

Fluvanna

REVIEW



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**Fluvanna County
Comprehensive Plan**

FLUVANNA Community Input Survey

What is the purpose of the Community Survey?

Fluvanna County is preparing an update to its Comprehensive Plan, and would like to invite citizens to participate in the process. All information provided is confidential, and will assist in gathering information on issues important to citizens. The survey is available online by scanning the **QR code** or going to the link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/FluvCompPlanSurvey2025>



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a guide for a locality's future development. The Plan lays out a locality's vision for the future and outlines the goals to achieve that vision. The plan also outlines ways to manage growth, protects what citizens think is special, and assists local officials with decision making. Public input is a crucial part of this process. Paper copies will be available at the County Office Building and Library.



**Please Complete Survey
by May 30th, 2025**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE FLUVANNA COUNTY
PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE AT 434-591-1910**

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On the cover: Susan Edginton's Group of
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GENERAL

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Copies will be mailed for the subscription price of \$150 per year or \$85 per six months. Please mail a check and a note with your name and address to: Subscriptions Dept., P.O. Box 59, Palmyra, VA 22963. For more information email Edee Povol at edee@fluvannareview.com.

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The *Fluvanna Review* is the paper of record for Fluvanna County. Call Rae Alberts at 434-207-0223 to place a legal ad.

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Letters to the editor should be a maximum of 350 words and include the name, phone number and address of the author. The phone number and street address are for the paper's records only. We reserve the right to edit letters to the editor. Submit to editor@fluvannareview.com

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Fluco girls soccer outscored, not outplayed

BY DUNCAN NIXON
CORRESPONDENT



Flucos take on Goochland. Photo by Duncan Nixon

In a closely contested game, the Fluco girls soccer team was outscored but not really outplayed on April 24. The first half was an even match-up as both Fluvanna and the Goochland Bulldogs had some scoring opportunities that they could not convert. With time running out in the half, and possibly with time actually run out, the Bulldogs put the ball into the net. The referee immediately blew his whistle signaling the end of the half. The referee keeps the time on the field and the stadium clock is stopped at two minutes, since it is not official. Spectators wondered whether the referee in rushing to follow the run down the field by the Goochland attacker might have not noticed that time in the half had run out before the score. In

any event, the Bulldogs took a 1-0 lead into the second half.

One of the highlights of the first half for the Flucos was an impressive run through the Bulldogs' defense by sophomore attacker Caroline Thomas, but she was turned away just in time from the Goochland point of view. Fluco senior stand-out Piper La Rochelle also had a good chance, but her long scoring attempt was too high. LaRochelle also headed away a Goochland corner kick with about 14 minutes remaining in the half.

Early in the second half, Fluco senior goalie Kayli Presnell made an excellent diving save, but was injured and had to leave the game. After several minutes of play, Presnell was able to return to her position. Shortly after her return,

she made another outstanding save at the second half's halfway point.

Both teams battled back and forth for the next 15-16 minutes of play until, with just 5:25 remaining, a long high floating kick by Goochland just slid under the cross bar for the Bulldogs' second goal. It was one of those shots that occurs in soccer, not forcefully kicked, and with little chance of going in, but accidentally perfectly placed. This second goal with little time remaining seemed to put an end to the Flucos chances. Goochland scored two goals, one with probably no time on the clock and one on a fluke kick. The game could easily have been a 0-0 tie.

Several Flucos turned in strong performances for Coach Kat Hinkle. In addition to Caroline Thomas, senior McKinley Thomas and sophomore Jimena Linares Torres were very speedy and handled the ball well. Presnell had an excellent game in goal and LaRochelle was tenacious throughout, locking down the Bulldogs' top attacker.

The girls team played at Monticello High on April 28 and will be at Charlottesville on May 1. Their next home game will be on May 5 when they host Albemarle High. After that, they travel to Western Albemarle on May 5 and host Orange County on May 12.

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PUBLIC NOTICES



PUBLIC HEARING Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 15.2-1427 and 15.2-2204, a Public Hearing will be held Fluvanna County Circuit Court, at 72 Main Street, Palmyra, VA 22963 for citizens of the County to have the opportunity to appear before and be heard by the Board of Supervisors on the following items:

Ordinance to amend the “Code of the County of Fluvanna, Virginia,” by enacting § 20-13-1 to codify that there shall be a biennial assessment, reassessment, and equalization of assessments of all real estate in the County, such real estate to be assessed as of January 1.

Copies of the complete text of the above ordinance is available for public review at <https://www.fluvannacounty.org/> and at the Office of the Fluvanna County Administrator during normal business hours. All interested persons wishing to be heard are invited to attend the public hearing.



PUBLIC HEARING Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Board of Supervisors of Fluvanna County, in accordance with Section 33.2-331 of the Code of Virginia, will conduct a joint Public Hearing at the Fluvanna County Circuit Court, 72 Main Street, Palmyra 22963, at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive public comment on the proposed Secondary Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2031 in Fluvanna County, and on the Secondary System Construction Budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Copies of the proposed Plan and Budget may be reviewed at the Louisa Residency Office of the Virginia Department of Transportation, located at 3709 Davis Highway, Louisa, or at the Fluvanna County Administrator's Office located at 132 Main Street, Palmyra, Virginia.

All projects in the Secondary Six-Year Plan that are eligible for federal funds will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which documents how Virginia will obligate federal transportation funds.

