



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 14, Issue 5 ♦ September 15, 2023

From the Mayor

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV

A new railroad station building to stand at the spot of its 19th century predecessor is further along its way thanks to a major gift from former Valley Proteins President and CEO J. J. Smith. Smith's gift of \$50,000 brings the club to about 80% of their \$200,000 goal.

Last October the town purchased 20 acres and had 5 acres donated and stopped 85 homes from coming. The Winchester Model Railroad Club needs a new home and we are going to rebuild the circa 1880s train station that was here. We are also working with a local nonprofit to hopefully get a caboose.

Jim Clevenger the president of the Winchester Model Railroad Club says they've modeled in HO scale which is 1/87th of the full size. The club was founded in 1982 and had its headquarters in Winchester until the railroad sold the property. Their plan is to have a replica of the building that once stood on the property that was owned by the B&O Railroad and behind it, they plan to have a 36 x 60 open room where they plan to construct a model railroad,

The project is being overseen by Patrick Sowers and Dave Holliday Construction, Inc. of Winchester, who contributed the first \$100,000 towards the goal.

The Town of Middletown is proud to announce that Clerk Christina Smith, has earned the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC), which is awarded by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC), Inc. IIMC grants the CMC designation only to municipal clerks who complete demanding education requirements; and have a record of significant contributions to their local government, community, and state. We take immense pride in Christina's educational accomplishments and achievement of this milestone.

If you have not already heard the great news. The Town of Middletown is set to receive the largest grant in the locality's history. Town Council voted unanimously to accept nearly \$2.5 million from the state to improve and maintain water quality.

The grant, which Town Manager Les Morefield explained took about nine months to secure, comes from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The money will be used to meet limitations on nitrogen and phosphorus in the town's water supply. It will help fund various operations at the town's wastewater treatment plant including processing, flow equalization, disinfection, and pumping.

This is such a blessing for the town. It is a big deal for all of us, and a real feather in our town manager's hat. It will benefit every taxpayer. It will allow the town to keep rates steady. We cannot commend Town Manager Les Morefield enough in all his efforts and hard work to obtain this grant on behalf of the town.

Lastly the town had a very successful 13th annual Car, Truck & Tractor Show. We raised a total of \$4,000 which will benefit the town's annual July 4th Celebration. A big thanks to our sponsors who donate year after year and the volunteers for their time supporting the event. A big shout out to City National Bank and Thomas A Lash, Esq. for their generous financial support. And to all the donors who provided lavish door prizes and raffle items. It is all of you that make these community events a success. We thank you.

Please remember when mowing your grass do NOT blow or discharge grass clippings or debris on to the roadways or sidewalks. This is for the safety of our motor cyclists along with water runoff and clogging the town's storm drains. (Town Code § 6-1)

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

Trick or Treat will take place on Tuesday October 31, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. If you will be handing out candy, please make sure your place is well lit. And for those of you trick or treating please make sure you are visible and not darting out in the roadways. Let us all practice safety and look out for one another. Use caution if you are out and about driving through town.

No handheld devices while driving. Phone Down. It is the Law. A person who violates 46.2-818.2 is subject to a fine of \$125 for the first offense and \$250 for the second and subsequent offenses. If you are pulled over for holding a handheld personal communications device, act in the same manner you would for any traffic stop. You will not be asked to hand over your device. Keep in mind that what you are doing with the device is irrelevant, it is the act of HOLDING the device while driving that is illegal.

If you have police matters, please do not call the Town office staff. This creates confusion, possible miscommunications and takes up unnecessary time in having an officer respond to the complaint. For all non-emergency police issues please contact the Middletown Police Department directly Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 540-868-0535. Only leave a voice message at the Middletown Police Department if the return call is for administrative or information only.

All non-life-threatening matters which require an officer please contact Frederick County non-emergency dispatch at 540-662-6162. If you have an emergency, please call 911. All calls for service must first go through Frederick County dispatch. Frederick County dispatch will contact the officer/deputy on duty who will be handling the complaint. This will ensure that all calls are handled properly and in an efficient & timely manner.

