

The WV INDEPENDENT Observer

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

MARCH 2024

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*East of Shenandoah Junction,
the Harvest Hills subdivision (left)
borders Clear Field Farm (right).*

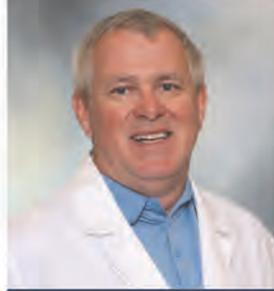
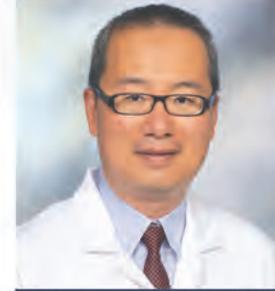
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The Blake industrial solar facility stretches across 500 acres at the intersection of Old Charles Town Road and Kabletown Road. The project has been cited for violations multiple times by the WV Department of Environmental Protection (see February issue of The Observer).

TO OUR READERS — The Jefferson County Planning Commission voted at its February 20 meeting to have the county’s Planning & Zoning staff review and recommend changes to the zoning ordinance related to permitting of industrial solar facilities. The Planning Commission’s action followed a request from the Jefferson County Commission to review the solar zoning. The Blake industrial solar facility (above) is the first to be permitted under zoning that was adopted in 2022. Members of both the Planning Commission and County Commission expressed concerns that the zoning rules that apply to future solar projects need to do a better job of preserving farmland and minimizing impacts on neighbors.

How Jefferson County preserves its agricultural heritage has been a topic of discussion for several decades. The Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board has been operating for over 20 years. The current director, Liz Wheeler, is retiring this year. In her final annual report, she notes that, as of January 2024, the Board has protected 6,846 acres of farmland, encompassing 58 farms. An additional 5 farms covering 574 acres are expected to be added by the end of the year.

The farmland protection effort is not just about keeping the land bucolic — it’s about preserving farming as an activity, a point noted several times last year during the discussion about updates to Jefferson County’s comprehensive plan (see *ObserverWV.com/Jefferson-comp-plan-2024*). The local farms feed into the local restaurants and local markets (see page 5). Both create local jobs. When you talk about a green economy, it’s good to plant your feet on the ground.


Steve Pearson
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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Attorneys: Stephen Skinner, Andrew Skinner, & Bryan Ogilvie | Stephen Skinner is responsible for the content of this ad.

// LAND PRESERVATION

A MISSION TO KEEP LOCAL FARMS IN PRODUCTION

Farmland Protection Covers 6,846 Acres In County



JANE TABB SERVES on the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board (FPB) as the representative of the County Commission. 2024 marks the end of her current term on the commission, but Tabb says she plans to remain active in the farmland protection effort. You can tell that she’s passionate about the mission of the FPB, an organization that she helped start in 2001.

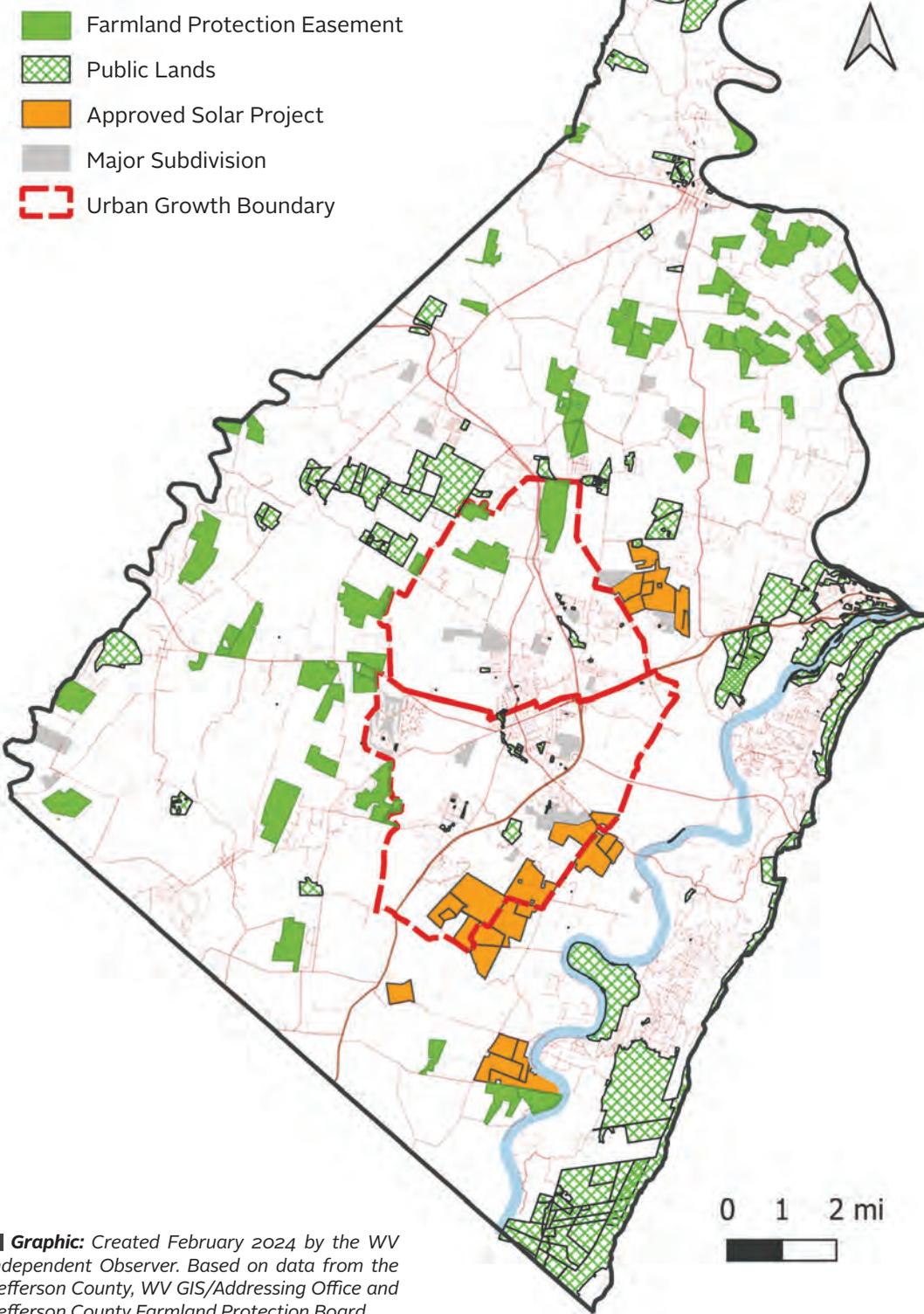
“John Unger helped get the legislation passed in the state legislature that allowed each county to tailor a program specific to their needs and opportunities,” Tabb recalled. “The key was to make the easements permanent. We saw the Maryland program that had only a 20 year easement period and it turned out to be a mess when the easements expired,” she explained, noting it was developers, not farmers, that reaped the windfall profits on the land.

