



# Council Chatter

January 2023

Town of Grottoes

## Mayor's Corner



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Hello 2023! Happy, Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and Holiday Season with all your loved ones. Looking back over the past year, we have made great progress towards our Town's future successes. I hope you did not miss the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting. It was larger than last year and another great welcoming to the Holiday Season.

In case you did not know, our police department welcomed Sergeant Steve Knight to the force in early November, and a new Administrative Assistant, Jeanell Thomas, in December. A lot of great things are on the horizon and 2023 is going to be even more prosperous.

I would also like to say, "Congratulations," to our newly elected Council members on their run for council! Councilmen Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey and David Rayne's have retained their council seats for four more years. Councilman Jim Justis and Councilman David Raynes have served our town for 20+ years. Councilman Bai-

ley was first elected in 2017 and served on council until 2020 and then again in 2022.

Additionally, we have two new appointees to the Planning Commission, Mr. Eddie Chittum and Ms. Gleamer Sullivan, both of which will serve four year terms and are looking forward to serving our community.

With the New Year comes new beginnings, new opportunities and the chance at a fresh start. No matter your age, how big or how small, the entire world has held this tradition of "in with the new," for over 4,000 years. Did you know, "Auld Lang Syne," was originally a Scottish poem and the phrase translates to "old long since" and similarly, in English, "times gone by," still serving as a reminder to cherish those fond memories that we've held dear over the past year and years passed.

As we move forward into 2023, let's do so together by taking a moment to see the world around us and the very special people that are a part of it and be the best version of ourselves that we

can possibly be. That's my hope for us all in 2023!

And by the way...

If you have ever had thoughts of serving our town, your community, in a larger capacity and want to do more, there are vacancies on the Board of Zoning. Interested persons must reside within the Town of Grottoes. Questions? Or anyone interested, please complete a volunteer application and a letter of interest to the Town.

Applications can be found on the Town of Grottoes Website.

Applications by Mail:  
Town Clerk, P.O. Box 146, Grottoes VA 24441

In Person: Assistant to Town Manager: Tara Morris - 601 Dogwood Avenue, Grottoes

Email: [tmorris@ci.grottoes.va.us](mailto:tmorris@ci.grottoes.va.us)

My Best to You and Yours in the New Year!

Your Mayor,  
Jo Plaster

## Town Manager's Message

Happy New Year and best wishes for a fun, healthy and productive 2023. As always there are many projects going on in Town with more in store for 2023. Residential development continues to pop-up in town. Before construction begins, town staff reviews sites and plans to assure that all regulations are followed and what is being built; single family houses, townhouses, etc., is allowed within the zoning district. We also work with contractors to assure that connections to town services such as water and sewer are done in a way that improves the systems and doesn't cause disruption to existing customers.

Development brings change and often

times temporary inconveniences. There are many areas within town that are available for construction. With construction comes some disruption to residents. For example, increased daytime noise, extra vehicles and materials on or near roads, and often an unclean appearance like dirt and mud on roads, portable toilets, building materials, etc. Town staff and the contractors try to keep these issues to a minimum. However, excessive noise outside of daytime hours (7 am to 10pm), safety hazards on public property such as a roadway, or damage to private property are items that, if they occur should be brought to the attention of town administration or our police department.

Town construction projects in the plans for this year include a new building near town hall for the housing of public works equipment, supplies, and materials, the extension of 21st Street from Cherry Ave to Dogwood Ave, the replacement of a water line along Aspen Avenue near Caverns Boulevard, and another planned for 7th Street between Birch Ave and Dogwood Ave, construction of new entryway signage at two points along Augusta Ave, one on 3rd Street and one on Dogwood Ave, and the placement of a First Responders Memorial at Town Hall! Positive progress each day.

*Stefanie McAlister*

## Library News

*Mon-Thurs 1-6pm Fri 11-2pm*

**540-434-4475 option 3**

Season's greetings from the Grottoes Library! We would like to thank our patrons for keeping our library a lively, dynamic part of our neighborhood.

Cold weather brings many opportunities for curling up with a new book. Come in and choose from new releases and/or old favorites. Our knowledgeable librarians always have favorite suggestions on display to help you choose your next read. While you're here, you can also find DVD's and audio books for everyone in the family.

