

# The WV INDEPENDENT Observer

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

JULY 2024

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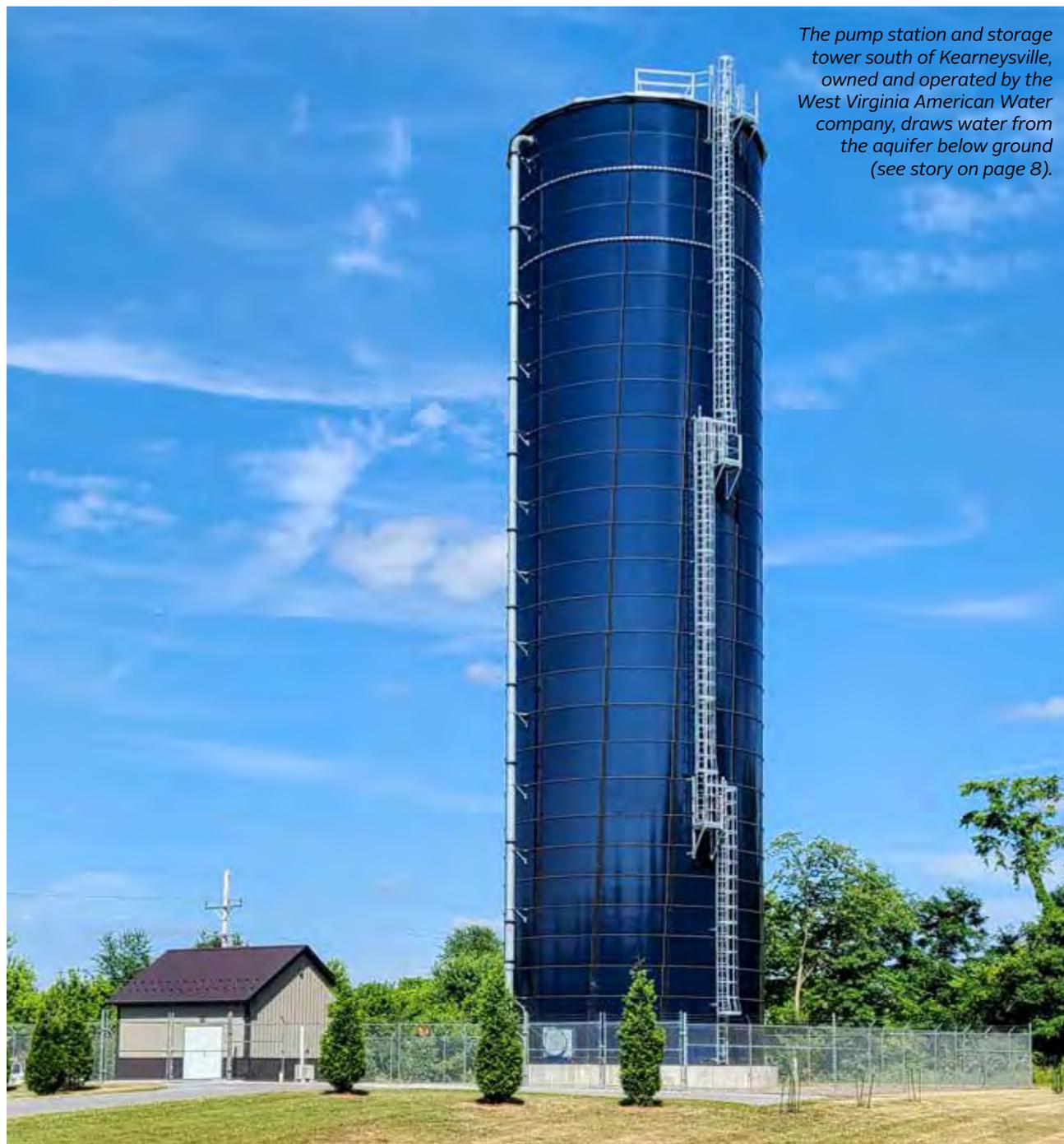
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*The pump station and storage tower south of Kearneysville, owned and operated by the West Virginia American Water company, draws water from the aquifer below ground (see story on page 8).*

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THIS PAPER WANTS TO BE RECYCLED.



Evitts Run flows through a multi-use park just west of downtown Charles Town.

**TO OUR READERS** — We're halfway through 2024 and things are definitely heating up in Jefferson County. Aside from the weather, the future of the county has been a hot discussion topic at recent meetings. Ranson recently adopted its updated Comprehensive Plan and also amended its zoning ordinance for industrial land use. The first request to rezone a property with the new industrial zoning rules was presented to the Ranson City Council last month and a public hearing on the rezoning is scheduled for July 16 (see page 12).

The County Planning Commission recently received a deluge of public comments on the draft Future Land Use Map (also now referred to as the Future Land Use Guide). One of the proposed additions to the map, a preferred growth area around the future Shepherdstown Elementary School, was quickly removed after hundreds of residents voiced their concerns (see page 8). Next up, the Planning Commission will be reviewing a draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan in July. We'll post the full draft document to [ObserverWV.com/Jefferson-Comp-Plan-2024](http://ObserverWV.com/Jefferson-Comp-Plan-2024) as soon as it is released to the public in the next couple of weeks.

