

The WV INDEPENDENT Observer

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

OCTOBER 2024

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Traditional German folk dancing at the Bavarian Inn's annual Oktoberfest.

FOR MORE FEATURES, COMMUNITY NEWS, AND LOCAL EVENTS, VISIT OBSERVERWV.COM

// LOCAL STORIES

BAVARIAN INN HOSTS 47TH OKTOBERFEST

Family Shares Culture & Traditions With Community

GEMÜTLICHKEIT — THAT’S A GERMAN word that translates as conviviality or friendliness. Visitors to the Bavarian Inn’s 2024 celebration of Oktoberfest certainly enjoyed that and more. The Asam family’s tradition of converting the grounds of their resort into a Bavarian-style beer garden on the third Sunday in September has been going strong for 47 years now (the traditional Oktoberfest in Bavaria runs for three weeks through the first Sunday in October, hence the name).

Brothers Christian and David Asam, who manage the hotel, restaurant and brewing complex located at 164 Shepherd Grade Road in Shepherdstown estimate that 2,000 people showed up for the event this year.

In addition to counting people as they came through the gates, David kept track of how much beer was poured — roughly 530 gallons. He reports that they served nearly 1800 sausages, 110 half roasted chickens, 800 pounds of potato salad, and 40 gallons of sauerkraut, too. He’s pretty sure nobody left hungry or thirsty.

The traditional Bavarian dancing on the patio (cover image) was led by the S.U.G.T.V Washingtonia club (the initials stand for the German phrase that translates as shoe-slapping



and mountain costume society). The group is based in Washington DC and was founded in 1923 by immigrants from Bavaria. The group’s earliest performances were at relief benefits during the Great Depression. Still going strong after a century of “Schuplattler” (shoe-slapping) dancing, the group travels around the region, and even to Germany, to celebrate traditional Bavarian folk culture.

Oktoberfest in Bavaria is a community event and the same is true in Shepherdstown, with Shepherd University lending its parking lots and the Rotaract Club (the youth arm of Rotary) operating a kids carnival to raise funds for its programs. 🍻

The Bavarian Inn Hotel & Resort is located at 164 Shepherd Grade Road in Shepherdstown. Web: BavarianInnWV.com



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THIS PAPER WANTS TO BE RECYCLED.



Pumpkins for sale at the Town & Country Nursery in Kearneysville.

TO OUR READERS — You'll find lots of pumpkins of many varieties for carving and decorating at the Town & Country Nursery (above), located at 1885 Darke Lane in Kearneysville. You can pick your own from the six-acre patch or buy them from the display. Bob and Nancy Tabb keep the fruit and produce market open every day from 10 am to 5 pm. The Tabbs started the operation in 1981 as a landscape and nursery business (hence the name), but changed their focus to the market several years ago.

The rest of the county will be getting into the Halloween spirit soon too. Look for a listing of trick-or-treat events and where you can find the spookiest houses in our next issue. If you want to start celebrating now, you can check out the Facebook page for Halloween in Shepherdstown, which has events during the entire month of October.

There are some important election dates in October as well. The County Clerk's office has created a helpful guide to the voter registration and early voting deadlines, along with links about the voting process (see page 5). There will be a lot of candidates on the ballot in Jefferson County — you can visit ObserverWV.com/elections-2024 for more information and helpful links.



Steve Pearson
EDITOR IN CHIEF



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// ELECTIONS

MORE THAN JUST CANDIDATES ON THE BALLOT

Additional Levy Supports Teacher Pay & Key School Programs

By Steve Pearson

IN ADDITION TO ELECTING CANDIDATES this year, Jefferson County residents get to vote on a proposed amendment to the state constitution and the five-year additional levy to fund the Jefferson County public school system.

According to the Ballotpedia website, the proposed constitutional amendment on all West Virginia ballots this fall would prohibit people (including healthcare providers and physicians) from “participating in the practice of medically assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing of a person. This practice is sometimes referred to as assisted death, assisted suicide, or aid-in-dying.” During a recent forum, representatives of the Jefferson County chapter of the League of Women Voters stated that West Virginia state code already prohibits medically assisted suicide. Although both houses of the legislature voted overwhelmingly to put this amendment on the ballot, the League representatives noted that they were unable to find anyone actively campaigning for passage of the amendment.