Persons requiring special assistance to attend and participate in this hearing should contact the Virginia Department of Transportation at 829-7616. Persons wishing to speak at this public hearing should contact the Fluvanna County Administrator's Office at 434-591-1910.

NOTICE OF TAKING PROOF OF DEBTS AND DEMANDS

IN RE: EDITH WILMA FEISNER, DECEASED

At the request of the personal representative of Edith Wilma Feisner, deceased, and pursuant to Section 64.2-550 of the Code of Virginia. I have fixed the 14th day of May, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. as the time and my office at 115 W. Main Street, Suite 4, Louisa, Virginia, as the place for receiving debts and demands against the said decedent or her estate.

John David Gibson
Assistant Commissioner of Accounts
Fluvanna County, Virginia
Email: jdgibsonlaw@gmail.com



PUBLIC HEARING Fluvanna County Planning Commission Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 15.2-1427 and 15.2-2204, a Public Hearing will be held in the Morris Room in the County Administration Building at 132 Main Street, Palmyra, Virginia 22963 for citizens of the County to have the opportunity to appear before and be heard by the Planning Commission for the following item:

ZTA 25:05: Ordinance to amend the “Code of the County of Fluvanna, Virginia,” by adding § 22-1-3 to identify the County’s GIS map as the official zoning map of Fluvanna County.

A copy of the complete text of the above ordinance is available for public review at <https://www.fluvannacounty.org/> and at the Fluvanna County Planning and Zoning Department during normal business hours. Questions may be directed to the Planning and Zoning Department, at (434) 591-1910. All interested persons wishing to be heard are invited to attend the public hearing.

MACAA thrift shop opens

BY PAGE H. GIFFORD
CORRESPONDENT

It has been a few years since MACAA closed the thrift shop at Carysbrook but it has reopened. The Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA)'s Fluvanna office operates the thrift shop (and a large food pantry) in conjunction with the Fluvanna Christian Service Society.

The store has clothes for adults, children, shoes, bags, jewelry, and housewares. They are not accepting furniture.

The Thrift Shop is located in the Carysbrook Complex next to the gym and is open Monday-Friday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Call 434-987-8173 for more information about donations.

PVCC expanding its testing services

PRESS RELEASE

Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) is expanding its testing services, increasing the opportunity for more community members to come to the college for professional certification exams. The Pearson Vue Testing Center at PVCC, which offers various certification and professional licensure exams, has been renamed the Professional Testing and Certification Center (PTCC) and now offers certification exams through Kryterion, a global leader in online assessment and testing solutions. The PTCC will continue to offer exams through Pearson Vue, such as the GED®, National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality exams.

PVCC also now offers certification exams through Prov, which delivers innovative and accessible exam services for industries including cosmetology and barbering.

“This expansion of testing providers means that PVCC is able to assist more people in Charlottesville and the surrounding areas and can help more individuals reach their goals of a new

job or career,” shared PVCC Testing Coordinator Amy Floyd.

To learn more about the Professional Testing and Certification Center, visit pvcc.edu/professional-testing-and-certification-center or email afloyd@pvcc.edu.



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Community Calendar

Cville band plays May 4

The Charlottesville Band will open its 103th Season on Sunday, **May 4** at 3:30 p.m. at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). The family oriented program will feature Eric Chen, alto saxophone soloist. The concert is free and open to the public.

Coles to play

Donald Coles, guitarist and banjo player, will be performing your jazz, blues, and rock favorites on Sunday, **May 4** at 3 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 43 Washington Street, Columbia. Admission is free.

Food Pantry

Fluvanna MACAA / FCSS Food Pantry is located at the old Carysbrook High School. To receive food from the food pantry bring a photo ID as proof of residency in Fluvanna. Open: **Monday - Friday**, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. To donate directly to the food bank call 434.842.2521. Cash and food donations gratefully accepted.

Food Pantry

FLRD Community Food Pantry, located at 4321 James Madison Hwy, Fork Union, is accepting cash and food donations. The pantry is open on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



QR Code provided by the Fluvanna Leadership Development Program

LMOA to ask residents to approve withdrawal from emergency fund to help pay PPP loan

BY HEATHER MICHON
CORRESPONDENT

The Lake Monticello Owners Association (LMOA) will ask residents for permission to potentially draw funds from the Emergency Reserve Account (ERA) to help pay off a \$680,000 COVID-era federal loan.

Directors voted 6-0 to add the question to the ballot that will go out to members for the annual meeting during their monthly meeting on Thursday night (April 25).

In April 2020, the LMOA applied for a \$646,843 loan from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), an emergency fund established by Congress to provide up to eight weeks of payroll assistance for eligible businesses facing furloughs and layoffs as the country shut down in the face of the expanding pandemic.

LMOA was concerned that illness and rising unemployment would prevent members from keeping up with the dues and permits, and could lead to staff layoffs.

Current LMOA president Larry Henson said that the LMOA directors on the board at the time "believed it was their fiduciary responsibility" to apply for the loan.

Henson said that the PPP program guidelines had been contradictory and constantly changing, but the LMOA had "trusted the SBA (Small Business Administration) to vet the application properly."

Because the LMOA was found to have used the funds for their intended purpose, the SBA forgave the loan in full in May 2021. The association then took the debt off the books.

But in December 2024, it received a demand letter from the DOJ, stating that, as a 501(c)(4) homeowners' association, LMOA had been ineligible for PPP loan forgiveness.

