



# Sharpsburg Town Crier

## *Ernie Wetterer*

### *Edition, 2025*



Volume 33

December 2025

Number 11

### Why can't everyday be like Christmas?

'If Every Day was like Christmas' is an old song written in 1965 by Red West, the friend and body-guard of Elvis Presley. I remember when Elvis sang the song during the Christmas season of 1966, and it was very popular.

I was in boot camp down at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in November that year, and after hearing the song, I wondered briefly, *why can't everyday be like Christmas?*

For sure, I would always enjoy and remember those many Christmases I had growing up in the woods of Dargan.

They were some mighty fine times for sure. I didn't go to church back in those days, but I did enjoy the fellowship, friendliness, generosity, and togetherness that was offered by family and friends in that tiny village of Dargan.

Giving and sharing were things we did back then.

Not being home for Christmas in 1966 was a little disappointing as I spent my time preparing to be a soldier in Uncle Sam's Army. Marching, jogging, discipline, marksmanship, fighting, bivouac, and survival skills were the subjects of the day.

A war in Vietnam was underway and there were already 184,300 soldiers in that far away country. Some 2.7 million Americans would serve in Vietnam before its end.

As I listened to Elvis sing that song, 'If Every day could be like Christmas', I wondered about that wish for the entire world.

It's not going to happen I was thinking back then, and every time I watch, read or hear the news these days, it seems like 'pie in the sky' too ~ *It ain't going to happen!*

My military career and trip to Vietnam in 1967 for a year sort of solidified my thinking. Over 58,000 American deaths later before that war would end in April 1975.

It made many Christmases sad for mourning families.



Even today, sober visits to the cemetery, are filled with tears from yesterday.

Still today, I believe there is a wish by many who still look to the sky for 'Peace and Joy' and ponder that question, 'Why can't everyday be like Christmas'.

Along the traveled roads of this life, I still hear that wish even today for a better world.

And as I make it to church as a wayward sinner now and then these days, I am reminded of the Apostle Mathew's writing and those suggestions of a Holy man to make the world a little better every day.

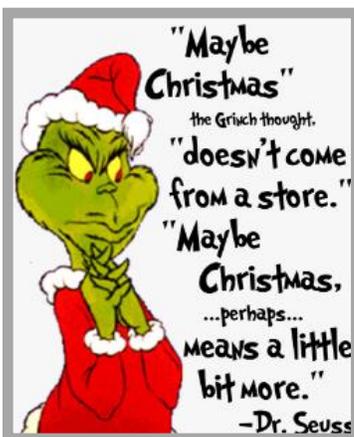
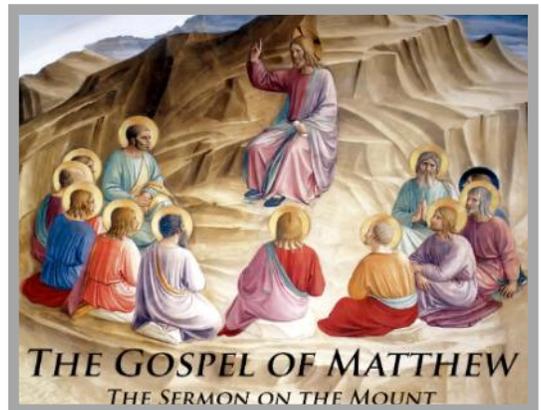
Do you remember that Holy man's suggestions on how to make every day like Christmas?

Steve Maraboli, the author of *Unapologetically You: Reflections of Life and the Human Experience*, remembered Mathew's writing as a possible answer to that question above

*"Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies and do unto others as you would have done unto you"*

The Apostle Mathew emphasized these same instructions of the Holy man in that book carried by many to church every week.

Christmas is a day marked on a calendar each and every year, but it means different things to people.



I read recently, 'Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought, doesn't come from a store.'

Perhaps Christmas is a time established to stir the soul of mankind. How is the world doing with the Holy man's instructions gifted to the world centuries ago?

I wondered if back then that many people thought of making a better world for all of humanity and if they took the Holy man's guidance seriously.

I didn't recognize that thought either 'Peace on earth, goodwill to all' back in 1967. Today, it seems like a fleeting dream also.

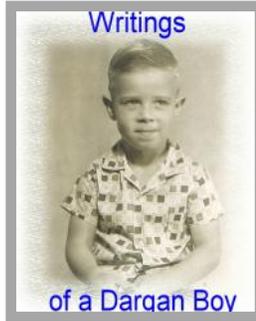
I remember another thought by Mother Teresa when she offered; 'It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.'

Certainly, many people enjoy giving on this special day of the year, and for certain, there are many needs to be considered along this season of love.