Local funding for public schools in West Virginia comes from two types of levys — a “regular” levy and an “additional” levy. The “regular” levy provides funding according to state code, but does not provide funds for librarians, nurses, art teachers, music teachers, custodians, instructional assistants, coaches and extracurricular advisors. State code also does not allow the “regular” levy to provide funds for school resource officers (law enforcement), behavioral and mental health support, or classroom technology support. The “additional” levy allows localities to fund these programs as well as to support teacher training, dental and vision benefits to employees, and salary enhancements that supplement teacher pay.

The “additional levy” on the 2024 ballot would provide a minimum of \$25.4 million dollars each year for five years to fund specific programs and personnel positions in Jefferson County schools. The levy also designates \$40,000 each year to help fund 4-H programs, \$90,000 to help fund the local public libraries, and a \$40,000 contribution each year to help maintain playgrounds at the schools and county parks.

The first year of the renewed levy would run from July 1 2026 to June 30 2027. The current additional levy that was approved in 2020 runs



until June 30 2026. The levy renewal is on the ballot this year because of a recent change to state law removing the option to have the levy on a special election ballot, so this fall is the only election date available before the current levy authorization expires.

Any amount raised from the “additional levy” above \$25.5 million each year would be designated according to a formula that directs 80 percent of any “excess” amount collected to be paid out as supplemental pay to certified teachers and support staff. These “excess levy” paychecks are issued three times a year and act as a de facto locality pay boost that helps offset some of Jefferson County Schools’ pay scale disadvantage compared to the wealthier neighboring counties in Maryland and Virginia.

The levy authorization on the ballot would keep the tax rate unchanged from the current 2020 levy. For residential property, the additional levy rate would remain at 0.4590 cents per \$100 dollars of assessed value (or 0.00459 times the total assessed value). In Jefferson County, the assessed value for tax purposes is 60 percent of the total assessed value. For example, a personal residence that was valued at \$350,000 in 2020 would have had an assessed value for tax purposes of \$210,000 and the additional levy tax would have been \$964. If the value of that residence increases to \$400,000, the assessed value would be \$240,000 and the additional annual levy tax would increase by \$138.

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// ELECTIONS

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

Deputy Clerk Provides Tips

NIKKI PAINTER IS THE CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK of Jefferson County. She's had the job of overseeing the smooth running of all county-wide elections in the county since 2005. She remembers when she first started: "It was two weeks before a special election. There was a new clerk and everyone else was new too. We learned on the job." The next year, in 2006, Painter managed the switch from the old punch card system (remember "hanging chads") to the Scantron electronic system. In 2018, the county switched to the Express Votes system currently in use.

The Express Votes machines have a touchscreen display on which voters make their choices, which are then printed on a paper ballot that the voter can inspect. The paper ballot is scanned by a counting machine which also takes a photograph of the paper ballot, which is also preserved. Painter emphasized that the multiple checks allow voters to be highly confident that their votes are accurate and secure.

Painter says what she likes most about her job is educating voters. In prior years, Painter has made presentations about voting at the local high schools and to community groups, something she hopes to do again in the future. She was recently at a League of Women Voters forum, encouraging voters to "have a plan to vote," explaining that voters will see a lot of choices on this year's ballots in Jefferson County, including a proposed amendment to the West Virginia constitution, a school levy, and choices for federal, state, and local county offices. At the forum, she shared a poster she created with key dates and links (image, right). These links will also be posted at ObserverWV.com/elections-2024. 🗳️



SENATE CANDIDATES WILL DEBATE

THE TWO CANDIDATES RUNNING for West Virginia State Senate in District 16, which covers all of Jefferson County and the eastern part of Berkeley County, have agreed to hold two debates in October. Patricia Rucker, the incumbent Republican candidate and John Doyle the Democratic candidate made a joint announcement last month that they will be debating on October 1 at the Shepherd University Robert C. Byrd Center (213 North King Street, Shepherdstown) and on October 15 at the Randy Smith Recreation Center (40 Excellence Way, Inwood). Both debates will begin at 7:00 pm and run for 90 minutes. The candidates will be self-moderating. All residents are welcome, no reservations are required and civility by all attendees is expected. 🗳️

BE PREPARED!



