

Governor Terry McAuliffe's Virginia Treasures Initiative Recognizes Four Projects at the Poquoson Museum

On April 22, 2015, Governor Terry McAuliffe announced the launch of Virginia Treasures, the Commonwealth's new strategy for conserving land and expanding access to public outdoor recreation.

"Virginia Treasures will enable us to focus on what's important for land conservation and public outdoor recreation," Governor McAuliffe said. "This initiative will prioritize our land conservation efforts, taking into account factors such as biodiversity, public access and wetlands preservation."

The program's goal is to identify, conserve and protect at least 1,000 treasures by the end of the governor's term.

Four Projects Completed at the Poquoson Historical and Cultural Museum Foundation (aka the Poquoson Museum) Designated as Virginia Treasures

On September 15, 2016 Governor McAuliffe recognized four projects completed at the Poquoson Museum as Virginia Treasures.

The Poquoson Museum's 16 acre campus is open daily (365 days a year) from dawn to dusk to the public. The campus consists of the circa 1910 farm house (now the museum building), the circa 1940 "Miss Becky's Store", a circa 1930 building once used as a polling place and several other significant agricultural outbuildings.

The four projects on the Museum's Campus approved as Virginia Treasures are:

- The Learning Garden and Pollinator Garden (Phase 1)
- The Learning Garden and Pollinator Garden (Phase 2)
- The Colonial Beekeepers Association Learning Bee Yard
- Treescaping along the Marsh Walk Nature Trail

York/Poquoson Master Gardeners Learning Garden at the Poquoson Museum – Phase 1

Phase 1 of the Learning Garden opened to the public in 2014. The Garden is open daily from dawn to dusk and it was designed to be fully accessible for visitors with hard packed stone dust pathways that meet ADA requirements. It features a variety of raised bed planters, cinder block planters and low cost gardening techniques like straw bale gardening. Many of these techniques are well suited for locations without conventional garden space. The Garden also includes a large outdoor classroom, butterfly garden beds and a demonstration wildflower meadow. It is a place for workshops, a space for hands on learning, demonstration, and for engagement with local residents and school children.

York/Poquoson Master Gardeners Learning Garden at the Poquoson Museum – Phase 2

Phase 2, the Enabling Garden, opened to the public in 2016. Phase 2 features gardening techniques for people with physical disabilities, limited mobility or space constraints. This section of the garden includes freestanding, wheelchair accessible tabletop beds, vertical planters; and multilevel raised bed planters designed to help persons learn the best height of a planter for their special needs. High frames put plants in reach of a gardener in a wheelchair. Visitors can try each out and see which ones best suit their needs.

Colonial Beekeepers Association's Learning Bee Yard at the Poquoson Museum

The Colonial Beekeepers Association established a Learning Bee Yard at the Museum in 2015. Goals for the Bee Yard were to foster the keeping and efficient management of honeybees and inform the public of the ecological and economic benefits of honey bee culture. Three active, working bee hives offer the public a great way to see honeybees in action and learn more about their vital and often-unnoticed role in our lives and more appropriately a Learning Bee Yard provides the public with an opportunity to learn about and safely observe operating honeybee hives. The Bee Yard is open daily - visit anytime to see how the honeybees are doing.

Treescaping Along Poquoson Museum's Marsh Walk Nature Trail

Phase 2 and 3 of the Treescaping Project along the Museum's Marsh Walk Nature were completed in 2014 and 2015. The one mile loop trail includes boardwalks and observation decks that provide views of the salt marsh and is open daily from dawn to dusk to the public. The trail gives Poquoson a unique interpretive urban tree trail. The project planted over 120 native trees and shrubs and is a recreational and educational resource for the citizens and students of Poquoson. Each tree or shrub is identified by its common name, Latin name and its leaf description. Eighteen interpretive signs along the trail describe the marsh environment and the wildlife that inhabit or benefit from it.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor

September 15, 2016

Mr. Noel Talcott, Secretary
Poquoson Historical and Cultural Museum Foundation
860 Yorktown Road
Poquoson, Virginia 23662

Dear Mr. Talcott:

Thank you and congratulations on four Virginia Treasure designations: the Learning and Pollinator Garden Phases I and II, the Colonial Beekeepers Association's Learning Bee Yard, and the Treescaping at Marsh Walk Nature Trail. I am pleased to present you with the enclosed certificates of recognition.

For centuries and around the world, our Commonwealth has been known for the beauty of our environment and for the rich diversity found in our forests, wetlands, streams and fields. These treasures benefit all Virginians and are economic and environmental assets. Most importantly, they are a huge part of our culture.

Whether it is through land conservation, establishment of new parks or park facilities, trails, wildlife habitats, or protection of historic or scenic resources, the actions you have taken join you with others across Virginia in fostering a stewardship ethic for our natural and cultural resources. Thank you for taking this step to help protect and showcase Virginia's many and diverse treasures.

It is my hope that as more citizens become aware of our natural and cultural resources, they will be inspired to protect and preserve Virginia's many treasures for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you again for being a part of this legacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terence R. McAuliffe".

Terence R. McAuliffe

Enclosures