

A photograph of the Stafford Courthouse, a classical building with white columns and a red-tiled cupola, set against a clear blue sky. The word "STAFFORD" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the top, with "Virginia" written in a white, cursive script below it.

STAFFORD *Virginia*

**Celebrate Stafford's
350th Anniversary!**

**More Parking at
VRE Commuter Lots**

**Classes Start at Tech and
Research Park**

**Parks and Rec's
Winter Activities
Brochure**

COURTHOUSE

**Stafford County's
News & Information
Magazine
Winter 2013**



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Stafford By the Numbers...

- **2.2** Completed miles of an eventual 4 miles on the Belmont-Ferry Farm Trail.
- **196** New parking spaces in the Leeland Station VRE Commuter Lot.
- **234** New parking spaces at the Brooke VRE Commuter Lot.
- **1** New Community Development Services Center in which to get your permit and building questions answered.
- **10** Beautiful new Gateway signs coming soon to welcome visitors to the entrances to Stafford County.



Message from the Chairman

Hello and thank you for your interest in Stafford County! I am so excited to share this revised edition of *Activities* with you. For years, our Parks and Recreation Department has done a wonderful job of bringing you all of the seasonal activities they have planned for the community. We thought we could take their work and enhance it just a little to provide you with even more information about our community. Each quarter, we will bring you all the regular parks and recreational activities that you've come to expect over the years, but we'll add a news and information section in front of those listings so that you can be informed on important policies, issues, events and new initiatives that we are undertaking to make Stafford County a great place to live, work and raise a family.

We have so much of which we can be proud...high quality schools, safe neighborhoods, a diverse economy with good jobs for our citizens, and beautiful parks. We are looking forward to sharing news about all of these areas with you, and much, much more, so that you can be an educated citizen who helps us make the best decisions for our community.



Chairman Susan Stimpson

Susan Stimpson, Chairman of the Stafford Board of Supervisors

Get Ready to Celebrate! Stafford's 350th Anniversary is coming up.

From George Washington to Wayne Newton, Government Island to the new Tech and Research Center, the Trail to Freedom to the Belmont-Ferry Farm Trail, Stafford County has much to celebrate! In 2014, the County will commemorate its 350th Anniversary and salute our past, present and future.

Planning for the big celebration is being led by the 350th Blue Ribbon Planning Committee, which was appointed by the Board of Supervisors in 2011. This past July, the Board of Supervisors endorsed the activities, and committee members are working on the details. So far, the agenda includes: a "First Night Stafford" in December 2013; parade and commu-



nity celebration during Memorial Day Weekend 2014; July 4 entertainment before and after the July 4th fireworks display at Pratt Park; special events at Aquia Landing/Crow's Nest in September; participation in the Wings and Wheels Air Show at the Stafford Regional Airport in October, and finally, "Last Night Stafford" on December 31, 2014.

For more information, contact Sue Henderson, Program Director, at (540) 658-8681, or via email at sue-

henderson@earthlink.net. Meetings of the Committee and the subcommittees are also listed on the Stafford County website at www.staffordcountyva.gov. Get involved and help plan our 350th anniversary!



Board Continues to Achieve Financial Goals for Stafford

Fitch Rating Service announced recently an upgrade to Stafford's bond rating for lease revenue bonds from AA- to AA citing superior economic and financial performance, following on the heels of Stafford's general obligation bond upgrade to AA last year by Standard and Poor's.

"This upgrade reflects the strength of Stafford County's commitment to fiscal discipline and accountability," said Board of Supervisors Susan Stimpson. "In 2010, our Board adopted a 10-point economic development plan that outlined our vision and we aggressively adopted the practices within our economic plan, to include tax cuts, spending cuts, increased reserves and a focus on economic development. Our most recent bond rating upgrade is further confirmation that the Board's long-range plan is working. Investors and businesses reward those who provide a vision and have the discipline to follow through on it."

Stafford adheres to several strict financial policies that include maintaining a balanced budget, borrowing money only for capital projects, maintaining reserves, estimating

revenues conservatively and spending less than adopted budgets that have improved the County's financial standing.

Most recently, FY12 ended with \$5.1 million positive results of operations. The average residential tax bill has also decreased 11% (inflation adjusted) over the last five years.

Prudent management of Stafford's financial resources has led to consistent positive financial results and savings for the County. In fact, the Stafford Board of Supervisors passed a resolution earlier this year to revise the County's financial guidelines and policies to reflect reaching milestones for improving debt ratios and reserves much earlier than officials had originally planned.

This year marks 30 consecutive years that Stafford has received the prestigious Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States.

VRE Commuter Parking Lots Expand

By the end of 2012, Stafford County and the Virginia Railway Express will have added 430 commuter parking spaces to the Leeland and Brooke Commuter Rail Stations. 2011 was a record year for ridership on the VRE. While having more riders is a good thing, it makes for some crowded parking lots. Stafford County was proactive in meeting the need for parking places by working with VRE to find a solution while being wise stewards of taxpayer money.



