



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 15, Issue 5 ♦ September 16, 2024

From the Mayor

Charles Harbaugh, IV

As many of you have seen in the local newspaper, town business is thriving. Whether you are catching up on town minutes posted on our website or attending town meetings, our community is buzzing with activity. If you are not yet engaged, I encourage you to get involved. Staying informed and proactive before decisions are made is the best way to contribute to our cherished, growing town. Your involvement helps maintain the unique charm that makes our town a desirable place to live.

Fundraiser Update

We recently held our 14th Annual Car, Truck, and Tractor Show, and it was a tremendous success! We raised over \$3,600, all of which will go towards funding our town's July 4th celebration. A heartfelt thank you to our longtime sponsors, our new sponsors, and all the volunteers who made this event possible. Special thanks to our town staff and police department for their support.

A big shout-out goes to our main sponsors, City National Bank and Thomas A. Lash, Esq., for their generous financial contributions. We also appreciate Hang 10 Car Wash for stepping up as a primary sponsor this year. We are immensely grateful to the 80 plus businesses that donated items for the silent auction, door prizes, and raffle.

Upcoming Events

2024 National Sheepdog Finals

- **Dates:** September 30 – October 6, 2024
- **Location:** Belle Grove, Middletown, Virginia
- **Event Details:** Watch the top 150 sheepdogs and their handlers compete in various challenges to become the National Champion.
 - **Open Preliminaries:** September 30 – October 3, 8 AM – 5 PM
 - **Semi-Finals:** October 5, 8 AM – 4 PM
 - **Finals:** October 6, 8 AM – 4 PM
 - **Nursery Preliminaries:** October 1 – October 3, 8 AM – 4 PM
 - **Nursery Finals:** October 4, 8 AM – 4 PM

The tradition of sheepdog trials began in Britain in the 1870s and gained international fame through the TV series *One Man and His Dog*.

160th Annual Cedar Creek Battlefield Reenactment

- **Date:** October 19 – October 20, 2024
- - **Friday, October 18: 7th Annual Battle of Church Street - CCAP Fundraiser 5-6pm**
 - **Saturday, October 19:** Gates open 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Confederate Morning Assault at 2:00 PM, Luminaries Main Street Middletown dusk
 - **Sunday, October 20:** Gates open 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM; Federal Afternoon Counterattack at 1:00 PM

I look forward to seeing you at these events and hope you continue to stay engaged in our vibrant community.

From the Treasurer

Keith Smith

Real Estate and Personal Property bills will be mailed mid-October due December 5, 2024. Please remember if you have sold, traded, disposed of, and/or purchased a new vehicle you must update this information with Frederick County. Your due diligence in this matter is necessary for the town to bill you correctly.

To contact the personal property division of Frederick County please call (540) 665-5681 ext. 1

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

Trick or Treat will take place on Thursday October 31, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. If you will be handing out candy, please make sure your place is well lit. And for those of you trick or treating please make sure you are visible and not darting out in the roadways. Let us all practice safety and look out for one another. Use caution if you are out and about driving through town.

Reminder no handheld devices while driving. A person who violates 46.2-818.2 is subject to a fine of \$125 for the first offense and \$250 for the second and subsequent offenses. If you are pulled over for holding a handheld personal communications device, act in the same manner you would for any traffic stop. You will not be asked to hand over your device. Keep in mind that what you are doing with the device is irrelevant, it is the act of HOLDING the device while driving that is illegal.

All non-life-threatening matters which require an officer please contact Frederick County non-emergency dispatch at 540-662-6162. If you have an emergency, please call 911. All calls for service must first go through Frederick County dispatch. Frederick County dispatch will contact the officer/deputy on duty who will be handling the complaint. This ensures that all calls are handled properly and in an efficient & timely manner.

For all non-emergency police questions please contact the Middletown Police Department Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 540-868-0535. Only leave a voice message if the return call is for administrative or non-emergency matters only.

From the Town Clerk

Christina Smith

The town offers online payments for your convenience. You will need your account number to get started. Once there you can register your account and set up the many features that make paying your bill(s) easy such as automatic and recurring payments, text and email reminders, paperless statements, etc. Please go to www.middletownva.gov and check it out.

You may also pay your water & sewer bill over the phone, which is available 24/7 by calling (855)844-0226. If you need assistance registering your account contact the town office.

Homeowners, please remember if you are having contracted work done at your home such as landscaping, roofing, plumbing, electrical, additions, fencing and decks, etc., please make sure the contractor(s) has a valid Town of Middletown business license. This helps ensure you are dealing with a legitimate business and if recourse needs to be taken, we have information on file for the business that we can provide to you. No one should be soliciting business door to door in town limits without a Town of Middletown business license.

