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THIS PAPER WANTS TO BE RECYCLED. 

## WV PERSPECTIVES



Cliff Smith during his Superhero Challenge walk to benefit CASA of the Eastern Panhandle. Joining him are CASA-EP Executive Director, Michelle Sudduth (left) and friend Joy Lewis (right).

## TO OUR READERS

**AS WE HEAD INTO DECEMBER**, Jefferson Security Bank and *The Observer* invite everyone in Jefferson County to have some fun with Jefferson the Bear (see page 17) — we look forward to sharing wishes and thoughts from our readers — and hope that this season will encourage all of us to summon our better angels to guide us and give us hope.

Cliff Smith (pictured above) reminds us that angels and superheroes come in all forms. This fall, Cliff, age 81 and recovering from a recent stroke, took up the Superhero Challenge supporting Court Appointed Special Advocates of the Eastern Panhandle (CASA-EP). Recruiting 37 friends to support his half-marathon, he completed his run in four hours and raised \$7,000 to support CASA-EP's mission to recruit and support the court-appointed volunteers who serve as advocates for abused and neglected children navigating the foster care system.

In the stories we feature in this month's issue, we hear the echoes of Cliff's comment about his effort — "I was surprised that I was able to do so well. But it was my friends and family who really carried me over the finish line." Despite the unsettling times of the past year, we see a determination, resolve, and optimism in our community that inspires us as well.

  
**Steve Pearson**  
 EDITOR IN CHIEF

// COMMUNITY

# JEFFERSON COUNTY IS HORSE COUNTRY

## *Blue Spruce Farm*

**D**riving around, it's easy to see the agricultural activity that surrounds us in Jefferson County, but it often seems at a distance. Of the 210 square miles that make up the County, about half of that land, 66,000 acres, is classified as farm-use. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture published by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), there are over 600 farms in the county. Almost half of these farms are

commercial operations larger than 50 acres and many of the smaller farms produce for market also — part of a robust network of small businesses that contribute to the agricultural economy and cultural identity of the county. As part of a planned series of articles looking at the activities that have defined Jefferson County across several centuries, *The Observer* recently visited one of these operations — the Blue Spruce Farm in Kearneysville WV.

AMANDA MORRO got hitched on horses early in life. Recalling her childhood growing up in England, living in Caversham, a village to the west of London and across the Thames River from Reading, she said her father was an administrator at a nearby facility (still in operation) for disabled children that features horses as part of its program. She got to see the boarding and riding school operations up close and talked her mother into buying her a riding pony when she was 13. It was just a hobby she shared with her best friend, but she did find part time work at a local stable. Eventually she went off to University and started an office career, but it was the horses that were always on her mind.

In 1990 Morro found herself in Northern Virginia and gravitated towards the race track in Charles Town. At first she just picked up work as an exercise rider, but soon she found her life revolving around horses again. She was eager to help out when anyone asked her to fill in as an extra hand, especially with foaling. Eventually she became known in the community as a go-to midwife for horses. By that time, she was living in Jefferson County near Charles Town. Word-of-mouth connections in the local horse community brought her together with a local farm owner who wanted someone to run operations on his property.

By the middle of 2017, Morro had been running her boarding and foaling business at that same farm for twenty years and had a solid team. She oversaw foaling operations while Stevie Craig, John Berry and Issac Barhona ran the boarding and training operations with help from a network of regular part time help. Then the farm was sold and she had three months to decide on a plan. Morro recalled, "I heard about Blue Spruce Farm in Kearneysville through the community. It was a great facility for horses, but very overgrown. The barns were well built, but everything was full of stuff. It would take a lot

of work to get it in shape, but when I spoke with my team we realized it was either this or we quit the business. And that's the thing, we're a team. And we had a lot of help to put it back together. It was important that the owners wanted to keep it as a working farm too." Today, looking across the multiple paddocks and the arrow-straight fences and into the well-ordered barns, it's hard to picture the scene of three years ago that Morro describes, but her vision certainly shines through what the entire facility has become today.

“

**It's something I thought about when we were deciding to continue, would I let all of these people down if we stopped?**

”

Morro noted there are several other large breeding farms in the county, but she describes Blue Spruce Farm as the only facility in the Eastern Panhandle to operate both foaling and breaking at this scale. She points out that she has a lot of flexibility with the size of her current facility and the extensive network of veterinarians, hospitals and other



Keeping equipment organized at the farm.

support services nearby: "There are people we can call on to help out on a part time basis. We can buy local at Gowers Feed and also source all of our hay and straw from within the county. It's something I thought about when we were deciding to continue, would I let all of these people down if we stopped."

Morro describes herself as being "very fussy, a perfectionist. I like to see a happy horse, especially when they are in the field grazing and enjoying life. It gives you a sense of pride when you see it done the right way." She also noted,



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“I’m very careful about the owners I work with too. A big part of responsible horse ownership is being able to afford the proper care and training. I know my owners take a lot of pride in their animals and I know where these horses come from. About half of the brood mares are from West Virginia, a quarter are from Maryland and a quarter are from Kentucky. We currently have 60 mares foaling a year, about half who board here and half who ship in to foal and wean.”

Describing the foaling process, Morro said, “we can take a mare two months before she is ready to foal, but we also have mares that arrive just before. After the foaling, we can keep the foals with their mares through the suckling period or we can send them back to their home farms. For the horses that board here, we typically wean between 6 and 12 months. I don’t like to wean too early, it’s less stressful. That’s also the time when we teach the babies to lead. Typically we’ll bring in a pair of mares and foals into the corral next to the barn for a few days before we separate them. So it will take us several weeks to wean each season’s group.”

“Once we wean,” Morro continued, “we’ll turn the colts and fillies into the field to play until the next year. Basically to just enjoy being a horse. The following summer, we’ll work with the yearlings to re-school them in a harness. If they are big enough by then, we’ll put on the tack [a saddle and other harness equipment] and teach them to drive. You need to be in tune with each horse. You work differently with a January baby than you do with a May baby. By the second year we are riding them for exercise. At that point, it’s the owner’s decision on when to take them to the track for training.”

Asked about her plans, she responded, “I believe all of us have a purpose, mine is to take care of lives, these horses. I get a little more cautious as I get older, we all do. It would be nice if we could find someone younger to bring into



Amanda Morro chats with Issac Barhona, taking a two-year old out for exercise.

“  
**I believe all of us have a purpose, mine is to take care of lives, these horses**  
 ”

the program, but for now I try not to worry about the future.” A bit earlier she had described her own path: “It wasn’t something I planned, but it did fall into place.” She noted also the passion she sees in the horse business: “When you own a racehorse, it’s years of preparation to build up to a two-minute event. But the feelings you get when your horse races is worth it. It’s why we do this.”

BY: Steve Pearson

*Horses pictured on the cover: Bop Copy (left) & I’m Fuhr Real (right). Horse pictured on page 4: Limetini (in stall).*



Andrew Skinner

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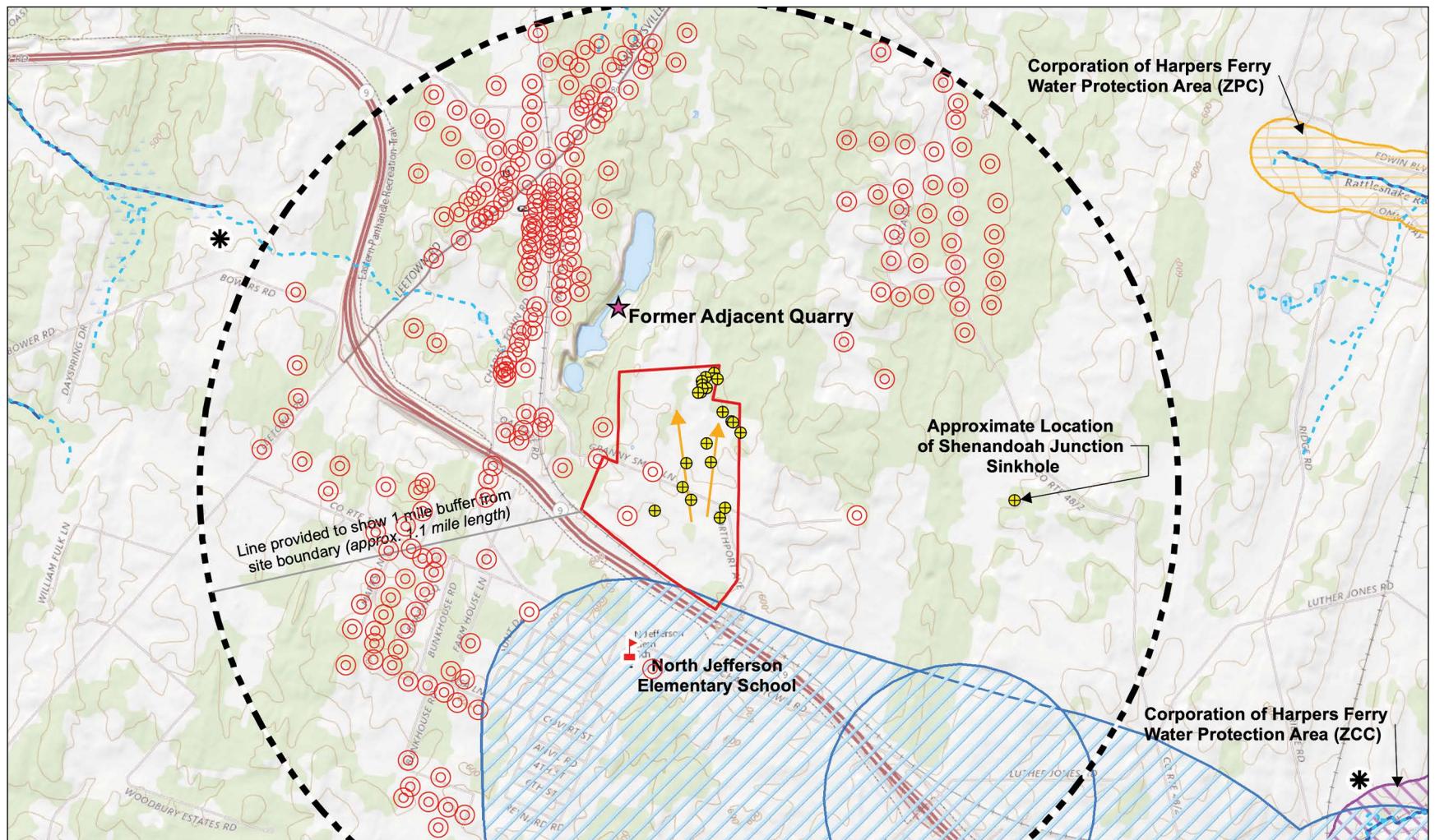
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// ENVIRONMENT



# COUNTING ON THE WELL WATER

## Local Residents Raise Concerns About Risks Of Pollutants In Stormwater Runoff Affecting Drinking Water

The Jefferson County Foundation (JCF), a nonprofit organization formed by local residents to advocate for sustainable development in the region, has identified Jefferson County’s geology as a priority concern because the qualities of local bedrock make the entire region vulnerable to groundwater contamination. Described as “karst topography,” the fractured bedrock in the area makes it easy for contaminated surface water to quickly seep into the ground and flow for long distances (see article on the contaminated caves under Charles Town in the September 2020 issue of *The Observer*).