A draft of the county's Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and action items is already available for the public's review (see page 8), so if you have a comment or question about those elements, now is the time to send it to the Planning Commission — you can email comments to [Complan2045@JeffersonCountyWV.com](mailto:Complan2045@JeffersonCountyWV.com) (note spelling). If you send them before July 2, your comments will be in the packet for the July 9 meeting.

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.

// COMMUNITY

# SHEPHERD CAMPUS IS BUSY THIS SUMMER

## University Adds New Major, Summer Programs & Parking



WHEN CLASSES END IN MAY, the campus may seem quiet. But for Shepherd University professors and administrators, the summer can be the busiest time of the year as they work on research, grant proposals, course planning, and the organizational changes required to navigate the changing environment of higher education.

### New Programs

Last year, the faculty, administration, and students engaged in a months-long process to review and restructure the university's academic priorities. The initiative was driven by an urgent need to stabilize the financial prospects of the university, but the plan adopted by the Board of Governors also envisioned adding new programs and concentrations to build on opportunities identified during the review process.

At its June 2024 meeting, the university's Board of Governors approved a new Applied Math and Data Science major (BS) and four concentrations within existing degree programs: "Cybersecurity, Network Security & Information Science," "Environmental Science," "Sustainable Agriculture & Resource Management," and "Music Performance." The board also approved an independent study concentration within the Global Studies degree program. According to interim Provost Dr. Robert Tudor, "These new programs allow us to offer curriculum and content closely aligned with the needs of businesses and industries, and create stronger opportunities for Shepherd's students."

### Summer Camp On Campus

Most of the undergraduate students may be elsewhere, but the University hosts many camps and programs for high school students during the summer, many of which are focused on helping these younger students explore possible college degrees and careers. One example was the Neuroscience Camp held the week of June 17. It was quite warm outside, but the students were practicing some cool science inside, getting hands-on experience working in the lab and working with data. In the photo above, biology professor Conor Sipe is giving students pointers on working with the fruit fly brains they will be examining under the microscopes. This program was funded by the National Science Foundation, part of a larger grant that supports undergraduate research directed by Dr. Sipe.

### Making New Connections

One of the more visible activities this summer is another construction project in the northeast corner of the campus, near the nursing school. Last year this part of campus was busy with the demolition of the Turner and Kenamond buildings. The University says that it is in the early stages of evaluating what it might want to do on those two sites, but in the meantime it received federal funding to rework the parking lots adjacent to the stadium (K and C lots). Of most interest to commuter students, there will be a few more parking spaces with the new layout (sketch below) and cars will be able to exit onto North King Street, allowing easier access to the A lot off High Street.

According to Sonya Sholley, Associate VP for Strategic Initiatives, the construction is scheduled to be complete by mid-August, before students return for classes and football kicks off in Ram Stadium. 🏈



// ARTS & CULTURE

# THEATER FESTIVAL BEGINS

## Lots Of Effort In June To Set The Stage



CATF Associate Artistic Director Theresa Davis speaking to the festival's interns at a lunch sponsored by CATF board members Rick Shaffer and Susan Mills.

**THE 2024 CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN** Theater Festival (CATF) in Shepherdstown will run from July 5 through 28. As busy as the July schedule is, the month of June is even busier behind the scenes, as the technical crews work against tight deadlines to transform the festival's four stages with walls, furniture, backdrops, painting, lighting, sound, props — a seemingly endless list of details that all need to come together from rough sketches to finished sets in a matter of weeks.

The festival also hosts several dozen interns each summer, providing opportunities for college students planning careers in theater to get hands-on experiences and learn from the seasoned theater professionals who take up residence in Shepherdstown during the festival.

CATF's Associate Artistic Director



The CATF lighting team hanging lights at the Shepherdstown Opera House. From left, Eli Golding, Emma Cullen, Trinity Joseph, Alex Malli.

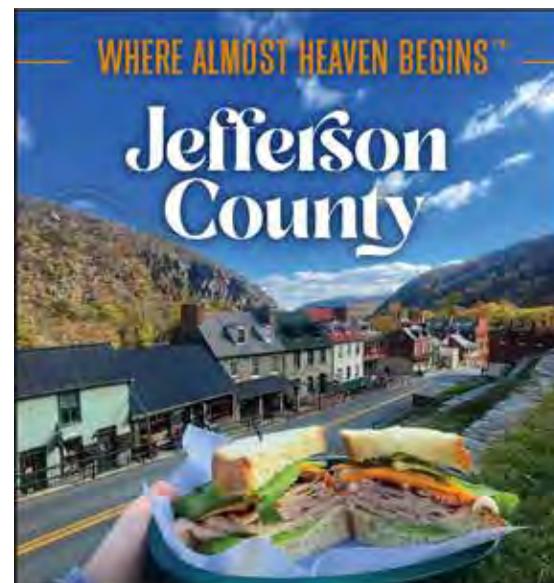
Theresa Davis remarked on the sense of community she sees in the interns, even after a few weeks together. "It's really a joy, you can sense it in the room. They bring it with them and each group has a different energy." Davis also noted the strong theme of "community" in several of the 2024 plays, highlighting Donja Love's *What Will Happen To All The Beauty* about a Black community living with HIV/AIDS and Harmon dot aut's *Tornado Tastes Like Aluminum* Sting presenting the experience of living on the autism spectrum, as examples of how theater can represent communities and "bring them off the stage" to the audiences. 🎭

*The 2024 festival will present four plays plus special events led by industry experts and artists, including lectures, post-show conversations, and discussions that surround the themes explored in the plays. There will also be a special concert in partnership with the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival (see page 12).*

Individual tickets to the CATF 2024 July season range from \$40 to \$70. Packages of three or five mainstage performances range from \$174 to \$300. Purchased online at [CATF.org](http://CATF.org) or call the box office at 681-240-2283.



