

Council Chatter

JANUARY 2021

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Mayor's Corner

Happy New Year, Grottoes! 2021 is here!! I pray each and every one of you had a blessed Christmas! We all had to be a little more creative with how unconventional this past year has been. Like you, we missed those in-person visits with Family and Friends. I pray that we all will be able to gather with our loved ones not just as before, but more than ever, appreciating the time we have to spend together.

I would like to take this time to introduce myself as your newly elected Mayor. I am excited and ready to serve you and our great town these next 4 years! I wish to thank you all for your support and belief in me as I keep my promise to do what is best for our town at heart. Never hesitate to reach out to me with any concerns, suggestions, and/or insight you may have. Grottoes is a wonderful community. It is because of you that I am able to serve you in this capacity and again, I thank you for this opportunity. We really do have some great things going on and are off to a great start!

We are fortunate to have the expertise of our interim Town Manager, Joe Paxton until April 2021. Mr. Paxton will be managing and assisting the town as

we search for a new Town Manager. Mr. Paxton has already proven an asset during this time of transition. He will be at Town Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week and can be contacted by calling Town Hall or through email.

A big shout out is in order for our former Mayor, Emily Holloway! Thank you, Emily, for your service to our town and for all that you do. Your dedication, efforts, and love for our town and our citizens is not without notice and with all due respect, gratefully appreciated. This town is a great place with you and your family in it!

A special thank you, for Mark Keeler's service to our town the past 18 years. Mark Keeler's presence was invaluable on council and the planning commission and we will surely miss him! Enjoy your retirement, Mark and Cheryl Keeler! You have earned it!

I also would like to thank Joshua Bailey for his time of service to our town from 2017 – 2020. Best of luck to you and your future endeavors.

Without further ado, congratulations to our newly elected council members on their run for council! Congratulations to Tim Leeth for retaining his

council seat another 4 years. Tim is an asset to our town and we are glad to have him another term! Congratulations to Mark Sterling on his return to Council. Mark Sterling was first elected in 2001 and served on council until 2018. Glad to have you back! Congratulations to Michael Kohl for obtaining his council seat and we look forward to having him on board!

One last item, when I was elected Mayor this past November it meant that my Council seat became vacant at the end of December 2020. The remainder of the term of my council seat term is now open. Council will appoint a replacement until the November 2021 general election. There will be a special election in the Town November 2, 2021 to fill this seat for the final year. I am pleased that four persons have applied to fill the vacancy until the election. Council has scheduled interviews for each of these persons later this month, and hopes to have a person to fill the seat by the February meeting.

My Best to You and Yours in the New Year!

Your Mayor,
Jo Plaster



Manager's Message

Happy New Year and Welcome 2021!

2020 was a difficult year for many including the Town. Events had to be delayed or cancelled. The pool opening was delayed, and capacity was held at half, not allowing as many of residents the use of the Town's newly renovated pool. The Grottoes Community Little League season was cancelled, which we are sure disappointed a lot of children and their families. The Grottoes Cardinals played a late shortened schedule; however Grottoes fans were there to support them when they could play. The Town looked for other ways to bring events to citizens including,

the celebration parade, delivering the senior citizens meals, a traveling Christmas Parade and Virtual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Even during these uncertain times, Grottoes residents support this community. As we head into a new year, uncertain times remain, but the Town Council and staff will continue exploring ways to safely host community events.

New residential construction remained strong this past year with several homes completed. Work continues in the Shady Creek subdivision, and Town Council has reviewed two townhouse complexes and several other

single-family homes and commercial have been discussed.

The Town's maintenance staff has been working hard to keep the Town looking good. This week they completed leaf collection which has been delayed because of the snow storm, rain, and water leaks. Leaf collection is an important service the Town provides residents, but please understand that sometimes other more critical problems or situations arise that may delay the pick-up process.

Library News *Mon-Thurs* 1-6pm *Fri* 11-2 540-434-4475 option 3

Happy New Year from all of us at the Grottoes Library. We continue to serve our patrons with limited-contact carry-out service. This means that a patron may place items on hold and pick-up in person at the library. Please wait to receive notification that your holds are available. If you are unable or have difficulty placing holds, please call the Grottoes library for individual help. We are glad to place holds, offer suggestions and/or retrieve books and movies off our shelves for your convenience. We are still able

to offer remote printing, copying, faxing, and Notary services. Also, FREE kids craft kits are available for pick up at the library. Our open hours will stay the same during this time.

In house programming is still on hold, but you and your children can enjoy virtual programming each day on the library website. Check out online story times, digital book talks, craft tutorials, archived virtual adult programs and much more at mrlib.org/youtube.

Thought for today: *"The only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library."*

-Albert Einstein

Here's to a blessed new year,

Peggy Counts
Branch Manager

Park Place

The old year is gone and the new one has begun! Let's all breathe a collective sigh of relief, shall we? The weather has been mild so far this winter and we see lots of people taking advantage of the walking and hiking trails in both parks. Get out and enjoy the parks and amenities! Re-



member: Grottoes residents receive a discounted rate for Grand Caverns Walking Tours.

I'm delighted to share the Virtual Caroling in the Caverns was successful. It raised \$434.83 for the South River Boys and Girls Club and the Grottoes Ruritan Scholarship Funds. Thank you to all who registered and donated! While the

virtual presentation reached a lot of folks in a lot of states, we look forward to hosting this event in person again in the future. Take care and we hope to see you in the parks!

Ashley Collier

Grottoes Police Department

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself, Timothy Carroll, as the new Chief of Police at the Grottoes Police Department. I have fourteen years' experience in law enforcement and have worked in several positions within my time as a police officer. My experiences include being a patrol officer, a school resource officer, a sergeant at James Madison University, and most recently, the Chief of Police at GPD. I am dedicated to building positive relationships and working with our dedicated officers to keep our community safe. As the new year is starting, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for this position and hope everyone had a Merry Christmas, a warm and healthy holiday season, and a Happy New Year!



