

The Mayor's Corner

BY MAYOR BETH A. TAYLOR
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I welcome the opportunity to talk to you regarding your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by phone, mail or email.



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MILLWALD THEATRE

COMING SOON!!!!

Construction at the Millwald continues on schedule for completion in late July 2022 and a probable opening in late September. According to Mark Bloomfield, Chairman, "all of the demolition was completed in January and now everything is being rebuilt. It's fun to go inside because there are workmen everywhere. One day there were 15-20 carpenters, electricians, plumbers, roofers, and drywall installers working. Every day it looks different."

This is a complete renovation, restoration, and expansion project. When complete there will be an additional 7500 sq. ft. of program space with classrooms, a green room, and dressing rooms with private toilets. The balcony will once again become part of the main auditorium providing more than 500 seats. The ceiling is being rehabbed to return the original stenciling and include original light fixtures.

The stage is getting a substantial upgrade with a new apron extension, a 26 ft rollup projection screen, an ADA lift from the auditorium floor. A freight elevator is being added to move performance equipment from outside ground level onto the stage.



State of the art sound, lighting and streaming equipment is being installed and will be controlled from a new sound booth located at the back of the auditorium near the entrance doors.

The two spaces that were previously used as store fronts will house concession and ticketing as well as an elevator for ADA accesses to the new program level.

Important Information from Your Police Department

Thieves have found a new target—the gasoline from your vehicle. When the price of gas rises, so do the number of gas-thief incidents. Here's how you can protect your vehicle and your pocketbook.

- Park in well-lit, well-traveled locations.
- Park in your garage or driveway whenever possible. If you must park on the street, do so under street lighting near the house.
- Avoid parking in public places, such as airport parking, for an extended period of time.
- Position your vehicle so the fuel door is seen from a main road.
- Consider installing a locking gas cap.
- Gas thieves are becoming sneaky and drilling up under your gas tank.
- It can be difficult to tell if your gas has been siphoned. The best way to tell is to keep track of your fuel level when you get in and out of the car. If you do have a locking gas cap, there might be scratches or damage on it where thieves attempted to access your gas.
- Remember to call 911 if you see suspicious behavior, such as someone putting a siphon into a gas tank or acting strangely around parked cars.

Important Information from Your Fire & Rescue Department

Regarding upcoming Blue Star industry, Wythe County has invited the Town of Wytheville Fire & Rescue Department to participate in emergency response procedures associated with possible hazards regarding the new business. Significant improvements in response capabilities are being worked on. These improvements include applying for grants for equipment mitigation, as well as increased manpower. Currently, the county and town are working with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Fire Programs, and regional hazardous material response teams to increase preparation and needs. This includes not only onsite responses, but also railroad and highway transporting of hazardous materials. Although we respond to many hazardous materials calls for service, this facility poses a different set of challenges that we will be prepared for.

Beware of Phishing Scams

We all enjoy using email in our personal and professional lives to communicate with others in a quick and efficient manner. Unfortunately, criminals have also created ways to use this tool to deceive people. I recently experienced this when a bogus email was sent to many Town of Wytheville employees that appeared to have come from me. I thought this would be a good time for us to share some information with our citizens about these "Phishing Scams" and how to avoid them in your inbox. Our Computer Operations Department has provided the following link to beneficial information for you to review to help you avoid these scams.

How To Recognize and Avoid Phishing Scams - Consumer Information (ftc.gov)
<https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-recognize-and-avoid-phishing-scams>

Community Garden

Community Garden plots located at the Balloon Water Tower on Cove Road are available again this growing season on a first come first serve basis. The first plot is at no cost, if a second plot is requested it will be \$10. Limit of two plots, please. The plot size is approximately 10' x 20'. All maintenance of the garden plot is the responsibility of the person reserving the space. A 200-gallon water tank is located on the property so that gardeners can more conveniently water their plants with buckets or watering cans. Plots must be reserved by calling 223-3505.

Tickets are \$50 and will include heavy hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and drinks. Beer and wine will also be available for purchase. For information on sponsorship or ticket reservations, please call (276) 223-3330. Visit www.wythevillemuseums.com (website) or www.facebook.com/wythevillemuseums (Facebook) for more information.

Museum Fundraiser

The Town of Wytheville Department of Museums and the Wythe County Historical Society are jointly hosting a special fundraiser for heritage and music education as well as building preservation on Friday, April 22, at the Wytheville Meeting Center. Djoukil, a popular French music group, will perform beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The group performed a sold-out show when last in the area in 2019. Blending the jazz/swing rhythms and melodies of the 1940s have made the Djoukil swingtet a much sought-after band for swing dances, festivals, and concerts. Wytheville will be one stop on their 2022 tour.

Council Actions

March 14, 2022:

- Approved renewing the Town employee health insurance plan with The Local Choice with the same plan offerings, continuing to pay the 92 percent blended rate for employee only insurance plans and paying \$250 monthly toward insurance premiums for the "plus one" and family insurance plan.
- Appointed Mr. David Schmidt to the Wytheville Planning Commission for a four-year term.
- Appointed the Town Manager, or his designee, as the Town of Wytheville Zoning Administrator.

March 28, 2022:

- Conducted a public hearing to consider amending Ordinance No.1408, which later in the meeting was approved on first and final reading. These changes to the mowing ordinance include distance and notification. Mowing Ordinance will soon be available on our website.
- Council approved the Town participating in the "Targeted Brownfields Assistance Program." This program assists local governments by identifying site contaminants and provides recommendations for the type of cleanup which may be necessary.
- Council set a public hearing for April 25, 2022, to consider moving the East Wytheville Precinct and polling Place from the Fourth Street Civic Center to Spiller Elementary School.