

STAFFORD *Virginia*

**Warm Days
Are Here
Again!**

Stafford County's News
and Information Magazine
Summer 2013



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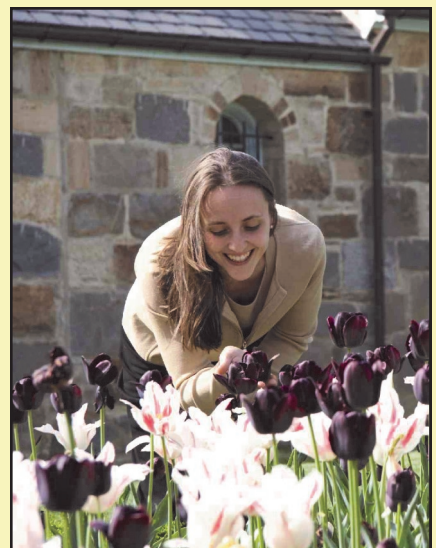
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On the Cover

The gardens at the Gari Melcher's Home and Studio at Belmont draw many visitors each spring and summer, as do many other sites in Stafford. After reading the story on page 6, you will find out that not only can you have fun at our parks, but you will learn valuable history lessons at many of them such as Government Island and the newly opened Civil War Park.





Message from the Chairman

Public safety is a Board of Supervisors priority for Stafford, and we take your safety very seriously year round. Warmer weather means more time outdoors, either at Stafford's parks or on the roads traveling for vacations. We hope that you keep a few safety precautions in mind as you enjoy your summer here in Stafford or wherever your travels may take you.

If you are staying close to home and plan to visit the Historic Port of Falmouth on the Rappahannock River, Stafford County Parks and Recreation staff has practiced an ongoing safety campaign every summer at the Historic Port of Falmouth on the Rappahannock River. While the Rappahannock River may appear calm and beautiful on the surface, currents can be strong, and debris and holes can trap unsuspecting swimmers underwater. We know everyone loves to visit the river, go fishing, or stroll along its banks, but for your safety please use extreme caution near the Rappahannock River.

If your summer plans will take you on a road trip, please be aware that the I-95 Express Lanes project will be very active. The Telegraph Road bridge over I-95 near Quantico was closed April 1 and will be closed for approximately nine months. Crews are removing and building a new Telegraph Road bridge that will run

over I-95 and the future 95 express lanes. All Telegraph Road traffic will be detoured to Russell Road or U.S. Route 1 to access both north and southbound I-95. Drivers can expect additional travel times during peak morning and afternoon rush hours when using the detours. You can sign up for construction updates and lane closure alerts at www.VAmegaprojects.com.

Of course, you could try a "staycation" and explore all of Stafford's beautiful parks this summer. Government Island, the Belmont-Ferry Farm Trail and the new Stafford Civil War Park are just a few places that will surprise visitors with their historic connections and environmental beauty. Wherever your curiosities or travels take you, I hope you enjoy a fun, happy and most importantly, a safe summer.



Susan Stimpson
Chairman of the Stafford Board of Supervisors

Stafford by the Numbers

21 Properties on the National Historic Register



Aquia Church



Moncure Conway House



*George Washington's
Boyhood Home at
Ferry Farm*



*Falmouth Historic
District*



*Stafford Training School
(Rowser Building)*

Stafford County has a total of 21 properties listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. Photos of five of them are shown here. For a complete listing, please visit the National Park Service Website at www.nps.gov/nr/.



Memorial Honors Stafford's Military Service Members

In 2012, the Board of Supervisors appointed an Armed Services Memorial Commission to create a memorial to honor all of Stafford's fallen military service members in wars and military operations over the last 200 years.

The members of the commission, Lt. Gen. Ron Christmas, USMC (Ret.), Delegate Mark Dudenhefer, a retired Marine and former Chairman of the Board, and Supervisor Gary Snellings, who represents the Hartwood District and is an Air Force veteran, first came up with a vision for the purpose of the memorial. They wanted to honor the residents from Stafford who have served in our nation's armed forces for more than 200 years to preserve freedom and democracy. The commission also envisioned a place for the public to recognize, honor and remember the sacrifice of these brave men and women and their families. Ultimately, they wished for a memorial to serve as a physical reminder that the preservation of freedom requires sacrifice.