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// COMMUNITY

# NEW FACES IN DOWNTOWN CHARLES TOWN

## Several Small Businesses See Opportunity In Community

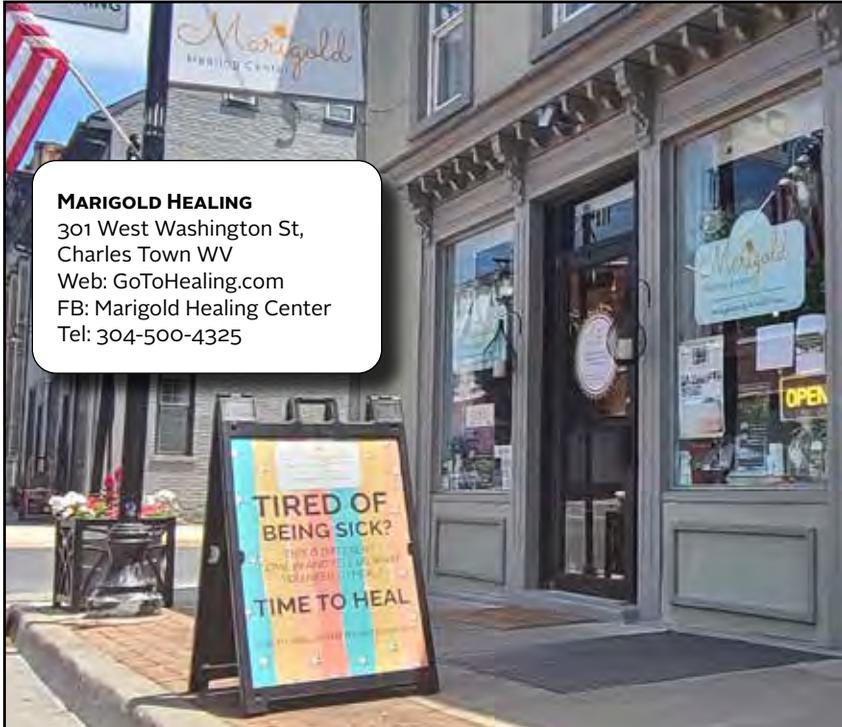
THE STREETS OF DOWNTOWN CHARLES TOWN were crowded with lots of smiling faces for WV Fest in June. If you poke your head inside the downtown storefronts, you'll see several new faces have popped up over the past year as well. Here's a short list of some of the recent additions (with more to come according to the word on the street):

**CORNER CONNECTION**  
 108 South Samuel St, Charles Town WV  
 Web: CornerConnectionWV.com  
 FB: Corner Connection  
 Tel: 304-207-0341



The **Corner Connection**, a business center and event space run by the mother-daughter team of Mara Bauserman and Chloe Waldeck opened in April 2023. According to Waldeck, they were originally looking for a much smaller space, but when that deal fell through, they found their current location, a much bigger space that can accommodate up to 200 people for events.

**MARIGOLD HEALING**  
 301 West Washington St,  
 Charles Town WV  
 Web: GoToHealing.com  
 FB: Marigold Healing Center  
 Tel: 304-500-4325



Michelle Williams opened up **Marigold Healing Center**, offering a variety of health and wellness services (see ad below), at the end of 2023.

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# 4

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205 West Washington St, Charles Town WV  
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 IG: LaGazelleCoffee

Mohamed Saleh opened **La Gazelle Coffee** in December 2023. Mohamed hails from Mauritania and noted that he is enjoying building his coffee shop business much more than his former career as a technology professional.



Tony Chen and his team opened **Poke Boba** in April 2024, just in time for the Blooms & Blossoms festival. You might guess that the menu includes poke bowls and boba tea — and you'd be correct!

**POKE BOBA**

132 West Washington St, Charles Town WV  
 Web: WVPokeBoba.com  
 FB: Poke Boba  
 Tel: 681-677-4057



**POUR CHOICES WINE**

130 West Washington St,  
 Charles Town WV  
 FB: Pour Choices Wine

Leah Brooks opened her wine shop, **Pour Choices** in May 2024. After a 15-year career in the restaurant and hospitality industry, Brooks gained a lot of experience, but is now enjoying working for herself. She describes her shop as a family-friendly space (strollers and dogs welcome) and also aims to be a cozy event space available for rent.



**L JAYS DINER**

216 West Washington St, Charles Town WV  
 Web: LadyJaysCatering.com  
 FB: L Jays Diner  
 Tel: 240-866-0350



Rakita Ames has been cooking up some delicious food for the soul based on family recipes from North Carolina for several years. In June 2024 she launched **L Jays Diner** in the 1930s-era department store lunch counter space inside of the Needful Things Emporium.