Now, the government wants the money back, with interest. Failure to settle and repay the \$681,000 could result in prosecution under the False Claims Act. A conviction could lead to a fine double or triple the amount of the original debt.

Henson said an attorney's analysis of DOJ settlements with other HOAs under similar PPP loan cases generally found that the amounts were about 1.2 to 1.5 times the original loan amount.

The ERA is a reserve fund created when LMOA sold the water treatment plant to Aqua in the 1990s.

Residents have voted to approve withdrawals in the past. In 2014, a majority voted to loan the association \$2 million from the ERA to fund the construction of the new clubhouses at Ashlawn and Fairway. A portion of annual dues goes back into the fund each year, with the loan expected to be fully repaid by 2030.

The question of using ERA funds to help pay the PPP loan will be on the ballot that will go out to residents in the next few weeks. Results will be announced at the annual meeting in late June.



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BY RUDY GARCIA, OWNER, RIVANNA WOODS FINANCIAL / TAX SERVICES

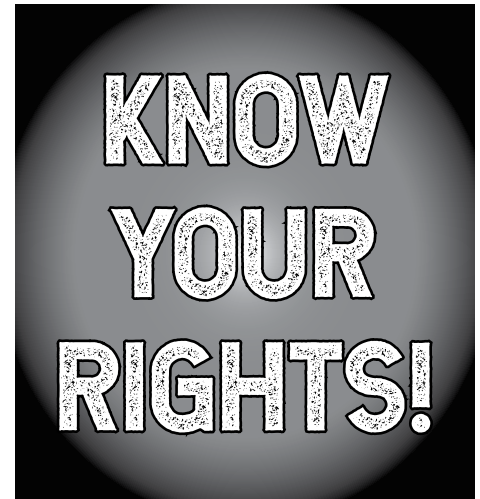
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- **Right to receive inheritance as dictated by the estate or trust.** One of the fundamental rights of beneficiaries is to receive their inheritance as stipulated in the estate or trust documents. Whether you are named in a will or designated as a beneficiary of a trust, the executor or trustee has a legal obligation to distribute assets according to the deceased's wishes.
- **Right to information.** Beneficiaries are entitled to receive information regarding the estate or trust, including its contents, the management of assets, and the expected timeline for distributions. Trustees and executors have a fiduciary duty to keep beneficiaries informed and act in their best interests.
- **Right to an accounting of assets, distributions, and expenses.** Beneficiaries have the right to request a report with the following information:
 - A list of all assets and their values
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 - Distributions made to beneficiaries
 - Fees paid to the executor or trustee

Depending on how long it takes to administer the estate, consider asking for several reports at a consistent interval.



What To Do If Your Rights Are Violated

If you believe that your rights as a beneficiary are being violated, here are several courses of action you can take:

- **Request information in writing.** Formally ask the executor or trustee for the necessary documents and updates.
- **Consult an attorney.** A legal professional specializing in estate or trust law can help enforce beneficiary rights.
- **Petition the court.** If a trustee or executor is failing in their duties, beneficiaries can petition the court for an accounting, removal of a fiduciary, or enforcement of distributions.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a beneficiary, please consult a legal expert! We can help you sort out the tax implications, but we are not attorneys and do not provide any legal guidance through this article. If you don't have an attorney, we can make a referral for you. Feel free to give us a call at 434-442-4044 with any Trust tax or income questions.

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FAA celebrates 50 years

BY PAGE H. GIFFORD
CORRESPONDENT



Alyce Walcavich's Mountain Trees.

Fluvanna Art Association's (FAA) held its annual spring show April 26 celebrating its 50th anniversary and artists throughout the area with a reception and show titled *Then and Now*.

Fluvanna native Windy Payne, a member since 1975, summed up the artistic drive that has kept the FAA flourishing saying, "anyone can paint but a true artist cannot survive without creating art."

The show featured new works by members and an accompanying artist's statement about their artistic journey.

Susan Edginton came a long way from growing up in the Midwest, drawing on sidewalks with chalk and painting watercolors on her mother's typing paper. Like fellow artist William Snow, who was an accomplished graphics artist, they both shared the challenges and frustration of watercolor. Nowadays, watercolor artists, embrace watercolor and have learned how to manipulate it to their advantage.

"These days, my work is all about capturing a moment through painting or photography," said Edginton. Pho-



Jim Wilkin's Journey. Photos courtesy of the FAA and Carol Sorber

tography led her to the world of show dogs, and commissions painting dogs. "Watercolor remains my go-to, pen and ink, and colored pencil." Her painting titled *Griffins* caught everyone's attention at the reception with her subtle blend of colors and exquisite details.

She added, "That early love of creating has stayed with me and continues to shape the way I see the world."

The FAA as a collective group of artists has changed as much as the artists themselves have. Fifty years ago, artists sketched or painted, mostly still life's and landscapes. Fifteen years ago, an evolution of styles and mediums began to take shape, changing the group. Some opposed change within the group, including not allowing photography and later comput-



Page Gifford. Hooray for Hollywood.

er-generated images. This was seen as not pure art. Today, FAA welcomes all artists of all skill levels.

Jim Wilkin, a woodworker whose current work is a sculpture of delicate curled wood that takes on a life of its own in its subtle movement in stillness. Jim's early work showed painstaking detail in his pen and ink drawings but he had always worked with wood as a hobby. Now retired, he devotes his time to refining his craft into an art form.