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OCT
15

DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE OR UPDATE VOTER REGISTRATION



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NOV
5

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Voting is your opportunity to voice your opinions and influence the nation. Always remember to educate yourself on the issues and candidates on the ballot.

Jefferson County Voter Registration Office
304-728-3386 or 304-728-3217

// COMMUNITY

WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE MAKES 6 GRANTS

WISH Supports University & Community Programs

WISH (WOMEN INVESTING IN SHEPHERD) recently awarded six grants of \$26,750 each to three Shepherd University programs and three community nonprofit organizations. WISH, a giving circle sponsored by the Shepherd University Foundation, was created by Shepherd alumnae and community members to inspire, educate, and develop the potential of women's philanthropy through high-impact grant-making. Individual members make a \$500 annual contribution and the group shares the total among two grant pools — one for Shepherd learning programs and one for community nonprofits. A one-woman, one-vote process determines the grant recipients in each category. The total amount awarded by WISH for its 2024 grant cycle was \$160,500.



Members of the WISH Grant Committee that recommends finalists for a vote by the full WISH membership.

Supporting Shepherd University

The three Shepherd University programs that received funding were Accessibility Services, the chemistry program's forensic science initiative, and the Little House rehabilitation.

Shepherd University Accessibility Services' grant will enable it to continue using "Accommodate" software to support more than 300 students each year. "Accessibility Services

is honored to be chosen for the WISH initiative," said Jessica Anders, Director of Accessibility Services. "This support will allow us to continue having a modern, streamlined system and let us proceed with our efforts to promote disability inclusion and understanding."

Shepherd's chemistry program will use its WISH grant to equip a new laboratory that will be used in a unique two-semester

forensic science lab course. The WISH funds will purchase four forensic comparison microscopes specifically for the lab, two additional hand-held microscopes, and items necessary to assemble individual forensic investigation kits. Co-chair of Shepherd's Department of Natural and Physical Sciences, Dr. Jacquelyn Cole, spearheaded the effort to get the kits. "Shepherd's chemistry program

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// COMMUNITY

is so appreciative to have been selected for a 2024 WISH grant award to aid in this exciting new direction we are taking to help serve the humanities and social sciences, particularly criminal justice majors,” Cole said. “The equipment will create a very modern lab experience for the students and pave the way for future courses bridging criminal justice and the sciences.”

The WISH grant to the Shepherd University Division of Student Affairs will provide funding for the safe removal of deteriorating lead paint in the Little House, one of the community’s best-known landmarks which has been closed to the public since 2020. Built in the late 1920s, the miniature house on Princess Street was constructed as a teaching/demonstration facility. The remediation will allow it to open to the public again. “We are thrilled to be a recipient of this year’s WISH awards,” said Vice President of Student Affairs Holly Morgan Frye. “It has been heartbreaking to tell families that they cannot visit the Little House due to necessary repairs, but with this funding, we will be able to make it safe and magical again.”

Supporting the Community

Three area community nonprofits — the Boys & Girls Club of Eastern Panhandle, CASA of Eastern Panhandle, and Literacy Volunteers of the Eastern Panhandle — each received \$26,500 WISH grants this year.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle will use WISH grant funding to enhance safety at its facilities. Boys and Girls Club Chief Executive Officer Stacie Rohn said

they are committed to providing the safest environment possible in all three of its clubs. “Women Investing in Shepherd [WISH] has been a generous partner to our organization,” Rohn said. “We prioritize the safety of our children every day, and we are grateful that WISH is supporting our efforts to ensure our facilities remain safe havens for those who need us most.”

CASA of the Eastern Panhandle will use its WISH grant to establish a “Family Bridge Program” to provide support for children transitioning from foster care to a permanent caregiver. The grant will cover contracting and training fees for a parenting coach, materials and fees for software to maintain and collect data for program evaluation, and a Family Support emergency fund. “We are incredibly grateful for the WISH grant to establish the Family Bridge Program,” said CASA Executive Director Michelle Sudduth. “These services are key in preventing system re-entry and ensuring that families have the tools they need to create stable, loving homes for children.”