From the Treasurer

Real Estate and Personal Property bills will be mailed late October and will be due on December 5, 2023. Please remember if you have sold, traded, disposed of and/or purchased a vehicle you must update your information with Frederick County so that the Town of Middletown can bill you correctly. The Town can only bill what Frederick County reports to our office.

To contact the personal property division of Frederick County please call (540) 665-5681 ext. 1

From the Planning & Zoning Department

Hello citizens, reminder all trash must be placed curbside in a trash can. Our trash company requires it. It is an unsightly nuisance when animal(s) get into trash bags laying curbside. This creates trash blowing throughout the town and onto neighboring properties. We appreciate your attention in this matter and our trash company thanks you for your compliance. Large items of card board should be taken to the landfill and placed in the recyclables.

As property owners, should you decide to build a fence, deck, patio or shed a zoning permit must be completed along with a detailed drawing of your proposed project. The contractor should apply for/or have a Town of Middletown business license. Forms can be picked up at the Town office or found online at www.middletownva.gov When in doubt please feel free to contact the town office. (540) 869-2226 ext. 4 or zoning@middletownva.gov



From the Clerk

Christina Smith

Thank you to all those who continue to update their contact information with the town office. Telephone numbers are very important to the staff in the case of an emergency or to discuss your account. Email is also a way we can communicate with you regarding account matters or issues at your property. Please feel free to email me your current contact information. clerk@middletownva.gov We still have a good bit of contact information that needs to be updated. Those who have gotten rid of their landlines the town has no contact information on file for you.

Yard sale season is still upon us, please make sure you get a yard sale permit. If you post signs, they must be ***free standing*** and not attached to any utility poles or roadway signs. Signage must be removed immediately following your yard sale. The yard sale permit and the rules & regulations can be found online at www.middletownva.gov

The town offers online payments for your convenience. You will need your account number in order to get started. Once there you can register your account and set up the many features that make paying your bill(s) easy such as automatic and recurring payments, text and email reminders, paperless statements, etc. Please go to www.middletownva.gov and check it out. You may also pay over the phone, which is available 24/7 by calling (855)844-0226. If you need assistance registering your account, please feel free to contact the town office.

Homeowners, please remember if you are having contracted work done at your home such as landscaping, roofing, plumbing, electrical, additions, fencing and decks, etc., please make sure the contractor(s) has a valid Town of Middletown business license. This helps ensure you are dealing with a legitimate business and if recourse needs to be taken, we have information on file for the business that we can provide to you. No one should be soliciting business door to door in town limits without a Town of Middletown business license.

As always, all utility payments are due by the due date indicated or by the cut-off date. If the bill is not paid in full by the cut-off date, service will be disconnected for non-payment and an additional fee of \$100 will be added to your account that must be paid before services are restored. Cut-off \$50/cut-on \$50. If you have any questions, or need assistance paying your bill please contact the town office. Please call before the account is past due.

For information regarding the Town of Middletown please visit the town's website www.middletownva.gov



From the Maintenance Department

Les Morefield

Please make sure the water meter on your property is always free and clear. This is the property owner/tenant's responsibility. The meter should never be covered by any type of over growth including but not limited to; grass, weeds, bushes, vehicles, boats, trailers, etc. This can cause serious problems in the event of an emergency if we are unable to find and/or access the meter. The meter should be visible and most importantly easy to access. Please take the time to make sure the water meter in your yard is accessible.

Yard waste pick-up is in full swing and will continue through Monday December 4, 2023. If a holiday falls on a Monday, yard waste will be picked up the next day.

Please review the guidelines for yard waste. **Any yard waste that does not meet the required guidelines will be left curbside.** Yard waste collection will be every Monday, and must be placed curbside by 8:00 a.m. Yard waste consists of grass trimmings and leaves which CANNOT weigh more than 40 lbs. Branches or twigs can be **NO LONGER** than four (4) feet in length and **NO LARGER** than twelve (12) inches in diameter and must be **tied in bundles** (no wire or plastic string). Yard waste must be placed in biodegradable or paper yard waste bags only, **NO PLASTIC BAGS.** Yard waste should not be placed curbside until the morning of collection. This helps keep the community neat and free of clutter and ensures the bags have not been compromised due to weather. Rain soaked or damaged bags that rip or tear during pick up will be the responsibility of the homeowner/tenant to clean up. If you have any questions, please contact Public Works (540) 869-7731.