"Each piece of wood was alive at one time, breathing in its own ways. And for me there is still life in it," he said. "My goal is for each piece of wood that I use to inspire me to create shapes and forms, turnings, sculpture, and pieces of furniture, that allow the wood's natural beauty to be seen, touched, and appreciated by all who look at it."

Bev Bowman loved oils and painting landscapes in her early days but once she studied botanical drawing with Lara Gasteringer she found her niche. Bowman's steady hand and attention to detail show in the delicacy and realism of her work.

Former art teacher Alyce Walcavich says her serious artistic style emerged in graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University. She developed large paintings and drawings that were photo-realistic in style. Her subjects are close-up still-life images with materials and clothing.

"I tried to incorporate rich colors, textures, and patterns within the work using an interplay of warm and cool passages. The larger size of four feet by seven feet surfaces engages the viewer to explore the rich passages of color tones and textural patterns."

Teaching photography at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts influenced and changed Walcavich's approach to making art. Progressing through different photographic processes, her art evolved into surrealism where realistic images were juxtaposed in unusual ways. She adds that Photoshop allowed her to experiment with distortions, effects, and textural changes.

Today she says her style can be "roughly defined as Magic realism: a style that blurs the lines between the

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ordinary and the unusual and is characterized by the use of bright colors, dreamlike imagery, and the unexpected juxtaposition of elements.”

“I want the viewer to explore the spaces between the real and imagined, and to create a sense of wonder and mystery within the real world.”

Other artists in the show, including Mary Volin, a fiber artist, showed off a different side with a stunning 3-D abstract. Duffy Dillinger's 3-D abstract, unlike her more offbeat, humorous work, featured attractive symmetry. Page Gifford departed from her figures and zentangles to create a fun collage of memorable Hollywood movies and icons. Bill Snow, once again traded in his landscapes for a figure of a woman holding a chicken.

All the art shows the development and expression of each artist and in each statement the progression of how they saw the world in the past to how they see it in the present.

The show will be at the Fluvanna County Public Library until June 20.

Supervisors approve FY26 budget

Average homeowner to see 8.85 percent increase in tax bill

BY HEATHER MICHON
CORRESPONDEN

The Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the budget for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) at a special meeting on Wednesday night (April 23).

Director of Finance Tori Melton said the total budget came to \$117,769,609.

Of that, \$103,252,148 will go to general operating expenses, \$10,261,439 will be allocated to capital improvement projects (CIP), and \$4,256,022 will go to enterprise funds.

Overall, the FY26 budget is \$6.8 million more than the amended FY25 budget, an increase of 6.1 percent.

One of the most significant increases came from the schools, which requested over \$1.5 million in additional local funding. Another \$1 million was needed for rising health care costs and cost-of-living increases for county staff. Debt service on Fluvanna's portion of

the James River Water Project is expected to cost \$1.4 million. CIP projects required \$4.6 million in funding.

The county will add four new full-time deputy positions for the sheriff's office for \$563,000. They will also hire a chief of fire services and EMS by January 2026 at a cost of over \$200,000. The Department of Social Services will add three new full-time staff members at a cost of \$248,000.

To fund these increases, supervisors agreed to raise the real estate tax rate to \$0.750 per \$100 of assessed value.

This is an increase of \$0.061 over the recently-adopted equalized tax rate of \$0.689. Each penny added to the real estate tax generates just under \$400,000 in revenue for the county.

Melton said the average homeowner will be looking at an 8.85 percent increase in their real estate tax bill.

The county will also have a new revenue stream beginning in August 2025 as meals tax takes effect. This

four percent tax on ready-to-eat meals is projected to add between \$300,000 to \$600,000 in the first year.

All other county taxes were unchanged. Personal property taxes will stay at \$4.10 per \$100 of assessed value, the business and public utilities tax at \$2.90, and the machinery and tools tax at \$1.90.

The vote to approve the budget came a week later than initially expected. Weather delays and other issues plagued the early part of the budget season, pushing the schedule out of whack. Still, they finished up well ahead of the state-mandated deadline of April 30.

No citizens spoke during the public hearing phase and supervisors did not have any discussions before making the motion to approve the budget resolution.

Before they adjourned, Tony O'Brien (Rivanna) thanked everyone for their participation in the process. "It's always a lot of work and energy and effort," he said. "It's always wonderful when we have a consensus."



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Virginia strawberry growers are cultivating a sweet spring selection

VIRGINIA FARM BUREAU PRESS RELEASE

Ripe, ready-to-pick strawberries are right around the corner—offering ample options for a memorable Mother’s Day.

Statewide strawberry growers are working to open their U-pick fields by May 10, with some early varieties already available for picking.

“It’s like prepping for a big game,” remarked Tyler Wegmeyer of Wegmeyer Farms in Loudoun County. He expects his four locations’ pick-your-own and pre-picked strawberries to be ready in the next three weeks.

Despite a delayed start from an early

April cold snap that cut into about 25% of his farms’ open blooms, Wegmeyer is optimistic about the season.

“When it dropped to 22 degrees, it zapped a lot of blooms that would’ve been strawberries in 30 days,” he explained. “We’re still going to have strawberries, but we’re a little bit delayed since we won’t have as many initially.”

Managing losses from weather extremes is something strawberry growers are accustomed to—especially in Northern Virginia, where frosts can occur as late as May 15, according to Wegmeyer.