Literacy Volunteers of the Eastern Panhandle lost all of their instructional materials following a fire in July 2023. The \$26,750 WISH grant will go towards replacing the materials used for programs such as Citizenship, English Language Learners, and High School Equivalency, among others. 🗣️

To learn more about becoming a member of WISH or about the organization, visit ShepherdUniversityFoundation.org/women-investing-in-shepherd or contact Meg Patterson at 304-876-5021 or mpeterso@shepherd.edu.

SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION GROWS



SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix (above, left) and Shepherd University Foundation Executive Director Sherri Janelle (above, right) are both members of WISH. They attended the September 19 annual meeting of the Shepherd University Foundation to welcome Austin Slater (left), the newly-elected president of the foundation’s board and to thank Chris Colbert (right), the outgoing president who has served on the foundation’s board since 2012.

The foundation’s endowment increased by approximately \$5 million between 2023 and 2024. In addition to the \$40 million endowment that generates yearly income to support scholarships and other University programs, the Foundation supports directed-giving programs including WISH, the Scarborough Society, which supports the university library, and the “Last Dollar Fund,” which helps students who have exhausted other financial aid options. 🗣️

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// PLANNING

COUNTY PLANNERS REVIEW NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION met on September 17 to review public comments on the draft comprehensive plan that will guide growth in the county for the next decade. In addition to the comments made at the public hearing in August, the commission received written comments from 81 individuals.

Many of the comments from county residents raised concerns about the prioritization of the objectives listed under Goal 1 (“Ensure that future land use regulations and policies support the development rights of residential and non-residential properties”) and Goal 5 (“Encourage land conservation programs to help preserve the rural character of Jefferson County”).

There were several comments requesting that the term “by right” be removed from the document and the commissioners seemed to indicate that adding a “conditional use” recommendation would be appropriate under several objectives related to rural areas. There were other questions about balancing development with protections for neighboring property, but there was no clear resolution on these items.

Planning Commission Schedule

After lengthy discussions, the commissioners referred several issues for the planning staff to address in a revised draft document that will be presented to the Planning Commission on October 1. That special meeting will begin at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room of the Charles Town Library. There will be no public comment accepted during the October 1 meeting. The current schedule calls for the planning commissioners to vote to recommend the revised draft document to the County Commission at that meeting or at the Planning Commission’s regular meeting on October 8 (same time and location).

If the Planning Commission votes to approve a final draft of the Comprehensive Plan at either of those two early October meetings, the revised comprehensive plan document and future land use map could be presented at the next regular meeting of the County Commission on October 17.

At The County Commission

Once the draft comprehensive plan and map are presented to the County Commission, the county commissioners will have 90 days to adopt, reject or amend the documents. The County Commission is required to hold at



least one additional public hearing on the plan before it votes.

According to Jane Tabb, who was the president of the County Commission in 2015 when the comprehensive plan was updated ten years ago, the County Commission made numerous changes to the plan after it was presented by the Planning Commission (which is why the “2014 plan” was not approved until January 2015). While West Virginia code requires the plan to be updated every ten years, it’s not a precise deadline and there appears to be no penalty for extending the process for a month or more to hammer out the details. That point was highlighted during a recent meeting of the Shepherdstown Town Council, which is working on updating that town’s comprehensive plan on a similar timeframe.

If the County Commission votes for changes to the draft comprehensive plan, the Planning Commission will have an additional 45 days after that vote to decide whether or not it agrees with the County Commission’s revisions or if it wants to make additional recommendations back to the County Commission.

