

STAFFORD *Virginia*

SUMMERTIME

Parks and Recreation
activities inside!

Cost-saving watering tips

Volunteer Opportunities
with our Summer
Feeding Program

Where it began

The Stafford Training
School Story

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ON THE COVER



Tourism is a boost to Stafford's economy. Did you know there are over 2,200 hotel rooms located in Stafford? Those rooms host everything from visitors to Quantico and the National Museum of the Marine Corps, to soccer, lacrosse, football, baseball, softball, swim and field hockey teams, to visitors to Stafford's many historical attractions. Last year,

those visitors increased our transient occupancy tax revenue by almost 7% or \$1,787,916. Sports tourism is becoming a significant contributor to Stafford's economy, with two events, Stafford Soccer's St. Patrick's Day tournament and Virginia Swimming's Senior Championship Meet, having more than \$1 million in economic impact. In 2018, swim meets alone are expected to have more than \$10 million in impact and soccer tournaments. As well, Stafford hosts tournaments at our Chichester Park baseball and softball complex. Stafford is known as a sports tourism destination, and our Department of Tourism is working to attract more interest every day. Visit www.tourstaffordva.com to discover and learn more about Stafford activities.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We are always evaluating our methods of reaching out to our citizens, looking for ways to streamline the flow of information and utilizing current best practices. We have recently reorganized our Public Information Office into the Office of Community Engagement because we want to engage you, our citizens, more comprehensively. We now live in a digital world that extends our engagement options through several different mechanisms, such as our website and social media. Our Board is committed to achieving a high level of transparency and sharing what we know is an integral part of that plan.

That is why it is the right to say goodbye to the Stafford magazine and to devote our time and resources to making news available online in a timely manner. Parks and Recreation will continue to print some of the parks quarterly catalog. Previously, we included the Parks' catalog in the magazine, which was sent to every address in Stafford. Now, the catalog will be available online, and dispersed throughout the county including local libraries, select businesses and County offices such as the Rowser Building, the Government Center and the Public Safety Building, for those who do not go online. More importantly, we will maximize the resources we have, which we never forget come from our citizens and patrons.

Through the careful use of our revenues and our financial practices, we were able to break ground on a new Fire and Rescue Station 14, located at the intersection of Shelton Shop Road and Garrisonville Road. The new firehouse will replace the temporary mobile unit that replaced a 100-year-old home that our personnel shared with small critters. The new, cutting-edge fire station will enhance our efforts to serve the Garrisonville corridor.

Our new Animal Shelter is scheduled to be operational by early June. The 17,400 square foot building nearly triples the capacity of our old shelter, and it will provide more space for animals to await adoption. The new shelter is located at 195 Wyche Road, just off Courthouse Road at the I-95 interchange.

Significant changes are coming to the I-95 interchange at Courthouse Road. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) \$149.4 million project will modernize the interchange into a diverging diamond and realign it to intersect with Route 1 at Stafford Hospital. Courthouse Road will be widened to four lanes



as far west as Ramoth Church Road in a \$35.9 million public-private partnership between Stafford County and VDOT. The road projects look to finish in July 2020.

All these improvements will further enhance the revitalization of the courthouse area into a downtown Stafford. This plan is under development right now, and we will include community input as the process unfolds.

Lastly, I would like to make you aware of a new council that will be helping to meet the needs of our region. I serve on the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, and I am the GWRC representative to a newly established group, the Be Well Rappahannock Council. The Be Well Rappahannock (BWR) is a collaborative comprised of agencies representative of the community, with a deep concern for the health and well-being of the residents of the Rappahannock Region. The purpose of this council is to identify and promote the awareness of mental health, domestic violence and drug-related concerns impacting the Rappahannock Region. I am passionate about these issues affecting our community and the opportunity to strengthen local resources for those in need.

Have a wonderful summer and please take the time to enjoy all the incredible outdoor opportunities in Stafford County listed at www.staffordparks.com!

Meg Bohmke
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

* Chairman Meg Bohmke is featured in the photo below with Luke Shelton, a student at Brooke Point High School. He is the fourth generation in the Shelton family to serve at the Brooke Fire and Rescue.

LIBRARY RENAMED FOR HOWELL



You might have noticed a change at the former England Run Library. The Board of Supervisors voted to rename the library after William James Howell, known to most people as Bill Howell. Howell retired from his seat in the House of Delegates last December after 29 years of service, serving as Speaker of the House for the last 15. Howell, a long-time Stafford County resident, held the Speaker spot for the second longest time in General Assembly history.

During his service, he was a champion for Stafford County at the state level on transportation, education, economic development, historic preservation and other issues important to the county. Howell's decisions seemed to always track with the best interests of Stafford County. A true public servant, he was known for meeting with his constituents personally. He and his wife, Cessie, have been integral parts of the Stafford County community, sacrificing their time and putting their efforts toward the betterment of the community.

