



September 2021

*There are flowers enough
in the summertime,
More flowers than I can
remember—*

*But none with the purple,
gold, and red*

*That dye the flowers of
September!*

—Mary Howitt (1799-1888)



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Mayor's Corner

Can you believe that we are into September already? Where has 2021 gone? I wanted to take a minute to address some concerns regarding several traffic changes that have recently been made in town. As the town continues to grow, we currently have a population of approximately 3,000, Council is evaluating the street plan and looking at ways to promote safety and protect our residents. We are aware concerns have been expressed about the installation of the stop signs along Park Avenue. These were installed at the request of many property owners in that residential area, since much of the traffic there is a result of using the street as a cut-through to the Food Lion shopping center. Speed has been an issue there as well. A remedy to address that, was to install the stop signs at the cross streets to slow traffic and improve safety for those who live and travel along the street. The Town's police department conducted a traffic study of this area in late June and early July. The study recorded 475 cars in a 13-hour period, an average of almost 40 cars each hour. Also, there have been reported accidents along the street

involving a vehicle into a tree, mailboxes being hit, and cars running into the guard rail at 2nd Street. The safest route for most in Town, and visitors from the west side of town to the shopping center, is to use 3rd Street (Route 256) to Augusta Avenue (Route 340). These routes are designed to safely handle this amount of traffic, while Park Avenue is not. Also, earlier this year, at the request of property owners, several stop ahead signs were installed along Holly Avenue to give better notice to drivers. This hopefully prevents the number of persons running the stop signs and improves safety in that area.

There have also been changes to the parking along Dogwood Avenue in the area of Lil' Gus'. Concerns increased as vehicles parked in front of the building were encroaching onto the street. Signage has been installed to help inform restaurant patrons of the new parking conditions. Town officials had conversations with the owners prior to making those changes. Once again, the goal is to provide for safe travel in our town. The Town Council's Street Committee is looking at other improvements such

as crosswalks, etc. This will alert drivers to slow down and will provide greater safety to those that walk along some of the busier streets. Council wants to hear from you. Not all decisions will make everyone happy, but please know that our goal is to provide for a safe town for pedestrians and for property owners.

Grottoes has much to offer. We are a regional tourist attraction with Grand Caverns, parks, pool, and other amenities that attract visitors to our town. During the month of July our Caverns and parks had their highest earnings to date! Council wants to keep that momentum going. We encourage feedback from citizens, as we continue to make improvements like addressing traffic issues, bringing businesses to our town, having entertainment and music events, maintaining our beautiful parks, assuring compliance with Town ordinances, maintaining our water and sewer infrastructure, and more! The Grottoes Council's goal is to make proactive decisions not just for today but for tomorrow and many years to come.

Jo Plaster
Mayor

Park Place

As your new Parks & Tourism Director I just wanted to say, "Hello Grottoes, it is so good to be back!" I grew up in Harrison, Staunton, Harrisonburg, and Bridge-water before I chased a career to Florida, North Carolina, California, and most recently Washington. Being selected for this opportunity feels like I've come home to my dream job. Through my travels with my career, I can confidently say the citizens of Grottoes are very blessed to have such expansive parks filled with natural beauty. I'm looking forward to preserving local history, thoughtfully enhancing park amenities, and exploring new ideas collaboratively with you all.

Grand Caverns tours will continue to be open 9am – 5pm through October. There

is still time for you to beat the heat and cool off in our caverns with these extended hours. Weekends will be busy so be sure to reserve online or call ahead.

Thanks to Michelle Tucker, Pool Manager and longtime swim team coach for Grottoes, the pool was open 7 days a week throughout the summer for the first time ever. Pool hours ended with the Labor Day Weekend but we're already planning on how to deliver an even better season of service for 2022!

You might want to mark this down on your calendars, the **Grottoes Bluegrass Festival** is returning to Grand Caverns Park on **10/7 – 10/9** and we're expecting it to be a big and busy event! Town staff have worked hard to bring this event back for both

Grottoes' citizens and business owners. As in previous years, primitive camping will be available onsite for tents and RVs. Tickets will only be available at the front gate with this pricing: Friday only - \$30. Saturday only - \$35. 2-day Pass - \$55. All Rough Camping - \$20. For more information see the official flyer on our Facebook page or come to the Lodge at Grand Caverns Park and pick up a few for yourself and friends. The Promoter/Organizer is Wayne Proffit. Please feel free call him with questions at 434-989-0996.