Tabb remarked that “in the 1990s we had been seeing tremendous population growth in the county. Back in the 1970s we had 50 family-run dairy farms in the county, but by the 1990s they were selling. You needed larger and larger herds to make the dairy farm work and it just didn’t make sense for many of us. Our farm transitioned to beef cattle, but others didn’t see that as a good option, so we were seeing housing developments come in.”

According to Tabb, the FPB prioritizes its efforts using a ranking system that looks at the fertility of the soil, water resource preservation, and historical preservation opportunities. The program also prioritizes larger parcels and farms adjacent to previously preserved farms. The effort to preserve a farm can be quite complex, involving multiple organizations, as the signs on the Shepherdstown Battlefield site illustrate (image, page 5). Tabb notes that “the program is self-funding, covering our staff expense and easement purchases with revenue from the local property transfer tax and matching funds from other organizations.”

Read more at ObserverWV.com

PRESERVED FARMLAND & PUBLIC LANDS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY



Graphic: Created February 2024 by the WV Independent Observer. Based on data from the Jefferson County, WV GIS/Addressing Office and Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board.

A WEEKEND ON THE BATTLEFIELD



Ongoing efforts to preserve the Shepherdstown Battlefield involve numerous non-profit and government entities.

MIKE NICKERSON, PRESIDENT of the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, sketched out the plan of action that will start in downtown Shepherdstown on Friday April 5 and continue onto the battlefield site on Saturday April 6:

“Our kickoff will be Friday at 7 pm, with a Battle of Shepherdstown History Talk at the Shepherdstown Opera House. Thomas A. McGrath will present a talk titled *Bay State Blood and Valor: Massachusetts at the Battle of Shepherdstown*. This is a great opportunity to learn about the dramatic and often overlooked actions of the 18th & 22nd Massachusetts in the fighting during the Battle of Shepherdstown. The talk is based on his 2007 book, *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign*.”

“On Saturday, we really dig in with our annual clean-up day. Participants will meet at 9 am at the intersection of River and Trough Roads (on the left just downstream from the Boteler Cement Mill ruins south of Shepherdstown). Wear clothing and gloves appropriate for the weather and cleanup.”



Natalie Grantham Friend, the lead organizer for the Shepherdstown Farmers Market, and Jane Tabb, a Jefferson County commissioner, are both active in managing their family farms.

“Following the battlefield clean up, there is a Battle of Shepherdstown Tour that will run from 12:30 to 3 pm. Be prepared for an epic tour. You’ll have McGrath for several hours and several miles. It’s totally worth it! Participants should dress appropriately and arrive by 12:30 at the Osborn Farmhouse lawn (1901 Trough Road). There is no charge for this event and you should bring a lunch or light snacks; we’ll have water available.”

Details at ShepherdstownBattlefield.org. The weekend’s events are sponsored by the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, Historic Shepherdstown Museum, Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission, and the Shepherdstown Opera House.

LOCAL FOOD RESOURCES

Shepherdstown Farmers Market

Sunday mornings (open all year)
Old Market House (S. King St), Shepherdstown
FB: ShepherdstownFarmersMarket

Charles Town Farmers Market

Saturday mornings (opens April 13)
100 Blk of South Samuel St, Charles Town
FB: CharlesTownFarmersMarketWV

St. Isadore’s Market

Thursday evenings (open all year)
49 Crosswinds Dr, Charles Town
FB: St.IsidoreMarket

Community Garden Market

207 South Princess St, Shepherdstown
FB: CGMShepherdstown

Bushel & Peck Market

100 West Washington St, Charles Town
FB: BushelAndPeckwv

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A QUICK LOOK AT THE PLANNING & ZONING PROCESS

The Difference Between Land Use And Zoning

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING & ZONING describes the Future Land Use Map, together with the Comprehensive Plan, as the general guideline for what might be built in specific areas of the county to meet anticipated housing, employment, commercial, recreational, and other needs of residents. Classifications in the land use map (see next page) are defined in the Comprehensive Plan and cover broad categories of activity. The land use map looks at natural features, infrastructure, and existing development to define broad categories to guide future development — an approach that is typically more high-level than zoning.