As always, all utility payments are due by the due date indicated or by the cut-off date. If the bill is not paid in full by the cut-off date, service will be disconnected for non-payment and an additional fee of \$100 will be added to your account that must be paid before services are restored. Cut-off \$50/cut-on \$50. If you have any questions, or need assistance paying your bill please contact the town office. Please call before the account is past due.

Planning & Zoning Department

Yard sale season is still upon us, if you post signs, they must be free standing and not attached to any utility poles or roadway signs. Signage must be removed immediately following your yard sale. The yard sale permit, and rules & regulations can be found on town website www.middletonva.gov

Reminder Town of Middletown residents, no outside storage is allowed. Items should be properly stored in accessory buildings and out of view. Please clean up your property before being cited. Town officials graciously reach out and attempt to resolve matters before a citation is issued. Help by doing your part to keep the town neat and free of clutter.

Town Code section 6-2

Duty of owners, etc., of premises - To cut and remove tall grass and weeds.

- a. It shall be unlawful for any person owning, occupying or having charge of any real estate or an interest therein, located within the corporate limits of the town, where the parcel is one acre or less, to allow grass, weeds, or like vegetation grow on the property to a height of no more than 10 inches.
- b. Parcels greater in size than one acre that lies within 25 feet of the right of way boundary of a public roadway (except for interstate highways) must also keep the grass, weeds or like vegetation to a height of no more than 10 inches.
- c. If any owner, occupant, or person in charge of such land or interest therein shall fail to have such illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed within 7 days written notice of violation of this section, the town shall have the right to cut or remove such unlawful growth at the expense of the landowner, and such expense may be collected by the town as taxes are levied and collected. In addition, the owner shall pay a penalty of \$50.00 as a fine of this section.
- d. Each day that any owner, occupant, or person in charge of such land or interest shall fail to have such an illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed after the above mentioned 7 days has run shall constitute a separate offense. Subsequent offenses in the same calendar year shall double until the fine reaches \$200.00. The fine per calendar year is capped at \$2000.00.
- e. This section shall not apply to any land used for agricultural or industrial purposes.

Please remember when mowing your grass do NOT blow or discharge grass clippings or debris on to the roadways or sidewalks. This is for the safety of our motor cyclists along with water runoff and clogging the storm drains. (Town Code § 6-1)

Reminder all trash must be placed curbside in a trash can. We appreciate your attention in this matter and our trash company thanks you for your part. Large items such as cardboard should be broken down or taken to the landfill for recycling.

As property owners, should you decide to build a fence, deck, patio or shed a zoning permit must be completed along with a detailed drawing of your proposed project. The contractor must have a Town of Middletown business license. Forms can be picked up at the Town office or found online at www.middletonva.gov

When in doubt please feel free to contact the town office. (540) 869-2226 ext. 4 or zoning@middletonva.gov

When out on your walks with your pet(s) please be considerate and pickup their waste. It is unlawful to allow feces deposited by his/her animal to remain on any public highway, street, sidewalk, part of other public property, or on private property without written consent of the owner thereof or his agent.

Penalty – Any person who knowingly violates this Ordinance shall be guilty of a littering infraction and shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$25.00 per occurrence. (Middletown Town Code § 3-8)

From the Public Works Superintendent

Les Morefield

NOTICE: Town Park visitors - The wastewater treatment plant on Third Street remains under construction, this area is off limits to all residents and visitors. Please use the park entrance off Senseney Road to gain access to the Town Park for all activities.

As a reminder please do not bring household trash or yard waste to the Public Works Department for disposal. The town provides trash service every Friday and Yard Waste pick up every Monday. Please use the Citizen Convenience Center located at 6671 Valley Pike, Middletown should you have additional needs during the week.

Yard waste pick-up will continue through Monday December 2, 2024. If a holiday falls on a Monday, yard waste will be picked up the next day.

Please review the guidelines for yard waste. **Any yard waste that does not meet the required guidelines will be left curbside.** Yard waste collection will be every Monday, and must be placed curbside by 8:00 a.m. Yard waste consists of grass trimmings and leaves which CANNOT weigh more than 40 lbs. Branches or twigs can be **NO LONGER** than four (4) feet in length and **NO LARGER** than twelve (12) inches in diameter and must be **tied in bundles** (no wire or plastic string). Yard waste must be placed in biodegradable or paper yard waste bags only, **NO PLASTIC BAGS.** Yard waste should not be placed curbside until the morning of collection. This helps keep the community neat and free of clutter and ensures the bags have not been compromised due to weather. Rain soaked or damaged bags that rip or tear during pick up will be the responsibility of the homeowner/tenant to clean up. If you have any questions, please contact Public Works (540) 869-7731.