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// PLANNING

# MORE PLANNING DISCUSSIONS AHEAD

## Commission Reverses Course On New Growth Area

By Steve Pearson

THE PLANNING COMMISSION will meet on July 9 (both a work session at 5:30 and a regular meeting at 7:00), to review the first draft of the updated

Comprehensive Plan. During these meetings, the Commission will also review comments submitted by citizens. The work session will run from 5:30 to 6:30 and the regular meeting will begin at 7:00. Both sessions will take place in the

meeting room on the lower floor of the Charles Town Library building, which is located at 200 East Washington St, Charles Town — enter the lower level via the door on North Samuel Street (by the museum sign).



The Jefferson County Planning Commission voted unanimously on June 11 to remove a proposed preferred growth area (PGA) around the future Shepherdstown Elementary School from the land use map. During the discussion, the commissioners acknowledged the significant opposition to the PGA from county residents, as well as the lack of public water and sewer in this area. Planning Commissioner Wade Louthan remarked that it was encouraging to see so much citizen interest in the process. See page 10 for a profile of the Jefferson County Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helped educate the public about the proposed PGA.

“Promoting Tourism and Conservation” is one of the five themes in the draft plan. There are several goals related to this theme, including Goal #6, which calls for balancing the “preservation of Jefferson County’s natural resources with providing additional access to and utilization of outdoor recreational tourism.” An action item to support this goal focuses on the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers to “support rural and recreational tourism for its economic benefits” and “develop additional public access points” to the rivers. There are references to public access for residents elsewhere in the plan, but the focus of this goal seems to be about commercializing the river access for tourism.



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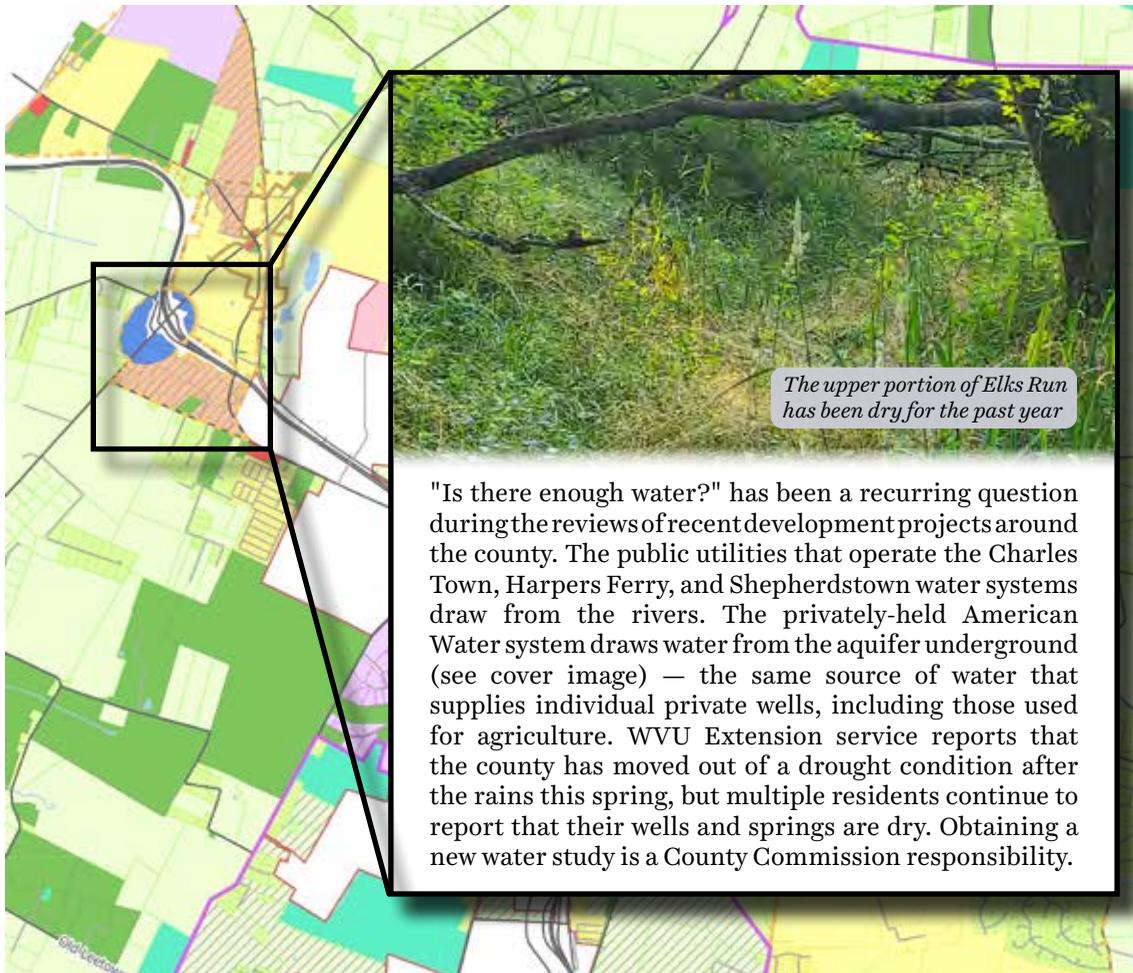
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“The right way to wholeness is made up, unfortunately, with fateful detours and wrong turnings.”  
 — C.G. Jung  
 [Collected Works, Vol 12 “Psychology & Alchemy”, par 6]

Cathryn Polonchak, LCSW  
 Psychologist & Jungian Analyst

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"Is there enough water?" has been a recurring question during the reviews of recent development projects around the county. The public utilities that operate the Charles Town, Harpers Ferry, and Shepherdstown water systems draw from the rivers. The privately-held American Water system draws water from the aquifer underground (see cover image) — the same source of water that supplies individual private wells, including those used for agriculture. WVU Extension service reports that the county has moved out of a drought condition after the rains this spring, but multiple residents continue to report that their wells and springs are dry. Obtaining a new water study is a County Commission responsibility.

