



Council Chatter

Town of Grottoes

July 2022

Mayor's Corner

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow.”

-Helen Keller

Hello Everyone! Can you believe it is already July? Did you know that this year on July 4th, 2022 the Earth reaches its farthest point from the Sun, occurring about two weeks after the June solstice? This point in the Earth's orbit around the Sun is called “aphelion.” We are closest to our fiery star in the winter and farthest away in the hot summer. This year, Earth will be 94,509,598 miles away from the Sun at aphelion.

The days have been hot. Please keep yourselves hydrated and do most of your outside work in the morning and evening hours if you are able.

There has been a lot of great things happening in the town! I hope all who were able to come out to the collaborative GVFD Lawn Party and the Town's “Party in the Park,” had a wonderful time and got to see the fireworks!!! It truly turned out to be a well-attended event. Be sure and come out to John E. Painter Park, for Friday night Bluegrass, catch a Cardinal's ballgame or go swimming at Grand Caverns Park and enjoy the great outdoors!

This year Council has decided to move forward with the First Responders Memorial at Town Hall. We are excited to finally have this in motion. As a tribute to our Former Chief of Police, John Painter, we will also be hosting our 1st ever, First Responders Ceremony, July 30th, 2022 at the GVFD from 4pm to 7pm. This will be an annual event to honor and pay tribute to our men and women, first responders, who serve and protect our community. In Honor of

Chief John Painter and Officer JJ Jefferson, who gave of their lives to save many, February 1st, 2022 at Bridgewater College.

Council and our town staff are working hard for you. With the recent budget adoption, Council voted to reduce the Real Estate Tax rate from .12 cents per \$100 of assessed value to .10 cents. This was to help offset the increase on taxes, due to the increase of assessed value for residential properties.

If you are interested in serving our community in a larger capacity, there are still vacancies on the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning and Appeals. Please come by town hall and fill out an application or visit the Town's website and download one there. [https://](https://www.ci.grottoes.va.us)

www.ci.grottoes.va.us. Remember, sometimes it's not us that makes the call, it's the call that has chooses you.

Lastly, we cannot forget the month August! It just so happens this is the month for star gazing! August is the month of the Perseid meteor shower, which is one of the most prolific showers and will reach its maximum between August 11 and 13. The shower actually lasts from about July 23 to August 22, so you should have a real chance at seeing those shooting stars!

As always, do not hesitate to reach out to me or your fellow council with your thoughts and feedback.

Your Mayor,
Jo Plaster

Inside this issue:

Town Manager's Message	2
Library News	2
Grottoes Police Dept	2
Park Place	3
Grottoes Fire Dept	3
Grottoes Rescue Squad	3
Informational	4
Town Officials	4



Town Manager's Message

Grottoes is a lovely town where citizens' sense of pride is evident by the abundance of neat and aesthetically pleasing properties. The town is full of clean well-manicured lawns, beautiful landscaping with pops of bright colors, and houses kept in attractive, cared for conditions. From time to time we do see a few properties in town that could use some attention. The town has ordinances that outline how properties should be cared for and what town staff and council can do to remedy any violations. These include town code Chapter 53 that defines inopera-



ble vehicles and details the notice and removal process; Chapter 117, which deals with nuisances such as, rubbish and/or junk and Chapter 134 that addresses solid waste and weeds including grass over 8 inches. Also, town code Chapter 100 Table 1, explains all structure set-back regulations while Section 105 details fence regulations. Chapter 48 addresses the keeping of animals within Town. Additionally, the complete town code can be found on our website under the Resources page.

<https://www.ci.grottoes.va.us/resources>

Whenever a report of concern over these types of issues comes to the attention of staff, research must be done to determine if a violation according to code exists. Then the process of documenting the situation, notifying the responsible party, allowing time for violation remedy, determining financial costs and responsibility, and assuring violation compliance must happen. This is often a time-consuming process and must be done in a way that is economically feasible to the town and is defensible in court should it rise to that level. If you see a probable violation in town, please contact town hall or use the contact portion of our website to let us know.