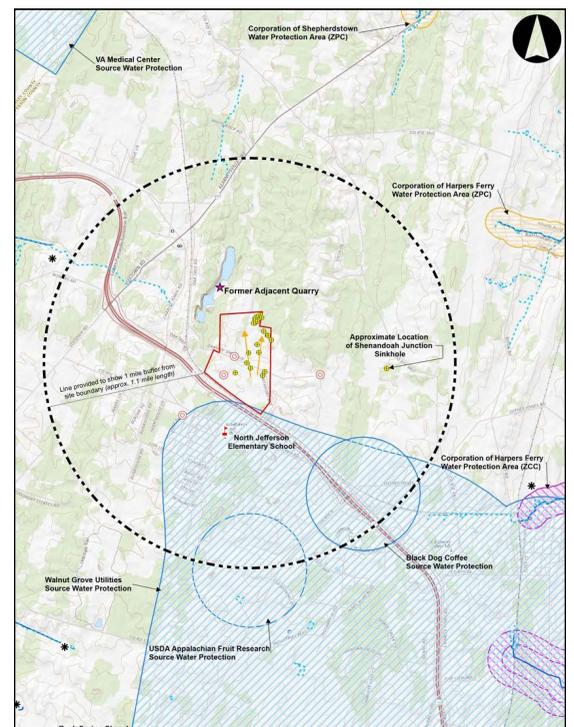
### The Case of the Missing Wells

After the WV Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued a notice on November 5, 2020 that it was authorizing the Rockwool stone wool insulation manufacturing facility in Ranson to operate under a general water pollution control permit, JCF noted that the source water protection

area map submitted as part of the facility’s application process (*smaller map at right*) marked only 4 drinking water wells within the one mile buffer zone. JCF surveyed residents and researched the public records to identify 100+ wells within the buffer zone (*marked as red circles on the larger map above*).

In addition to risks posed to the secondary supply watersheds for the Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry municipal water systems (*see map*), a key concern documented by JCF is the risk of airborne pollutants from the planned factory’s multiple “smokestacks” settling to the ground and washing into the underground streams that connect with these individual wells. It is unclear what action, if any, the DEP will take to address this discrepancy in accounting for the risks posed to the local drinking water.

BY: Observer Staff



Compare the number of drinking water wells shown on the map submitted to the DEP (small map) to the number on the map revised by JCF (large map). Images from Jefferson County Foundation ([JeffersonCountyFoundation.org](http://JeffersonCountyFoundation.org)).

// PUBLIC HEALTH

## ORGANIZING ALLIES IN WV

Community Education Group Fights Overlapping Epidemics



WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC dominating the news, it's easy for other public health issues to drop out of sight. Shepherdstown-based Community Education Group (CEG) is pointedly focused on West Virginia's ongoing substance-use disorder epidemic, which itself is directly linked to highest-in-the-nation rates of viral hepatitis, three HIV outbreaks in the past four years, and the highest rate of drug overdose deaths in the nation. CEG Founder and Executive Director Toni Young emphasizes the Mountain State's unfortunate reality: "Ultimately, this is a story about the need to provide opioid support and prevention services statewide in order to keep the spikes of HIV and hepatitis — needle-sharing-related diseases — at bay."

CEG is structured as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization with a mission to eliminate disparities in health outcomes and improve public health in disadvantaged populations and underserved communities. The group accomplishes this by conducting research, training community health workers, educating and testing people who are hard to reach or at-risk, sharing expertise

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**We all have to be willing  
 to invest in the health of  
 West Virginia**  
 ”

through national networks and local capacity-building efforts, and advocating for practical and effective health policies that lead to social change.

### Identifying the Gaps

Young described CEG's current focus on deconstructing the silos that currently shape the state's approach to viral hepatitis, HIV, and substance-use disorder — and to develop policies, programs, and training opportunities to support

a more unified response. “For example, we have our monthly stakeholder meeting [conducted as a video conference at the moment], where we've discovered that many people didn't know there is a moratorium on methadone facilities in the state,” she pointed out. “We want to try and either amend that current regulation or overturn that rule.”

What CEG does know, Young said, is that substance-use disorder, as well as the HIV crisis in the state, is basically going unchecked. “We don't have a statewide testing program that should be in place. I think we have a syndemic [a concurrence of multiple epidemics] in this state and we need a plan, and the funding, to address it. Taking the opioid crisis in isolation has allowed people to focus on drug-treatment and drug-education programs, but they haven't realized its relationship to other public health considerations.”

### Removing the Barriers

The stakeholder meeting that Young describes is called the West Virginia Statewide Stakeholder Coalition (WVSSC). As the name suggests, “the group's primary mission is to break down technical, regulatory, and administrative barriers that limit testing, treatment, and support across HIV, viral hepatitis, and substance-use disorder programs,” Young explained. “Such barriers create treatment silos that fail to reflect the medical and social realities behind the interrelated health crises — and thereby impede effective intervention.” Young convened the first meeting of this stakeholder group in September and plans for a monthly schedule to address the aforementioned syndemic of HIV, Hepatitis C outbreaks and drug-overdose deaths.

Young hopes that the WVSSC will ultimately assemble the expertise and collaborative strategy to spearhead a productive, sustainable response: “The WVSSC will focus on expanding awareness, education, rapid testing for HIV and viral hepatitis, treatment for substance-use disorder, and linkage-to-care networks which refer those recently diagnosed with HIV or viral hepatitis to treatment resources.”

### Connecting the Stakeholders

Thus far, the WVSSC meetings have brought together state government and public health officials, healthcare providers, national organizations, school board officials, community-based organizations and members, and others from across West Virginia. But Young also wants the public to know that anyone can attend — in fact, she urges everyone to do so. “This is an opportunity to bring federal partners to the table, to talk about issues, but it's also an opportunity for state health officials to attend, as well as the provider community and individual consumers,” she said. “What we're really trying to use this meeting for is an opportunity to access the people

that can give you the information you need — to create an opportunity to make West Virginia better.”

Young shared that the group is now putting together a monthly training calendar, “so people will be able to get training on rapid HIV testing, ACEs [Adverse Childhood Experience] testing, hepatitis, and substance-use disorder. We’ve partnered with Gilead; we’re talking to Merck and some others to put together a training that folks can access online, at home.”

Young is determined to bring people together through the WVSSC. “It’s the only way we can understand these crises, and hope to fix them,” she stressed. “People need to know that their voices have weight — they can join us... help us figure out how we address things like the opioid treatment moratorium, what we can do to get a statewide viral hepatitis plan, how we do more to get a statewide HIV plan, how we integrate these things. But we have to get together to figure out what these groups need — and how to get it to them.”

**Finding The Resources**

An additional burden for a state already straining beneath the weight of a substance-use epidemic is the additional load that comes with COVID-19 — where state officials across the nation are reporting spikes in opioid deaths amid lockdowns as increased isolation combines with a lack of in-person treatment options. In fact, substance abuse of all kinds is on the rise, with more and more people increasingly vulnerable as they work from home. In response, CEG recently rolled out West Virginia’s first county-by-county list of opioid addiction and health-support services, accessed through an online directory and map.

“It’s been something that I’ve wanted to do for West Virginia for quite a while,” said CEG West Virginia Policy Directory Marcus Hopkins. “It emerged from the thought that, as a patient, if I’d just been diagnosed with HIV somewhere in West Virginia, I might first Google ‘HIV in West Virginia’ looking for help, and that would send me to the state website. But when we looked at the state site, it didn’t actually have any resources. It lists where you can go to get tested, and almost all of those locations are county health departments. There’s no link to who treats HIV, or where someone can find a doctor. And if HIV meds are expensive, then my income is going to be affected — I’m going to potentially struggle with housing and utility bills. Where are those resources?”

One of the things Hopkins and his team discovered when building the resource was that, not only was this information not available on state websites, but it’s hardly readily available anywhere at all — which led him to drill down from a patient perspective. “People need somewhere they can go to find information, so we



CEG Founder and Executive Director Toni Young.

“  
**People need somewhere  
 they can go to find  
 information, so we  
 built this tool with an  
 interactive clickable map**  
 ”

built this tool with an interactive clickable map, where you can click any county in the state and it will provide the county health department, list the county government resources, HIV services, substance-use disorder services, viral hepatitis services, and additional services — such as wraparound nutrition services and housing assistance.”

The intensive process required Hopkins to do individual outreach to people in every West Virginia county asking questions such as, “Is there someone who tests for HIV? Is there someone who provides treatment there?” Hopkins described that, “what we were finally able to develop is a tool where, not only can people get the information they need, but providers or organizations that provide services can click on the county where they operate, and if they see a gap in services, then it creates an opportunity to

say, okay, well no one is filling this gap here — how do we fill it?”

And anyone can add resources to the guide, Hopkins added. “Once they fill out a form that tells people what they offer, where they’re located, and what their hours of operation are, that information will get added to the resource guide within forty-eight hours and remain dynamic content that gets updated regularly.”

Young noted that CEG is excited to offer this innovation to the state when it seemingly needs it most. “At the end of the day, we’re responding to a once-in-a-lifetime COVID-19 pandemic, a series of HIV outbreaks, we’ve been number one or two on the national list for viral hepatitis for a number of years, and we’re responding to a nearly decade-old opioid crisis,” she pointed out. “So that’s the work we have ahead. But all of those things are interrelated. And none of us can do it alone — not our federal partners, not state partners, not philanthropy, not the individual consumer. We’ve got to get everyone to the table and say that West Virginia’s public health is a priority. We all have to be willing to invest in the health of West Virginia.”

**BY: Mike Chalmers**

*You can visit the CEG’s website at [CommunityEducationGroup.org](http://CommunityEducationGroup.org) to connect to the statewide resource guide for West Virginia, learn about upcoming events, and make donations to support their mission.*

**ONLINE EVENT**  
**DECONSTRUCTING SILOS**  
 Dec. 14, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

THE RURAL HEALTH Service Providers Network will host a National Day of Advocacy in collaboration with the Community Education Group based in Shepherdstown, WV.



A panel of speakers will focus on the topic of **Deconstructing Silos - Increasing Access in Rural Health** and discuss some of the challenges of HIV, Substance Use Disorders, and Viral Hepatitis testing, treatment, services, and care.