**Mostly Books**, adult book club,

meets on the first Monday each month at 10:00 a.m. Join us to share your favorite reads with other book enthusiasts. Call Peggy to get added to the email list for a monthly reminder.

Our littlest readers will enjoy **CircleTime** each Wednesday morning at 11:00a.m. This is a time for songs with guitar, flannel boards, finger play fun, and stories! All are welcome.

Afterschool events are held on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of each month at 4:00 p.m. Join us for **Keva Lab** (1<sup>st</sup>), **Board Games** (2<sup>nd</sup>) and **Lego Club** (3<sup>rd</sup>). Stop by the library to pick up a reminder flyer to post at home.

January and February are Puzzle Month at the library. Come see us and pick up a puzzle from our large assorted mix. Come back for more as you finish each treasured puzzle.



So much to explore.....so much to learn about.....we look forward to seeing you soon.

Here's to a blessed New Year,

Peggy Counts  
Grottoes Branch Manager

## From the Chief's Desk...

I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. During our patrols through the Town, we have noticed a lot of inoperable vehicles. An inoperable vehicle is defined in the Town Ordinance chapter 53 as a vehicle that is not in operating condition, partially or totally dismantled by the removal of tires, wheels, the engine, or other essential working parts, and a vehicle without a valid license plate or current inspections. At the request of the Town Council, Grottoes Police officers will be making contact with those residents that have vehicles on their property that violate Chapter 53, and working with those residents to bring them into compliance. Please help us keep Grottoes beautiful.



## Grottoes Rescue Squad

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!** The members of the Grottoes Rescue Squad hope you had a wonderful Christmas holiday and that 2023 is off to a great start. We would like to take a moment and introduce our Officers for 2023

### Executive Officers

President - Jeremy Wampler  
Vice President - Terry Gentile  
Treasurer - Misty Shaver  
Secretary - Jodi Johnson  
Board Member - Katie Mohr  
Board Member - Barbara Gump

### Operational Officers

Chief - Ben Wampler

Deputy Chief - Joseph Bailey  
Captain - Charlotte Weaver  
Lieutenant - Cole Conley  
Training Officer - Joseph Bailey

### GRS Spring EMT Course

The rescue squad *is always in need of new volunteers*. All training is provided free of charge. The rescue squad will be hosting a **Hybrid EMT Course** that begins on February 1, 2023 and ending early May 2023. With the hybrid model, the student is assigned lectures to complete each week on their own time and are required to attend a lab day each Saturday from 9am - 3pm. If



you are interested in membership with the rescue squad or the EMT class, please contact President Jeremy Wampler at [jswampler5@gmail.com](mailto:jswampler5@gmail.com) or 540-457-9110

### CPR & STOP the Bleed!

Ever wanted to learn CPR or how to stop life threatening bleeding? Now is your chance. GRS will be hosting an American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR course on Saturday January 14th from 9am - 12 pm and then a STOP the Bleed course on the same day from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. To register go to [www.rescue20.org](http://www.rescue20.org). If you have questions, call 540-249-5787.



## Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department

### 1948 GVFD IN THE MAKING - REFLECTIONS OF 75 YEARS OF SERVICE

*Second in a series of articles preparing for GVFD 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2023.*

In January 1948 the cost of a car was \$1,550; gasoline: 26¢ a gallon; house: \$13, 500; bread: 14¢ a loaf; and the average salary was \$3,600. With these prices in mind, the task of purchasing a fire truck, equipment and building a station to house it was a huge undertaking for the newly formed Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department.

Community businesses, organizations and individuals realized the importance of having a fire department in the Town of Grottoes. Up to 1948, if there was a fire in Grottoes or the surrounding areas, fire trucks would come from Harrisonburg or Waynesboro. The only fire protection in Grottoes was a 1922 American LaFrance Chemical Hand Cart and volunteers who would form a bucket brigade.

The community's financial support for GVFD began within a month of its first meeting. The Textile Workers Union of Duplan Corporation in Grottoes donated \$500. Next, the Rockingham County and Augusta County Board of Supervisors each made a \$250 donation. Local merchants were called on to contribute and the fire department planned a house-to-house canvas for donations. A "Donation Thermometer" was placed in front of the Grottoes Theater so local citizens could see how the drive was progressing. The initial goal was \$7,500 for the purchase of a fire truck and equipment.