Comment posted during a Planning Commission workshop.

WHY is the #1 priority (or 1st) development rights and not keeping farms in Jefferson County?

Several goals in the draft plan touch on supporting agriculture and conservation, with the terms "compatible" and "complementary" in their related objectives. "Maintaining the viability of existing farmlands" and leveraging "heritage and cultural tourism" are also stated as objectives in the draft plan. In contrast, Goal #1 of the draft plan is stated as "Ensure that future land use regulations and policies support the development rights of residential and non-residential properties." As stated, Goal #1 suggests a strong bias to development, without reference to a balance that preserves the property rights of owners who desire to maintain their land for agricultural or conservation purposes.

**There will be no in-person public comment at the July 9 work session. Submit comments via email to [Complan2045@JeffersonCountyWV.org](mailto:Complan2045@JeffersonCountyWV.org) More analysis & info at [ObserverWV.com/Jefferson-Comp-Plan-2024](http://ObserverWV.com/Jefferson-Comp-Plan-2024)**

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// COMMUNITY

# PUSHING FOR SMART GROWTH & TRANSPARENCY

## Jefferson County Foundation Advocates For Local Residents

IN 2018 WHEN DR. CHRISTINE WIMER started attending local government meetings to express concerns about the impact of industrial development in Jefferson County, her academic training (in biology, molecular biology, and veterinary medicine) proved helpful to understanding and explaining the science underlying her positions. But it is her roots in the region - her VanMetre ancestors settled here 14 generations ago - that have sustained her work as the founder and president of Jefferson County Foundation (JCF).

JCF's stated mission is to advocate for accountable local government and sustainable development that balances economic vitality and quality of life for residents while maintaining the rural heritage and natural environment of Jefferson County.

Dr. Wimer explains the linkage between economic vitality and the preservation of rural character: "Tourism and agriculture in Jefferson County date back centuries. There is a long history of horse breeding and racing here — even in the 1700s people were coming from elsewhere to race horses and enjoy the countryside. It's not so different today, when people come to Jefferson County to get away from the city, enjoy our country towns, and spend some time in a place that's less busy. The horse breeding and racing activities also support a local market for the agricultural economy. The horse, agriculture, and tourism sectors feed each other (literally). If you lose one, the other two become a lot less likely to be sustainable."

JCF's advocacy work has paid off with several recent achievements this year. In Ranson, the foundation successfully pushed to change in the land use designation of a large parcel adjacent to the Rockwool factory from

**HOW JEFFERSON COUNTY FOUNDATION HELPS RESIDENTS ENGAGE**

- MONITOR >>>** Scan government actions, policy changes & private projects that may affect residents
- EVALUATE >>>** Understand the potential impacts on residents' health, rural heritage & the environment
- EDUCATE >>>** Make residents aware of key issues
- IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES >>>** Empower residents by identifying pathways to take action
- REMOVE BARRIERS >>>** Make it easier for residents to understand the comment & action process

"production" (i.e. manufacturing) to "large parcel mixed use" along with a significant change in the city's zoning ordinance that will restrict the types of industrial uses allowed and add meaningful environmental protection standards for light industrial uses.

Karen Freer, a local horse breeder, commented that "the foundation gives the community a heads up on what's going on, that's for sure. For those of us who are not big computer users, the foundation helps a lot to get our comments and concerns heard." For two recent high-density housing development proposals, Birdhill and Harvest Hills, JCF raised awareness of the issues and supported citizen engagement with the Planning Commission, resulting in the Harvest Hills developer withdrawing its proposed plan and the Birdhill developer agreeing to engage with neighboring property owners to provide appropriate fencing and buffers.

More recently, JCF helped inform and support hundreds of residents to object to a proposed preferred growth (PGA) area around the future location of the Shepherdstown Elementary School. The county Planning

Commission made direct reference to the level of citizen engagement when it quickly reversed course and removed the proposed PGA from its land use map (see page 8).

JCF was formed in 2018 to support scientific analysis and legal advocacy work in response to environmental concerns related to the Rockwool factory in Ranson. Its work on Rockwool issues continues (see page 16), but JCF has had impact here as well, including two negotiated settlements in early 2023 with Rockwool related to stormwater legal cases before the West Virginia Environmental Quality Board. 📌

*Jefferson County Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides support and strategic guidance to address long-term planning issues facing Jefferson County. In support of its all-volunteer team, JCF pays for outside legal and scientific expertise. Donations to support this work can be sent to PO Box 460, Ranson WV 25438 or online at [JeffersonCountyFoundation.org](https://JeffersonCountyFoundation.org).*



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# LEAVE FAWNS ALONE!