“Every year, farmers with sensitive crops deal with this issue,” he noted. “We

just have to be really vigilant and do what we can to keep our crops safe.”

Farther south in Richmond, some of Steve Gallmeyer’s early-blooming strawberry plants were lightly damaged by the April frost.

“They were coming on a lot faster than normal because we were having a very mild, late winter,” he said. “Now it appears we’ll be opening around the usual time in the first week of May.”

The Gallmeyer Farms pick-your-own berry patch typically opens later than most area farms, as the farm uses a mated-row production system for growing strawberries. This method involves planting strawberries in rows and allowing runners to fill in the spaces to maximize production.

The most-recent Virginia Cooperative Extension survey of strawberry practices in Virginia found that 93% of growers use an annual hill plasticulture system, which offers earlier harvesting. In this system, new plants are planted into raised beds covered with plastic mulch each year.

While Gallmeyer’s heirloom strawberries are smaller than most plasticulture berries,

they feature exceptional sweetness.

Wegmeyer’s Chandler and Ruby June strawberries also are softer and sweeter than grocery store varieties, offering a unique tasting experience.

“There’s nothing like picking a fresh strawberry from the field,” he remarked. “People who have never done it before, their eyes are just wide open and they’re flabbergasted with what the taste is like.”

Visitors to the upcoming Wegmeyer Farms Foundation Lincoln Strawberry Festival May 16-18 can pick their own strawberries while supporting the local community. The new event raised almost \$25,000 last year for local charities and youth scholarships, and features a variety of family-friendly attractions. Visit wegmeyerfarms.com for more information.

Gallmeyer encourages all berry lovers to treat themselves—and their mothers—to the season’s sweet selection.

“The more the merrier—we’ve got five acres of berries and plenty of room,” he said.

To find fresh strawberries near you, visit the Virginia Grown website at vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown

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Virginia floriculture blossoms during the spring

VIRGINIA FARM BUREAU PRESS RELEASE

Virginia’s flower farms are bursting with color as growers prepare their fresh blooms for a busy season.

From cut flowers and U-pick farms to nurseries and wholesalers, floriculture is thriving in the commonwealth. In 2023, the sector brought in nearly \$133 million in cash receipts, ranking it No. 11 among Virginia’s top agricultural commodities and No. 14 in flower-producing states nationwide.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s 2022 Census of Agriculture, Virginia is home to 320 cut flower farms—a 74% increase from 2017, demonstrating how demand has blossomed for local flowers.

In Augusta County, Jessica Hall of Harmony Harvest Farm cultivates over 200 flower varieties on 20 acres, including anemones, dahlias, hydrangeas, peonies, ranunculuses and rudbeckias. On a recent episode of Virginia Farm Bureau’s *Real Virginia* television program, she explained that “Mother’s Day is what we like to call the ‘Super Bowl’ of the flower industry.

“It’s when we have some of our most amazing (flowers), fresh, directly off the farm available.”

Hall typically has about 1,500 plants ready in time for the May holiday, and they sell quickly. In addition to retail and wholesale flowers, Harmony Harvest offers U-pick, floral workshops and farm tours.

While their peonies are among the most popular Mother’s Day flowers, the farm also is known for heirloom mums.

“One of the things ... I’m super passionate about is preserving the legacy of one of my favorite crops—the heritage chry-

santhemums,” Hall said. “These are true perennial chrysanthemums. Not like the ones we tend to find at the box stores, but the long-lost varieties that look like the football mums that used to adorn our proms and homecoming games.”

In Amelia County, former health coach turned flower farmer Bridget McMillion of Red Handle Farm grows more than 50 varieties, including unique perennials. Most are field grown, and others are hydroponically cultivated indoors to weather Virginia’s unpredictable spring and offer delicate flowers like tulips during off seasons.

McMillion said timing and care are key to healthy, long-lasting blooms.

“People gravitate toward flowers that are fully bloomed, but if I cut at that stage, the customer isn’t going to get a good vase life,” she explained. “Most have to be cut much earlier, in a tighter bud stage.”

Flowers are harvested during cool mornings and evenings and placed in water with plant food to ensure freshness.

And between Mother’s Day and the spring wedding season, McMillion already has a waiting list for orders. In addition to build-your-own bouquet bars and direct-to-consumer sales, she sells to wholesalers and enjoys collaborating with florists and wedding designers.

“I love the way people smile when they see the blooms,” McMillion said. “People never frown when they’re handed flowers!”

Want to learn more about Virginia floriculture? Watch *Real Virginia* at bit.ly/42J0QGI.

To find locally grown flowers near you, visit the Virginia Grown website at vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown.

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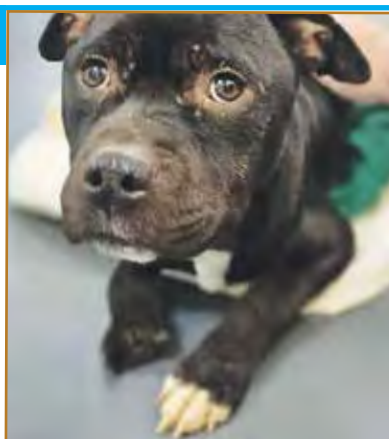
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THIS WEEK'S PET: Caesar

Fall In Love with little Caesar!

Meet Caesar! This gorgeous pocket pittie was brought into the shelter very thin but is slowly gaining weight and already looks much healthier! He has a special right front foot where he is missing 2 of his toes & it makes him even cuter. He loves to snuggle, is very housetrained, and wants to be part of a family! Come in and meet him and you are sure to fall in love!



