

The Mayor's Corner

By Mayor Beth A. Taylor

Fellow Citizens,

Volunteerism is a great way to make an impact on your community. It is a positive way to connect with others while making a valuable contribution. During the uncertain times we are living in, volunteering can truly make a strong difference for the project that you devote time to as well as your own mental outlook through the feeling of giving back to others. It can be a unifying common goal with your fellow citizens and neighbors.

There are many ways that you can volunteer in your community. In the weeks and months ahead, I will be giving you some examples in this column. Also, you can look for other notifications from specific departments and organizations affiliated with the Town of Wytheville.



Director of Museums, Frances Emerson, is advertising for volunteers for the Museums including the Homestead Museum. The Museums have had a volunteer program for quite some time and have handbooks which include job descriptions. They are looking for volunteers to help on a regular basis after some initial clean-up has been completed. Volunteers are needed to do outside work such as taking care of flower beds and assisting with cleaning creek banks and other areas of the Homestead. You can volunteer for a day or on an ongoing schedule. A volunteer application will be necessary. Please contact the Museum Department at 276-223-3330. I hope to also volunteer myself. Maybe you might like to volunteer with me. I will announce the dates I plan to volunteer shortly. Maybe our Museum staff will share some historic tidbits with us, while we are working, and we can all learn together. This property is large enough for plenty of social distancing as well as getting some fresh air and doing good for our community. I'm sure that your club or organization could get a few members

to represent the organization and volunteer. Maybe we can start a volunteer day with the Mayor? Let me know what you think about how we can all work together. My email is beth.taylor@wytheville.org.

Plans are underway to begin a Friends of Crystal Springs Recreation Area volunteer program to help with trail maintenance and construction. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or to receive more information, please contact Haley Morehead at 276-223-3520.

Downtown Wytheville Incorporated values community input and participation. There are opportunities to volunteer on special projects or serve on various committees. Contact Todd Wolford at 276-223-3343 to learn more about the organization and opportunities to get involved.

Wytheville Fire & Rescue Department

The Wytheville Fire & Rescue Department and town staff have been working diligently on assessing the Town of Wytheville's current fire hydrant situation. Realizing there are some structures that are more than 500 feet from a fire hydrant, the fire trucks carry both 500 foot and 1000-foot water hoses. Using this 500-foot buffer, they have mapped out what structures are within a 500-foot radius of each fire hydrant, and what structures do not fall into that 500-foot radius. These efforts are to identify potential coverage gaps.

Some of you may be wondering why there are multiple staff working on painting and repairing fire hydrants throughout town. I asked Fire Chief Marc Brade this question and he has explained it this way.

It's all about "crew integrity." We cannot control when 911 calls are received. If we have crews split up in multiple locations, then our tactics in the event of a fire change. The National Fire Protection Association requires what we call "2 in & 2 out." This means that for an offensive or interior structure fire tactic, there must be at least three



people staffing an engine, the driver, the officer and the firefighter. If there are not at least three people on the engine, then we are only able to conduct a defensive or exterior tactic until all personnel arrive on scene. If they are spread out in multiple locations in the town, this could cause valuable time lost. In the event we have four on the engine, the fourth person is responsible for bringing an additional fire truck to the scene, if needed.

In regard to hydrant painting, typically two people will clean the hydrant by using a wire brush while the other crew of two is painting. One team will usually be a hydrant ahead of the other. Another reason is training. Over 75% of the department has less than one year of experience. By participating in hydrant testing, painting etc., doing this work gives these staff a chance to see the hydrants and their locations and familiarize themselves with what challenges could be encountered.

All Town of Wytheville hydrants will be painted yellow. Privately owned hydrants may be painted a different color. Those are not maintained by the Town.

Wytheville Parks & Recreation Department

Beginning in late August, the Wytheville Community Center indoor pool moved to the normal school schedule and will be closed from 12 noon to 4 pm Monday-Friday. The athletic staff is working on the schedule for all sports to take place from November 2020 and run through June 2021. The schedule will be like the Virginia High School League is doing for high school sports. This fall, they will offer an instructional co-ed volleyball clinic and free skills competitions in football, baseball, soccer, and basketball. For questions or registration call 276-223-3518 or 276-223-3519. The swim and strokes clinic begins in September. To register, call 276-223-3378. Fitness Coordinator Becky Irvin and her staff are continuing to offer exciting land and water aerobics for the gold plan pass members. Anyone can become a gold pass plan member by calling 276-223-3526. Fitness Coordinator Brandon Wolford is excited to announce we have over 70+ pieces of fitness equipment available for use. Also, coming soon to the fitness area will be a state-of-the-art Fit3D Body scanner technology that compares and tracks your progress over time by providing full 3D body scanning that captures weight loss, body fat percentage, lean mass and more, all in 35 seconds.

Wytheville Police Department

I want to reach out to our law enforcement men and women who protect us and our properties and thank them and I hope you do the same given an opportunity. I also want our citizens to know that our police force has had, does have, and will have the support and tools they need to do just that—Protect Us!

