



By: Richard Carter

Shelba Notebook

Celebrating Farmers' Market

Little more than two weeks from now, August 21, the second Tappahannock Farmers' Market will take place.

Tappahannock: it's a destination, not a drive-thru. The Farmers' Market makes this new way of thinking a reality.

It has the backing of all the right people. The Main Street program wants to revitalize the downtown and sponsored the Farmers' Market. It got off to a great start.

The Farmers' Market helps people in the farming community who are looking to sell their produce. It helps people in the business community who are looking for new customers for their goods. And it helps service organizations, like the Rotary, who are trying to improve Tappahannock.

Local sponsors included EVB, Essex Bank, Tappahannock Rotary, Rappahannock Electrical Cooperative, WRAR/Rivah Country, Metro-Cast, Perdue, and Dominion Power. Pretty impressive.

The Farmers' Market takes place in Tappahannock on Cross Street and the Fountain Green. It takes place on the third Saturday of the month through October 16. Next year, we hope that the market will start earlier and expand from its already heady success.

David Broad of Tappahannock deserves much credit for seeing the Farmers' Market from its birth to reality. Several months ago he approached me with his business plan, which I thought well thought out and inclusive.

Naturally, I have no head whatsoever for business. My wife, however, is another story. This kind of thing is her metier. It was she who informed me that he "has done his homework."

My wife and our new neighbor attended the very first Farmer's Market this past July 17. Mind you, this was a way to not only get her out of my hair, which is becoming increasingly thin and rare, but also a way for her to spend less time fretting over her garden

and more time spending money at the new Farmers' Market.

After all, isn't that the point of the whole enterprise? For with economic success comes community improvement, the consequential need to improve the look of Tappahannock, and the resulting pride that comes with living in a place that is at once historically significant and pleasant to be in.

Thus, I have come to the conclusion in my own mind that the new Tappahannock Farmers' Market is the lynch pin around which the Main Street Program will revolve and evolve. It gives it a grounding, a practical result, a tangible outcome, that makes the civic improvement of Tappahannock a distinct possibility.

Without the Farmers' Market all the efforts of good spirited citizens seemed to lack focus and practical purpose, even if they did not. Perhaps the Farmers' Market brought it all together.

My wife and my neighbor gave me the details:

There was music. There was barbecue. There were fruits and vegetables. There were unusual heritage tomatoes. There was Faunce's Seafood from the Northern Neck--a big hit. There were artists and home-made pottery. There were fresh cut flowers, not the ones imported from China that you find in "you-know-where." There was the King and Queen Humane Society. Southern States was there. Local businessman and landscape designer Jeff Willett's company was there. There were crafts and jewelry.

According to my on-the-scene reporters, here's what was still needed: Baked goods. Farm fresh eggs. Farm fresh meat and poultry.

And, in the near future one hopes: a booth for this newspaper, *The Rappahannock Times*, and other service organizations, i.e., The Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and perhaps some churches and their outreach groups as well.

Local attorney Peter Tribble was right when he was quoted

as saying, "The whole purpose of today was to bring attention to downtown Tappahannock and create revitalization. This was a perfect fit... Tappahannock is a jewel being slowly uncovered. We are seeing a resurgence...."