Speakers: Tom Morris (Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources & Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), Sean Bland (O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law), Michelle Perdue (Cabell-Huntington Health Department), Daphne L. Kackloudis (Equitas Health)

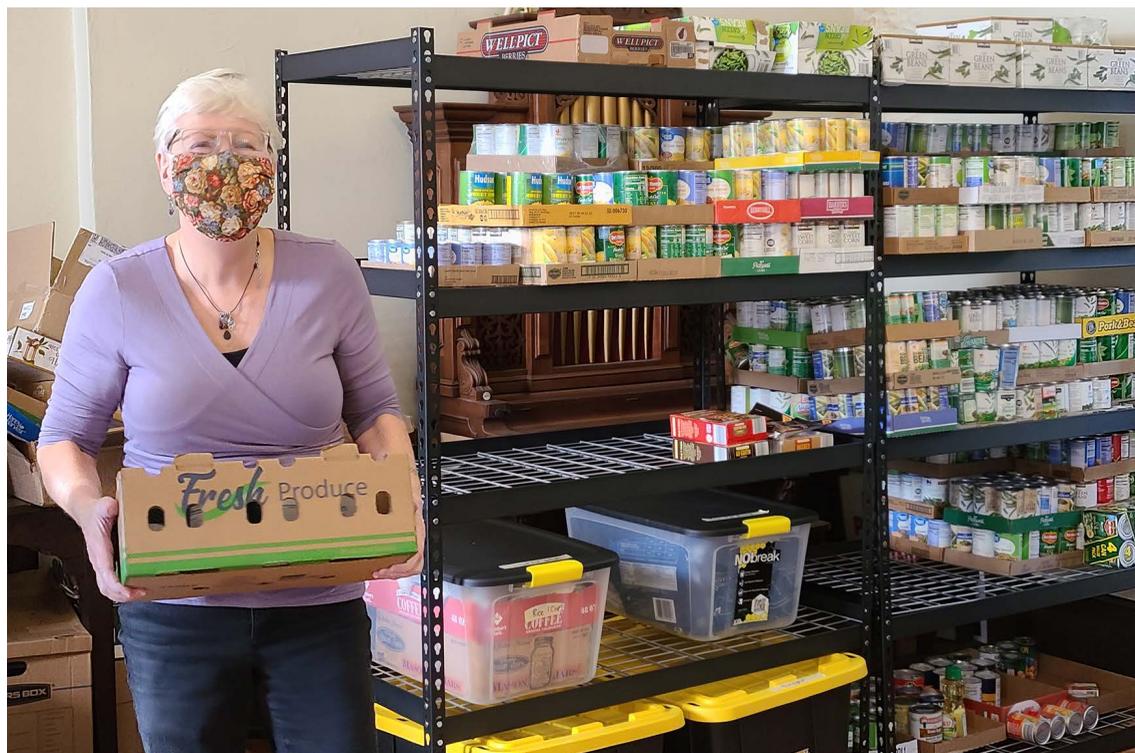
**Event details & registration at [CommunityEducationGroup.org](http://CommunityEducationGroup.org)**



// COMMUNITY

## STOCKING THE SHELVES

Food Pantries In Jefferson County See Increasing Need



Cari Simon unpacks the produce deliveries at the Shares Pantry in Shepherdstown.

**WHEN THE OBSERVER SPOKE** with Greg Petersen of the Jefferson County Community Ministries (JCCM) for our July 2020 issue, the Food Pantry operated by JCCM in downtown Charles Town was in the early days of navigating the pandemic and the staff was anticipating a sharp increase in demand. We recently touched base with John Cloyd, Greg's colleague at JCCM to see what they experienced over the summer and what they expect this winter.

"We lost 90 percent of our volunteers in the spring," Cloyd reported. "Fortunately, we've picked up a whole new set of people willing to give their time. On a typical day we'll have 15 people assisting. Previously our volunteers were mostly retired people, but the pandemic created a lot of concerns for them. What we see now are younger people who have flexible schedules because of the pandemic — it's a mix of what I call youth — people in their 20s, 30s and 40s. Even some college students who are studying at home."

### A Delayed Demand

"Fortunately, we didn't see the increase in demand for food that we had expected," Cloyd continued. "We assume that the stimulus money and enhanced unemployment benefits cushioned the economic blow for many, so we didn't see a big spike. Our activity was actually lower in the summer, perhaps because many of our churches

were offering bag lunches and other food assistance programs." With the cold weather returning, Cloyd observed that "we're back up to our pre-March levels of activity. We have 2,000 active clients and we typically see 20 every day. That represents families too, so we're serving a lot more people than that number."

Cloyd did note that "the changes we made to the pick-up process are still in place. In our pre-COVID operation, clients would come into the facility, but now our volunteers will pick out the food and bring it out to the front for our clients." He also noted that "the JCCM mission is to help our clients regain self-sufficiency, so our intake process is more than just signing up for a grocery voucher. We still have a lot of interaction with our clients and offer other services."

### A Long Year Ahead

Looking ahead, Cloyd remarked that "fall is always the 'giving time' when JCCM historically builds up its food stocks to carry through the spring. If there is a message I would like to send, it's that we are a 365-day operation. It's nice to be remembered now, but we do need support year-round. I do believe that we haven't seen the worst yet. For all of the folks who were able to defer rent payments or pick up work, we expect to see a lot more difficulty in the months ahead. Our goal this

fall is to fill all of our storage space with food supplies so we're ready for the deluge."

Asked about what support JCCM needs, Cloyd thanked Martin's Foods in Charles Town for their generosity and all of the many donors to JCCM. "Martin's is donating a large number of turkeys for our Thanksgiving distribution and they work with us every week to donate a significant amount of food. We rely on our cash donations to complete the order, especially to purchase meat and proteins."

“

**Our goal this fall is to fill all of our storage space with food supplies so we're ready for the deluge**

”

- John Cloyd

### Around the County

JCCM has been serving the Charles Town area since 1982. Cloyd noted that transportation is an issue for many clients, one of the reasons that JCCM encouraged the opening of the Shepherdstown Shares Food Pantry to serve the northern part of Jefferson County. *The Observer* spoke with Cari Simon after the first afternoon the new pantry opened in early November to get her insights. She reported that only a handful of clients had visited on the first weekend. When we spoke again a week later, Simon remarked, "we signed up nine new clients today and now have 78 individuals on our list. It's a cross-section of the community, from college students to seniors."

Simon noted that Martin's Foods in Charles Town is also assisting with this pantry. "We have volunteers visiting the store twice a week to pick up produce that they are donating so we have fresh vegetables available for our two distribution days. JCCM was also a great help in getting us started. They provided a large amount of staples and canned goods, as well as a significant amount of meat."

Describing the operation, Simon mentioned that she has had a great response from volunteers. "We have five volunteers in the pantry during our



JCCM's John Cloyd points out freezer space awaiting delivery of turkeys from Martin's Foods.

“  
**We are a 365-day  
 operation...we do need  
 support year-round.**  
 ”

- John Cloyd

service hours to pack up the food and bring it to the pickup point outside in the alley. We also do a lot of work to break down large cases and repackage items so we can provide our clients with a week's worth of food and supplies, and we also have people helping with deliveries to a couple of groups that would have difficulty getting to the pantry. It's very labor-intensive.”

Simon explained that, “we're starting off with a plan to accommodate 100 clients each week.” We ask clients to pre-register so we can better understand what they need — some just need a supplement to get them by, but others have

more needs. We keep all of this information confidential — it's just on paper and it goes home with me to keep it secure. Our aim is to help understand each person's needs so we can better tailor what we provide. This is just a beginning. We're just trying to help and I appreciate the good energy of our volunteers.”

*If you are in need, would like to help, or have a tip about other food resources in the Eastern Panhandle, visit the online version of this article at [WeAreTheObserver.com/food-help-2020](http://WeAreTheObserver.com/food-help-2020) for more information.*

*The JCCM Food Pantry is located at 238 West Washington Street in downtown Charles Town. The pantry is open for clients Monday through Friday, 9 am to noon (also on the last Saturday of the month from 9 am to 1 pm). For more information on services or to donate, visit the website at [JCCM.us](http://JCCM.us).*

*The Shepherdstown Shares Pantry is located in the Trinity chapel building at the corner of Church Street and West Back Alley in downtown Shepherdstown. The pantry is open for clients on Saturday afternoons from 3 to 5 and on Monday afternoons from 12:30 to 3:30. Donations of food and personal items can be dropped off on Thursdays after 9:30 am and on Sunday between 9 am and 10 am. For more information on services or to donate, visit the website at [ShepherdstownShares.org/food-support](http://ShepherdstownShares.org/food-support).*

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**HOLIDAY LIGHT EVENTS**  
**PAGE 24**

// WELLNESS

# RUNNING THE COVID MARATHON

## Rethinking How We Fight the Virus



Dr. Mark Cucuzzella and local Shepherdstown friend, James Munnis, keeping their immune systems strong at the recent Rim to River 100 mile run in Fayetteville.

*Health experts around the globe have been warning of the risk of a pandemic like COVID-19 for years — and they tell us that we can expect similar viruses to break out in the future. Dr. Mark Cucuzzella suggests that our current approach has focused on hiding from this virus and he makes the case that it's just as important to strengthen our resistance to COVID-19 and future viruses — in other words, healthier lifestyles for healthier immune systems.*

AS WE REOPEN SOCIETY and search for medicines that could improve coronavirus outcomes, we should not miss the opportunity to talk about the conditions that have increased our vulnerability to this pandemic in the first place: America's poor state of health. Some 60 percent of us have one or more diet-related chronic disease. Even before the pandemic, the cost of this poor health was responsible for a staggering amount of the 3.5 trillion dollars spent annually on healthcare in the US. With COVID-19, these underlying diseases,

particularly cardiovascular disease, obesity, and diabetes, have accompanied a large majority of severe cases in the US, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hospitalizations were six times higher, and deaths were twelve times higher, among those with reported underlying conditions compared with those with none reported. We have often blamed the victim for having obesity or other diet-related diseases, but these illnesses now affect up to 80 percent of the world's population.

### Weighing the Evidence

Obesity is clearly emerging as a dominant factor increasing the risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19. In a recent study on comorbidities conducted in France, only one in every ten people who ended up in intensive care with COVID-19 were in a healthy weight range. Researchers led by Francois Pattou, the head of Lille University Hospital's general and endocrine surgery department in France, presented data at a conference showing that about half of the 124 intensive-care patients with COVID-19 in a sample they studied were obese and most of the remaining ones were overweight. It seems inescapable that, to build resilience to COVID-19 and future viruses, we need to talk about better nutrition.

In the United Kingdom, the National Health Service (NHS) reports that over a quarter of fatalities from COVID-19 are accompanied by diabetes. Prime Minister Boris Johnson became convinced that his own obesity contributed to his hospital stay, prompting him to declare, upon launching a probe into the link between obesity and worsened COVID-19 outcomes, "I've changed my mind on this [obesity]. We need to be much more interventionist."

Almost all of these comorbidities — hypertension, diabetes, coronary artery disease, and obesity — have a common root cause, called insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is diagnosed

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“ If an inferiority is conscious, one always has a chance to correct it ... but if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets corrected.”  
—C.G. Jung  
(CW 11: Psychology and Religion: West and East, p. 131)



**Cathryn Polonchak** LCSW  
Psychotherapist & Jungian Analyst

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when a person has a spectrum of symptoms, including abdominal obesity, low HDL-cholesterol, high triglycerides, high blood pressure, and high blood sugar. Up to 88 percent of Americans have one or more of these symptoms, according to estimates based on recent data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHNES). This means that only 12 percent of our population is metabolically well. Given that chronic diseases are strongly implicated in poor outcomes for coronavirus patients, we need to take insulin resistance far more seriously.

**Just A Spoonful of Sugar**

Reducing our consumption of sugar and refined carbohydrates, which together fuel insulin resistance, is an ideal first step. Eating to keep blood sugar low and stable will clearly reduce risk. Recently, the World Health Organization launched a Stay Healthy At Home Campaign, urging adults to limit their sugar consumption to less than six teaspoons a day — the amount of sugar in one small carton of chocolate milk served to school

children. Anyone can purchase a continuous glucose monitor to know exactly how foods are affecting blood sugar levels. Junk food is the obvious enemy, even if it can be every quarantiner’s best friend. Yet even these comforting foods can be resisted when replaced by whole, natural foods including filling fats and proteins. It is also critical to focus the diet on foods that are nutrient-dense: meats, eggs, seafood, dairy, vegetables, and low-sugar fruits.