Zoning defines the rules that determine if and how something can be built on a particular lot. The Zoning Ordinance defines multiple zoning districts, each with specific rules and restrictions. The Zoning Map refers to the zoning ordinance to define the permitted, conditionally permitted, and non-permitted uses within each district.

Subdivisions — A Multi-Step Process For Building Lots

The first step in land development is to define the legal building lot. A building lot can be a 500-acre farm with a farmstead. Or it can be a 1,400 square-foot lot for a townhouse dwelling. The process to get from the larger lot to the smaller lots is called subdivision. The “minor subdivision” rules apply when creating five or fewer lots from the original parcel. The “major subdivision” rules apply for anything above that. With a major subdivision, the first step is a concept plan (a sketch that shows the major elements, but does not include engineering details) followed by a public workshop and a preliminary plat (this includes the engineering details) presented at a public hearing. After that, the Planning & Zoning Office will issue a “final plat” that allows the developer to begin the building permit application process.

Site Plan – What’s On The Lot

Once a building lot is platted, a non-residential project (or apartment building) needs to provide a site plan to the Planning & Zoning Office before applying for a construction permit. The site plan needs to show compliance with requirements for stormwater management, setbacks & landscaping, and parking. Highway entrance permits (but not traffic studies) and plans for providing water & sewer are also required.

Small projects — a structure of less than 1,200 square feet that is disturbing less than 5,000 square feet — are exempt from site plans. Slightly larger projects — up to a 3,000 square feet footprint — fall into the category of limited site plan. Anything larger requires a full site plan and a construction bond to ensure that the promised features are built even if the developer cannot finish the project.

Know When To Express Concerns And Ask For Changes — Timing Is Important

Neighbors, narrow roads, historic sites, shared water & air resources, and other factors come into play when a specific project gets proposed. According to the Office of Planning & Zoning, concerns such as housing density and commercial/industrial uses should be raised during the comprehensive plan review and land use map update process. Once a project is presented as a subdivision or site plan, it’s too late to raise concerns about whether a specific use is permitted or not — if a project meets the conditions specified in the zoning ordinance, it’s allowed. Likewise, questions about mitigating specific impacts on neighboring properties should be raised during the concept plan workshop; by the time a preliminary plat is presented for public hearing, the process is constrained to reviewing technical details within the boundaries of the project.

// LAND USE & ZONING

ALIGNING LAND USE & ZONING

Commission To Review Changes

Land Use Classification	Zoning District
Rural/Agriculture	Major Industrial
Rural/Agriculture For Possible Urban	Light Industrial
Agricultural Economic Empowerment	Industrial/Commercial
Large Lot Residential	Office/Commercial Mixed-Use
Low Density Residential	General Commercial
Medium Density Residential	Highway Commercial
High Density Residential	Neighborhood Commercial
General Commercial	Residential/Light Industrial/Commercial
Neighborhood Commercial	Residential Growth
Regional Commercial	Planned Neighborhood Development
Industrial	Rural
Office	Village
Mixed Use Residential/Commercial	Incorporated Town

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION is considering multiple changes to the Future Land Use Map's existing land use classifications (above left). Notably, several variants of commercial land use — Office/Commercial Mixed-Use, Regional Commercial, and Office — are proposed to be consolidated into a broader commercial land use category, with the particular details of commercial use (and corresponding conditions) defined in the zoning ordinance, rather than the land use map. The Industrial land use classification is also proposed for elimination.

At its February 20 meeting, the Planning Commission noted the need to update the zoning district definitions (above right). In the context of a proposal submitted for the Harvest Hills subdivision (see story page 16), the commissioners noted that while the existing Future Land Use Map includes multiple classifications for residential housing (large lot, low density, medium density, high density), the closest corresponding classifications in the zoning ordinance include only Residential Growth and Rural districts. These two zoning districts permit multiple levels of housing density — depending on access to public water and sewer. The only other existing district type in the zoning ordinance that permits residential development is Residential/Light Industrial/Commercial (RLIC). The RLIC zoning is a legacy of the pre-2008 zoning framework. As the name suggests, the RLIC zoning allows non-residential development. During several recent requests to rezone land from Rural to RLIC, residents have voiced concerns that future development on parcels rezoned as RLIC could easily shift to the type of projects that fall under commercial or industrial uses permitted under this broad zoning designation, rather than purely residential development as initially proposed.

Two Planning Commission Seats Open In March

The County Commission is responsible for appointing the eight commissioners of the County's Planning Commission to their three-year terms. The terms of two of the commissioners, Mike Shepp and Matt Knott, will expire in March 2024. Residents of Jefferson County who are interested in serving on the Planning Commission can call the County Commission office at 304-728-3284 or contact a county commissioner for information on how to apply. 📍



As it works towards completing the update of the county's comprehensive plan later this year, the Planning Commission will schedule another public input session in April (time and location to be announced). Results of the most recent public input survey, which collected comments via an interactive map (image), are posted at ObserverWV.com



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// COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

RANSON DISCUSSES INDUSTRIAL ZONING



DURING ITS FEBRUARY 6 MEETING, the Ranson City Council reviewed the draft of Plan 2034, a guide for residential and commercial development in Ranson over the next decade. Following a lengthy discussion centered on concerns that the definition of “light industrial” referenced in the comprehensive plan is not adequately spelled out in the Ranson’s zoning ordinance, the Council voted to hold a first reading of the ordinance that would enact the comprehensive plan and proceed with a coordinated timetable that would allow for both updating of the zoning ordinance and adopting the updated comprehensive plan by April 15 (there is a 90 day deadline specified in state code which began when the City Council met on January 16 to receive the draft plan recommended by the Planning Commission).

