There's nothing pretentious about the South Shore of the James River. It is, and has been for four centuries, an alternative to the faster paced lifestyle on the north side of the James. That's what we, and more than 15 generations of our ancestors, have found appealing in this land tucked between the mighty James and the murkey Blackwater.

Everyone knows that Jamestown Island on the north shore of the James was the first successful English colony in America. Less well known is the important role the South Shore played in the success of early Virginia. Within a very few years after Jamestown was settled, colonists began migrating across the river. Industrious farmers cleared land, planted crops and raised livestock vital to the survival and prosperity of the colony.

Today, Isle of Wight and Surry Counties are prosperous, progressive communities. And, between the two, something is always happening. That’s the focus of the “Pulse,” The Smithfield Times’ new Web site. It’s the portal to these two counties. Here you can plan your weekend or schedule your club’s activities up to a year in advance. Here you can comment on current events or view photo collections of events just passed.

The “Pulse” is a companion to The Smithfield Times, which will continue to provide our two counties with the quality news coverage they have come to expect. We invite you to use both as you keep abreast of the exciting times ahead.