VRE put out an invitation for bids for the expansion of the Leeland lot in 2011. The bids came in higher than the funding level would allow for expansion at both lots which were already over capacity. Rather than deferring one of these projects, or using County tax dollars to make up the difference, Stafford County and VRE worked together to reissue the bid with cost-saving measures. These efforts resulted in a combined project savings of approximately \$900,000 and allowed VRE and Stafford to move forward immediately on both commuter lot expansions. Each lot cost just over \$1,000,000 to construct. The Leeland lot opened officially in September 2012, and the Brooke lot is scheduled to open in December 2012.

Stafford Board of Supervisors joined other officials to open the expanded parking area at the Leeland VRE commuter lot. From left to right: Supervisor Paul Milde, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates Bill Howell, Chairman of the Stafford Board of Supervisors Susan Stimpson; Supervisor Ty Schieber; and VRE Chief Executive Officer Doug Allen.



New Tech and Research Center Increases Educational Choices

The Stafford Board of Supervisors, their academic partners, George Mason University, the University of Mary Washington and Germanna Community College, and special guests, U.S. Congressman Rob Wittman and Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates Bill Howell, celebrated the grand opening of the Stafford Technology and Research Center with a ribbon cutting Thursday, September 6, 2012.

“By increasing the presence and educational opportunities offered by UMW, Germanna, GMU and others, we are branding Stafford and the Quantico Region as a proactive, progressive 21st Century employment center,” said Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Susan Stimpson, Falmouth District. “The Technology and Research Center will help lay the groundwork for a full-fledged technology and research park. We know that having a highly skilled and educated workforce will draw more businesses and jobs to Stafford. The center will pull educational pieces together, and serve as the hub of activities as we begin to pursue national security-related research opportunities.”

The center’s convenient location just 600 yards from the South Gate of the Marine Corps Base Quantico makes it the ideal location to offer classes in Informatics, Data Science and Bio Sciences, particularly as they relate to homeland security, defense and intelligence efforts. There are over 40 private high-tech employers and 30 public agencies and support operations near the center, which is just 25 miles south of the Capital Beltway.

“The education provided by the center will give employees the skills sought after by the kind of businesses that bring jobs with higher salaries. In turn, that strengthens the local tax base,” said Supervisor Paul Milde, Aquia District, and chairman of the Board’s Community and Economic Development Committee. “Over time, having our own research and technology park provides opportunities for partnerships between private industry and academia. The community and our local schools will be enhanced by these types of activities occurring in Stafford.”

The Board of Supervisors has worked diligently to transform Boswell’s Corner. This work began more than a decade ago with the conversion of an old ball field into what is today Quantico Corporate Center, one of the region’s premier office parks. The Board has also successfully sought and won grant monies for preliminary engineering and design for an eventual Route 1 widening; advocated for Defense Access Road monies to improve the Telegraph Road and Route 1 intersection; approved a Redevelopment Master Plan for the area; increased the Floor Area Ratio to allow for a more dense build-out of real

estate; and executed MOA/MOUs with public and private institutions to advance the creation of an atmosphere conducive to technology and research park build-out. The Board has also worked with the Association of University Research Parks to craft a vision, mission and the beginnings of a business plan, which will soon lead to a chartered organization.

Supervisor Jack Cavalier, Griffis-Widewater, said, “Stafford has for almost a century supported the cause of the Marine Corps and our national defense. We believe this next step will further



Classroom space in the new Tech and Research Center

demonstrate Stafford’s commitment to the cause of freedom by providing a place that is closer to home for critical national security-related research to take place – just off base.”

The Board of Supervisors signed a Memorandum of Understanding with George Mason University, the University of Mary Washington, and Germanna Community College to provide classes at the center in 2010.



The ribbon cutting for the new center



Rocky Pen Run Reservoir Set To Open in 2014

The largest County project in Stafford is currently under construction in the Hartwood District. The Rocky Pen Run Reservoir covers 521 acres and will hold 5.3 billion gallons of water when completed. The whole project consists of a river intake pumping station, an earthen dam, a state-of-the-art water treatment facility, two large distribution pipelines, and significant environmental mitigation.

“As more citizens and businesses move to Stafford, we have to provide them with services,” said Hartwood District Supervisor Gary Snellings. “Water is a basic service that they expect.”

Census figures from 2010 show that from 2000 to 2010, Stafford’s population grew by almost 40%. The population was 92,446 in 2000; it is 131,067 in 2012, which is an increase of 1.6%. In addition, more businesses are coming to Stafford, bring-



ing with them good jobs for citizens. This growth in population, businesses and jobs has created a greater demand for water in Stafford, and County officials are confident that Rocky Pen Run will meet these needs, and then some.