Next Up, The Zoning Ordinance

Once the comprehensive plan and future land use maps are approved, the next step for the county is to update its zoning ordinance to align it with the updated land use classifications in the comprehensive plan. The schedule presented during the comprehensive plan process suggests that the Planning Commission could be working on the zoning ordinance update for the next two years. 📌

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County Commissioner Jane Tabb, who is finishing up her third term on the commission this year (see page 16) noted that growth has been a top issue in the county since she was first elected in the year 2000. Looking back at the numbers of building permits issued, it's pretty clear that the scale of growth has changed since then — in 2020 an entire subdivision of 50 houses might have taken several years to be fully completed. Looking around the county today, it's easy to spot several subdivisions where there are 50 or more houses under construction at the same time.

WHO HAS THE FINAL VOTE?




BY THE TIME THE COUNTY COMMISSION votes on the comprehensive plan, there will be several new commissioners (the only commissioner who is not up for election this year is Steve Stolpher). For the 4 commission seats on the ballot, 3 of them are to fill an unexpired term (Charles Town, Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown) and will be filled immediately after the November 5 vote is certified. The person elected to fill the Middleway seat will take office on January 1 to serve for a full term. There are 9 candidates (photo above) running for 4 County Commission seats this year.

It's not unusual for a planning commissioner to run for County Commission, given the key role planning and zoning has in guiding the future of the county.

County Commissioner Steve Stolpher served on the Planning Commission for six

years before he was elected to the County Commission in 2020, serving as the president of the Planning Commission in 2014 and 2015. During that time, the county made only minor changes to its zoning ordinance, despite the language in the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2015 that anticipated significant changes to the county's residential zoning regulations.

Two candidates running for County Commission are currently serving on the Planning Commission. Jack Hefestay (who is competing with James Walch and David Tabb for the Charles Town seat) has served since 2018, during the time the county updated the zoning ordinance to permit industrial solar facilities. Cara Keys (who is competing with Carrie Blessing for the Shepherdstown Seat) was appointed to the Planning Commission in late 2024. 🗳️



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West Virginia

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// COMMUNITY

LOOKING AT HOUSING GROWTH

New Homes Are Being Built Quickly



The photo above was taken in July 2024, just after the site work (utilities and roads) were completed at the Stone Crest subdivision off Flowing Springs Road between Old Country Club Road and Job Corps Road. There was a single house under construction in the subdivision at that time. The photo below was taken two months later in September 2024. There were a dozen homes visible from the main entrance with visible foundation work underway for many more. 🏠



LOCAL PROFESSOR PENS YOUTH NOVEL



The Shepherd University Library is hosting a book launch party for Professor Matthew J. Kushin's coming-of-age novel, *Beware the Smart Kids* on Wednesday, October 9 from 4 to 6 pm at the Shepherd University Scarborough Library (301 North King St, Shepherdstown). The event is free and open to the public.

Beware the Smart Kids is a heartwarming story about a troubled teenager, an ex-convict, and the search for happiness that will appeal to teen and adult readers. Attendees can meet the author, purchase the book, and have it signed. Shepherd University creative writing students will also share their works from the literary journal *Sans Merci*. Light snacks will be served.

More information about the book and author are at MattKushin.com/SmartKids or @mjkushin on Instagram. The event is sponsored by the Shepherd University Department of Art, Communication and Theater and the Shepherd University Center for Appalachian Studies and Communities. 📖

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PERSPECTIVE // NATURE

CROWS GET INTO ANTS

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.

LOOKING OUT ACROSS THE FRESHLY brush-hogged pasture, I saw a dark object lying on the ground. Looking closer, I recognized it as a crow. Watching it thrash and roll around, I wondered if the bird might be having a convulsion or seizure. When the crow shook and rubbed its wings against its tail, I remembered watching the pet crow I had back in high school do this same thing. The crow was “anting.”

Anting behavior in birds was first described by John James Audubon in 1831. He wrote about seeing wild turkeys wallowing on ant hills. Since then, scientists have described similar behavior in more than 200 species of birds. Active anting is when a bird picks up ants in its bill and rubs them directly onto its feathers and body. Passive anting is when a bird lands on an anthill and performs dust bath-like movements with its wings and tail, letting the ants crawl over it.

Why would a bird do this? Interpreting animal behavior is much more difficult than describing it, since we can't know how a bird feels. Despite many theories and studies, anting behavior in birds isn't fully understood. Scientists have long known that many kinds of ants secrete formic acid when alarmed or stressed. This liquid is believed to discourage predators and to protect the ants from bacterial and fungal infections. Theoretically, birds recognize these benefits and apply the insects to their feathers and skin.