PROPOSED RANSON TIMELINE:

March 4 - Planning Commission considers an ordinance defining light industrial and/or limiting heavy industry; makes recommendation to the City Council.

March 20 - City Council considers first reading of zoning ordinance recommended by the Planning Commission (TBD from March 4 meeting).

April 2 - City Council holds two public hearings (1 for zoning ordinance, 1 for comprehensive plan ordinance); considers second reading and adoption of the zoning ordinance (TBD from March 4 meeting) and enactment of the comprehensive plan ordinance (first reading was during the February 6 Council meeting). 📍

Find links to the draft Ranson Comprehensive Plan at ObserverWV.com/ranson-comp-plan-2024.

COMMITTEE REPORTS ON SHEPHERDSTOWN PLAN

A **VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE** has invested more than 1,100 hours of work to review and assess progress against the **Shepherdstown Comprehensive Plan** that was adopted in 2014. This committee has completed its work and a 69-page report was provided to the town’s Planning Commission and elected leaders on February 26. This report assesses the 2014 plan — initiative by initiative — and provides specific recommendations for updates. At the committee’s final meeting, the members agreed to recommend that the town hold a public hearing to present and discuss the findings of this report.

According to the committee report, the 2014 Comprehensive Plan was put “on the proverbial shelf” and many of its recommended initiatives were not implemented. In addition, the committee found that the town government did not put in place a “structure to foster accountability and responsibility” to implement the 2014 plan.

The review committee was established by the town’s Planning Commission in July 2022. Chaired by Phil Baker-Shenk, the committee’s membership included two Town Council members, a Shepherd University representative, and residents who live in or surrounding the incorporated area of Shepherdstown. The group held 16 monthly meetings (open to the public), and conducted hours of research through 10 informal working groups. 📍

The full text of the Final Report and Recommendations of the Shepherdstown Comprehensive Plan Review Steering Committee can be viewed at ObserverWV.com/shepherdstown-comp-plan-2024.



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// COMMUNITY

STEPPING UP TO HELP OTHERS

Recognizing The Next Generation Of Police



DURING THE FEBRUARY 5 MEETING of the Charles Town City Council, Mayor Bob Trainor (top image, left) smiled broadly as he got to the mayor's report item on the agenda. Trainor remarked "this is my favorite part of the job" as he read off the citation to recognize the quick efforts of Patrolman Jarrett Day (top image, right) which saved the life of a local resident:

"Patrolman Jarrett L. Day is cited for exceptionally meritorious conduct responding to a person in distress while off duty on the eighteenth of August 2023. At approximately 1200 hours, while dining with his family at a local restaurant, located on Saratoga Drive in Charles Town, West Virginia, Patrolman Day observed a female customer choking, signaling her distress and need of assistance. Without hesitation, Patrolman Day approached the female offering his assistance. Quickly assessing the situation, he determined that her airway was

blocked and immediately began performing the Heimlich maneuver until successfully clearing the obstruction from her airway. The female customer was subsequently transported to Jefferson Medical Center for evaluation.

Patrolman Jarrett Day demonstrated an astute awareness of his surroundings, quick reaction, and impressive performance under pressure responding to an urgent situation, which likely saved the life of a fellow human being. His quick and decisive actions speaks volumes to his professionalism, dedication to duty, and service to the community! He exemplifies the highest standards and values of the Charles Town Police Department. It is with profound appreciation and great pleasure, and with the unanimous support of the Department's Award Committee, that I hereby award Patrolman Jarrett L. Day with the LIFE SAVING AWARD in saving a life as cited above." 🙏

POLICE INTERNS IN SHEPHERDSTOWN

SARGENT JOHN JEFFRIES says he enjoys the time he spends with the three Shepherd University students currently participating in a 120 hour internship program with the Shepherdstown Police Department. "The program gives the interns a chance to see what police work is first hand. But it also gives me the opportunity to learn from how they see things too."

The three interns are studying criminal justice at Shepherd. Abigail Miller, a senior, remarked that she finds the reward of helping people to be the attraction of police work. She also participated in an internship with the Maryland State Police previously. She says the first-hand experience in the two different environments helped guide her decision to look for a position with a small town police force and ultimately train for detective work.

Kirsten Payne, also a senior, intends to pursue a career as a probation officer after



graduation. She explained that her interest in law enforcement stems from watching the experience of a family member who struggled with addiction and was arrested. "It was a probation officer that believed in him and kept encouraging him to change that led him to become clean. It showed me that this is a job that can make a difference in people's lives." 🙏

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ROBINS RETURN FOR SPRING

By Doug Pifer

Doug Pifer is an artist, naturalist, and writer. He has a Master's Degree in Journalism from Penn State and has been an editor and art educator. His illustrations have appeared in various books and magazines and he has been a contributor to The Observer for several years. He lives with his wife and assorted animals on 5.7 acres in a historic farmhouse near Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

EACH MORNING DURING MID-FEBRUARY, robin songs echo from the woods behind the barn. Flocks of them stream overhead. Dozens of robins fly back and forth between the sycamores and the banks of the creek. On sunny afternoons robins forage in scattered groups in the mowed field across the road. In the evenings they gather in the cedar trees to roost.

Almost everyone recognizes an American robin. They lay their turquoise blue eggs in grass-lined mud nests in backyard shade trees, hunt worms to feed their speckle-bellied babies, and scold us if we venture too close to their nests. Say “bird” to any American and I’ll bet most of them would visualize a robin.

Despite its familiarity, we have much to learn about the American robin. Its scientific name means “migratory thrush,” yet its movements after the nesting season can hardly be described as migratory. Robins breed throughout the continental United States and across southern Canada. Most Canadian birds move southward sometime in the fall and the US population tends to greatly increase in the southern states during the winter months. But in much of its range, you might see a robin any time of the year.