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The County of Fluvanna is recruiting for the positions of

A full-time HVAC Assistant

The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Specialist performs skilled technical work, on a journeyman level, in the installation, operation, maintenance, modification, service, and repair of HVAC and refrigeration systems. The incumbent inspects and tests both high- and low-pressure refrigerant systems to locate and diagnose faults and malfunctions, performs required repairs through the replacement of inoperative parts or adjustment of thermostatic controls and blowers. The HVAC Specialist also complies with federal regulations governing environmental protection, hazardous waste disposal, and the use of refrigerants, chemical substances, and materials.

Required Knowledge and Abilities:

- The ability to use wrenches, electric drills, pipe cutters, and benders,
- acetylene torches, hammers, and various other hand/power tools
- Ao Read Amp meters, ohmmeters, test lamp, voltmeter, wattmeter, thermometer and manometer, Refrigerant gauges, vacuum pumps and refrigerant scales, and refrigerant recycle/recovery equipment
- Journeyman-like knowledge of industrial plumbing
- Knowledge of refrigeration recovery, evacuation, and charging; understands the installation and sizing of refrigerant piping.
- Thorough knowledge of Building Automation Systems (BAS)
- Thorough knowledge of OSHA safety regulations
- Extensive knowledge of chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) handling procedures and related EPA regulations
- Ability to read and interpret electrical schematics and mechanical blueprints
- Ability to work independently, communicate effectively verbally and in writing.
- Ability to work from ladders and in enclosed spaces
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with County staff, vendors, and contractors
- Possession of and maintenance of a driver's license valid in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Essential Services Designation – must be available to work during inclement weather and emergency call back to perform essential and/or emergency services for the County.
- Basic tools and equipment will be provided by the County and will remain under the County's ownership
- Criminal background and driving record check.

Minimum Qualifications:

High School diploma or equivalent
7+ years of experience with commercial and industrial HVAC systems
Journeyman HVAC License or ability to obtain within one year of employment
CFC Refrigeration Certificate or ability to obtain within 6 months of employment

Preferred Qualifications:

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Prior local government experience

The Hiring Range is \$53,518 to \$61,546-Depending on the qualifications

Excellent benefits (paid health, dental, and vision, flex spending, life, disability, and Virginia Retirement).
Submit a cover letter, resume, references, and County application to jobs@fluvannacounty.org.

Applications are available on the county website at www.fluvannacounty.org

The Position is open until filled.

EOE/AA

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Master Gardeners' annual plant sale this Saturday

CONTRIBUTED BY E. DIANNE CAMPBELL



April Nguyen discusses planting pollinator attractors with FMG President Kathleen Brunke. Photo courtesy of E. Dianne Campbell

Okay, home gardeners, focus up!

Are you ready?

Spots selected? (There's always a place for at least one more.)

Soil turned and amended?

Patio pots scrubbed and in position?
Soil fluffy?

Space cleared in the back of the car to carry them home?

Gloves found? Trowels at ready?

This Saturday is the Fluvanna Master Gardeners annual plant sale!

And the Master Gardeners are ready for you. The sale will be on Saturday, May 3, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the Park & Ride lot at Turkeysag Trail, across from Jefferson Pharmacy. Rain date is May 4, 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Customers will not be admitted before the posted start time.

Easy category location

Plants will be displayed according to the categories of herbs, vegetables, annuals, sun perennials, and shade perennials. In addition to originating from trusted local nurseries, a good selection has been carefully nurtured from seed by the Master Gardeners. Others are offsprings selected from members' personal gardens. And anyone looking to

attract pollinators will appreciate the selections taken from the Pleasant Grove Butterfly Garden.

A Master Gardener help desk will be on site for assistance with general questions or problems that are arising, in addition to questions relative to the plants being purchased at the sale. Good companion planting is a frequent query, for example, and the Help Desk team can advise.

A team of volunteers will be available to help collect and box selections for purchase. Credit cards will be accepted for transaction of \$10 or more. Personal checks will be accepted as well as cash.

Traffic congestion from 6:30 a.m.

Throughout the day, there will be some traffic congestion in the area. Beginning at 6:30 a.m. Rick Hernandez, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, and his team will begin bringing in tables and equipment. Master Gardeners will be delivering plants from then on, tents will be set up, signage will be placed, and volunteers will be arriving. At the conclusion of the sale, the break-down process will ensue with tents, tables, hardware and volunteers dispersing.

The Annual Plant Sale is the Master Gardeners' only fund-raising event of the year. It is the source of revenue for the organization's efforts to encourage appreciation and involvement in horticulture, which is a vital component of the county's economy. Notable events include an annual post-secondary scholarship, 4-H summer Camp sponsorships, programs for school children through the academic year and with the library during the summer, and special seminars and training programs for home growers and future Master Gardeners.

Full information on the activities is available through the website www.fluvannamg.org.

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EVENTS

FLUVANNA MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL PLANT SALE: Saturday, May 3, starting at 9:30 a.m. Set up is in the Turkeysag Park & Ride section, across from Jefferson Pharmacy. Rain date: Sunday, May 4, at 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Native plants, perennials, annuals, vegetables Herbs, while they last.