The ants also attack and bite the bird in

self-defense. And, theoretically, the bracing tingle of formic acid and the sensation of ants crawling across their feathers and skin makes birds feel good. Some scientists speculate that formic acid released by ants therapeutically benefits birds, preserving and protecting their feathers from the ravages of fungus and bacteria. Think of anting as spa therapy for birds.

In one behavioral study, a large enclosure with an open bottom, containing a family of captive blue jays, was positioned over a group of ant hills. Some of the jays immediately started anting. Others, after watching their companions, joined in. A few of the birds remained indifferent to the ants. To me, this simply demonstrates individual preference. Some like it while some can take it or leave it. Others want nothing to do with it.

Later that same afternoon, while walking the fence line of the pasture, I visited the spot where I saw the crow. I scuffed the bare soil up with my foot and observed a colony of ants there. I imagined how disturbed and upset the ants were after the tractor wheels and rotary blade destroyed the top of their castle. I imagined them running out to survey the damage, their bodies defensively oozing formic acid. Their lively movements, or maybe their scent, caught the attention of a local crow. The intelligent bird swooped down for a closer look at the ants and decided to treat himself and his brand-new suit of glossy fall feathers to a relaxing spa session.

When the crow landed and stretched out flat to the ground, ants surged over him in a wave of defense. They crawled between the feathers, following the hard quills down until they reached crow skin. There the warriors clamped their jaws into the flesh with all their might, flexing their bodies in rage. As more ants swarmed up his legs, head, beak and eyelids, the crow flicked them away, rubbing his head against his shoulders. Gradually, the tang of acid and the prickly bites grew too intense. The crow shook himself, flew across the field, and landed on a bare limb to preen the remaining ants from his feathers. At last, the crow relaxed in the mild September sun. Life was good.



“There is absolutely no truth that does not spell salvation for one person and damnation to another.”

— C.G. Jung
 (“Psychology and Alchemy”, Collected Works, Vol. 12, par.12)



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THE TOWN RUN WATERSHED

Water Security, Risks, Resiliency

DR. NATHANIEL "THAN" HITT will give a presentation on "Risks and Resiliencies for Water Security in Town Run" on Thursday, October 10 at 7:00 pm. The event will take place at the Byrd Center on the Shepherd University campus (213 North King St, Shepherdstown). The program is organized by the Town Run Watershed Association, a recently-formed group that focuses on educating residents and organizing clean up events to improve conditions in and around the Town Run watershed.

Shepherdstown's Water Department, which serves customers in town and the surrounding area, is preparing to blend water from Town Run with the Potomac River to supply drinking water to its customers. This program will provide insights into the evolving challenges of water resource management and learn how citizen participation can play a vital role in safeguarding the future of the Town Run watershed. The speaker will explain how karst geology, a defining feature of the local landscape, affects the Town Run and other municipal water supplies across the region. He will also discuss the potential effects of climate change and land use on water security and highlight key areas where further research is needed.

Hitt has 15 years of experience in fisheries, water quality, and climate science. He is the Senior Scientist at the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, where he focuses on ensuring the protection of vital waterways throughout the state. Dr. Hitt has a BA from the College of Wooster, an MS from the University of Montana, and a PhD from Virginia Tech. Prior



to his current role at the WV Rivers Coalition, Hitt served as a Research Fish Biologist with the US Geological Survey from 2009 to 2024. He has done extensive research on water security and has a passion for community-driven conservation efforts.

This presentation is free and open to the public. For more information about the event and the Town Run Watershed Association, visit TownRunWatershed.org. To learn more about Dr. Hitt's work, visit WVRivers.org.

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EXPLORE // CHARLES TOWN

SPOOKY HALLOWEEN CONCERTS

The Charles Washington Symphony Orchestra will perform a special spooky concert during the October 19 Trick-or-Treat on Main Street event in downtown Charles Town. Trick-or-treat starts at 5:00 pm (street closures) and the concerts will be performed every half hour in Charles Washington Hall (100 West Washington St).