Much about the travels of robins remains unknown. Scientists often trap wild birds and release them with GPS transmitters attached to their backs to study their movements. Robins have proved difficult to get data from, not because they’re hard to catch in mist nets, but because it’s difficult to re-capture the same robin a year or so later. Robins lack the nest site fidelity many other birds have. They may return to the same general area the following year but not to the same place where they nested before.

Robins have soft bills that aren’t made for cracking and eating seeds. During the nesting season, robins, and the young they are feeding, consume a high protein diet of mostly



Illustration by Doug Pifer, courtesy of the PA Game Commission.

worms and insects. Then as fall approaches they turn to eating fruits and berries.

A fruit diet makes robins go where food is plentiful. In early fall, robins congregate where wild grapes festoon the edges of waterways, or along woodland edges where dogwood, sassafras, and honeysuckle grow. Later they glean dropped and unpicked orchard fruit. Then in December, after several prolonged freezes, groups of robins may appear in suburban landscaped parking lots where they find Callender (Bradford) pear, holly, and other ornamental fruit bearing trees. Or they frequent certain woods where persimmon, hackberry, holly, and cedar trees bear fruit. A great part of their winter diet consists of the berry-like blue fruits of red cedar trees.

This year I’ve noticed many of our local cedar trees are unusually fruitful. Many cedar boughs are packed with so many “berries” they look blue from a distance. Red cedar groves also provide cover where robins can roost in great numbers, protected from the elements. The birds can hide there with less chance of being taken by predatory owls and hawks.

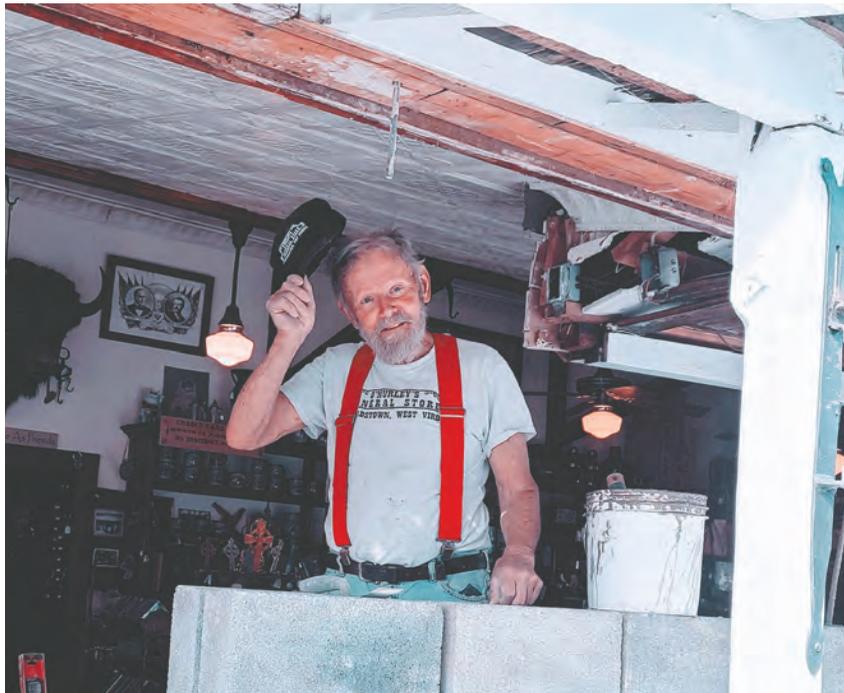
Meanwhile flocks of restless, excited robins continue to brighten the landscape. No matter why they’re here, they can stay as long as they like. Their chorus at sunrise announces with absolute certainty that spring isn’t just around the corner — it’s already here.

Interested in local bird watching opportunities? Join the Potomac Valley Audubon Society for bird walks and other free events throughout the year.
VISIT POTOMACAUDUBON.ORG/CALENDAR

EXPLORE // SHEPHERDSTOWN

JAY HURLEY OFFERS PARK

A Final Gift To The Town



GARLAND "JAY" HURLEY departed Shepherdstown on November 25, 2023 in the same spot he had arrived 82 years earlier on April 15, 1941, in a room above what is now O’Hurley’s General Store. In between, he traveled the world, had great adventures, and collected a lot of stories to tell. And tell them he did, if you would stop by the store. You’d be especially gifted if he invited you into his workshop where decades of projects and dreams that had flown out of his head were stacked — a chaotic jumble that he could somehow navigate to find the precise bit for the latest project at hand.

When Jay left Shepherdstown in the late 1950s, he was still a teenager. His interest and expertise in electronics led to a series of jobs in radio broadcasting as both a DJ and a technician. After working his way up to running a commercial radio station in Annapolis, he added a little formal education and ended up on a remote Alaskan island tending to military radar. Then it was on to a job in Turkey with various side adventures in Europe and Africa.

O’Hurley’s General Store occupies what was once a furniture store operated by Hurley’s father, Milburn Glenn Hurley. Jay had returned to Shepherdstown in the 1970s and, when his father died in 1979, Jay rebuilt the store building into the postcard-perfect emporium that offers a little bit of everything for everyone. Jay liked music so he later built the “great hall” addition that still hosts weekly jam sessions for traditional bluegrass and folk musicians.

At the February 13 meeting of the Shepherdstown Town Council, Genevieve O’Loughlin, the executor of Hurley’s estate, accompanied local attorney Frank Hill to present Jay’s last gift to the town — an offer of 2.5 acres of property along Mill Street given for the “express purpose of a public park to be named in memory of his father, M.G. Hurley” according to a statement read by Hill. The bequest has specific conditions including a requirement to maintain the land as a park for 30 years. The Town Council will hold a special meeting on March 5 to review the proposed gift.