If you notice a street light out, please contact the Public Works Department at 540-869-7731. Please provide the following information. Your name, your phone number, the street light address and the pole number if possible. We will then contact Rappahannock Electric regarding the outage.

When out on your walks with your pet(s) please be considerate and pickup their waste. It is unlawful to allow feces deposited by his/her animal to remain on any public highway, street, sidewalk, part of other public property, or on private property without written consent of the owner thereof or his agent.

Penalty – Any person who knowingly violates this Ordinance shall be guilty of a littering infraction and shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$25.00 per occurrence. (Middletown Town Code § 3-8)

Please take a minute to read the outdoor water saving tips provided on the next page. We hear from a lot of folks in the warmer months that their water & sewer bills have gone up substantially and think they have a leak. To avoid this from happening to you take a minute to review the tips provided. If you think you have a leak, please feel free to call the Public Works Department and we will be glad to come out and check it out (540)869-7731. If you have a billing question, please call the town office for assistance (540) 869-2226.



12 Ways to Conserve Water Outdoors

During these warmer months, we spend more time outdoors tending to our lawns, growing gardens, and washing our cars. All of these activities require water. More than half of the average household's water occurs outdoors. As a result, your water bill can see a significant increase during the next few months. Using these simple tips will reduce your water bill and save you money.

1. Inspect your garden hose and irrigation system for leaks. Check hose connectors to make sure rubber washers are in place.
2. Add a shut-off nozzle to your hose. You can save about 5-7 gallons each minute your hose is on.
3. Put out a rain barrel. Collecting rain water is an excellent (and FREE) way to water your indoor plants or wash your car.
4. Water outdoor plants in the morning or late evening. Due to the colder temperatures, less water will be lost from evaporation. Avoid watering on windy and hot days.
5. Use a broom to clean off outside living areas (decks, porches, driveways), rather than hosing them off.
6. When cutting the lawn, set the mower blade to 2-3 inches high. The longer grass will shade the soil, allowing for better moisture retention.
7. Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades tear grass, making it susceptible to disease, and causing it to appear tan and worn.
8. Only water your lawn when necessary. Over-watering results in the growth of shallow root systems that are easily damaged. If rainfall is not sufficient, water your lawn once a week. This routine will encourage healthier and deeper grass roots.
9. Mulch around plants and flower beds to keep the soil cool, reduce moisture evaporation, promote growth and control weeds.
10. Take your car to the car wash, rather than washing it at home. Most commercial car washes recycle the water.
11. Wash your pet outdoors in an area of your lawn that needs watering.
12. Don't water your lawn during a drought. The grass may turn brown, but it is not dead. Your lawn will turn dormant during dry and hot spells, but it will revive itself when wetter weather returns.

Information Courtesy of Dollar Energy Fund



Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

Save the date: Veterans Day ceremony Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. In case of rain, it will be held at the Middletown Fire Hall. Our guest speaker will be Brigadier General Doumont.

Brigadier General Doumont received a Regular Army commission in the Medical Service Corps in August 1988. She spent much of her career commanding at various levels in combat and on the home front. After serving her initial tour on active duty, Brigadier General Doumont resigned her Regular Army commission to become an Army Reserve Soldier, a decision which allowed her to serve in a part-time capacity while raising her family.

Brigadier General Doumont served as the Assistant Surgeon General – Force Management, Mobilization, Readiness & Reserve Affairs at the Office of the Surgeon General in Falls Church, Virginia while dual hatted as the Deputy Commanding General for the Army Reserve Medical Command in Pinellas Park, Florida. Earlier assignments include J9, Director of Reserve Affairs for the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command in Norfolk, Virginia and commander for Detachment 7, 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) Operational Command Post (Forward) which deployed to Kuwait as the medical enabling command for U.S. Central Command in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Resolute Support and Inherent Resolve.

Brigadier General Doumont is a graduate of the Joint Combined Warfighter School and the U.S. Army War College where she received a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies. She also holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Old Dominion University and a Doctor of Professional Studies in Organizational Leadership from Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia. She was honored with the Shenandoah University Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019 and is a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit.