Chief Hash reports that the Police Department has been meeting with citizen groups who are concerned about traffic safety in their neighborhood. Traffic issues on Withers Road and Mountain View Drive have been identified by these groups. Be aware that police officers will be working radar in these areas. Chief Hash also reports that there has been an increase in vehicle break-ins. Please remember to lock your vehicles, remove all valuables and take your keys with you. Don't make it easy for criminals to gain entry. Chief Hash also wants us to know that over the past three months the Police Department, along with Probation and Parole, have worked together in attempts to locate individuals that are wanted for various charges and they have made 81 arrests. I also would like to remind our citizens that the Town has adopted a criminal blight ordinance, which will help cut down on certain illegal activities in Town. This ordinance applies to properties that have repeated drugs, prostitution or gun fire activity. If you have a concern, please call 911 for an emergency, or contact Wytheville Police Department at 276-223-3300 with concerns or questions.

Wytheville Public Utilities Department

What should you do if you experience 'sewer' odors, slow drains or back-ups? If an odor originated from a house drain, first check to see if the water trap in the drain contains water. Pour water into the drain, if you are unsure. The water trap provides an odor barrier between the drain and sewer line. If a drain is not used for an extended period, the water in the trap evaporates and the odor barrier is lost. If the odor is not from a drain, call the Town Office at 276-223-3333 and someone will be dispatched to check whether the source of the problem is from the Town's sanitary sewer or determine if a contractor needs to be called to fix the issue. If you believe the Town's sanitary sewer is backing up, call the above number during normal business hours. After business hours, you can also call this number and follow the instructions in order to reach someone with the Public Utility Department about the issue. Someone will need to check the sewer to confirm whether the problem is in the Town sewer main or on the private line. They will advise you accordingly. If the backup is on your private line, you are responsible and may need to call a plumber.

Did You Know?

- ◆ If your toilet is running for 24 hours, it can waste over 4,000 gallons of water and cost you \$18 per day! That quickly adds up. If its running turn it off and get it fixed. The Town will have little tolerance to forgive that bill. Remember to update your contact information with the Treasurer's Office. The Water Department may be the first to detect water over usage and may be able to notify you, if the right contact information is available.
- ◆ For the safety of our children, especially those attending GWHS, our citizens, and those passing through and because of constantly increasing traffic volume, there has been a speed limit change coming into town from the west. The speed limit from 26th street to CJ's Pizza has changed from 45 mph to 35 mph and from CJ's to Super Dollar has decreased from 35 mph to 25 mph. The speed limit going out of town from Super Dollar to CJ's Pizza is now 25 mph. and from CJ's Pizza to 26th street is now 35 mph.
- ◆ Our two newly appointed youth members to the Recreation Commission are Joseph "Kade" Minton and Dylan Jones, I think they will be an asset and we look forward to having them and their ideas on this committee.
- ◆ Around the first week in September, the Millwald Theatre will begin the lead paint and asbestos remediation, and the Cardno Company will begin work inside the theatre.
- ◆ A shredding event has been postponed from October 2020 to May 2021 because of COVID 19. Hosted by the Town of Wytheville, in partnership with Truliant Federal Credit Union and the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce, the event was originally scheduled for May of this year.
- ◆ In the near future, an emergency phone will be installed at Crystal Springs Recreation Area by the Town.
- ◆ All Town of Wytheville buildings that were closed to the public due to COVID-19 are now re-opened with specific requirements or limitations. The Museums of Wytheville was the last to reopen on Saturday, September 5. The Museums have new exhibits and have updated some previous ones. Especially relevant to this time period is the exhibit about the polio epidemic that occurred in Wytheville 70 years ago.
- ◆ Our Town Attorney recently resigned and we are in the process of hiring a replacement. As previously announced, Steve Moore is our Town Manager and this week, Brian Freeman was appointed to the position of Assistant Town Manager.

Council Actions

- ◆ Ordinance No.1385 - this ordinance amends Ordinance 640, generally known as the Zoning Ordinance, Subsection 8-5 Side Yard Regulations.
- ◆ Ordinance No. 1386 - this ordinance amends Ordinance 640, generally known as the Zoning Ordinance, Subsection 16-16.3 Buffer Yards and Screening.
- ◆ Ordinance No.1387 - this ordinance amends Chapter 16, Water and Sewage Disposal. The main change to this ordinance is that it will prohibit pharmaceuticals from being placed into the Town's waste stream.
For further Information regarding these ordinances, contact Sherry Corvin, Town Clerk, at 276-223-3349.

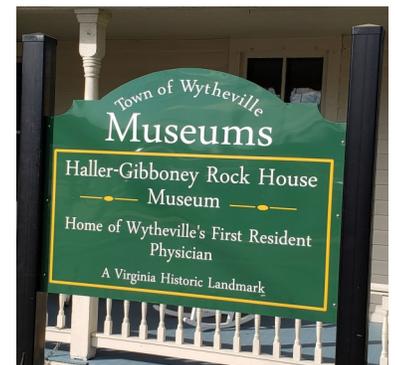
I welcome the opportunity to talk to you regarding your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by phone at (276) 223-3356 or via email at beth.taylor@wytheville.org.



NEW HOURS

- ◆ *Haller-Gibboney Rock House Museum*
- ◆ *Thomas J. Boyd Museum*
- ◆ *Great Lakes to Florida Highway Museum*

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 10 AM – 4 PM
Or By Appointment
Call (276) 223-3330 for information.



MUSEUM SHOP INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE AT THE THOMAS J. BOYD MUSEUM!

MANY ITEMS 50% OFF

**Books, Select Collectible Ornaments/Buildings,
Décor Items, Children's Toys, and MORE**