**Mapping the Path to Wellness**

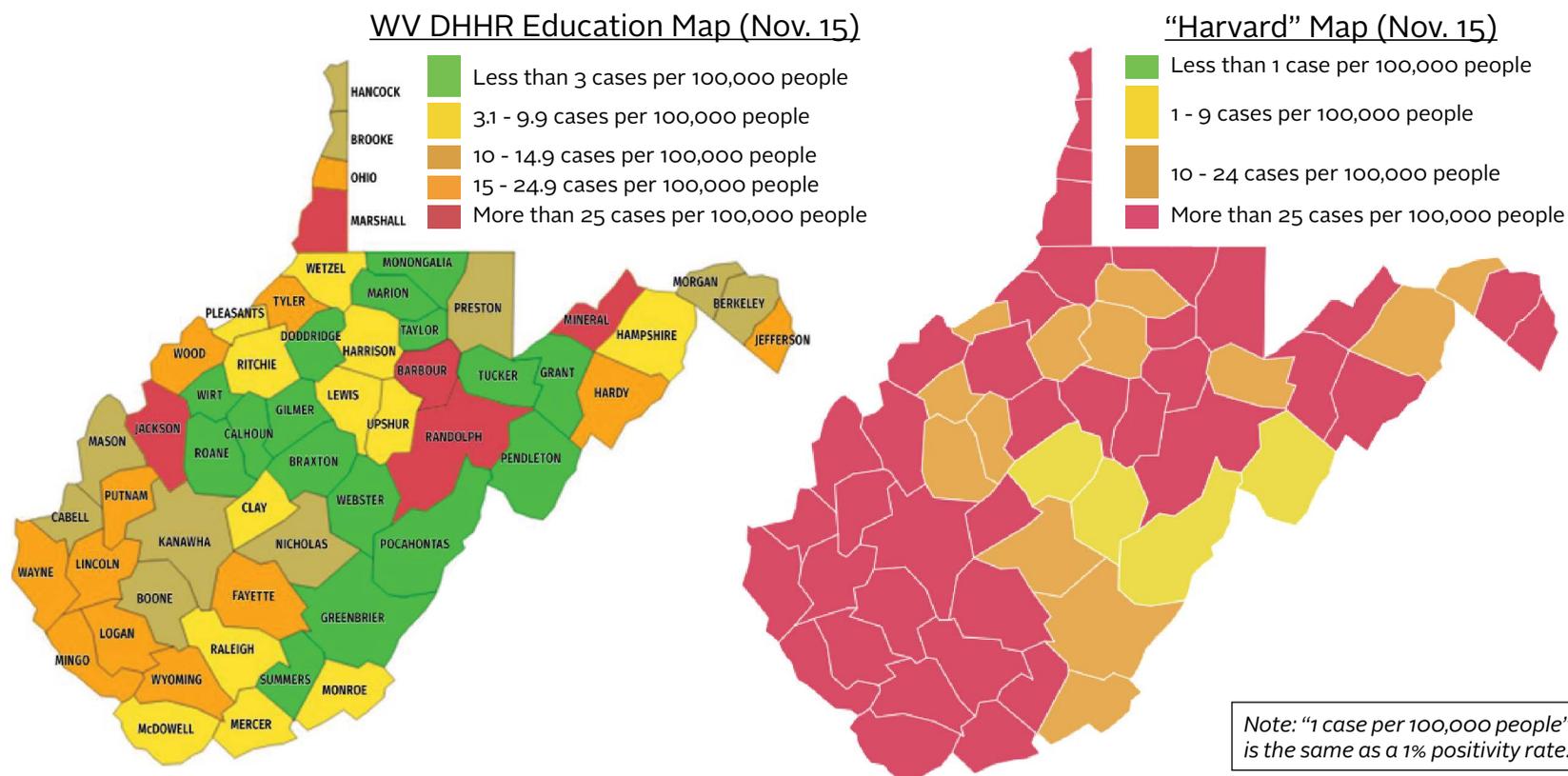
Many people who aim to achieve good health do so through natural means, such as better nutrition and other lifestyle changes of moving more, sleeping better, and reducing stress. Instead of managing their conditions with pills, they seek to reverse chronic disease through more natural approaches. This strategy, like a vaccine, should provide protection now and for many years to come, and that is essential, since COVID-19 will not be like a blizzard (hitting hard and quickly passing over) but rather like a long hard winter.

We all can get healthier and this applies especially to those with metabolic illnesses.

The reality is that we are partially responsible for our fragility to the coronavirus. Each comorbidity you have decreases your physiological reserve. We should be doing a better job in maintaining our health for times when we are under stress. I hope to see a new world where people have the tools to recover their good health and become stronger to fight pandemics such as this one. Right now, we are hoping for a vaccine and medications to pull us out of this pandemic. We are probably in mile 4 now of the 26-mile COVID marathon, but even as the coronavirus eventually abates, the ongoing obesity, diabetes, and metabolic disease pandemics will continue to take their toll on our society. It’s time to take back our health, our own resilience — race for your life instead of running from illness.

**BY: Mark Cucuzzella MD, FAAFP**, a Professor of Family Medicine at West Virginia University School of Medicine and a practitioner at the WVU Center for Diabetes and Metabolic Health and Shepherdstown Medical office.

**SHADING THE MAPS IN CHARLESTON?**



On November 16, Jefferson County schools shifted to remote learning for all students based on the WV State Department of Education guidelines. The WV Department of Health and Human Resources Education map (left) released the previous day showed Jefferson County at an “orange” level of risk (between 15 and 24.9 active cases per 100,000 population). The “Harvard” map (right), updated through the same day, November 15, indicated that Jefferson County (along with many other counties in WV) was already at the “red” level of risk (over 25 active cases per 100,000 population). No counties in West Virginia fell into the “Harvard” map’s “green” risk level.

Source: WV Department of Health and Human Resources  
Source: GlobalPandemics.org (Harvard Global Health Institute et al.)

// NATURE

# EVEN THE BIRDS SOUND DIFFERENT IN 2020

## White-Throated Sparrows Singing A New Tune

**By Doug Pifer**

Doug Pifer is an artist, naturalist, and writer. He has a Master's Degree in Journalism from Penn State and has been an editor and art educator. His illustrations have appeared in various books and magazines and he has been a contributor to *The Observer* for several years. He lives with his wife and assorted animals on 5.7 acres in a historic farmhouse near Shepherdstown.

ABOUT A HALF HOUR AFTER SUNRISE, the song of a white-throated sparrow came from our big forsythia bush. I look forward to these sparrows every year, but this time I was paying special attention. I was pleased and thrilled to hear him singing the new song! Some background information is necessary here. Native to the northern forests throughout Canada, these attractively striped sparrows spend their winters in the eastern United States. They are among our most abundant winter birds in West Virginia, especially if you have a wooded area nearby.

Occasionally a white-throated sparrow, as if overtaken by homesickness, breaks into song. This is typically a series of whistled notes to the cadence, "Oh, sweet Canada, Canada, Canada." Now, as if we needed another unique event in the unprecedented year of the pandemic, white-throated sparrows across America are singing much differently. The final whistled triplet has become a double, as in "Oh sweet Candy, Candy, Candy." Online, search



White-Throated Sparrow. Photo by Doug Pifer.

for "Catchy Sparrow Song Goes Viral" at [www.sciencealert.com](http://www.sciencealert.com) to hear the difference. This fall I've heard them singing both old and new songs.

This is a big deal to those who study birds. We have learned how important spring vocalizations are to a songbird's survival. Females select mates based on the vigor of their song, which proclaims them as healthy males that can father strong young and defend their chosen nesting territory. Regional "dialects" occur, but an individual white-throated sparrow sings pretty much the same song as all his ancestors have sung.

But not anymore. In the late 1990s, Canadian ornithologists in the province of Alberta started reporting this new song among the white-throated sparrows nesting in certain

areas. By the early 2000s, the alternative song was almost universal throughout western Canada. And this past year it has been heard from birds as far east as Quebec.

I love hearing the first white-throats sing when they arrive here, usually about the middle of October. Their songs are often fragmentary and weak. Youngsters only a couple months old are beginning to tune their voices. Studies of many birds in the wild and in captivity have shown how young males learn to sing by listening to the songs of older "mentor" males during the non-breeding season. By late March they're all singing their wistful, homesick songs.

Field biologists and ornithologists are studying to determine the hows and whys of this new song. It is believed the new song started out years ago as a local aberration. During the winter, different populations of white-throats associate with each other on their wintering grounds. Young birds from other places heard the new song and learned it. When they returned to their home locations and set up new territories in the spring, female white-throats there apparently preferred and were attracted to males singing the new song. As they and their offspring returned to spend the winter with more sparrows from other areas, this learning process has continued. Thus, the popular new song has spread and, in this sense, "gone viral."

Ornithologists recently report that individuals of another songbird species, the white-crowned sparrow, have also been heard singing different songs. Stay tuned!

### HAVE FUN OUTSIDE THIS WINTER WITH THE POTOMAC VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY (PVAS)

The Potomac Valley Audubon Society (PVAS) organizes many events each month (online and in person). Visit [PotomacAudubon.org](http://PotomacAudubon.org) to learn more about upcoming events and register to attend.



#### Volunteer Work Day (Yankauer)

Dec. 3 – Join PVAS for a day of service. Event limited to 5 volunteers. Registration required. More details online.



#### Nature Journaling (Online Event)

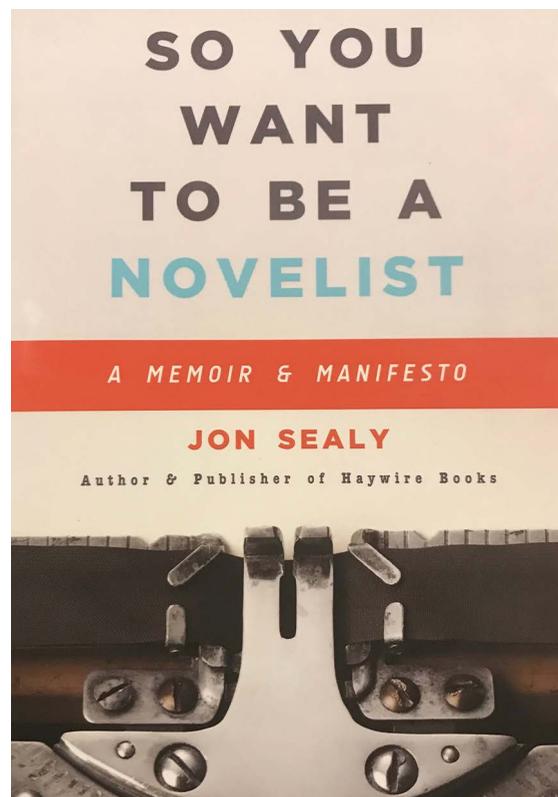
Get inspired to start nature journaling with Joy Birdy's seasonal prompts. The Autumn prompt is available through November and a new one is coming December 1. Registration optional but encouraged. More details online.



#### Christmas Bird Count (Online Event)

Dec. 14 – PVAS invites you to participate in the annual holiday bird count. All are welcome. Registration required. More details online.

// BOOK REVIEW



**So You Want to Be a Novelist: A Memoir & Manifesto**, by John Sealey

**Publisher:** Haywire Books (2020)

**Review by:** Gonzalo Baeza — Born in Texas, raised in Chile, and currently living in Shepherdstown WV, Gonzalo is a writer with books published in Spain and Chile. His fiction has appeared in *Boulevard*, *Goliad*, and *The Texas Review*.

**ASPIRING WRITERS** may have a hard time finding responsive publishers and agents, but at least they have an entire industry that caters to them. Not only are there conferences, online communities, and over 200 creative writing MFA programs in the country, but also countless “how to write” books penned by everyone from big name authors to literary agents to unknown writing “coaches.”