Another goal of the commission is to provide a location for the community to come together.

"There are plans to improve the streetscape of the whole courthouse area," said Supervisor Gary Snellings, Hartwood District. "A memorial would be a beautiful addition to the campus and would give the public a place to gather for special days."

The memorial will be built upon the grassy area to the rear of the Stafford Government campus, located at 1300 Courthouse Road.

A student design competition was held in Stafford's high schools. The winning entry will become the design for the memorial. The winner, who will receive a \$1,500 scholarship, will be announced in early May.

For more information about the Commission, visit the Stafford website at www.staffordcountyva.gov and click on Boards and Commissions under the "Your Government" link. You can also watch a video of General Christmas describing the memorial.

350th Anniversary Website Unveiled!

Stafford's 350th Blue Ribbon Anniversary Committee is excited to unveil its new website dedicated to Stafford's year-long celebration in 2014.

The site, located at www.Stafford350.com, includes information about Stafford's history since 1664, events planned for 2014, and how residents and businesses can become involved in volunteering to assist with planning, helping at events, or to sponsor an event or program. The website is a major step forward for the Committee to start publicizing the many wonderful events and programs it has planned for next year.



On February 19, 2013, the Board of Supervisors endorsed several major programs and events for the 350th Anniversary such as the Founders Day Parade and Heritage Festival; Celebration Stage at Pratt Park; Interactive Media/Signage; Rowser African American History Wall and Dedication Ceremony; and several other endorsed programs that are still in the planning stages. The Board also approved the volunteer-led efforts to raise funds for the following anniversary programs and events: New Year Kick-Off Event in North Stafford, Legacy Film, Trail to Freedom Tour, and Wings & Wheels at the Stafford Regional Airport.

If you want to volunteer to help plan the events, or to assist at the events next year, please contact Jenny Chinault in the Stafford Citizens Assistance and Volunteer Services Office at 540.658.4518, or email her at jchinault@staffordcountyva.gov.

If you're interested in sponsoring an event, check out the many sponsorship opportunities on the website or contact Joanie DeShazo at 540.658.4159 or at jdeshazo@staffordcountyva.gov.



In the Pipeline...Community Projects Underway

2013

Completed

- Chichester Building, New Commonwealth's Attorney Offices
- Civil War Park
- Gateway Signs to Greet Visitors at Points of Entry to Stafford County

Still To Come

- Stafford Elementary School Renovation
- Courthouse Renovation
- Courthouse Streetscape
- Smith Lake Parking Lot Expansion



Gateway Signs

2014



Rocky Pen Run

- Grafton Village Elementary School Renovations
- Chichester Park
- The Park at Embrey Mill
- Indoor Recreation Center at the Park at Embrey Mill
- Interstate 95 Express Lanes from Garrisonville Road to the Beltway
- Mountain View Road Improvements, Phase I & II
- Staffordboro Commuter Parking Lot
- Rocky Pen Run Reservoir
- Poplar Road Improvements Phase I
- Curtis Park Pool Renovations
- Opening of Crow's Nest Nature Preserve

2015

- Stafford High School
- Garrisonville/Onville Road Turn Lane Improvement
- Truslow Road Improvements
- Falmouth Intersection Improvements
- Brooke Road Safety Improvements
- Belmont-Ferry Farm Trail, Phase 4, Pratt Park to the Chatham Bridge
- Poplar Road Improvements, Phases II and III



Want to Know More About Stafford Tourism?

Take a Walk in a Park

Learning more about Stafford's rich history is as easy as "a walk in the park." Many of the scenic strolls along beautiful trails in County parks are dotted with colorful and interpretive signs that tell stories of local life and history with a national significance.