MACAA THRIFT STORE: Hours of operations are Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Inventory may vary from week to week. Store will carry clothing for babies, adult women and men – all sizes, shoes, purses, accessories, etc. Small household items, kitchenware, dishes/pots/glasses/linens/lamps. Toiletries like perfumes, hand lotions. Crafts for kids, puzzles, etc. Located at 8878 James Madison Hwy., Fork Union, VA 23055.

FLU. CO. H/S HORTICULTURE PLANT SALE: Final two sales days are Saturday, MAY 3 and Saturday, MAY 8, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$2 single pots or \$4 for four pks. of Herbs, Vegetables & Foliage plants. Gorgeous \$15 Hanging Baskets. While they last! Greenhouse is behind the Fluvanna County High School – around back. Email – flucoffa@gmail.com. Russell Jennings (434) 373-0521.

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Stargazing in Fluvanna

BY PAT BEERS BLOCK

Welcome Star Gazers to this month's highlights of celestial events visible in Fluvanna County!

Fun events to view in May

The wonderful thing about star gazing is that we always learn about new celestial happenings; with professional and amateur astronomers exploring the sky, new features are bound to be discovered each day. Friends Lisa and Todd mentioned to me in early April that a new comet was discovered on April 1 (not an April Fools joke!) when a comet passing near Earth suddenly appeared in the sky; it is now named SWAN25 F2. At first it was thought this comet would disintegrate as it approached the Sun, but evidence now suggests that SWAN25 F2 will be visible in early May in the north-western sky after sunset near the Pleiades star cluster and the Sun. Remember, since this is in the direction of the Sun, be careful not to look for this comet before the Sun has set. As for its future beyond early May, SWAN25 F2 it might disintegrate or continue its orbit to the outer limits of space; its destiny is unknown at this time. We are reminded through this discovery that our knowledge of the universe is always expanding so keep looking up to the sky!

This month, there will be conjunctions (remote objects visually appear close to one another) and planetary and star occultations (one object briefly overshadows another celestial object) to observe. May will not be an especially active month for observing celestial events but there are some interesting things to observe and facts to digest. For instance, the major Class I meteor shower Eta Aquariids is at its peak in early May; the full moon has an interesting and

logical colloquial name; and we just might see that new SWAN25 F2 comet!

Hopefully some of these events capture your interest and motivate you to spend time observing the night and early morning dark sky this month. So let's get ready to engage in observing these events by setting up your star gazing equipment, charging your cell phones and linking to Sky Guide, Sky View Lite, or any other star gazing applications that you find useful, and settling into your favorite viewing spot to witness the magic of the night and early morning skies!

Weeks 1-2 (May 1-10)

The possibility exists that the new comet SWAN25 F2 will be visible (telescopes and binoculars advised) the first week of May. It is best to only look for this comet after sunset since it will reside in the area near the Sun. Never look directly at the Sun at any time for any significant length of time; as you do with solar eclipses, always protect your eyesight.

On the night of May 2, the moon will be in conjunction with Pollux within the constellation Gemini. On May 3 evening, the moon will be in conjunction with the Beehive Star Cluster (Messier 44) in the constellation Cancer.

The Eta Aquariids major Class I meteor shower can be seen just before dawn on May 4. In the Fluvanna area, the shower will produce about 10-30 meteors an hour. Unfortunately, the moon will be in its first quarter so the meteors might be overshadowed by the brightness of the moon.

On the morning of May 4, Mars can be seen in conjunction with the Beehive Star Cluster (Messier 44) located in the



constellation Cancer.

On May 5, the moon will be in conjunction with the star Regulus located within the constellation Leo.

On May 10, the moon will be conjunction with the star Spica, the brightest star within the constellation Virgo.

Week 3 (May 11-17)

The full moon appears on May 12 within the constellation Libra. This moon bares the colloquial name of the Flower Moon, so named by Native Americans because of the emergence of many flowers at this time of the year. Like April, this month's moon is a "Micro-moon", with it appearing 5% smaller and 10% darker than average full moons.

On May 14, the moon is in conjunction with the star Antares, the brightest star in the constellation Scorpius.

On May 17, Uranus will be in conjunction with the Sun. This interaction will not be visible but it is worth noting how the planets interface with the Sun and other planetary bodies.

Week 4 (May 18-24)

The moon moves into its last quarter phase on May 20. The moon will be illuminated on the left half of its surface.

From May 22 through May 24, the moon will be in conjunction with Saturn and Venus just before dawn. This conjunction should be visible in the east/southeast sky.

Week 5 (May 25-31)

The last events of May include the new moon phase on May 26 at which time the moon will no longer be visible except as a ghost-like sphere in the sky. The conjunction of the moon with Pollux and the Beehive Star Cluster return and will occur on May 30 and 31 respectively.

In Summary...

So ends the celestial highlights of May. The question of what happens to SWAN25 F2 will weigh on our minds this month, as will the fun name of the Flower Moon for this month's full moon. We might witness the Eta Aquariids meteor shower if the shower is productive and the sky is clear of clouds.

Beyond these noted events, it is worth exploring celestial stories and events that are posted on NASA's homepage, and visiting websites that provide information about space rocket and satellite launches, the travels of the ISS, and aurora borealis flare-ups that might be visible in Fluvanna county.

With the perpetual motion of planets and stars, the daily changing sky promises to entertain you for a lifetime! Until next month, keep your eyes facing the morning and evening sky to see the wonders of our universe as we Earthlings travel through it!