On the literary side of the spectrum of books about writing fiction, there are titles like James Wood’s *How Fiction Works* and John Gardner’s *The Art of Fiction*. Those who would rather learn about the insights of popular fiction writers can consult Stephen King’s *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* or Chuck Wendig’s *Damn Fine Story*.

Why then would there be a need for another book about writing fiction? Jon Sealy’s *So You Want to Be a Novelist* answers that question in its first few pages. Sealy depicts the professional writing world as a series of concentric rings. The center ring contains authors who are widely read, normally well reviewed, and typically well paid. The second ring contains so-called “midlist writers,” those who have one or more traditionally published books, enjoy some small acclaim and

yet are not familiar to the average reader. The third ring contains the hundreds of thousands of aspiring writers in everything from MFA programs to informal writing groups.

Based on his own often brutally honest assessment of his career thus far, Sealy is part of the second circle of writers. After his debut novel, *The Whiskey Baron*, an excellent literary thriller set in his native South Carolina garnered good reviews in all the prestigious trade publications (Kirkus, Publishers Weekly, Library Journal), Sealy found himself in a tough spot. He could not find a home for his second novel as the agents he dealt with were unable to sell the book to a publisher.

In an account that is as blunt as it is knowledgeable about the publishing industry, Sealy delves into the reasons why writers with good credentials have a hard time getting published and why an author’s chances of success have become increasingly similar to the chances of winning the lottery. One of the main causes is excessive supply. Every year, nearly 1.7 million titles are self-published and 300,000 are traditionally published in the country. This approach that combines the idiosyncratic and anecdotal with informed insights gives Sealy’s book its differentiating value.

While the first part of the book deals with Sealy’s career and the lessons one can draw from its trajectory, the second section focuses on elements of craft such as scene, perspective, structure, and revision. Analyzing works of fiction by authors like Anne Patchett, Cormac McCarthy, Toni Morrison, and Gabriel García Márquez, Sealy stresses the importance — and rewards — of attentive reading for aspiring writers.

Having read both of Sealy’s published novels, I consider him what literary critic Peter Swirski calls a “nobrow” writer. That is to say, an author who combines the elements normally associated with “highbrow” or literary writing such as finely-crafted language and aesthetic concerns together with elements of what snobbish critics sometimes dismiss as “lowbrow” or genre fiction such as a plot-centered story. Paradoxically, writers who successfully combine these two sensibilities often have a hard time finding support in a publishing industry that seeks to pigeonhole them. Partly to avoid this pigeonholing, Sealy launched his own publishing house, Haywire Books. The insights he has learned from the business of publishing are covered in the third part of the book.

Ultimately, the appeal of writing, reading, and publishing fiction can be explained by our perennial need to make sense of the world. “Real life doesn’t have much meaning in itself,” Sealy writes. “Just as a photographer will frame a picture, the novelist chooses certain events, a beginning and an ending, to create a story. Stories are what give our lives meaning, because they provide an understandable narrative with causality.”

**THE FRONT SHELF**



**Ghost Stories of Shepherdstown**

Edited by A. B. Gibson  
Four Seasons Books  
(2020)  
\$14.95

**AN ANTHOLOGY OF GHOST STORIES** written by local authors in Shepherdstown, WV. A Revolutionary War era house in Wizard’s Clip, the President’s residence at Shepherd University, Elmwood Cemetery, the local Presbyterian Church, and the infamous Mecklenburg Inn. These are a few Shepherdstown locations where these fourteen stories written by local authors begin. Watch out! In the end, they linger to shadow you home.



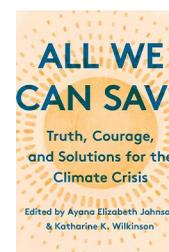
**The Secret Lives of Church Ladies**

Deesha Philyaw  
West Virginia University Press  
(2020)  
\$18.99

**FINALIST FOR THE 2020 National Book Award** for fiction, published by West Virginia University Press. *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*

explores the raw and tender places where black women and girls dare to follow their desires and pursue a momentary reprieve from being good. The nine stories in this collection feature four generations of characters grappling with who they want to be in the world, caught as they are between the church’s double standards and their own needs and passions.

**All We Can Save**



Edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson & Katharine K. Wilkinson  
One World  
(2020)  
\$29.00

**ALL WE CAN SAVE ILLUMINATES** the expertise and insights of dozens of diverse women leading on climate in the United States—scientists, journalists, farmers, lawyers, teachers, activists, innovators, wonks, and designers, across generations, geographies, and race—and aims to advance a more representative, nuanced, and solution-oriented public conversation on the climate crisis. These women offer a spectrum of ideas and insights for how we can rapidly, radically reshape society. Features a contribution from Mary Anne Hitt, a Shepherdstown resident and the national director of campaigns at Sierra Club.

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SHEPHERDSTOWN LIQUORS is honoring the memory of Mohsen Sadeghzadeh and continuing a tradition of offering a rare bottle of Pappy Van Winkle Straight Bourbon Whiskey in a holiday raffle with all proceeds to support the Shepherdstown Public Library.

This 20 year-old bottle is valued at over \$2,000. Tickets available until drawing to be held at 5:00 pm on December 29.

*Purchase tickets at Shepherdstown Liquors, 202 East Washington St. Shepherdstown. Must be over 20 to purchase. Each ticket is \$10 (cash), no limit. Purchase for yourself or as a gift.*

LOCAL HISTORY



HISTORIC SHEPHERDSTOWN'S 2020 HOLIDAY ORNAMENT

**SHOP NOW FOR** Historic Shepherdstown 6th in a series of Holiday Ornaments. This year features the Shepherdstown Opera House. The ornaments can be purchased in the HSC office by calling 304-876-0910 to make an appointment or they can be purchased on our website at [HistoricShepherdstown.com/visit/museum-shop](http://HistoricShepherdstown.com/visit/museum-shop).

**Phone:** 304-876-0910  
**Website:** [HistoricShepherdstown.com/visit/museum-shop](http://HistoricShepherdstown.com/visit/museum-shop)

**Love our Towns.  
Support our Neighbors.  
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This holiday season, it is more important than ever to find those extra special gifts at our local small businesses. Many small businesses have been dramatically impacted this year by COVID and need a successful holiday season to survive. Gift cards to local stores and restaurants are also a great gift to allow folks to come back downtown and shop or eat when they are ready.

Help make the holidays special for everyone by shopping local in Jefferson County. It's a Big deal for our local communities and neighbors.

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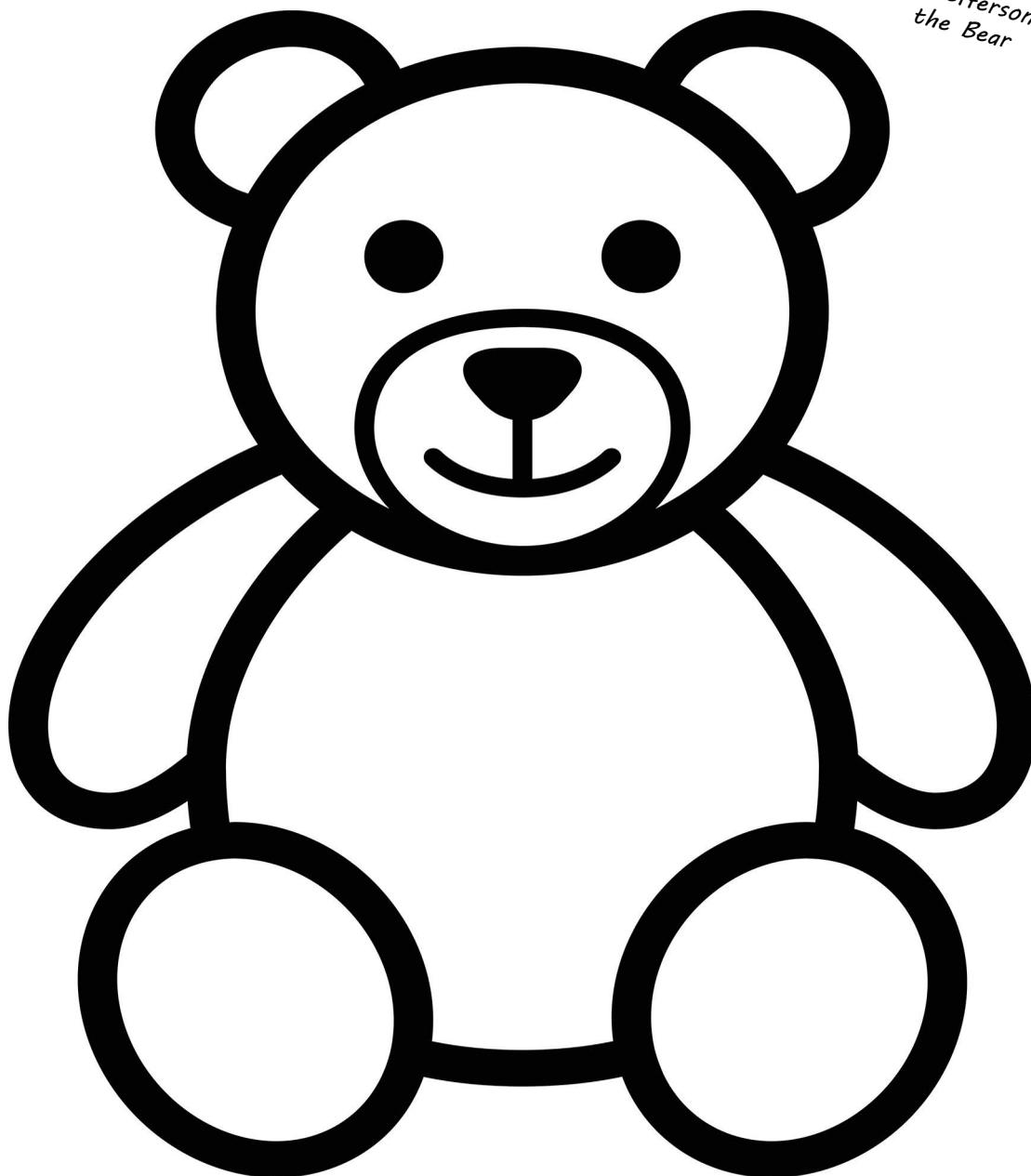
EXPLORE // COMMUNITY FUN IN THE PANHANDLE



# SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER WITH JEFFERSON THE BEAR

Happy Holidays from Jefferson Security Bank and The Observer!

*+ Jefferson  
the Bear*



*My holiday wish is ...*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**JEFFERSON SECURITY BANK** and **THE OBSERVER** are excited to invite you to help Jefferson the Bear spread cheer this holiday season!

### HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- 1. DESIGN YOUR BEAR!** Use the outline provided or print a full size outline of Jefferson the Bear from our website (link below). Color, paint, decorate, and accessorize Jefferson however you'd like!
- 2. INCLUDE A HOLIDAY WISH!** Share what you are thankful for this year or a wish for next year.
- 3. SHOW OFF YOUR BEAR!** Put Jefferson in a street-facing window.
- 4. FIND JEFFERSON!** Look for other bears around our community. How many times can you spot Jefferson?
- 5. SHARE WITH THE OBSERVER!** Once you're done decorating, **upload a photo of your bear to The Observer's website** (link below) or email a photo of your bear to **bear2020@wearetheobserver.com** by December 14th. Your bear may be featured in our next issue or on our website!



**BUILDING COMMUNITY**

Holiday Bear Art Hunt Sponsored by:

**Jefferson Security Bank**

Wishing you and your family a safe and happy holiday season!