Austin Shank,
Parks &
Tourism
Director



Library News

Mon-Thurs 11:00 am - 6:00 pm , Fri 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, 540-434-4475 option 3

New Hours: Now open every weekday at 11:00 a.m. Come and check us out again!

Return to In-House Programs:

Grottoes Library Book Club, now known as **Mostly Books**, will reconvene on Tuesday, September 7th, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Plan to join this awesome group of readers to share what you have been reading and enjoying. Excellent way to learn of new books and authors.

Story time is set to begin on Wednesday, September 8th. We will meet at Town

Hall in the Community Room (across from the library) from 11:00am to 12:00 noon. This will be a weekly event. New time and a new format requires a new name. **CircleTime** is open to all ages and will be a mixture of stories, music, movement, conversation, learning and fun! Hope to see y'all there.

Congratulations: Summer Reading Games 2021 are over and prizes have been awarded. Congrats to all the Grottoes winners! Prizes may still be picked up at the library through September.

FYI: Night box is open 24/7 for returning items at your convenience.

Donations are gladly accepted. Please bring your donated items to the library during our open hours.

Thought for Today: "Fill your house with stacks of books, in all the crannies and all the nooks." —Dr. Seuss

Peggy Counts
Branch Manager

Senior Citizens Luncheon

Senior Citizens Luncheon goes mobile and in-person **October 16th!**

On October 16th volunteers, town employees, and town council will be delivering a hot lunch meal between 11am-



12pm. We will be welcoming any seniors who would like to congregate to join us as the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department at 12pm for an in-person dining experience. Both delivered and in person meals will be cube steak with gravy, green beans, mashed potatoes, a roll, coleslaw, and pumpkin pie. You must RSVP by Friday October 1st and request delivery or in-

person. You will not be able to change your selection after Oct. 1st. We will not be able receive late orders. This gives the Town and GVFD time for food to be ordered, and a delivery route to be mapped. Please call the town office for your reservation as soon as possible.

540-249-5896

A Growing Grottoes

The US Census Bureau released data from the 2020 census. Following is information for the Town as compiled by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission. As you can see from this chart, the growth rate of the Town has been significant over the past 20 years. Though the rate slowed from 2010—2020 over the previous decade, town staff has seen a sharp increase in zoning permits for new homes recently. Since the beginning of 2021, 68 permits for new dwellings, including townhomes and single family homes, have been issued. With increased building comes increased population and increased need for municipal services like water and sewer, an increase in traffic throughout town, and the potential for new businesses. While It is difficult to project what will happen with population and growth in Grottoes over the next 10 years; it is certain that the town will need to continue to invest in our services and infrastructure, to work toward the goals of economic growth and a high standard of municipal services.

CSPDC REGION - TOWNS	POPULATION GROWTH (2000-2020)					
	2000	2010	2020	2000-2010 % growth	2010-2020 % growth	2000-2020 % growth
GROTTOES	2,114	2,668	2,899	26.2%	8.7%	37.1%

Grottoes Vol. Fire Department Publicity 2021 September - December Fundraising Events