[information has been extracted from *Astronomy Calendar of Celestial Events 2025 - Sea and Sky* (seasky.org); <https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov>; <https://highpointscientific.com/astronomy-hub>; <https://amsmeteors.org/meteor-showers>; <https://starwalk.space>; <https://spacetourismguide.com>; Wikipedia; <https://SkyatNightMagazine.com>]



LAKE VIEWS

NEWS FROM YOUR LAKE MONTICELLO NEIGHBORS

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Lake Monticello Blood Drive

The American Red Cross will hold another blood drive at the Ashlawn Clubhouse on Friday, May 2. A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who contributed to the incredible success of the February blood drive at Lake Monticello. Originally planned at the high school, the American Red Cross faced a last-minute cancellation due to the weather. Lisa Henry from Member Services stepped up when the American Red Cross reached out for an alternative location, quickly making all necessary arrangements to make the Ashlawn Clubhouse available and getting the word out. Lisa received a letter of gratitude from the Red Cross for her rapid response. The Lake Monticello blood drive became the most successful one that week. It was fully booked, and even walk-ins were turned away! Lisa, you did an outstanding job, and so did our wonderful community, which showed up to donate the much-needed gift of life!

Membership ID Cards Added to LMOA Fee Schedule

Starting this summer, membership photo ID cards will be mandatory to enter the Lake Monticello pool. The ID comes in two forms: virtual and physical. Both can be scanned and are linked to the community management software, allowing free pool credits to be viewed at check-in and enabling online payments for daily pool visits. The virtual ID is free and app-based, while the physical ID is a plastic card that includes a photo and barcode, available for purchase at Member Services for \$10 starting May 1, 2025. The Board added these to the fee schedule to allow

this change. To learn more about the pool check-in process, free credits, and more, visit NEWS at lmoa.org.

LMOA Board Approves Main Beach Mobility Mat

Earlier this month, the Lake Monticello Community Foundation proposed donating a mobility mat and swim platform at the Main Beach. While the LMOA Board was eager to approve both projects at the April Board meeting, LMOA's insurance is unwilling to provide coverage for the swim platform at an acceptable cost. Consequently, the Board only approved the mobility mat, which is expected to arrive in time for this swim season.

Committee Requests HABs Treatment Study

At the April Board meeting, the LMOA Board of Directors expressed strong interest in a proposed aeration study from the Facilities & Lake Operations Committee (FLOC). However, they requested that the committee provide a more precise estimate for a trial at Tufton Pond and obtain 2 or 3 additional bids. This study aims to evaluate the efficiency of preventative treatments in potentially avoiding algae bloom formations. If the study proves successful, the committee may recommend an aeration project in the Main Lake, which could exceed \$2 million. While our Lake has never experienced an algae bloom, Tufton Pond has faced several in recent years.

Fishing Contest for Lakers

On May 3, join the Lake Monticello Catch and Keep Small Bass Roundup to help improve our lake,

and have fun while making Lake Monticello a healthier fishery. On the morning of the "Roundup", catch and keep as many bass measuring 15 inches or less as you can. Bring the bass to the marina between 9 AM and 12:30 PM to register your catch. The three entrants with the most bass will win prizes: first prize is \$50, second prize is \$30, and third prize is \$20. Too many small bass can create a stunted and unhealthy fish population. For questions, email fishingclublakemonticello@gmail.com.

High School Senior Parade

Let's make some noise for the Fluvanna County High School Graduates of 2025! Join us in celebrating their achievement on May 4 at 2 PM as they parade around the Lake on Jefferson Drive, accompanied by the Lake Monticello Fire and Rescue Teams and LMPD! Line up will begin at 1:30 PM at Edgewater Drive and Stonewall Road at Lake Monticello.

Bunker Bistro Welcomes All of Fluvanna County

At the LMOA Board Meeting in April, Bunker Bistro co-owner, Jacie Dunkel, warmly urged Lake residents to support the bistro by visiting at least six times a year, purchasing gift certificates, and inviting friends to enjoy the many fun events held there. She also encouraged residents of Fluvanna County to come enjoy the patio and many fun events. Other news from Bunker Bistro includes:

Bistro Job Opportunities: Bunker Bistro is seeking a part-time Banquet Manager for about 20 hours per week, as well as a

full-time bartender. Interested candidates should send their resume to 51bunkebistro@gmail.com. Some experience is preferred, although it's not essential. All applicants must be over 21 years old. Also, the Shark Tank will be open on Saturday, May 24. If you're interested in a part-time summer job and are 16 years or older, you can fill out an application at Bunker Bistro.

Open for Breakfast! Speaking of breakfast, Bunker Bistro offers an early breakfast Tuesday through Saturday with sandwiches for a quick grab-and-go starting at 7:30 AM. You can also relax with a cup of Shenandoah Joe coffee while enjoying pancakes, an omelet, or something else on the menu!

Sit on the Patio: The patio is open, providing lovely views of the chipping green, pond, and fairways. Reservations are always recommended at bunkebistro.com.

WEEKLY WATER SAFETY TIP

Did you know...

Reckless operation of a motorboat is defined as operating any vessel or manipulating a towing device to endanger life, limb, or property. There are several actions that are considered reckless, and one of the most common examples of this is when a person rides on the gunwale, stern, or bow of the boat while underway. For example, on a pontoon boat, sitting outside the rails is considered dangerous and reckless, as a sudden increase or decrease in speed can cause a person to fall into the water and be hit by a propeller, get injured, and/or drown.

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