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.*



*Fawn in sleeping position. Illustration by Doug Pifer.*

LOOKING OUT THE KITCHEN WINDOW, I noticed a deer in the middle paddock, head down, apparently feeding. Feeding deer typically lift their heads to check out their surroundings every few seconds. When this never happened, I grabbed binoculars conveniently hanging nearby and confirmed my suspicions — it was a doe nursing a young fawn.

Fawns have been born inside our fenced fields more than once over the past several years. It's a safe place here, and the mother can easily hurdle the fence to nurse her fawn. In the past, the fawns stayed in the field, which had plenty of food and cover for them, until they were strong and confident enough to jump the fence. Throughout that time, we seldom saw them.

Many people don't realize a doe typically leaves her fawns alone from twelve to fourteen hours every day, from the day they are born until they are old enough to follow her. The young fawn's natural lack of body scent and their white spotted coats render them nearly undetectable to most predators. Should you find a fawn curled up

like the one pictured here, with legs tucked under it, it's behaving normally and "being good."

But like most baby animals, fawns sometimes get hungry and bored, and decide to go looking for their mothers. That's when they get into trouble. Many people, with the best intentions in the world, "kidnap" a baby fawn they see wandering around, bleating or even running up to them. They mistakenly believe it needs to be rescued.

Years ago, I learned for myself how easy it is to jump to this wrong conclusion. I'd crossed a nearby hayfield and stepped up on a big limestone rock to check a nearby patch of ripening black raspberries. Suddenly the tall grass parted. A small spotted fawn emerged, scrambling over the rock toward me, bleating plaintively. My heart went out to that crying baby. But the instant I turned around, the fawn seemed to recognize that I wasn't its mother and bounded away with a dancer's grace.

It has always been illegal for an unlicensed private citizen to keep or care for a wild bird or animal of any kind. But now there's a much more serious reason to leave baby fawns alone: chronic wasting disease (CWD).

CWD is spread through contact with urine, feces, and carcasses of deer. The disease attacks the nervous system and other internal organs of deer, elk, moose and caribou. Symptoms include weight loss that progresses over several months and is always fatal to the deer.

This disease has been around for over a decade but has become increasingly serious. According to the West Virginia DNR, there is no evidence that CWD is harmful to humans. But the threat to local deer populations is dire. If they are within a designated management area for CWD, a wildlife rehabilitator cannot take in a white-tailed deer, even if the deer is sick or injured.

The Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, in a recent news release, verified that no deer can be treated or transported out of the Virginia counties of Arlington, Bland, Carroll, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Floyd, Franklin, Frederick, Loudoun, Madison, Montgomery, Orange, Page, Patrick, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Shenandoah, Smyth, Tazewell, Warren, and Wythe.

In West Virginia, Jefferson County first detected CWD-positive deer in 2018. Deer with CWD have also been detected in Berkeley, Mineral, Morgan, and Hampshire counties. Baiting and feeding deer as well as transporting live deer, carcasses or body parts of deer into or out of these restricted areas is unlawful.

Leaving those wild babies alone is their best chance for survival.

**Assessor's Office**  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia

## NOTICE OF FILINGS DUE

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION as of JULY 1, 2024

**DATES TO FILE:**

**JEFFERSON COUNTY DOG TAGS**  
File by July 1st

**FARM USE FORMS & FARM STATISTICS**  
File by September 1

**COMMERCIAL BUSINESS REPORT**  
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(Corporation & Business Forms)

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EXPLORE // ARTS & CULTURE

# 2024 APPALACHIAN CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

## Exploring "Our Different Voices" With A Dozen Concerts



Artistic Director Katie Tertell introducing the Irish lasses, Sinead Farrell and Sinead Frost at The Station in Shepherdstown. Photo: Brian Christopher.

THE APPALACHIAN CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL (ACMF) is returning for a fourth season this August with twelve unique programs held at ten different venues in Jefferson County and the surrounding area. This season's theme is "Our Different Voices." According to Artistic Director Katie Tertell, "the theme is an exploration of musical expression, showcasing the diversity of voices of composers, performers, styles, ideas and movements." In keeping with this theme, the festival will welcome several new musicians to the ACMF family, including bass-baritone Thomas Coltman, the jazz stylings of the Howard Burns Quartet, and poet Jordan Burke.

The opening weekend celebration will feature three concerts. On Saturday August 10, an early morning performance at the Train Station in Shepherdstown will showcase classical solo pieces. That evening, a concert at the Barns of Rose Hill in Berryville, Virginia will feature more classical pieces performed with innovative pairings of cello, viola, and clarinet. The evening concert on Sunday August 11 at the Mather Campus in Harpers Ferry will present "Voices of the Niagara Movement," a program looking at the past, present, and future of chamber music which includes an hour of music by 20th and 21st century Black American composers. The Sunday evening concert, presented in partnership with the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, is free (reservations requested) and will feature a world-premiere work by jazz legend Rufus Reid.

On Monday August 12, the festival musicians will be playing at the 868 Estate Vineyards in Loudoun County. On Tuesday August 13, an ACMF



Rufus Reid introduces his work "Of Wind and Sail" at the 2023 Festival Finale. Photos: Brian Christopher.

quartet will perform on the stage of the Shepherdstown Opera House for a multimedia concert that presents "revolutionary" musical voices along with a projected display of curated art correlated to the music. During the week, the festival will perform evening concerts in Charles Town on Wednesday August 14, Shepherdstown on Thursday August 15, and in Frederick, Maryland on Friday, August 16.