Visit [WeAreTheObserver.com/bear2020](http://WeAreTheObserver.com/bear2020) to print an outline or share your bear

EXPLORE // SHEPHERDSTOWN



ONLINE EVENT

# Speak Story Series

**STORYTELLER ELIZABETH ROSE**

**SPEAK STORY SERIES HOSTS** storyteller Elizabeth Rose in an on-line performance. Elizabeth's stories include a blend of traditional southern folklore, Appalachian tales, mountain ballads, ghost stories, songs and her own personal stories of growing up in small town East Tennessee. She is an educator, workshop leader, presenter, and professional storyteller.

December 8, 2020, 7:30 pm

Pre-registration required: [SpeakStorySeries.com](http://SpeakStorySeries.com)  
Participants must provide an email address to receive a link for the concert. Registration is \$12 per person. Speak is for adult audiences (mature youth allowed at guardian's discretion).

HANDMADE GIFTS

**SHEPHERDSTOWN COMMUNITY CLUB  
HO-HO HOLIDAY MARKET**

**THE SHEPHERDSTOWN COMMUNITY CLUB** hosts local and regional artists, artisans and designers for a charming shopping experience at the War Memorial Building in historic downtown Shepherdstown. Discover handmade artful items, including fine art, pottery, wood, stained and fused glass, home & garden decor, specialty foods, jewelry, wearables and accessories. The vendor selection will each weekend.

For this indoor event, masks and social distancing are required. Please enter from the German Street door and exit through the rear door to King Street.

**Dates & Times:** Thanksgiving weekend: Nov 27 (Fri) 10 am - 6 pm; Nov 28 (Sat) 10 am - 6 pm; Nov 29 (Sun) 8:30 am - 4 pm. *Dec 5 / 12 / 19 (Saturdays) 10 am - 6 pm* *Dec 6 / 13 / 20 (Sundays) 8:30 am - 4 pm.* Dec 18 (Fri) 10 am - 6 pm

**Location:** 102 East German Street, Shepherdstown  
**Admission:** Free  
**Facebook:** @SCCHandmadeMarket

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**Address:** 121 W German Street, Shepherdstown

LOCAL ARTIST



**KIMOPICS GALLERY**

**"KIMOPICS" GALLERY** opens on Veterans Day 2020 in a new location, 129 East German St. in Shepherdstown. The exhibit, "Counties of The Potomac River - Series One", features images by Vietnam Veteran photographer/composer Kimo Williams.

The "Counties of The Potomac River" series is inspired by Kimo's observation of the Potomac and how its banks meld with his Shepherdstown property. "I found myself curious about the other banks that also touch the Potomac. The exhibit series is not about the specific banks along the river but about my excursions into each Potomac River county and the imagery that I find interesting."

**Contact:** J. Kimo Williams  
**Email:** [kimo@kimopics.com](mailto:kimo@kimopics.com)  
**Website:** [KimoPics.com](http://KimoPics.com)  
**Hours:** Saturdays and Sundays 11 to 5 (or by appointment).

LOCALLY GROWN



**SHEPHERDSTOWN FARMERS MARKET**

**SHOP LOCAL VENDORS** for Local Produce, Apples, Plants, Flowers, Breads & Baked Goods, Cheeses, Yogurt, Grass-Fed Beef, Eggs, Chicken, Pork, Local Honey, Beeswax Candles, Body Care, Bulbs, Mushrooms, Salsas & Dips, Maple Syrup, Vinegars, Teas, Spices and so much more!

As the holidays approach, you'll be wowed and delighted with the variety of gift-able offerings all made locally with love. Be sure to browse the hand-crafted wreathes, swags, greenery, gift baskets and local goods for holiday decorating and gift giving

**Hours:** Sundays, 9am-1pm, through Dec. 20  
**Address:** S. King Street, behind the Library, Shepherdstown, WV  
**Facebook:** [Facebook.com/ShepherdstownFarmersMarket](https://www.facebook.com/ShepherdstownFarmersMarket)  
**Website:** [ShepherdstownFarmersMarketWV.com](http://ShepherdstownFarmersMarketWV.com)

TASTY TREATS

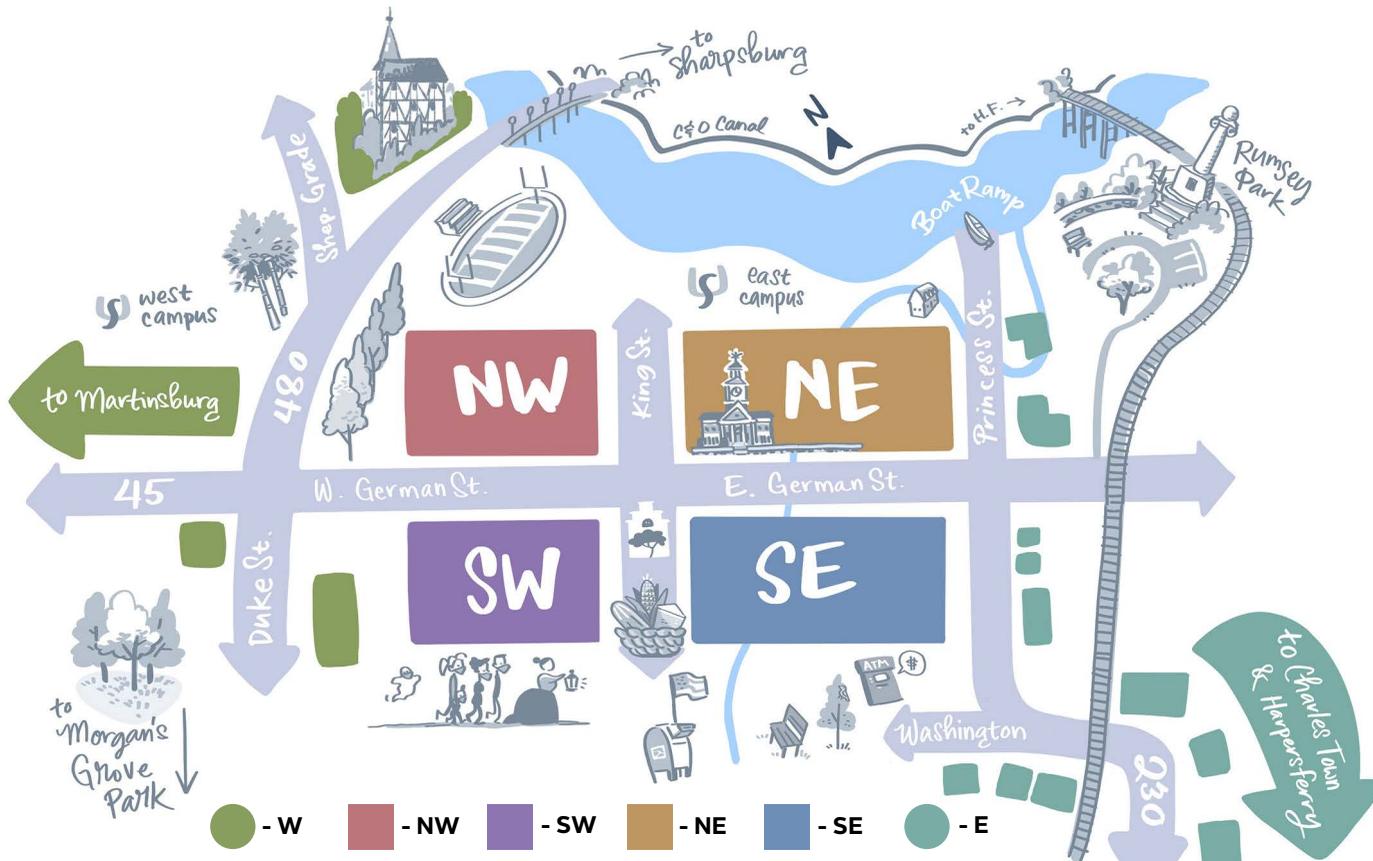


**SHEPHERDSTOWN SWEET SHOP**

**OUR SIGNATURE SPECIALTY,** Holiday Stollen, dates back to 14th-century Germany. We make our stollen entirely by hand in small batches. Our unique recipe uses rum-soaked raisins, dates, and pecans added to a dough of sweet butter and specially spiced flour. The mix is cut into rough loaves, hand-shaped, and wrapped around a marzipan center, then baked to a golden brown. When cooled, each loaf is brushed with melted butter and rolled in sugar, then placed onto trays to rest. To finish, we roll the stollen in Neu Schnee, or New Snow sugar. Call or stop by the store to purchase or order online at [www.wvbakery.com](http://www.wvbakery.com) and we will ship your stollen, with your personal greeting, to arrive on your specified date. Please visit our store to see all the other delicious pastries & breads we have to offer.

**Hours:** Beginning Nov. 27 — Mon-Thurs 9 am to 5pm, Fri-Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 9am-4pm  
**Address:** 100 W German St, Shepherdstown  
**Website:** [www.WVBakery.com](http://www.WVBakery.com)  
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**LOST DOG COFFEE** ■  
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304-876-0871

**MARIA'S TAQUERIA** ■  
Mex/SoCal cuisine  
304-876-3333

**MECKLENBURG INN** ■  
English-style pub & garden  
304-876-2126

**PRESS ROOM** ■  
Regional cuisine, fine dining  
304-876-8777

**SHEPHERDSTOWN LIQUORS** ●  
304-876-2100

**SHEPHERDSTOWN SWEET SHOP** ■  
Baked goods & sandwiches  
304-876-2432

**TOMMY'S PIZZA** ●  
Pizzas & subs to go  
304-876-2577

**SHOPPING & GALLERIES**

**ADMIRAL ANALOG** ■  
Vintage & new vinyl  
301-491-6050

**AZAD'S ORIENTAL RUG EMPORIUM** ■  
Handmade rugs  
240-707-8987

**BADGERHOUND STUDIO & GALLERY** ■  
304-261-6028

**BRIDGE GALLERY** ●  
Showcase of local artists  
304-876-2300

**COOPER CAPTURES** ■  
(Currently online only)  
304-263-3100

**CREATIVE PROCRASTINATIONS** ■  
Whimsical art emporium  
410-917-7262

**DICKINSON & WAIT CRAFT GALLERY** ■  
American craft products  
304-876-0657

**ENTLER HISTORIC MUSEUM** ■  
(By appointment only)  
304-876-0910

**FLOWER HAUS** ■  
Floral designs for events  
304-283-0588

**FOUR SEASONS BOOKS** ■  
New & resale books  
304-876-3486

**GALLERY AT 105** ●  
(Currently online only)  
304-876-8080

**GERMAN STREET MARKET** ■  
Gifts & delicacies  
304-876-1106

**GERMAN STREET TATTOO** ■  
(By appointment only)  
304-249-8332

**THE GOOD SHOP** ■  
Women's clothing  
123 E German St

**THE HIVE HOUSE** ●  
Beekeeping supply  
304-261-8548

**HONOR D FINE SHOES & HATS** ■  
Stylish shoes, hats for all  
304-539-3236

**KIMOPICS GALLERY** ■  
Local photographer  
304-582-1487

**MEDITATIVE MEDICINALS** ■  
CBD, health & beauty  
719-221-1543

**MOUNTAINEER POPCORN** ■  
Sweet & savory treats  
410-937-4612

**O'HURLEY'S GENERAL STORE** ●  
Novelties & gifts  
304-876-6907

**ON THE WINGS OF DREAMS** ■  
Gifts for spiritual journeyers  
304-876-0244

**REVERSA ROSE** ■  
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EXPLORE // CHARLES TOWN & RANSON

**SUPPORT OUR NEIGHBORS. SHOP LOCALLY THIS YEAR**

As we swing into the spirit of the holidays 2020-style, the Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau (JCCVB) is encouraging us to shop small and save our local businesses. Annette Gavin Bates, CEO of the organization, notes that small businesses are the backbone of our local communities. Supporting local retailers and restaurants keeps our downtowns vibrant and has a direct impact on our community and neighbors. For every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 of it stays within the local economy to support important programs benefiting local residents. Bates shared comments from some business owners across the County who are hoping for a successful holiday season to help survive the pandemic.