Visit www.librarypoint.org/howell to learn about all of the wonderful books and events happening at the library!



**17
JUNE**

CABIN HILL
Modern Bluegrass

**15
JULY**

ELBY BRASS
Funk & Rock Street
Brass

**19
AUG**

**ENGLISH
CHANNEL**
British Rock & Pop

**5:00 p.m., Pratt Park,
Admission is Free
Rain or Shine
Concessions Available
www.StaffordParks.com**

**Stafford County
Parks, Recreation and
Community Facilities**

STAFFORD EXPANDING SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM

Hartwood Elementary School will become the newest location for Stafford County's Kids on the Go Summer Food Service Program, joining Kate Waller Barrett Elementary in ensuring kids receive nutritious meals when school is not in session.

With the program beginning the summer of 2016, this effort has served over 1700 lunches to children over the last two summers. As an initiative of the Virginia Department of Health, Stafford County partnered with the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank to help make this the program happen. Kate Waller Barrett Elementary was selected initially because of its location to underserved youth who rely on free or reduced lunches during the school year. Happily, the program has expanded to Hartwood Elementary School.

Summer can be a tough time for children and families who struggle financially. Kids on the Go aims to fill that void. While this program targets underserved children, the program doesn't discriminate as all children are welcome to have lunch at both school locations this summer.

Volunteers are the heart of the program, and more are needed this summer with the addition of the new location. If you are interested in joining "Sammie," our Summer Program mascot, or helping out, please contact Stafford County Human Services at (540) 658-4622.



Warm weather is here and with it comes long summer days that can be rough on lawns and landscaping. How do you protect your investment, use responsible watering methods and keep your water bill under control? The good news is there are steps you can take to keep things looking nice without wasting water or breaking the bank. As for your lawn, too much water is more harmful than helpful. Learning good watering practices can benefit your yard in the end.

Plant and Lawn Selection

It can be tempting to buy the multitudes of brightly colored plants at your local garden center, but the best plants to buy are those that are native to the Mid-Atlantic Region. Native plants and grasses grow best in the climate, require less water and are more sustainable. Visit the Virginia Cooperative Extension website at www.ext.vt.edu for more information on native plants.

Watering Practices

A new lawn requires a little extra watering for the first couple of weeks, especially a sod lawn. Stafford Utilities has instituted a New Sod Establishment Credit. Homeowners establishing new sod may be able to receive a reduced water bill for lawn watering during the establishment period. If you have further questions, contact the Utilities Department at 540-658-8616. An average lawn needs only one inch of water a week. Over-watering your grass can drown the roots, causing them to rot. Deep and infrequent watering that thoroughly soaks the root zone to a four-inch depth maintains a healthy root system and reduces weed infestation. Thatch and aerate your lawn for better water filtration.



Over-watering plants can also be detrimental. Organic mulches, such as aged manure, compost, bark or woodchips can help retain moisture and minimize evaporation.

When purchasing an automatic sprinkler, make sure you install a timer on the faucet. Carefully position your sprinkler so that it does not water the sidewalk, driveway or street. One way to gain "free" water is to position your downspout so that it drains onto the lawn and garden areas rather than sidewalks or the driveway. The best time to water is early morning when evaporation loss and the impact of the wind are lowest. Evening watering is not as good because it keeps leaves and grass wet for hours, making them more susceptible to fungal diseases.

You can find these tips and more water conservation tips on the Stafford Utilities page of Stafford's website at www.staffordcountyva.gov. If you have questions, please call (540) 658-8616 during business hours or (540) 658-4857 after hours for emergencies.

Next year marks the 80th anniversary of the Stafford Training School building, currently known as The Rowser Building. The original school building sits off Jefferson Davis Highway south of the Courthouse in Stafford, Virginia. The building currently serves as a senior community center for Stafford Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. It has been used for many things over the years; as a school, a vocational center, School Board offices and Stafford Parks offices. However, its most important role was not as a building, but as a symbol of and witness to the highs and lows of the African-American experience in Stafford County.

Before 1939, the highest level of education a black child could receive in Stafford County was the seventh grade. Students who desired higher education would pay tuition to attend school in the City of Fredericksburg, a situation that effectively barred several children from progressing in school. Stafford native Henry Harrison Poole, the namesake of Stafford's H.H. Poole Middle School, was an African-American educator who served as Supervisor of Colored Schools in Stafford. He also served in a similar position in King George County from 1930 to 1953. In 1933, he organized a league of parents to raise funds to purchase land for a school that would serve African-American students through high school graduation. Understanding the worth of educating their children, the parents successfully raised the money over a challenging six-year period. In 1939, the Public Works Administration (PWA) built the Stafford Training school as part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" program. The school was one of 1,390 schools built by the PWA in 48 states between 1933 and 1939.