## Park Place

A belated Happy Holidays to all!

Caroling in the Caverns was a wonderful success, thanks to the musicians, volunteers, and staff that pulled off a lovely fundraising event. In case you hadn't heard, this year's event went to benefit both the Boys & Girls Club in

Grottoes AND the Grand Caverns Playground fund. I'm happy to report that this year we satisfied the Grottoes Ruritan Club's fundraising goal of \$3,000.00 consisting of two \$1,000.00 scholarships and a \$1,000.00 check for supplies. Additionally, patrons had the option to donate school supplies in lieu of children's tickets, which resulted in 195 items donated to the Boys and Girls Club in Grottoes. All of this was accomplished while raising an additional \$3,000.00 for the playground fund. This brings the total Grand Caverns Playground Fund up to \$22,000.00! A deep thank you to everyone for supporting this event. The Town of Grottoes is proud to help the Grottoes Ruritan Club support our local Boys and Girls Club.



Aside from Caroling in the Caverns, there isn't much more to report for the Parks & Tourism Department. This may be our slowest time of year for Grand Cavern tours, but it's our busiest time of year for projects and planning. Wish us luck as we anticipate spring and the next fiscal year!

Director, Austin Shank

## 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

### 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  
(Food Bank is closed on the 5th  
Monday and holidays)



### 2022 Winners of the Home Decorating Contest

**Elegance** - 201 8th Street

**Clark Griswold** - 201 Cherry Ave.

**Reason for the Season** - 705 12th St

We would like to thank the Grottoes  
Methodist Church for judging the contest.

### Brush Site Open

8:00 am - 12:00 noon

Jan. 7th & 11th

Feb. 4th & 8th

Mar. 4th & 8th

Christmas Trees can  
be dropped off at the  
Rockingham County  
Recycle site located  
on 20th St.



## Personal Property & Real Estate taxes

Are due by February 5th at 5:00 p.m.

*Check, cash, or money order only.*

**Online payment NOT AVAILABLE.**

24-dropbox adjacent to Town Hall parking lot

Mail: PO Box 146, Grottoes, VA 24441

Town Hall hours: Mon - Fri, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

## UTILITY BILL CUSTOMERS

### Go Paperless

You can now enroll in auto-pay

To set up an automatic draft for your utility pay-  
ment 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 state-  
ment via email but no longer mailed a bill. Your  
payment will be automatically transferred from  
your bank account each on the 3rd of February,  
April, June, Aug., Oct. and Dec.

### GVFD Fundraising January thru March

**January 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday Lunch**-Tenderloin,  
Mashed Potatoes, Cole Slaw, Green Beans,  
Roll w/Butter, Dessert, Tea or Coffee - All Meals  
\$13.00

**February 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday Lunch**-Cubed Steak,  
Mashed Potatoes, Cole Slaw, Green Beans,  
Roll w/Butter, Dessert, Tea or Coffee-All Meals  
\$13.00

**March 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Chicken in the Park** - Drive  
Thru Pickup, starts 4:00 pm each day; Chicken  
with slice of bread, French Fries - Price to be  
Determined closer to event

**March 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday Lunch**- Hand Breaded  
Baked & Seasoned Chicken Breast, Mashed  
Potatoes, Cole Slaw, Green Beans, Roll w/  
Butter, Dessert, Tea or Coffee All Meals \$13.00

## Grottoes Town Officials

### Town Council

Jo Plaster, Mayor

David Raynes

Tim Leeth

Mark Sterling

Michael Kohl

Jim Justis

Joshua Bailey

### Planning Commission

Dylan Nicely

Michael Kohl

Nathan Foerster

Darrel Baker

René Ehlenfeldt

Eddie Chittum

Gleamer Sullivan

### Board Of Zoning Appeals

Dylan Nicely

David Gorjup

Christa Hall

*Vacancy*

*Vacancy*

Town Council meets the second  
Monday 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 Meets the  
last Tuesday of the odd months at  
7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

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