I would also like to take a moment to introduce two new officers to the Town of Grottoes. Please join me in welcoming Officer Cory A. Brown and Officer Shane A. Turner.

Officer Brown has worked with the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office since 2016 where he started as a jail deputy and currently serves as a patrol deputy. Officer Brown has lived in Rockingham County his whole life and feels honored to serve the Town of Grottoes.

Officer Turner is also a Rockingham County resident. Officer Turner worked in Page County's Sheriff's Department before becoming a police officer at James Madison University, which is where he currently works. Officer Turner has been in law enforcement for more than four years and is eager to serve the great Town of Grottoes.

Chief Carroll

Cold Weather Safety Tips for Your Pet

Winter time is here and we need to make sure we are taking care of our pets properly to protect them from the colder temperatures. Exposure to winter's dry, cold air and chilly rain, sleet, and snow can cause chapped paws and itchy, flaking skin on our pets. We also need to be aware of the chemicals from ice-melting agents that our pets can lick off their paws. To help protect our pets from cold weather dangers, please read the tips below provided by the ASPCA:

- Keep your home humidified and/or towel dry your pet as soon as he/she comes inside. Dry off feet, in-between the toes, and remove any snow balls from foot pads. This can prevent itchy, flaky skin.
- Bathe your pet as little as possible during these cold winter months. Washing your pet too much can remove essential oils in their skin and increase the chance of developing dry, itchy skin.
- Did you know pets burn extra energy in the winter by trying to stay warm? Feeding your pet a little bit more during the cold weather months can provide much-needed calories.
- Also make sure your pet has plenty of water to drink to help keep them well-hydrated, which will keep their skin from getting dry and itchy.
- Make sure your pet has a warm place to sleep away from drafts. A dog or cat bed/crate with a warm blanket or pillow can make a perfect bed.
- Remember, if it's too cold for you, it's probably too cold for your pet, so keep them inside. If left outdoors, pets can freeze, become disoriented, lost, stolen, injured or killed. Also, don't leave pets in cars since cars can act as refrigerators.
- Coolant and antifreeze are poisonous for dogs and cats and can be lethal. Be sure to clean up any spills from your vehicle. You can also use products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.



Grottoes Rescue Squad

Grottoes Rescue Squad would like wish all of you a safe and happy new year. We'd like to announce our 2021 officers!

Chief: Jodi Johnson

Captain: Ben Zeller

President: Katie Mohr

Secretary: Cole Conley

Board Member at Large: Joey Bailey

Deputy Chief: Dustin Nuckoles

Lieutenant: Matthew Andes

Vice President: April Pazdric

Treasurer: Misty Shaver

Board Member at Large: Frank Pazdric

We hope in the new year you stay healthy and safe. We look forward to serving everyone in 2021.

Sincerely,

Grottoes Rescue Membership

TOWN OF GROTTOS

601 Dogwood Avenue
P.O. Box 146
Grottoes, VA 24441

Phone: 540-249-5896
Fax: 540-249-5726
www.ci.grottoes.va.us



ERMA Food Pantry

Grottoes United
Methodist Church

located at 300 4th St.
Every Monday

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
For more information call
540-249-5893

Brush Site Open

Saturday, January 9th
Tuesday, January 12th
Saturday, February 6th
Tuesday, February 16th
Saturday, March 6th
Tuesday, January 16th
8:00 am - 12:00 noon

Grottoes Community Little League

BASEBALL & SOFTBALL SPRING REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Online registration is open for the Grottoes Little League 2021 spring season!!! Follow the address below to our website to sign up online. Due to COVID restrictions online sign ups are encouraged.

<https://leagues.bluesombrero.com/Default.aspx?tabid=967316>

In person registration need to be scheduled due to the COVID restrictions. To schedule an appointment email: grottoeslittleleague@gmail.com

In person dates:

Saturday, January 30th 12:00 - 4:00 pm
Saturday, February 6th 12:00 - 4:00 pm
Grottoes Town Hall

CHRISTMAS TREES

The Rockingham County Container Site, located at 1005 20th Street, has set up a container to collect Christmas Trees. If you have any questions, please call 249-5896.

Please do not place them behind the maintenance shed at the Town Hall



Christmas Home Decorating Contest
PRIZES AWARDED
Elegance Award – 112 Park Ave.
Clark Griswold Award – 603 8th St.
Reason for the Season Award – 705 12th St.

Thank you to all who participated and to the Grottoes Ruritan Club for Judging.

Mountain View & Grand Caverns Parks

Shelter rentals will begin on **March 1, 2021**. Please call the Stone Lodge at 249-5705 to reserve a shelter. You may reserve a shelter online at

<https://www.grandcaverns.com/parks.html>

Plan now for your family reunion, graduation picnic, company picnics, or whatever the occasion. Shelters rent out quickly!

Happy New Year!

Grottoes Town Officials

Town Council

Jo Plaster, Mayor
David Raynes
Tim Leeth
C.W. Stephenson
Mark Sterling
Michael Kohl
vacant

Planning Commission

Justin Neitzey, Chair
Jen Smith, Vice-Chair
Kevin Campbell
David Bradley
Nathan Foerster
Dylan Nicely
vacant

Board of Zoning Appeals

Margie Mayes, Chair
Justin Neitzey
Ellen Showers
David Gorjup
Christa Hall

Council meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall. Council may also hold a work session at 6:00 pm prior to the monthly meeting.

Planning Commission meets the last Tuesday of the odd months at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

BZA meets the third Tuesday of the month (when needed) at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.