At that time, PWA employed a high-standard of craftsmanship in building the school according to the policies and standards of the WPA. The clean lines and well-lit interiors from the many windows are still in evidence

today. "Pot belly" wood stoves initially heated the Training School. Students also used second-hand books from their white counterparts. Until 1949, students used outdoor privies located behind the ball field. Constructed on a floodplain, the school's parking lot and playing field, unfortunately, flooded during storms.

In 1960, five students, from what was then known as H.H. Poole High School, attempted to



Rowser Building



Historical Marker

integrate Stafford High School. It was a courageous act and the first of its kind in the area. Stevenson Tyler, Lois Vines, Gary Mercer, Rudolph Beverly and Sherman White were unsuccessful, but their efforts eventually began desegregation in Stafford and the Greater Fredericksburg area. In 1961, Doretha and Cynthia Montague attended Stafford Elementary, and one year later, African-American students began attending Stafford High School.

THE STAFFORD TRAINING SCHOOL



In essence, the students who attended school at the Stafford Training School, H.H. Poole High School, led desegregation efforts in Stafford County and the Fredericksburg region. Their ranks include educators, veterans, businessmen and women, pastors, historians and all other manners of successful community members, all inspired by a little school built because their parents wanted more for their children.

The school, now known as The Rowser Building, is open to visitors during regular business hours and features an African-American history wall depicting the historical contributions of African-Americans in Stafford County.

*Information from this article came from the application prepared by Norman Schools for the Stafford Training School to be on the National Register of Historic Places.

ROWSER TIMELINE

1933

Henry Harrison Poole formed a league of parents to raise funds to purchase the land for the school

1939

The Public Works Administration built the Stafford Training School

1946

Practice begins of bussing Stafford African-American high school students out of the county to accredited schools

1954

The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision which held that "separate but equal" facilities for blacks was inherently unfair

1954

Virginia starts the practice of "massive resistance" to public school desegregation

1960

Five African-American students attempt to integrate all-white Stafford High School

1961

Cynthia and Doretha Montague integrate Stafford Elementary School, the first successful integration in the Fredericksburg area

1962

The first integration of high schools in Fredericksburg and Stafford and King George counties takes place

1964

In the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed major forms of discrimination including racial segregation in public schools

NEWS. ALERTS. ALL STAFFORD.

WE'RE GOING DIGITAL.
FIND AND FOLLOW US TODAY.

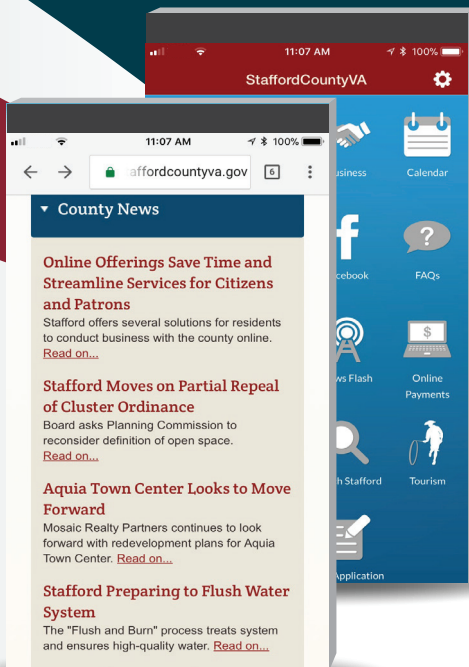
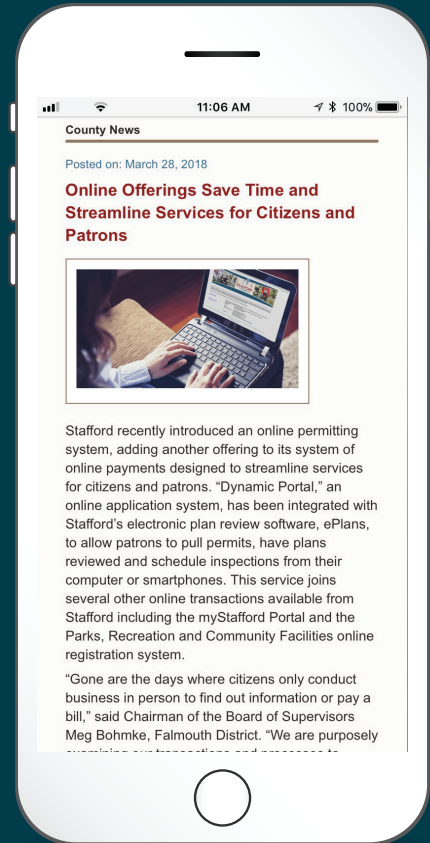
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