“In these very difficult times it is especially important to remember the small businesses that are locally owned,” says Meredith Wait, owner of Dickinson & Wait in Shepherdstown. “The dollars spent here will end up being put back into the local economy — not so with the money spent in big box stores.”

“These local small businesses are not only important to the local economy but are the cornerstones of our local culture, the glue that binds our main streets and are essential to the vibrancy of who we are as a community,” says Todd Coyle, COO of the Jefferson GAP Coalition. “Supporting them through these tough times, the way they need to be supported, speaks volumes to the integrity of who we are to the rest of the world. There is no better way to show your kindness for the holidays and love of your community than to buy from a local small business.”

“As small business owners, we have worked very hard to engage with local vendors



B.Vintage stocks an eclectic selection of goods.

and crafters. From micro-farms and creameries, to wood crafters and glass blowers,” says Anthony Brooks, owner of Hamilton’s Tavern 1840 in Harpers Ferry and H. B. Snallygaster General Store & Café in Bolivar. “It is important to support those individuals, because they are part of the fibers that make our region unique. Celebrating the holidays this year is going to be different for everyone. There is nothing better than a fresh baked loaf of bread, or a hand knit scarf. Letting these local artisans know they are appreciated and loved, has holiday spirit written all over it.”

Gavin emphasized that if you are not comfortable shopping in person, you can still support local shops and restaurants by purchasing online. She pointed out that gift certificates from local stores and restaurants are an easy way to share your local spirit. “I believe all of our small businesses have a very real connection to their community and we have an incredible opportunity to give back to them. Let’s support the businesses you love today, so they are here tomorrow.”



Discover old fashioned fun for all ages at The Hobbies Shop.

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**Website:** TheDesignCenterllc.com  
**Phone:** 304-260-8810

**LOCAL EVENT**



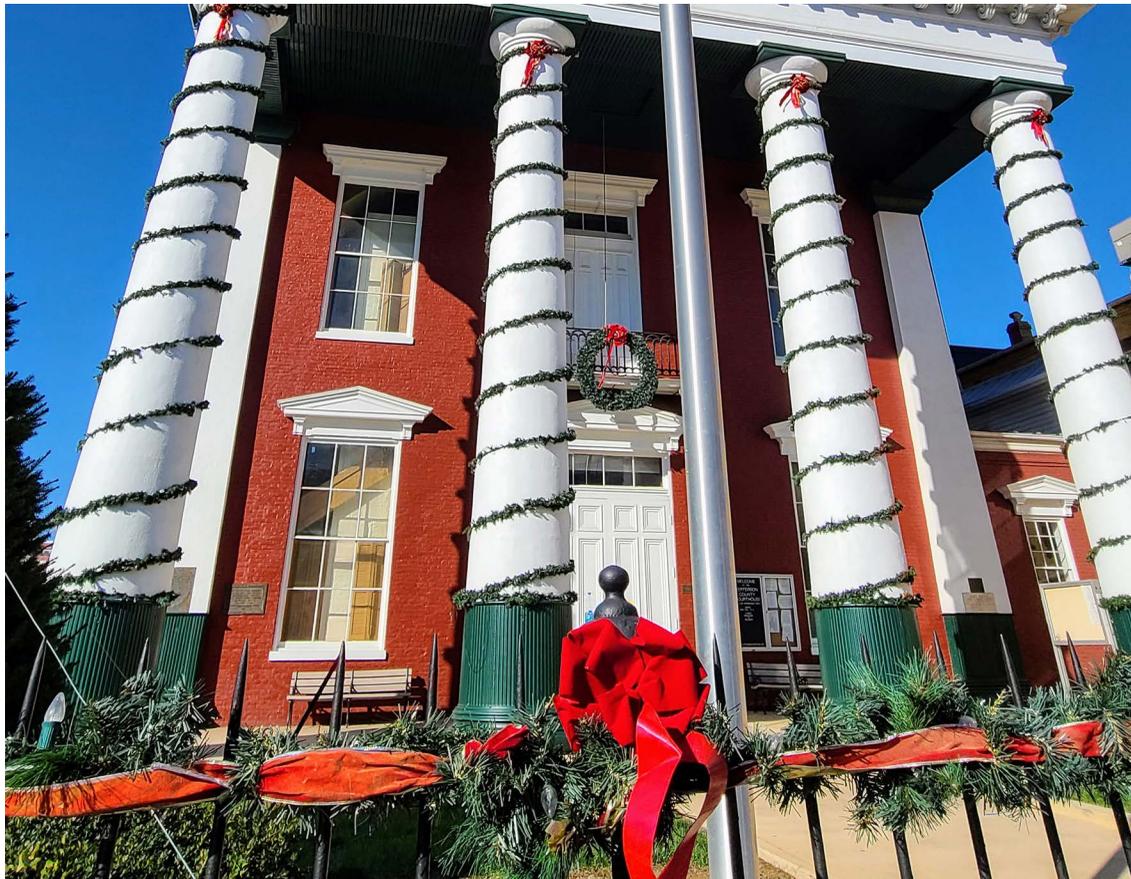
**HERBAL HOLIDAY FAIRE AT SACRED ROOTS HERBAL SANCTUARY**

**GIVE THE GIFT** of wellness this season with locally grown herbs and herbal products for body, mind and spirit. Our herbs are Certified Naturally Grown and are cultivated, harvested and processed by hand with love. We believe that creating a viable and healthy present and future, for the entire web of life, begins in the heart and on the land! Our mission is to work in collaboration with living world around us, while providing the highest quality medicinal herbs ...truly “affordable healthcare”.

Come enjoy some hot herbal tea, listen to live classical guitar music, and peruse the handmade and homegrown wares of other local artisans. This event is outdoors. Bring your own mug.

**Event date:** Nov. 29, 1-4 pm  
**Location:** Outdoor Garden Pavilion at Sacred Roots Herbal Sanctuary  
**Website:** SacredRootswv.com  
**Email:** info@sacredrootswv.com

EXPLORE // CHARLES TOWN & RANSON



**NEEDFUL THINGS**  
Vintage & new items  
218 W Washington St  
304-725-6315

**OP-SHOP**  
Curated resale clothing  
115 N Charles St  
304-725-6605

**TRADEWINDS FLOORS**  
Carpet & flooring  
204 W Washington St  
304-728-9980

**TWO CROWS ANTIQUE MALL**  
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1212 N Mildred St  
681-252-1343

**TWO RIVERS TREADS**  
Active & outdoor footwear  
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304-728-8843

**WEANT TO PLAY**  
Sporting equipment  
306 W Washington St  
540-514-3909

**WEAR IT AGAIN KID**  
Consignment boutique  
311 W Washington St  
304-725-7549

**THE WILLIAMS STORE**  
Convenience store  
131 W Washington St  
202-674-0300

**THE WOODEN SHOE**  
Vintage lighting, glass, china  
222 W Washington St  
304-725-1673

**FAST CASH PAWN**  
Jewelry, electronics, etc.  
237 W Washington St  
304-885-0066

**FEAGANS JEWELERS**  
Custom jewelry & repair  
226 W Washington St  
304-725-7411

**FUZZY DOG BOOKS & MUSIC**  
Used books & vinyl  
111 N Charles St  
304-867-9321

**THE HOBBIES SHOP**  
Models, RC, kites, etc.  
226 W Washington St  
681-252-0861

**JEFFERSON COUNTY MUSEUM**  
(Open by appointment)  
200 E Washington St  
304-725-8628

**LITTLE POTTERY HOUSE**  
Make & paint pottery  
117 N Charles St  
304-820-6485

**MITIELDA LATINA**  
Convenience store  
124 W Washington St  
304-885-4544

**WASHINGTON STREET ARTISTS COOP**  
Gallery & exhibits  
108 N George St  
304-724-2090

**YARNABILITY**  
Arts & crafts  
130 W Washington St  
304-876-8081

**SERVICES**

**COLIN'S BARBER SHOP**  
103 W Washington St  
304-725-0123

**DOUBLE IRIS YOGA**  
201 W Washington St  
240-625-8358

**EFFLEURAGE SPA & BOUTIQUE**  
303 W Washington St  
304-240-8012

**GARRISON'S BARBER SHOP**  
109 N Charles St

**SOKEL MAKEUP & SKIN CARE**  
123 N Charles St  
304-728-8801

**STUDIO M**  
Yoga  
231 W Washington St  
304-728-9988

**TAILORING BY TERESA**  
115 W Washington St  
304-724-6408

**THE UPPERCUT**  
Beauty Salon  
305 W Washington St  
304-725-1950

**FOOD, DRINK & ENTERTAINMENT**

**A LA MODE CAFE**  
**ICE CREAM & DESSERTS**  
113 Potomac St  
540-514-6255

**ALMOST HEAVEN PUB & GRILL**  
Pub food & drinks  
177 Potomac St  
304-535-8710

**ABOLITIONIST ALE WORKS**  
Craft beer & pub dining  
129 W Washington St  
681-252-1548

**ALFREDO'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILL**  
Quaint & homey bistro  
735 E Washington St  
304-724-9992

**GINZA**  
Hibachi & sushi  
91 Saratoga Dr  
304-728-9888

**GRANDMA'S DINER**  
American & Spanish  
227 W Washington St  
304-724-9960

**HOLLYWOOD CASINO**  
Slots, tables, & horse racing  
750 Hollywood Dr  
800-795-7001

**INKWELL'S TAVERN**  
Cocktails, craft beer, food  
205 W Washington St  
304-930-1742

**MAD MONKS BAKERY**  
Cofee and baked goods  
109 W Washington St

**MOUNTAIN VIEW DINER**  
Classic family restaurant  
903 E Washington St  
304-728-8522

**NEEDFUL THINGS**  
Cafe & vintage furnishings  
218 W Washington St  
304-725-6315

**OLD OPERA HOUSE**  
Community theater  
204 N George St  
304-725-4420

**ORTEGA'S TACO SHOP**  
Homemade Mexican cuisine  
100 W Washington St  
304-728-4321

**PADDY'S IRISH PUB**  
Irish-theme sports bar  
210 W Liberty St  
304-725-4999

**ROSSY'S PLACE**  
American Restaurant  
1446 Flowing Springs Rd  
861-252-4125

**SIBLING COFFEE ROASTERS**  
(new location)  
109 W Washington St  
540-450-7908

**SUMITRA**  
Innovative Thai & Asian  
211 W Washington St  
304-885-8747

**TEE DAWGS BBQ**  
TX style smoked meats  
307 S Washington St  
304-725-2271

**SHOPPING & GALLERIES**

**ART DECO DEKOR**  
20th Century vintage  
114 E Liberty St  
304-724-6004

**B.VINTAGE**  
Modern farmhouse vintage  
114 W Washington St  
304-885-8920

**BUSHEL & PECK**  
Specialty grocery store  
100 W Washington St  
304-885-8133

**HOLIDAY SPIRIT**

**Caring for the Community**

Local merchant **Two Rivers Treads** (400 S Mildred Street, Ranson) showcases the spirit of the holidays with its community coat rack in front of its store. Anyone in need of something to keep warm this winter is welcome to a jacket from the rack. They accept donations too — if you have any spare winter coats, gloves, hats, scarves or blankets, please drop them at the store during business hours.