O’Hurley’s General Store, 205 East Washington Street, Shepherdstown WV. Open 7 days a week. Web: OHurleys.com. Tel: 304-876-6907.

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EXPLORE // MUSIC

MUSIC SHOWCASE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Shepherd Music Has A Full Calendar Of Spring Concerts



THE CENTERPIECE OF THIS SPRING'S calendar at the Shepherd University School of Music is the Musical Showcase for Scholarships on Saturday, April 6 (7:00 pm, in the Frank Arts Center Theater). "This year's Musical Showcase will be a true extravaganza," says enthusiastic founder Alan Gibson. "Well over a dozen successful Shepherd Music alumni will dazzle you by what they've accomplished."

Eight years ago, Gibson and his partner, the late Dr. Scott Beard, Shepherd University's Provost and Professor of Music, came up with the idea of putting on the Musical Showcase to raise money to provide scholarships for Shepherd music students. The event was created to highlight outstanding performances and inspiring stories by former scholarship students who had gone on to enjoy successful careers in music.

Gibson and Beard casually mentioned the idea to Marcia Brand, who was serving on the University's Board of Governors at the time. Brand threw herself into the project and has co-chaired the committee ever since. The Musical Showcase was an instant hit and became an annual event which to date has raised \$245,000 worth of scholarships to deserving students.

The 2024 Musical Showcase, co-chaired by Marcia Brand and Susan Mills, will feature more than a dozen alumni representing stellar

careers in voice, instrumental performance, acting, teaching, and broadcast editing. Sponsors and supporters have made this event a great success over the years. To learn about how you can become a sponsor for the 2024 event, visit Shepherd.edu/Music or contact Sherri Janelle (sjanelle@shepherd.edu) at the Shepherd University Foundation.



UPCOMING CONCERTS

Shepherd Salon Series - Two Rivers Trio
Tuesday, March 5 at 7:30 pm (theater, free)

Fairy Tales & Folk Songs - Symphonic Band Concert
Friday, March 22 at 7:30 pm (theater, tickets)

The Earth Adorned - Spring Choral Concert
Saturday, March 23 at 7:30 pm (theater, tickets)

Alex Lalumondiere, Clarinet Recital
Sunday, March 24 at 3:00 pm (recital hall, free)

Amelia Rampersad, Community Recital
Sunday, March 24 at 5:00 pm (recital hall, free)

Shepherd Salon Series - Robin Rhodes
Tuesday, March 26 at 7:30 pm (recital hall, free)

String Quartet Concert
Thursday, March 28 at 7:30 pm (recital hall, free)

Composition Concert
Tuesday, April 2 at 7:30 pm (recital hall, free)

Musical Showcase For Scholarships
Saturday, Apr 6, 7:00 pm (theater, tickets)

For ticketed events, purchase at the door or online (Shepherd.edu/music). All performances are at the Frank Arts Center (theater or recital hall), 260 University Drive, Shepherdstown. Parking is available in Lot G (adjacent to the Arts Center).

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—C.G. Jung
(*Mysterium Coniunctionis, Collected Works, Vol 14, p.520*)

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EXPLORE // EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

BETO O'ROURKE DISCUSSION & BOOK SIGNING



FOUR SEASONS BOOKS and the Stubblefield Institute for Civil Political Communications are hosting Beto O'Rourke for a discussion and book-signing event at the Frank Arts Center Theater on Monday, March 4 at 6:00 pm. O'Rourke is a former US Congressman (TX) and founder of the voter registration organization Powered By The People. The event is described as a "candid talk on safeguarding our sacred right to vote and the imperative to save our democracy at this critical moment of truth as well as an opportunity to increase voter registration in our area."

Tickets must be purchased in advance, online at FourSeasonsBooks.com. Books will be available for purchase at the event (book purchase is separate from admission ticket).

EASTER EGG HUNTS AROUND JEFFERSON COUNTY

If you kids want to hunt for Easter eggs, you can hop over to Ranson early on Saturday, March 23 for Breakfast with the Easter Bunny at Independent Fire Company (8 am - noon). The Easter Eggstravaganza organized by the Jefferson County Parks & Rec Commission at Sam Michaels Park says it will have "tons" of eggs to hunt (10 am - noon). On the following

Saturday, March 30, the Shepherdstown Centennial Lions Club hosts a Breakfast with the Easter Bunny at the Blue Moon Cafe (8 - 11 am). Then you can stroll over to the Experience Shepherdstown Easter Egg Hunt on McMurrin Hall Lawn (10:30 - 11:00 am).

Visit ObserverWV.com for event links.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFERS UNUSUAL CHECK-OUT



Bolivar-Harpers Ferry
PUBLIC LIBRARY

IF YOU STOP BY THE LOCAL public library, you can check out books, videos, recordings, magazines, etc. But what if you could check out a conversation? That's the thought behind the program to be launched this month by the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library.

Adult program director Lisa Fox is organizing a trial run of a "Check Out a Person" event. The program is based on "The Human Library" concept that originated in Copenhagen in 2000 and has since expanded to 70 countries around the world. A local library patron suggested the idea to Fox and she decided to trial it on a small scale. She hopes

to develop it into a reoccurring program that would bring together people from different backgrounds, experiences and walks of life for lively conversations. The first session will include 9 patrons who can be 'checked out' on either March 16 or March 23.