If you're a musician interested in learning more about the orchestra, visit CWsymph.org.

ART & WINE

The Firehouse Gallery and Jefferson Arts Council have teamed up with the Pour Choices wine shop in Charles Town to present an Art and Wine sampling experience during the weekend of October 25-27. The event will kick off on Friday, October 25 with several of the artists from the gallery at the wine shop from 1 to 7 pm. Visitors will be able to sample some handpicked wines as well as view some original art pieces at the event. The art will remain on display at Pour Choices on Saturday noon-8 and Sunday 1-6. 130 West Washington St. Charles Town.



ART HEIST AT HAPPY RETREAT



The artists of the Firehouse Gallery will also be supporting Happy Retreat, the former home of Charles Washington, during the weekend of October 26 and 27 with their "Art Heist" fundraiser. Ten percent of the proceeds from the art sale will be donated to Happy Retreat. The art for sale will also include work from students artists from Jefferson and Washington High Schools. They promise the prices will be a "steel" for some great art. Noon to 4 both days at Happy Retreat, 100 Mordington Ave, Charles Town.

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EXPLORE // SHEPHERDSTOWN



ADAM BOOTH, STORYTELLER

Speak Story Series continues its twelfth season with local treasure and nationally-recognized story artist Adam Booth telling seasonally spooky stories on Tuesday, October 8 at 7:30 pm at the CATF-CRC facility (304 East German St, Shepherdstown). Adam is the 2022 West Virginia Folk Artist of the Year. He blends traditional mountain folklore, music and an awareness of contemporary Appalachia to create original, forward-thinking story artistry. Adam's new multi-disciplinary program, "The Heron's Journey," has been selected for the 2024-2025 Mid-Atlantic Arts Touring Roster. Tickets are \$20, available at the door or online at SpeakStorySeries.com Speak is for audiences aged 13 and up. See website for location details

ARCHITECTURE IN SHEPHERDSTOWN

On Wednesday, October 16, National Trust for Historic Preservation Chief Legal Officer & General Counsel Tom Mayes and Shepherd University Associate Professor of History Dr. Keith Alexander will discuss and illustrate the architectural features of the Shepherdstown Historic District, focusing on 1850 to present. As West Virginia's oldest town, Shepherdstown has a rich and diverse architectural and historical heritage spanning four centuries. The majority of Shepherdstown is within a designated historic district that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, just seven years after the register was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act. The presentation will begin at 7 pm at the Robert Byrd Center on the Shepherd University campus (213 North King St, Shepherdstown); free admission. The event is sponsored by Historic Shepherdstown Commission & Museum (HistoricShepherdstown.com).



SPAGHETTI DINNER

Catch dinner before the play on Friday, October 11. New Street United Methodist Church (202 West New Street, Shepherdstown) will host a Spaghetti dinner from 5 to 7 pm. Menu: Spaghetti served with your choice of 3 sauces, salad, roll, beverages, and homemade pies and cakes. Eat-in or take-out. Handicap accessibility. \$12 adults, \$5 children (4-12).

HISTORIC DEBATE AS THEATER

St. Agnes church in Shepherdstown will present "The Rivalry" by playwright Norman Corwin, directed by Joe Yates. Show dates are October 11, 12 & 13, and 18, 19 & 20. Friday and Saturday shows at 8:00 pm, Sundays shows at 3:00 pm.

The play looks back to 1858, when Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, the nation's most charismatic orators, debated for 36 hours with an energy that hypnotized the nation. Douglas fought for the rights of the separate states to make their own choice on the question of slavery. Lincoln fought for equality of human beings and the conviction that the nation could not endure half slave, half free. The arguments, even some of the words, of both Lincoln and Douglas are echoed today.

The play will be presented at the Historic Chapel, 204 South Church St, in Shepherdstown. Tickets are \$15. Reservations online at StAgnesShepherdstown.org or email JoeYates47@gmail.com. All profits will go towards youth group activities at St. Agnes.