Stafford has thousands of years of history, starting with the dinosaurs, through its native people, colonists, a revolution, a civil war division and reunification. Hundreds of acres have been the venues where individuals and actions impacted national history. Stafford's history is the nation's history as well!

Did you know that Aquia Landing Park, site of a serene park on the Potomac River, was once a bustling steamship wharf and the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad terminus? 150 years ago, this wharf brought in more than one million tons of food and supplies daily. It is the same port where thousands of enslaved people self-emancipated, including one of the most famous freedom seekers, Henry "Box" Brown. Brown hid in a wooden crate and mailed himself to freedom in Philadelphia. It is a stop on the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, a program that preserves Underground Railroad sites. In addition, Aquia has a series of Trail to Freedom (a local program to commemorate slaves who passed through this area seeking freedom) and Civil War informational signs,



The boardwalk at Government Island, birthplace of the stone used in the building of the U.S. Capitol and the White House



The Potomac Church Road bed that led from Potomac Church to the Stafford Courthouse area

allowing visitors to imagine what the landscape was like two centuries ago.

A beautiful boardwalk and a 1.5 mile scenic heritage trail compel visitors to explore Government Island. This 17-acre historic site is also referred to as "America's Historic Stone Quarry." Stone (Aquia sandstone) used to build the U.S. Capitol and the White House was quarried here and shipped up the Potomac River. The nature trail along the water's edge has interpretive signs that detail the history of the Native American population of the "island" as well as the extensive activities on the site through the early nineteenth century. Government Island is a Virginia Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Stafford's newest park offering, the Stafford Civil War Park, has just opened. This park combines historical and natural resource preservation and interpretation. Visitors can easily see the outlines of history in the terrain of this park and interpretive signs add amazing details. There are remnants of the locations of the Potomac Church Road bed, dating from the 1660's, the Union Batteries at Accokeek Creek, and the winter hut sites from the Union Army occupation of Stafford County. Eventually, two period appropriate replica cannons will be placed in the batteries.

These parks are open year-round. For more details about these and other Stafford parks, visit www.staffordparks.com.



Making the Most of Water

Did you know that a leaky faucet and toilet can waste up to 550 gallons of water combined each month? Most houses have multiple faucets and at least a couple of toilets. Add that up and that is a lot of wasted water. What can you do to prevent that in your home? It's as simple as repairing leaky pipes, faucets and toilets. With the dry conditions of summer arriving, it's a good time to re-examine water practices.



Here are a few tips for conserving water:

- Turn off faucets while brushing teeth or shaving. Rinse veggies in a pan in the sink instead of letting the water run.
- Choose high efficiency appliances that conserve water.
- Run dishwashers and washing machines only when full.
- Always use a shut-off nozzle on your hose when washing vehicles or watering plants. A hose generates 25 gallons of water in five minutes of use.
- Use native plants in landscaping. Native plants survive best under local conditions.
- Sweep outside with a broom not a hose.
- Water early. The earlier you water, the more the plant has a chance to absorb the water before it evaporates into the air.

For more information on water tips, visit Utilities on the Stafford website at www.staffordcountyva.gov.

Call 311
for General Government Information
Cell Phone Users, Please Dial
(540) 658-4311, (540) 658-5311

Call 911 for Emergencies

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](https://twitter.com/staffordvagov)

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



Pinterest Stafford County, VA

Pictures and information about Stafford County.

Did you know...

Stafford could use your help in preparing for its 350th Anniversary Celebration? Our county is going to be open to visitors from all over the world during our yearlong



celebration in 2014. We want it to look its best! You can help by always using trash receptacles or taking out what you take in to our parks and spaces. Plant a tree or flowers in your own yard or donate some to a park or historical site. If we all work together, we can keep our many natural and historical resources beautiful and ready for citizens and visitors to enjoy! For more information, visit the Stafford 350th Anniversary website at www.Stafford350.com.



Inside:

Priceless

Activities

Dec • Jan • Feb

Winter 2013



Inside:

**Youth & Adult
Volleyball**
(pp. 36, 39)

Archery
(p. 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