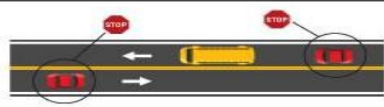
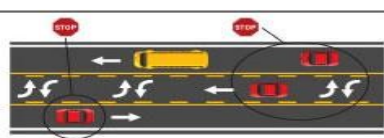
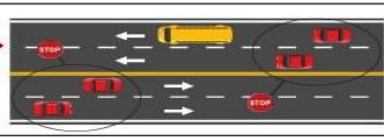
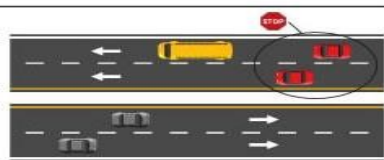
September 19	Monthly Sunday Lunch (Entrée: Fried Tenderloin) (starts 11am; \$11/adult; \$7/child 10 and under)
September 25	Gun Raffle - Presale tickets; contact Caleb Bailey at FD
October 1 & 2	Chicken Weekend in Mtn View Park, starts 4pm each day
October	Fund Drive Month
October 17	Monthly Sunday Lunch (Entrée: Roast Beef) (starts 11am; \$11/adult; \$7/child 10 and under)
November 21	Monthly Sunday Lunch (Turkey, Dressing Thanksgiving Lunch with Pumpkin Pie) (starts 11am; \$11/adult; \$7/child 10 and under)
December 19	Monthly Sunday Lunch (Entrée: Fried Cubed Steak) (starts 11am; \$11/adult; \$7/child 10 and under)

Grottoes Police Department

School is back in session. This means there's an increased number of school buses in town and that students will once again be waiting along roads, on sidewalks and in driveways for their buses.

Please be mindful of the children and the buses. Obey all traffic patterns, keep a close eye on your vehicle speed, stop signs and be aware of increased pedestrian traffic. Review and follow this guide that explains when you can and cannot pass a stopped School Bus.

Jason Sullivan
Police Chief

- Two-lane roadway:**
When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop!
 
- Two-lane roadway with a center turning lane:**
When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop!
 
- Four-lane roadway without a median separation:**
When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop!
 
- Divided Roadway of four lanes or more with a median separation:**
When school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop.
 

Town of Grottoes

601 Dogwood Avenue
P.O. Box 146
Grottoes, VA 24441
Phone: 540-249-5896
Fax: 540-249-5726
www.ci.grottoes.va.us

Brush Site Open

Saturday, October 2nd
Wednesday, October 13th
8:00 am - 12:00 noon

Emailed Utility Bills and Newsletter

To receive your utility bill &
Town newsletter by email
and not a paper mailed
copy, please email
Utilities@ci.grottoes.va.us
and let us know!
(This is not auto-pay)

End of Summer Celebration

**Saturday, September 11th
at Mountain View Park — 4 to 9 p.m.**

Food, games, music, pony rides and fun!!

Music by SLEAPWALKERZ (Southern Rock),
Josh Davidson (Acoustic), and Tim Leeth (Acoustic).

Food by: Batterbee's Catering

Grottoes Community



Saturday, September 11th

All Day and All Throughout Town!

ERMA Food Pantry

**Grottoes United
Methodist Church**

located at 300 4th St.

Every Monday

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

For more information call
540-249-5893



ATTENTION UTILITY BILL CUSTOMERS : Go Paperless

You can now enroll in auto-pay

To set up an automatic draft for your utility payment please
stop by Town Hall with the following information:

1. Bank name and address
2. Routing Number
3. Bank Account Number
4. Type of banking account
5. Your email address

A copy of a
voided
check is
acceptable

Once set up, you will receive a utility bill statement via
email but no longer mailed a bill. Your payment will be au-
tomatically transferred from your bank account each on the
3rd of February, April, June, August, Oct. and Dec.

CARDINAL DENTAL SPECIALISTS' 2021 Grand Caverns 5K Race Series

Friday, September 24th, 6:00 p.m.

For more information: contact Mike Betts at mike@grandcaverns-5K.com

Grottoes Town Officials

Town Council

Jo Plaster, Mayor

David Raynes

Tim Leeth

Mark Sterling

Michael Kohl

Jim Justis

Mike Betts

Town Council meets the second Mon-
day of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the
Council Chambers. A work session will
begin at 6:00 p.m., if needed.

Planning Commission

Justin Neitzey, Chair

Jen Smith, Vice-chair

David Bradley

Kevin Campbell

Dylan Nicely

Nathan Foerster

Michael Kohl

Planning Commission Meets the last
Tuesday of the odd months at 7:00
p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Board of Zoning Appeals

Margie Mayes, Chair

Ellen Showers

David Gorjup

Justin Neitzey

Christa Hall

BZA meets the third Tuesday of the
month, when needed, at 7:00 p.m. in
the Council Chambers.