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SPOOKY & SCARY AT THE LIBRARY

Zack with Charles Town Ghost Tours will serve up some spooky local ghost stories at the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library (151 Polk St, Harpers Ferry) on Friday, October 18 at 6:00 pm. This is a free program not for the faint of heart (recommended for mature teens & adults). Walk-ins welcome or call 304-535-2301 for reservations. On Saturday, October 19, the library will host an adults-only program to make Scary Eye Books. The event is free; participants should bring a book they wish to alter. Advance reservations required (stop by the circulation desk). Visit BolivarHarpersFerryLibrary.com for calendar of events and library schedule.

JOHN BROWN'S RAID SEMINAR

Harpers Ferry Park Association will host a full-day event on Sunday, October 13, featuring authors, journalists, and rangers for an exploration of the 1859 event in Harpers Ferry that changed the course of American history and how it has sparked continuous scholarship and debate since the rainy October night when John Brown crossed the river. The program will be held in the Allies for Freedom Room on the 2nd Floor of the John Brown Museum in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

It's been 165 years since Brown and his faithful followers crossed the Potomac River on their crusade to free four million enslaved people. Since then, generations of students, scholars, and biographers have written about this man and his mission.

Program highlights: 9:30 am Welcome with pastries and coffee; 10:00 Kevin R. Pawlak, historian and author of John Brown's Raid: Harpers Ferry and the Coming of the Civil War; 11:15. Brianna Wheeler, author of Altogether Different, a memoir that explores the author's relationship with an ancestor who was one of John Brown's soldiers; 12:15 light lunch; 1:30 panel discussion about the 1861 book A Voice from Harper's Ferry by Osborne Perry Anderson, reprinted in 2024 by the Harpers Ferry Park Association; 2:45 Louis DeCaro, Jr., retired historian and author of John Brown: Changing Perspectives.

Free, advance registration required. Harpersferryhistory.org/event-registration, call 304-535-6881 or email info@hfpawv.org. Parking is available at the park visitor Center (171 Shoreline Drive, Harpers Ferry); standard park fees (or valid park pass) required for parking. Visitor information at nps.gov/hafe.

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Halloween In Shepherdstown



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ENGAGE // COUNTY COMMISSION

JANE TABB RECEIVES AWARD

Commissioner Recognized For Service



Jane Tabb on her farm with Dolly, one of her Ayrshire cows.

THE WEST VIRGINIA WOMEN'S COMMISSION recognized County Commissioner Jane Tabb with its 2024 Mildred Mitchell-Bateman "Government and Public Service" award. The award announcement reads "Jane Tabb is a long-time Jefferson County resident and community leader with deep roots in agriculture. A Virginia Tech graduate in Dairy Science, she has served multiple terms as a Jefferson County Commissioner and is a partner in her family's farm, Lyle C. Tabb & Sons, Inc., as well as the owner of Fresh Feast on the Farm catering. Jane's extensive involvement in youth development, including leadership in 4-H and West Virginia's Promise, complements her commitment to local agriculture and community service. Her contributions have earned her numerous accolades, including the 2011 WV Women in Agriculture Award and the 2022 WV Sesquicentennial Farm recognition."

The League of Women Voters recently hosted a forum where Tabb spoke about the role of County Commissioner. She says "I always try to listen, even though sometimes what gets said can be insulting." She says she tries to learn from every comment and stresses that it's important for her to "do the research, since a lot of the opinions and comments are not always fact-based."

Looking back over her decades of involvement with the county government, Tabb remarked that growth has been a consistent concern. She noted that with the state controlling the roads and how utilities are expanded, "you feel like your hands are tied a lot of times when it comes to planning ahead." One bright spot that Tabb mentions often is the success of the Farmland Protection Board, an organization that she has been involved with since it began in 2000. The Board recently added a 59th farm to its program and has just under 7,000 acres protected throughout the county.

Tabb explained that she started attending commission meetings in the 1990s, when she and her husband Cam were dealing with problems caused by the county landfill near their farm. She ended up getting elected to the commission in 2000, ran again in 2006 and lost, then ran again successfully in both 2012 and 2018. She is not running for reelection this year, but she doesn't expect to slow down, saying the farm keeps her busy and that she has a lot of traveling to visit family on her calendar.



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