The participating individuals, who range in age from 16 to 80, come from many different walks of life. One patron is willing to share about her life as a hearing-impaired person. Fox hopes "that people can come together and learn about one another. In a time when we may not know the person who lives a few doors down, the library is doing the job of bringing people together, encouraging them to ask questions and empathize with one another."

To participate, you can stop by the library to preview a short biography of each person and reserve a one-hour time slot. The library will provide a list of questions and participants are also encouraged to come with their own questions.

Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library, 151 Polk St, Harpers Ferry; Tel 304-535-2301. Web: BolivarHarpersFerryLibrary.com

**MOVIES ♦ COMEDY
LIVE MUSIC**

**THE PRETTY WITTY & GAY
COMEDY TOUR**
Headlined by Shepherdstown's Ren Q
Mar 1, 7pm

WHEN WIRE WAS KING
The history of the phone and internet,
with discussion led by film director
Mar 3, 3pm

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: GOOD
David Tennant stars
Mar 16, 3pm

THE COLOR PURPLE
2023 Oscar-nominated adaptation of
Alice Walker's novel
Mar 23, 3:30pm & 7:30pm

BRENNAN EDWARDS & CODY CHRISTIAN
2 clean-livin Virginia boys with a
traditional country sound
Mar 30, 8pm

**TUCKER RIGGLMAN AND THE
CHEAP DATES**
Rockin' the restless spirits
Apr 12, 8pm

NATHAN STANLEY
The Opera House welcomes back
Ralph Stanley's grandson for a night
of traditional country music
Apr 13, 7pm

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UNIVERSITY HOSTS EXPO FOR WOMEN LEADERS



Women for Shepherd Expo keynote speaker Judee Ann Williams '01, Global Head of Impact, Creative Artists Agency (CAA) Sports.

ON SATURDAY, MARCH 23, SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY'S Suzanne Shipley Wellness Center will be the site of the first-ever Women for Shepherd Expo and Keynote Luncheon. The free-to-attend Expo will showcase nearly 30 women-owned businesses and local non-profit organizations. The Expo will have a morning session (9:00-11:30 am) and an afternoon session (1:30-3:30 pm).

The event is sponsored by Women for Shepherd University, a program supported by the Shepherd University Foundation. A portion of the proceeds from the event will go to support the Shepherd Fund, which provides unrestricted scholarship and programming support to the University.

Women for Shepherd was created to cultivate a network of alumnae, faculty, and friends who come together to learn first-hand about Shepherd today through a variety of educational and fun activities. According to a 2023 national survey conducted by intelligence firm Morning Consult, more than 80 percent of female managers and business leaders use networking to win business and tap into new opportunities for themselves. A keynote luncheon will feature Shepherd alumna Judee Ann Williams '01. Williams is the Global Head of Impact at Creative Artists Agency Sports. She is also active with national and global philanthropy organizations and serves on the Save the Children Board of Directors.

The Expo event is the 20th marquee event organized by Women for Shepherd by the Foundation. "The hope is that the event will bring groups of women together to celebrate and enhance future generations," said Meg Patterson of Shepherd University Foundation.

The Women for Shepherd Expo is free for all and requires no registration. Reservations to attend the luncheon, which starts at 11:30 am and costs \$30, are due by March 15 to Meg Patterson at 301-876-5021 or MPeterso@Shepherd.edu. Event information is available online at ShepherdUniversityFoundation.org.



EXPLORE // EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

STORYTELLING WITH WORDS, HANDS & MOVEMENT

SPEAK STORY SERIES IS HOSTING story artist Peter S. Cook at the War Memorial Building (102 East German St, Shepherdstown) on Tuesday, March 12 at 7:30 pm. Cook is an internationally known Deaf performing artist whose works incorporate American Sign Language, pantomime, storytelling, acting, and movement.

Cook has traveled extensively around the country and abroad with the Flying Words Project to promote ASL Literature with Kenny Lerner since 1986. He has appeared in Live from Off Center's "Words on Mouth" (PBS) and "United States of Poetry" (PBS) produced by Emmy winner Bob Holman. He was featured at the National Storytelling festival in Jonesborough, Tenn., the Tales of Graz in Graz, Austria, The Deaf Way II, and the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

Tickets are \$20, available at the door or online at SpeakStorySeries.com. Recommended for age 13 and older.



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HARPERS FERRY FILM FESTIVAL



LOOKING FOR SOME INTERESTING FILMS? Harpers Ferry Parks & Rec is sponsoring a film festival on Friday, March 22 (6 - 9 pm) and Saturday, March 23 (5 - 8 pm). The Friday lineup starts with 3 short films and the feature is *Impossible Town*. The Saturday lineup also has 3 short films and the feature is *King Coal*. The shorts program for both nights will include *The Peregrine Falcons of Harpers Ferry*.

The films will be presented at the Mather Training Center on the Storer College campus (51 Mather Place, Harpers Ferry). Parking is available in the lots behind the building.

Tickets are \$20 for each night, \$30 for both nights. Purchase at the door or stop by the Harpers Ferry Town Hall (open Mon-Thur 9-noon and 1-3). FB: Corporation of Harpers Ferry.

Support the
Shepherdstown Community Club

CASINO NIGHT
MARCH 9

Dinner Seatings at 6 & 7:30 pm
Casino Games 7 to 10 pm
Dancing 9 to 11:30 pm

Tickets: ShepherdstownCC.org

LUTE & VIOLA DA GAMBA CONCERT AT HAPPY RETREAT

HAPPY RETREAT WILL HOST a performance by Ronn McFarlane (lute) and Carolyn Surrick (viola da gamba) on Sunday, March 10 at 2 pm. Ronn McFarlane's critically acclaimed recordings and performances have brought the lute into today's musical mainstream. He has composed new music for the lute, building on the tradition of the lutenist/composers of past centuries. His original compositions are the focus of his solo CD, *Indigo Road*, which received a GRAMMY Award Nomination for Best Classical Crossover Album of 2009. Carolyn Surrick founded Ensemble Galilei in 1990, and they started touring in 1995. The group has recorded fourteen CDs and has performed hundreds of concerts in 46 states, Mexico, and Canada.