On Saturday August 17, the music kicks off early at the Train Station in Shepherdstown and then returns to Charles Town for an evening concert. The finale of the festival on Sunday Aug 18 will be outdoors at Happy Retreat in Charles Town (this is a ticketed event, but kids are invited to attend for free).

The 2024 Appalachian Chamber Music Festival runs from August 10 through 18. Tickets for individual performances and the Festival Pass (granting admission to 10 ACMF-hosted concerts) are now on sale. Complete schedule and detailed information about each concert is available on the ACMF website at [AppalachianChamber.org](http://AppalachianChamber.org).





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EXPLORE // ARTS & CULTURE

# A MOTHER'S VOICE

## Musical Event During CATF

MUSICI IRELAND, AN IRISH CREATIVE COLLECTIVE, will bring its performers and production crew to Shepherdstown to present its acclaimed production of *A Mother's Voice* for a three day run on July 20-23. The US premier of this production is hosted jointly by the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival (ACMF) and the Contemporary American Theater Festival (CATF). *A Mother's Voice* is a multidisciplinary exploration of Ireland's Magdalene Laundries scandal, a dark chapter in 20th century history involving institutions that housed unmarried mothers and their children in harsh conditions. Funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, the production joins a growing wave of artistic works raising awareness about the laundries.

The two-year project to develop *A Mother's Voice* was spearheaded by Wexford (Ireland) musician Beth McNinch, with creative assistance

from Jane Hackett. The immersive exhibit has been designed by Bridget Ni Dhuinn, with lighting by Eoin McNinch. The production showcases original music by Cork composers Linda and Irene Buckley and features animation by Eabha Bortolozzo and Jack Kirwan. Central to the performance are the voices of "Cait," Deirdre Wadding, and Sheila O'Byrne, who present the emotional stories of the women who endured the travails of these abusive institutions.



*A Mother's Voice* will be performed at CATF's newest facility, the former Christ Reformed Church located at 304 East German Street (across the railroad tracks from the Shepherdstown Train Station). Showtimes are Saturday, July 20 at 1:30 pm, Sunday July 21 at 5:30 pm, and Tuesday, July 23 at 8:00 pm.

Tickets can be purchased online at [CATF.org/2024-a-mothers-voice](http://CATF.org/2024-a-mothers-voice) (you can also find the ticket link (QR code, right) at [AppalachianChamber.org/2024events](http://AppalachianChamber.org/2024events)).



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EXPLORE // ARTS & CULTURE



# LOCAL ARTISTS SHOW & SALE



**THE ARTISTS OF THE OVER THE MOUNTAIN STUDIO TOUR** will present a summer show and sale during the Independence Day weekend. This event will feature new work by Over The Mountain Studio Tour artists and artisans including six artists new to the tour this year. Guests will be treated to high quality work in a range of media including basketry, glass, painting, mixed media, graphic art, fiber & textiles, metals, ceramics, wood, paper, plants, leather, and lapidary. The summer show provides a preview of the types of work that will be available during the Over The Mountain Studio Tour that will take place later this year on November 9 and 10.

The Over The Mountain Studio Tour is a juried group of working artisans located in Jefferson County, WV. Every year on the second weekend of November, the artists open

their studios to guests and invite them on a self-guided tour, to share their work and life as artists. An institution now in its 35th year, the Over The Mountain Studio Tour highlights the work of artists living locally. It is the longest running studio tour in West Virginia.

The summer show will be at Evolve Shepherdstown, 106 West German Street, Shepherdstown, WV.

The show hours are Friday July 5 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm, Saturday July 6 from 10:30 am to 7:30 pm, and Sunday July 7 from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm. There will be an open reception with the artists on Friday evening. More information online at [OverTheMountainStudioTour.com](http://OverTheMountainStudioTour.com).



## ARTISTS AT THE BRIDGE GALLERY

SIXTEEN ARTISTS from The Artists Gallery (TAG) in Frederick, Maryland will be exhibiting at the Bridge Gallery June 28 through August 4. The opening reception to meet the artists will be on Friday, June 28, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. TAG is an artist-owned organization established in 1990 and features high quality original art for sale in its monthly solo exhibitions by members as well as ongoing group exhibitions. A rich variety of subjects and media is always on view, ranging from realistic to abstract, and traditional to experimental mixed media creations. *More information at FB: The Bridge Gallery.*



## AN EVENING OF STORYTELLING



**SPEAK STORIES** and the Contemporary American Theater Festival are partnering to present an evening of “crankies” — a form of visual storytelling that uses light projected through intricately cut paper scrolls to create an audio-visual experience that evokes the experience of gathering around the flickering light of a campfire in late evening.

The performance will feature storytellers Katherine Fahey & Emily Schubert. Tuesday July 9 at 7:30, Marinoff Theater, 62 Campus Drive (on the Shepherd University campus).

Tickets are \$20. Available online at [SpeakStories.com](http://SpeakStories.com) or at the door. Recommended for ages 13 and older.