Since retiring, Brigadier General Doumont has worked for the Valley Health System and continues to serve our current and retired service members through the Reserve Organization of America and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Brigadier General Doumont resides in Winchester, Virginia with her husband of 35 years, Joe. They have three sons, Major Nicholas Doumont (a resident of Middletown, VA), US Air Force Reserve, Major Patrick Doumont, US Army and Andrew Doumont, doctoral student at University Colorado, Boulder. They are also blessed with three wonderful daughters-in-law, Sullivan, Mary, and Sierra and five grandchildren.

We still have bricks available to honor or memorialize family, friends and loved ones who have served and/or supported our military. Please inquire with the town office if you are interested in purchasing a brick. Applications can be found on the town website as well. www.middletownva.gov



Middletown Heritage Society

Paige Ulevich

The Middletown Heritage Society will have our next meeting on Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 12 noon at Daily Buzz Café located at 7815 Main Street, Middletown. We will hold November's meeting at the same location on Thursday November 9, 2023 at noon. All are welcome to join us.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact President Paige Ulevich at (571) 445-0889

Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

Please support our FUND DRIVE by mail. We will be mailing out fund drive letters around the beginning of October. Funds are used for fire and EMS equipment, station and apparatus up-keep, utilities, etc.

We need YOU! We are always looking for new members. Applications are available on our website (middletownfire.com) or at the fire station. You must be 16 years old to apply. Training is provided. If you are not interested in running fire and/or EMS calls, we can always use help with fund raising or with the Auxiliary. Being a member of a fire and rescue company is a great career path for young people! Come get started with us!



BINGO is held every Tuesday night! Doors open at 5 p.m. Early bird games followed by regular Bingo at 7 p.m. Concessions are available from our Auxiliary. An ATM is available, outside smoking areas are provided, and we have free coffee, tea, and water. Proceeds from Bingo pay for fire and EMS equipment. Come check it out, have some fun, and support YOUR fire and rescue company!

Mark your calendars for **BREAKFAST WITH SANTA!** November 25, 7-11 a.m. Come out for pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, and baked apples and visit with Santa!



Calendar of Events

September

September 25 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October

October 2 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 9 – Columbus Day – Town offices closed

October 10 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 21 – Lighting of the Luminaries (Dusk – South end of Main Street)

October 23 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 31 – Trick or Treat 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

November

November 6 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

November 7 – Election Day – Town offices closed

November 10 – Veterans Day Observed – Town offices closed

November 11 – Veterans Day Ceremony – Veterans Memorial @ 1:00 p.m.

November 13 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.



Please take a minute to review the Town's ordinance on grass, weeds or like vegetation as well as littering. When mowing or weeding it is unlawful to leave your grass clippings on the sidewalks and roadways.

Town Code section 6-2

Duty of owners, etc., of premises - To cut and remove tall grass and weeds.

a. It shall be unlawful for any person owning, occupying or having charge of any real estate or an interest therein, located within the corporate limits of the town, where the parcel is one acre or less, to allow grass, weeds, or like vegetation grow on the property to a height of no more than 10 inches.

b. Parcels greater in size than one acre that lies within 25 feet of the right of way boundary of a public roadway (except for interstate highways) must also keep the grass, weeds or like vegetation to a height of no more than 10 inches.

c. If any owner, occupant or person in charge of such land or interest therein shall fail to have such illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed within 7 days written notice of violation of this section, the town shall have the right to cut or remove such unlawful growth at the expense of the landowner, and such expense may be collected by the town as taxes are levied and collected. In addition, the owner shall pay a penalty of \$50.00 as a fine of this section.

d. Each day that any owner, occupant or person in charge of such land or interest shall fail to have such an illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed after the above mentioned 7 days has run shall constitute a separate offense. Subsequent offenses in the same calendar year shall double until the fine reaches \$200.00. The fine per calendar year is capped at \$2000.00.

e. This section shall not apply to any land used for agricultural or industrial purposes.

Please remember when mowing your grass do NOT blow or discharge grass clippings or debris on to the roadways or sidewalks. This is for the safety of our motor cyclists along with water runoff and clogging the storm drains. (Town Code § 6-1)