Tickets are \$35 (limited seats – advance purchase recommended). Happy Retreat, 600 Mordington Ave, Charles Town. Web: HappyRetreat.org.

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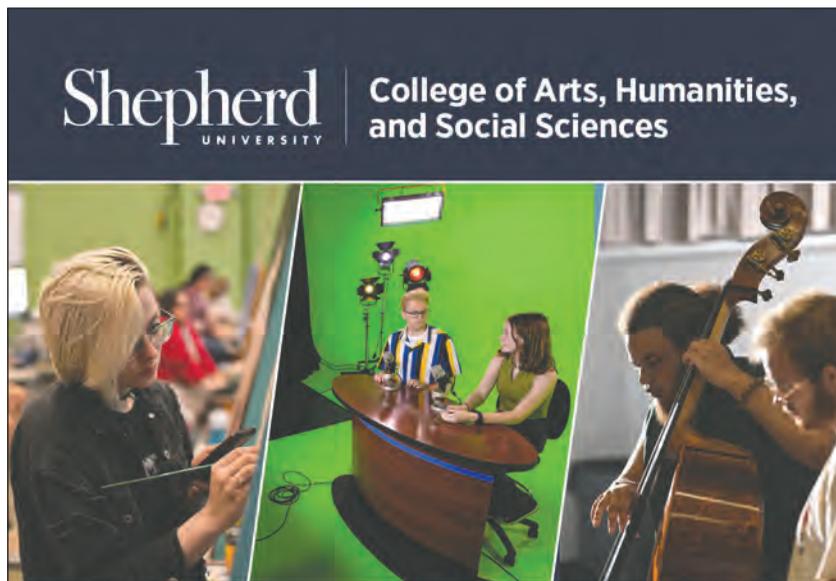
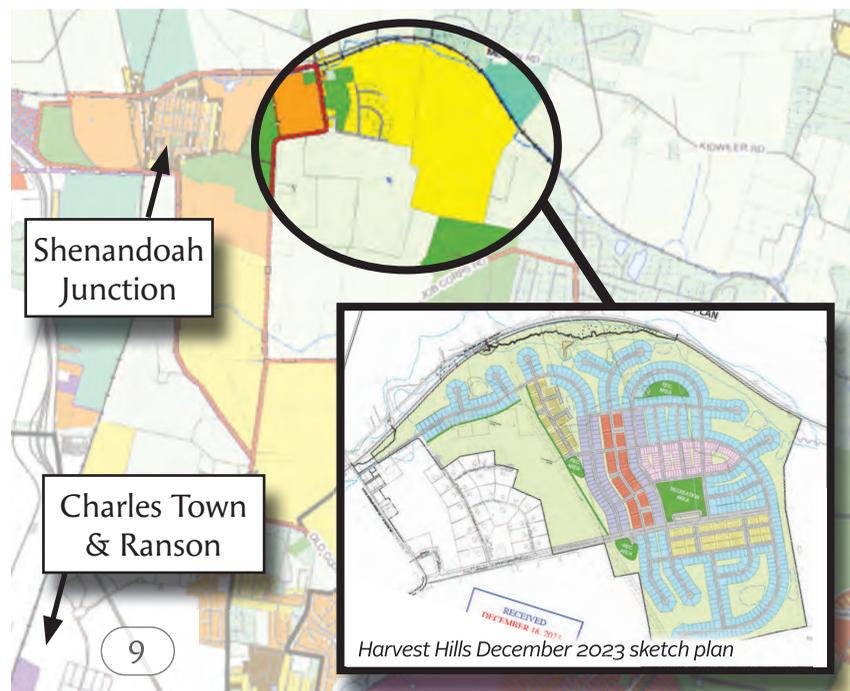
PLANNING COMMISSION PUSHES BACK High Density Development Questioned

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION reviewed a request from Arcadia Land, a land developer seeking to rezone the 352-acre Harvest Hills subdivision (Phase 2) from Rural to Residential Growth at its February 20 meeting. As *The Observer* reported last month, this zoning amendment request was accompanied by a sketch plan showing 1,009 home lots, a density that is not allowed in the rural zone. The planning commissioners noted that the existing conditional use permit and final plat for the project, which was processed in 2012, is still valid and allows the development of 392 houses (including 27 already built).

The Future Land Use map approved with the current Comprehensive Plan (see page 6) classifies this parcel as low density residential (per the existing use permit and plat). At the meeting, the commissioners expressed concerns that the requested Residential Growth zoning does not equate to low density residential. Planning Commission President Mike Shepp remarked that the developer “could ask for 3,000 units” and the Planning Commission would have to permit that number if the development were zoned Residential Growth.

During the discussion, Shepp noted that the county’s zoning ordinance needs to be updated with new categories to better reflect the density distinctions specified in the Future Land Use map. The planning commissioners voted unanimously to find that Arcadia’s proposed zoning amendment is “not consistent” with the County’s comprehensive plan.

The developer’s request now goes to the County Commission which will hold a public hearing and vote on this request at its Thursday, March 7 meeting (9:30 am, in the basement of the Charles Town Library). Written comments can be emailed to info@JeffersonCountyWV.org (send comments by March 1 to be included in the meeting packet).



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