EXPLORE // HARPERS FERRY & BOLIVAR

A 50 YEAR HOLIDAY TRADITION CONTINUES

OLDE TYME CHRISTMAS IN HARPERS FERRY & BOLIVAR

THE LARGE A&P GROCERY STORE ad on page A-5 of the December 2 issue of *The Spirit of Jefferson-Farmers Advocate* from 1971 brings back memories. Four loaves of bread for a dollar, pork chops at \$1.09 per pound, but also a note from the grocer apologizing for having been out of stock on so many items and celebrating a “Back to Normal ... Sell-O-Bration” — it was a year of economic turmoil, with the Nixon administration imposing wage and price controls in an ill-conceived attempt to control inflation. The article above the advertisement notes that the stores of Harpers Ferry, described as a “quaint old village,” will be illuminated by candlelight, and “clerks will wear period costumes and carolers will stroll the street” for an “Old Fashioned Christmas” event.

Inflation has been up and down, bread is now closer to four dollars per loaf, and the last A&P store closed in 2015, but Harpers Ferry and Bolivar have been remarkably consistent in celebrating Christmas every year for the past five decades. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced some changes this year, but the Merchants Association is keeping the tradition alive.

Events are currently scheduled for the weekends of December 5-6 and 12-13, including craft demonstrations, wagon tours, costumed performers strolling the streets in Lower Town, and visits (at a distance) with Santa & Mrs. Claus in the gazebo in Upper Town.

For current schedule and details, visit [HarpersFerryOTC.com](http://HarpersFerryOTC.com).



HANDMADE CRAFTS



TRI-STATE HOLIDAY HANDMADE MARKET

A juried event featuring only hand-crafted items produced by local artisans and artists. Organized by Heavenly Treasures Pottery Studio and Rock Fusion Studio, this show and sale presents dozens of individuals selling a variety of items suitable for gifts, including pottery, candles, prints, jewelry and other unique items.

For this indoor event, masks and social distancing are required. Please check the Facebook page for updates on dates & times due to the pandemic.

**Date & Time:** Dec 12 (Sat) 9 am - 5 pm  
**Location:** Clarion Inn, Harpers Ferry (Route 340 at the top of the hill)  
**Admission:** Free  
**Facebook:** Tri-State Holiday Handmade Market

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EXPLORE // HARPERS FERRY & BOLIVAR



**FOOD, DRINK & ENTERTAINMENT**

**A LA MODE CAFE ICE CREAM & DESSERTS**

113 Potomac St  
540-514-6255

**ALMOST HEAVEN PUB & GRILL**

Pub food & drinks  
177 Potomac St  
304-535-8710

**THE ANVIL RESTAURANT**

Casual dining, rustic space  
1290 W Washington St  
304-535-2582

**THE BARN OF HARPERS FERRY**

Bar & events venue  
1062 W Washington St  
855-935-2276

**BATTLE GROUNDS BAKERY & COFFEE**

Pastries & sandwiches  
180 High St  
304-535-8583

**THE CANAL HOUSE CAFÉ**

Local ingredients  
1226 W Washington St  
304-535-8551

**CANNONBALL DELI**

Sandwiches, Snacks, Drinks  
125 W Potomac St  
304-535-1762

**COACH HOUSE GRILL N' BAR**

Full service dining  
173 Potomac St  
540-514-6255

**THE COFFEE MILL**

Coffee shop (takeout-only)  
140 Potomac St  
540-514-6255

**COUNTRY CAFÉ**

Breakfast & lunch, casual  
1715 Washington St  
304-535-2327

**CREAMY CREATIONS**

Ice cream shop  
173 Potomac St  
304-535-3045

**HAMILTON'S TAVERN 1840**

Inventive craft menu  
914 Washington St  
304-535-8728

**HARPERS FERRY BREWING**

Craft brews  
37412 Adventure Center Ln  
571-420-2160

**Harpers Ferry Ice Cream Shop**

Ice cream & milkshakes  
4330 Wilson Freeway  
304-535-6305

**KELLEY FARM KITCHEN**

Vegetarian & Vegan  
(Takeout only)  
1112 Washington St  
304-535-9976

**LES & ALI'S SEAFOOD**

Fresh catch fish market  
(Weekends only)  
Wilson Freeway & Blair Rd  
540-931-8050

**MOUNTAIN HOUSE CAFE**

Cozy family inn, takeout  
175 High St  
304-932-0677

**THE RABBIT HOLE**

Casual American & drinks  
186 High St  
304-535-8818

**SWEET ALISHA'S PIZZA**

Family-owned pizzeria  
180 High St  
304-535-8769

**WHITE HORSE TAVERN**

Burgers, brews & Bourbons  
4328 Wilson Fwy  
304-535-6314

**SHOPPING & GALLERIES**

**THE GILDED FLEA ANTIQUES**

Antique & vintage wares  
930 Washington St  
304-268-0763

**HARPERS FERRY PARK ASSOCIATION BOOKSHOP**

(Currently under the tent)  
723 Shenandoah St  
304-535-6881

**THE HODGE PODGE**

Gifts, souvenirs & antiques  
156 High St  
304-535-6917

**MAGPIE POTTERY**

Ceramics by local artisans  
163 Public Way  
757-376-1748

**MARY ADAMS ACCESSORIES**

Eclectic jewelry  
170 High St  
304-535-2411

**NATURE'S HEALTH AND BODY**

Health & wellness products  
180 High St  
772-228-4367

**HARPERS FERRY OUTFITTERS**

Outdoor gear & bike shop  
106 Potomac St  
304-535-2087



**RIVERS STUDIO & GALLERY**

Functional & sculptural art  
1346 W Washington St  
703-727-2532

**HB SNALLYGASTER GENERAL STORE**

Whimsical goods & cafe  
1102 Washington St  
304-535-8728

**TENFOLD FAIR TRADE COLLECTION**

Hand-crafted wares  
180 High St  
304-579-8525

**TESSOTERICA**

Hand-crafted bath items  
170B High St  
304-535-8248

**TRUE TREATS HISTORIC CANDY**

Retro candy & fun treats  
144 High St  
304-461-4714

**THE VILLAGE SHOP**

Souvenirs & novelties  
144 High St  
304-535-8333

**THE VINTAGE LADY**

Jewelry & local WV goods  
180 High St  
304-535-1313

**WASHINGTON STREET STUDIOS**

Ceramic studio and classes  
1441 Washington St  
240-586-3030

**SERVICES & ADVENTURE**

**APPALACHIAN TRAIL VISITOR CENTER**

(Currently closed)  
799 Washington St  
304-535-6331

**GHOST TOURS OF HARPERS FERRY**

History, legend & lore  
(8pm daily)  
100 Church St  
304-725-8019

**HARPERS FERRY ADVENTURE CENTER**

Rafting, tubing, cabins  
37410 Adventure Center Ln  
540-668-9007

**TOY TRAIN MUSEUM**

Family fun (open May-Oct)  
937 Bakerton Rd  
304-535-2521

**JOHN BROWN WAX MUSEUM**

(Currently closed)  
168 High St  
304-535-6342

**RIVER & TRAIL OUTFITTERS**

Rafting, tubing, kayaking  
604 Valley Rd  
301-834-9950

**WHITE FLY OUTFITTERS**

Fly fishing & light tackle  
4332 Wilson Fwy  
304-876-8030

**RIVER RIDERS FAMILY ADVENTURE**

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EXPLORE // HOLIDAY LIGHTS

The Observer is encouraged to see that our local communities are keeping the festive spirit of the holiday season alive by continuing activities that can be enjoyed at a distance. We encourage our readers to find joy in these events and add our voice to the many who are encouraging patience and perseverance until we can all gather together again to celebrate.

**MARYLAND**

**Winter Lights Festival (Gaithersburg)**

A family tradition! The Winter Lights Festival is a 3.5 mile drive through Seneca Creek State Park with more than 450 illuminated displays and beautifully lit trees.

**Dates:** Nov. 27 — Dec. 31 (Closed Dec. 25)

**Times:** Fri-Sat 6-9:30 pm, Sun-Thurs 6-9 pm

**Location:** Seneca Creek State Park, 11950 Clopper Road, Gaithersburg

**Ticket Info:** \$15/car Mon-Thurs and \$20/car Fri-Sun. \$30/van or bus. Discounts available if tickets purchased in advance online.

**Website:** GaithersburgMD.gov/recreation/special-events/winter-lights-festival



**Sailing Through Winter Solstice (Frederick)**

During the Sailing Through The Winter Solstice event, about 25 boats set sail in Carrol Creek Park. The fleet includes gaff-rigged ketches, yawls, three-masted schooners and pirate ships, moored with their sail outlines, rigging and decks lit up from dusk till dawn.

**Dates:** Nov. 21 — Feb. 6

**Times:** Dusk till dawn

**Location:** Carroll Creek Park, Frederick

**Ticket Info:** Free

**Website:** ColorOnTheCreek.com



**City Park Lighting (Hagerstown)**

Drive through City Park during the month of December to enjoy spectacular lights. Tune to FM 90.3 for a holiday music accompaniment.

**Date:** Dec. 4 — 31

**Times:** All day (Official lighting on Dec. 4 at 7 pm)

**Location:** City Park, 501 Virginia Ave, Hagerstown

**Ticket Info:** Free

**Website:** HagerstownMD.org/1130/City-Park-Lighting



**VIRGINIA**

**Bull Run Festival of Lights (Northern Virginia)**



A 2.5-mile drive-through display of holiday lights and vignettes. Come to see classic scenes as well as new additions to this long-standing holiday light tour.

**Dates:** Nov. 6 — Jan. 10

**Times:** Mon-Thurs 5:30-9:30 pm, Fri-Sun & Holiday nights 5:30-10 pm

**Location:** Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville

**Ticket Info:** Purchase tickets for specific time slots at the door or online. \$25/car for Nov. 6—Dec. 11 & Jan. 1-10. \$30/car for Dec.

12-31. Ticket prices discounted \$5 if purchased in advance online. Additional \$5 discount available for tickets purchased for Mon-Thurs (promo code WEB20).

**Website:** NovaParks.com/events/bull-run-festival-of-lights



**Glitter & Glow Drive-Thru Parade (Leesburg)**

Celebrate the season with this drive-through parade. Holiday floats of all shapes and sizes will be decorated for the holidays and easily viewable from your car.

**Date:** Dec. 12

**Times:** 5:30-8 pm

**Location:** Freedom Park, 101 Colonel Grenata Circle SE, Leesburg

**Ticket Info:** Free

**Website:** LeesburgVA.gov/departments/parks-recreation/events/holidays-in-leesburg

**Holiday Lane: Lights in the Park (Winchester)**

Winchester's newest drive-through light show will feature beautiful light designs, characters, and holiday decorations the entire family will love. Santa is also planning to stop by on weekends.

**Dates:** Nov. 30 — Dec. 27

**Times:** 5-8:30 pm, everyday

**Location:** Jim Barnett Park, 1001 E Cork St, Winchester

**Ticket Info:** Free

**Website:** VisitWinchesterVA.com/event/lights-in-the-park



Find more events in the...

Local **HOLIDAY** Guide

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