Please make sure the water meter in your yard is always accessible. The meter should never be covered or buried by anything. This can cause serious problems in the event of an emergency if we are unable to find and/or access the meter. The meter should be visible and most importantly easy to access. Please take the time to make sure the water meter on your property is always accessible.

If you notice a street light out, please contact the Public Works Department at 540-869-7731. Please provide the following information. Your name, your phone number, the street light address and the pole number if possible. We will then contact Rappahannock Electric regarding the outage.

12 Ways to Conserve Water Outdoors

During these warmer months, we spend more time outdoors tending to our lawns, growing gardens, and washing our cars. All of these activities require water. More than half of the average household's water occurs outdoors. As a result, your water bill can see a significant increase during the next few months. Using these simple tips will reduce your water bill and save you money.

1. Inspect your garden hose and irrigation system for leaks. Check hose connectors to make sure rubber washers are in place.
2. Add a shut-off nozzle to your hose. You can save about 5-7 gallons each minute your hose is on.
3. Put out a rain barrel. Collecting rain water is an excellent (and FREE) way to water your indoor plants or wash your car.
4. Water outdoor plants in the morning or late evening. Due to the colder temperatures, less water will be lost from evaporation. Avoid watering on windy and hot days.
5. Use a broom to clean off outside living areas (decks, porches, driveways), rather than hosing them off.
6. When cutting the lawn, set the mower blade to 2-3 inches high. The longer grass will shade the soil, allowing for better moisture retention.
7. Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades tear grass, making it susceptible to disease, and causing it to appear tan and worn.
8. Only water your lawn when necessary. Over-watering results in the growth of shallow root systems that are easily damaged. If rainfall is not sufficient, water your lawn once a week. This routine will encourage healthier and deeper grass roots.
9. Mulch around plants and flower beds to keep the soil cool, reduce moisture evaporation, promote growth and control weeds.
10. Take your car to the car wash, rather than washing it at home. Most commercial car washes recycle the water.
11. Wash your pet outdoors in an area of your lawn that needs watering.
12. Don't water your lawn during a drought. The grass may turn brown, but it is not dead. Your lawn will turn dormant during dry and hot spells, but it will revive itself when wetter weather returns.

Information Courtesy of Dollar Energy Fund



Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

Save the date: Veterans Day ceremony Monday, November 11, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. We will be observing our 8th annual Veterans Day Ceremony at our Memorial, 8050 South Main Street. In case of rain, we will meet at the Middletown Volunteer Fire Department. Everyone is welcome!

If you would like to purchase a brick for the patio to remember or honor a loved one please place your order now at the town office. New bricks are only installed twice a year prior to May and November and we will be installing them soon.

Forms can be located on the town's website www.middletownva.gov or you can stop by the office. You do not need to be resident of our town to be honored. Veteran family and friends are welcome. Show your love to a previous or current veteran serving this great nation.

Middletown Heritage Society

Paige Ulevich

The Middletown Heritage Society meets the second Thursday of every month. We look forward to reviving our projects and making new plans. We welcome anyone with an interest in Middletown's history to please attend our meetings. For questions or meeting locations please feel free to contact President Paige Ulevich (571) 445-0889.



Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

BINGO every Tuesday night! Regular Bingo starts at 7 p.m. Concessions are available from our Auxiliary. We provide an ATM and outside smoking areas. Come have some fun and support our Company!

Our annual Fund Drive by mail will soon be underway. We hope that you will support us by donating. We appreciate EVERY dollar! These funds are used for fire and EMS equipment and supplies, maintenance and upkeep of our apparatus and building, utilities, and station needs. We have a new ambulance on order, will be starting the process of the purchase of a new engine/tanker combination, and will soon have to renovate or build on to our current fire station to accommodate the increase in staff. Please consider donating with the envelope provided in the letter.

We are always looking for new members. Applications are available on our website (middletownfire.com) or at the fire station. You must be 16 years old to apply. A background check is required. Training is provided.

Fire prevention week is October 6-12. The theme this year is "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!"

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area (like a hallway), and on each level (including the basement) of the home.
- Make sure smoke alarms meet the needs of all family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month by pushing the test button.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or do not respond when tested.

Calendar of Events

September

September 23 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October

October 7 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 14 – Columbus Day – Town offices closed

October 15 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 19 – Lighting of the Luminaries (Dusk – South end of Main Street)

October 28 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

October 31 – Trick or Treat 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

November

November 4 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

November 5 – Election Day – Town offices closed

November 11 – Veterans Day – Town offices closed

November 11 – Veterans Day Ceremony – Veterans Memorial @ 1:00 p.m.

November 12 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.