## JEFFERSON COUNTY CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY



### Saturday June 29

Concert & Fireworks at Sam Michaels Park  
Doors open 6:00, Concert at 7:30, Fireworks at dark. Music by The Kelley Band, food vendors on site or bring your own picnic.

*Details & restrictions at FB event page (The Amp At Sam Michaels Park).*



### Thursday July 4

Shepherdstown Parade (downtown) at 11 am  
Picnic at Morgan’s Grove Park from noon - 3 pm  
Music by The Speakeasy Boys & Gypsy Ramblers, kids activities, burgers & dogs for sale or bring your own picnic. Organized by Shepherdstown Rotary.



EXPLORE // ARTS & CULTURE

# THORNY ISSUES AT THE HOT BUTTON GALLERY

## For Carol Williams, Her Art Is Political Commentary



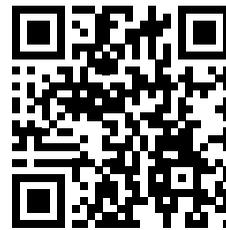
WHEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE HER ART, Carol Williams calls herself a “craftivist” who expresses satire and commentary with ordinary materials including buttons, wire, pins, miniature toys, and quilted cloth. She notes that she’s not a formally trained “artist,” explaining that she took up quilting in retirement after working two careers, first as a musician in the US Army and then as an emergency room nurse in Chicago. She says she started creating small pieces and began experimenting. At the same time, she was also writing commentary for a

local newspaper but remarked that she felt that the words alone didn’t really grab attention.

“I’ve always enjoyed political cartoons,” Williams says, “but I don’t draw. These pieces are a way of expressing my opinions.” She remarked that the typical creative process has several ups and downs from concept to finished piece. “How to finish it is often the hardest part,” she remarked. “The title needs to convey what I’m expressing and work on different levels — I want people to know what I’m thinking, but without being preachy.”

Williams opened her gallery in downtown Shepherdstown in the spring of 2022. “I started creating these works in 2016 and exhibiting them in pop-up displays in Shepherdstown and some invited exhibitions around the country. When this gallery space became available, I knew the front window would be the perfect spot for the piece titled “The Definitive Thorny Issue,” a medical model of a human uterus surrounded by very sharp thorns.” She describes the space as a gallery, not a store — she reserves most of the original pieces for use in other exhibits, but you can purchase prints and cards of her work.

*The Hot Button Gallery is located at 129 East German St, Shepherdstown (the Shepherdstown museum building). Open year-round, Saturdays 11:00 to 5:00 and Sundays 11:00 to 4:00. During July, the gallery will also open Fridays noon to 4:00. Online at [HotButtonGallery.com](http://HotButtonGallery.com) and [AnotherCarolWilliams.com](http://AnotherCarolWilliams.com).*



**THE ARTISTS GALLERY**

**The Bridge Gallery**

**The artists of TAG/The Artists Gallery**  
 Exhibiting June 28th - August 9th

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ENGAGE // PUBLIC MEETINGS

## ROCKWOOL TOUR & HEARING



ROCKWOOL WILL HOST a “Neighbors Meeting” on Tuesday July 16 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The event will take place at the Rockwool stone wool manufacturing facility located at 665 Northport Avenue in Kearneysville. The meeting will include a short presentation about the facility followed by an optional tour and question & answer session. Advance reservations are required due to capacity limitations. Email [RansonQuestions@Rockwool.com](mailto:RansonQuestions@Rockwool.com) to reserve a spot and indicate if you are interested in a factory tour. Tour participants should wear sturdy walking shoes (no high heels or open-toed shoes are permitted).

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Air Quality will hold a **virtual public hearing on Tuesday July 23 beginning at 6:00 pm**. The purpose of this hearing is to receive verbal comments on the draft Air Quality Permit for the Rockwool facility. To receive a link to the online meeting, you must register in advance (no later than 4:00 pm on July 23) at [Tinyurl.com/y5s4ratb](https://tinyurl.com/y5s4ratb) and a link to the virtual meeting will be emailed to you. You can also indicate if you would like to make a comment for the record using the same pre-registration link. Each commenter will be limited to 5 minutes.



Register for July 23 hearing

**Written comments on Rockwool’s draft Air Quality Permit** can be submitted until Friday August 2 at 5:00 pm. Comments can be emailed to [Robert.A.Mullins@WV.gov](mailto:Robert.A.Mullins@WV.gov) (subject line “ROXUL USA Inc. comments”) or mailed to WV DEP-DAQ, Attn: Sandra Adkins, 601 58th Street SE, Charleston WV 25304. Copies of the draft permit document and other information can be found at [ObserverWV.com/rockwool-air-permit-2024](https://ObserverWV.com/rockwool-air-permit-2024).

## RANSON REZONING HEARING

THE OWNERS OF A 195-ACRE PARCEL on Northport Blvd (across from the Rockwool factory) have requested that Ranson rezone the property for industrial use. The property is currently zoned for a mix of residential, commercial, and buffer areas. During prior discussions of rezoning this property, several community members raised concerns about water use and air quality related to the potential industrial activity. A first reading of the rezoning request was approved by the City Council on June 18. The City Council will hold a public hearing to accept public comment on this request during its regular meeting on July 16. The meeting will begin at 7:00 in the council chambers at Ranson City Hall (312 South Mildred Street).



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