Stefanie

Library News

Mon-Thurs 11-6pm

Fri 11-2pm

540-434-4475 option 3

Oceans of Possibilities – Summer Reading 2022 continues through July. Join the fun at mrlib.org.

Special thanks to local businesses Grand Caverns, Flowers By Rose, Grottoes 7-11 and Lil' Gus' for their donations to this program. Other prizes include coupons from Rockingham County Fair, Green Valley Book Fair, Luray Zoo and MORE! Free Friday Wristbands will get your child Free entry to fun events all summer.

CircleTime at Grottoes – Come and sing with us on Wednesday mornings at 11:00 am. Flannel board stories and read-aloud books create family fun for all ages.

JULY 13 – 11:00 am - *Digeridoo Down Under*

The Didgeridoo Down Under Show is an energetic fusion of Australian music, culture, comedy, character building, storytelling and audience participation. Learn more at www.didgrevolution.com Exciting and fun! You won't want to miss this.

Thursdays Afterschool Fun – 4:00-5:00 pm



Lego Club – every 3rd Thursday

JULY 21 – 4:00-5:00 pm

Come and build using our Legos. Display your creations in the library! Fun for all ages.

Starting in August :

Keva Planks – every 1st Thursday

Board Games – every 2nd Thursday

Peggy Counts

Branch Manager

From the Chief's Desk...

Summer has arrived!

During the hot days of summer remember to stay hydrated during outdoor activities. Also, remember to keep our furry companions hydrated. The Police Department has been receiving calls about dogs running loose or being walked while not on leashes. Please remember when your dog is not on your property they need to be on a leash and under control. If you have questions about the leash ordinance or questions

about dogs running at large, please do not hesitate to call the Police department. The full ordinance can be found under Chapter 48 of the Town Code.

Those dog owners that house their dogs outside remember that they need shelter from the elements such as shade from the sun and shelter from the cold. If you tether your dog it has to be 10 feet long or at least 3 times the animal's body length but not to be longer than 15 feet.

HOT WEATHER PET SAFETY

Remember this basic rule: If you're hot, your pet is too!

Be Sure To:

- Make sure your pet has access to fresh water
- Keep your pet out of the sun and in the shade

Remember:

Older, obese, and short-nosed dogs are even less tolerant of heat.

Pugs
Bulldogs
Boston Terriers
Boxers
Shih Tzus
French Bulldogs



Do Not:

- Take long walks or exercise heavily mid-day.
- Walk your pet on concrete or cement
- Rely on fans to cool your pet - animals don't cool in the same way people do.

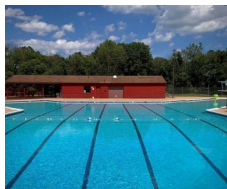


And **never, EVER** leave your pet in a parked car, not even for a minute!



Park Place

Summer is finally here, and we've got a pool season! For those that missed it in the local news, we had a delayed opening to our pool as we exhaustively inspected its safety and structural integrity. Town Council opened the pool for use which began on June 18th. If you haven't purchased your pool pass yet, please come by! We have pro-rated the season passes to reflect the delayed opening. Also, please remember to **check our schedule on our website or on Facebook before you come**. We are open 5 days a week (M,W,F,S,S) for the public while keeping Tuesdays & Thursdays exclusively open for swim lessons and group swim only (Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, Summer Camps, Girl Scouts, etc.). We



hope everyone makes the most out of this 2022 pool season!

In the last newsletter we shared an update on Grand Cavern's temporary natural playground. More additions to the playground are imminent, however, due to the scale, we'll need to organize the use of large heavy equipment. Keep your eyes peeled for big, fun additions to the playground. In related news, the April 5K race was able to fundraise an additional \$3,000.00 for a new playground. This brings the total amount fundraised to a little over \$18,000.00!! So, a big thanks to Mike Betts and all the volunteers who have planned and coordinated such a beneficial and enduring event.