Rocky Pen Run Reservoir will be a third water source for Stafford, drawing water from the Rappahannock, and will provide an additional safe yield of 12 million gallons per day (mgd), which is almost double the safe yield capacity of the Utilities system as it exists today. The dam is scheduled to be completed in early 2014. Filling the reservoir is expected to begin immediately after the completion of the dam and will take two to five years to fill completely. Water Treatment Facility testing will begin in early 2014. The water treatment facility is expected to be fully operational by the spring of 2014.

Stafford County Opens a New "One Stop Shop" Business-Friendly Community Development Services Center

The opening of the new Community Development Services Center (CDSC), highlights Stafford County’s continuing commitment to streamlining permit and planning processes for residents and businesses, making Stafford a premier place to do business in Virginia.

“The opening of the CDSC marks our steady progress in our plan to provide a healthy business climate in Stafford and an efficient process



A new space where customer service is a priority.

for our residents who may want to build a deck, finish a basement or have other needs. We are leading in the economic development arena and in job growth” said

Susan Stimpson, Chairman of the Stafford Board of Supervisors, Falmouth District. In addition, the County has created a team to help develop businesses and maintain their success. Brenda Schulte, the Community Development Service Center manager, and Bethany Miller, business retention and expansion manager in Economic Development, are working directly with businesses to assist in their growth and success in Stafford.

“Our goal has always been to make doing business easier in Stafford, both for our citizens and businesses,” said Supervisor Paul Milde, Aquia District.

The Board and staff evaluated the development fees and review processes and recommended amendments to the fees to allow minor revisions to proffer amendments, conditional use permits and site plans. They also streamlined the permit application process and reduced the steps that applicants had to go through when they made revisions to their plans.

The center is located in the former Public Works and Planning and Zoning departments on the first floor of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road in Stafford.



Frequently Called Numbers

All listed numbers are the (540) calling area unless otherwise indicated.

County Administration	658-4541
Animal Control	658-7387
Assessment	658-4129
Budget.....	658-8617
Circuit Court.....	658-8750
Citizens Assistance	658-4516
Commonwealth's Attorney	658-8780
Commissioner of the Revenue	658-4132
Community Development Services Center.....	658-8650
Cooperative Extension Service.....	658-8000
County Attorney's Office	658-8636
General District Court	658-8766
Crime Solvers	658-2020
Economic Development	658-8681
Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services.....	658-7200
Health Department	659-3101
Human Resources	658-8628
Jury Duty	658-8750
Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court	658-8755
Landfill	658-4590
Litter Prevention & Recycling Office.....	658-8680
Magistrates Office.....	659-2968
Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	658-4871
Planning and Zoning.....	658-8668
Public Works	658-8650
Public Information	658-4893
Purchasing.....	658-8614
School Board	658-6000
Senior Citizens' Center	658-5116
Sheriff's Office.....	658-4450
Social Services.....	658-8720
TDD	658-4553
Treasurer.....	658-8700
Utilities.....	658-8630
Utilities (after hours emergencies).....	658-4857
Volunteer Services	658-4516
Voter Registrar	658-4000
For departments not listed	658-8600

Call 911 for Emergencies

Call the following numbers for non-emergencies:

Fire and Rescue	658-4400
Sheriff's Office	658-4440

Stafford Online

Official Website—www.staffordcountyva.gov

Includes names and contact information for elected officials and staff; meeting times and places; agendas; videos; tax rates; and history.

Stafford Alert—www.staffordalert.com

Provides emergency information to cell phones, home phones and email. Information includes road closings, cancellations and weather updates.



Facebook—Stafford County Government

Provides an interactive option for users to learn more about the Stafford County Government.



Twitter—@staffordvagov

Twitter is especially useful during an emergency. Next to Stafford Alert, it's the fastest way to get information.



Pinterest Stafford County, VA

See more pictures and information about Stafford-County.

Did you know....

That the stone to build the White House and the U.S. Capitol was quarried right here in Stafford County?

Government Island, located in the northeastern part of Stafford, is an historic 18th and 19th century quarry site that provided Aquia sandstone for the construction of the White House and the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Government Island was purchased by Pierre L'Enfant in 1791 to provide stone to build the nation's new capital city — Washington, D.C.

Today, the site is now a natural park preserve and archaeological site. Government Island contains a trail and interpretive signs to help depict its rich, nationally significant history. Government Island is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



In the winter. It is located at 191 Coal Landing Road in Stafford. For more information, call (540) 658-8681 or visit www.tourstaffordva.com.

Look inside for:

Priceless

Activities

Dec • Jan • Feb

Winter 2013



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Volleyball**
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Archery
(pp. 20, 28)

**Spring Break
Camps** (pp. 15, 32)

Water Aerobics
(p. 7)

**Nova Scotia & New
England Cruise**
(p. 31)



Stafford County Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities
(www.staffordparks.com)

Spring booklet release: 2/6/13