The First Baptist Church of Grottoes is hosting a free movie night at John E Painter Park on 7/30/2022 from 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm. They'll provide

hotdogs, popcorn, and ice cream floats at no cost. Until the movie starts (Lion King), the GVFD will have a firetruck, ambulance, and wrecker onsite for the kids to enjoy. Lastly, the Parks & Tourism Department is hiring for a newly created full-time position, Parks Coordinator. We'll be advertising and interviewing for this position over the next couple of months, with an anticipated start date in September 2022. We are excited to fill this role on our team. This person will manage the daily operations for Interpretive Programming, Gift Shop/Front Desk, Special Events, and an all-new Volunteer Program. Please find the job description on our website and share it with anyone you think might be a great fit.

Austin Shank
Parks and Tourism Director

Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department

The members of the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department are here for you and we are proud of what we do. Our GVFD "family" is comprised of well-trained professionals, including certified firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics.

Our associate members support our professionals as well as the goals of our department in many ways including a variety of fundraising activities. Mark your calendars now for our upcoming Fundraising Events

Upcoming Fundraising Event

July 17th Sunday Lunch, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm \$11.00/meal - Lightly Hand-Breaded Seasoned Chicken Breast, Cole Slaw, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Roll, Coffee or Tea, Dessert

Aug. 21st Sunday Lunch, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm \$11.00/meal

Lawn Party Chicken, Cole Slaw, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, bread, Dessert, Tea or Coffee

Aug. 26th -27th Summer Bash Raffle Weekend



Fri., 26th - Kickoff of Raffle Weekend - food, cake wheel, bingo

Sat., 27th - Summer Bash Raffle, Tickets \$25 ea; Grand Prize \$25,000 Check our website for more details on raffle prizes and drawing times.

Sept. 18th Sunday Lunch, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm \$11.00/meal Fried Cubed Steak, Gravy, Cole Slaw, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Roll, Coffee or Tea, Dessert

Sept. 24th Fall Gun Raffle, Time to be determined; Save the Date
---- Watch for more details in near future

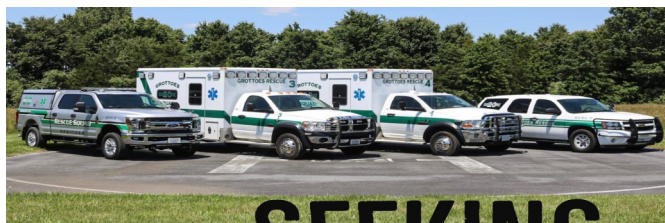
Grottoes Rescue Squad

Grottoes Rescue Squad is seeking volunteers!

We provide training!

To apply please go to our website, Rescue20.org or see any member at our station to get an application!

Thank you!
Katie M. Mohr
President



SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!



TO PROVIDE PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE AND
RESCUE SERVICES TO THE CITIZENS OF AUGUSTA
AND ROCKINGHAM COUNTIES AND THE
SURROUNDING AREAS.

[RESCUE20.ORG](https://Rescue20.org)

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)

Brush Site Open

8:00 am - 12:00 noon

July 9th & 13th

Aug. 6th & 10th

Sept. 10th & 14th



Saturday
Sept. 10th

Call to add your
address to our
directory 249-5896

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 automatically
transferred from your bank account each
on the 3rd of February, April, June, August,
Oct. and Dec.

If your email or bank info changes—Please contact us

Friday Night Bluegrass

AT GROTTOS JOHN E.
PAINTER PARK

FRIDAY NIGHTS THIS SUMMER - 7:00 PM

July 1st - Blue Ridge Thunder

July 8th - Caleb Bailey and Paine's Run

July 15th - Virginia Rain

July 22nd - The Deane's

Free to the Public, donations accepted to cover
cost of bands **Concessions Available** -
Rain or Shine Event

Town of Grottoes First Annual First Responders Ceremony

Saturday, July 30th

4 pm - 7 pm @ GVFD



Help Serve your Town!

We have vacancies on the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. Complete a
volunteer application to help serve your Town. For more information call 249-5896.

Grottoes Town Officials

Town Council

Jo Plaster, Mayor

David Raynes

Tim Leeth

Mark Sterling

Michael Kohl

Jim Justis

Joshua Bailey

Planning Commission

Justin Neitzey, Chairman

Michael Kohl

Dylan Nicely

Nathan Foerster

René Ehlenfeldt

Darrel Baker

Vacancy

Board Of Zoning Appeals

Justin Neitzey

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
6:00 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.