May your Christmas be filled with Peace, good health and Happiness.

And the best gift to give and receive this year and every day is one wrapped in 'love' .....

Merry Christmas!



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## Change

*"Without change something sleeps inside us, and seldom awakens. The sleeper must awaken."* – Duke Leto from Frank Herbert's, "Dune"

Change. With these short paragraphs the Editor steps down from Sharpsburg Town Crier. I hope that you have found it useful and informative. The Sharpsburg narratives yet to be told are a bottomless treasure and I will miss ferreting them out. My path diverges.

Here's an invitation to embrace change in your own life.

- Change feels like loss, but it's an invitation to grow.
- The unfamiliar is a friend, opening new horizons.
- Making change is a brave act; step confidently into it.
- Use the change in your life in service to the things you value.

I will keep Community Calendar active. Otherwise, we'll meet on the streets of Our Town, in the paths and trails surrounding, at Battleview Market, and at Old St. Paul's.

Love you all!

- Editor

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## Stories Yet To Be Recorded in Town Crier: The Short List

**The Deep History of the Good-Reilly House** (I defy you to find another like it! It's less like a residence and more like a fortress.)

**The White Coat Gang** (Did you know that our first ambulance service was made up of women volunteers? They got the call, turned off the stove, jammed a binkie in the kid's face, put on a white coat, and ran out the door!)

**What's With All the Structural Marble?** (There's lots of 19th-century architecture in town that features structural-grade marble. It's not something Michelangelo would have turned into a naked guy with a sling, but durable and sturdy.)

**A Comprehensive History of Town Churches** (There're bits and pieces of these scattered all over, ALL of them shallow in scope and not part of the bigger narrative.)

**Early Family Narratives** (It would be cool to see how the old family names that we still see got here...Rohrer, Poffenberger, Eichelberger, DeLauney....)

**The Remaining Stories of WWII Veterans** (I captured five of them. Sadly, WWII veteran's children are elderly with fewer still standing every year. If we are to get their story in our time, the clock's ticking.)

**An Architectural Tour of Sharpsburg** (Take a look. There are at least a dozen different styles of architecture. Each has a story.) ...in particular...

**Stone Barn by Big Spring** (Somebody long ago put more love into that barn than in most houses in town. I'd give my paycheck to find out who they were and why they made it more beautiful than they had to.)

**The History of Sharpsburg's Civic Organizations** (There seems to have been over a dozen. The Pete's Tavern building was built by one of them and is one of the most architecturally interesting structures in town.)

**Our Colonial-Era Roads** (Did you know the Old Philadelphia Road passed right through the town? It was the major north-south road from New England to Central Georgia. There were other roads of importance here, too.)

**Just What Led to General Braddock's Passing Through Town** (Braddock was the ranking British officer in North America, outranking even the colonial governors. He passed through here on his way to confront the French at Ft. Duquesne (Pittsburg) where he simultaneously took a French ball in the chest and his last breath.)

There are unanswered questions. For example, was Town Pond originally the feeder pond for the mill just 100 yards downstream? I'll bet my paycheck it was!! Who was Phil Lumm and why does his name show up in so many colorful town stories from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century?

So it goes. May this list inspire someone to put down their smartphone, turn off cable news, tell sister Suzy to go make someone else crazy, go outside into the town, and take on recording our experience.

- Editor

## From Town Hall

Congratulations to Miss Sharpsburg 2026, Harlow Mason! May she reign in a time of peace, prosperity, and neighborly love.



Miss Harlow Mason and Vice Mayor Jacob Martz

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If you'd like your favorite veteran remembered in a public banner, there's a revised order form on Page ##.



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As always, the Town Council Minutes are posted in the Attachments.

## Community Calendar (January – March)

January 5 at 6PM: **Town Council Meeting**  
**Sharpsburg Town Hall**  
106 E Main St  
301-432-4428

January 28 at 1:30 PM: **Homeschool**  
**"Vanderbeekers and the Hidden Garden"**  
Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

January 27-29 Anytime the Library is Open: **Trade your puzzles for new ones!**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February Any Time Library is Open, **Spice Club, Turmeric**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February 4 at 2PM (Snow date February 11 at 2PM)

**Walking Historical Figures, Harriet Tubman and Great Grandfather T.H. Barnes.**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February 11 at 5PM: **Movie Night, "Freakier Friday"**, Rated PG

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February 12 from 5 to 7PM: **Teen Paint Night**, Ages 11-17. Registration Required

301-432-8825.  
Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

January 14 at 5PM: **"Minecraft"**, Rated PG

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

Wednesday, February 25 at 1:30PM: Homeschool **"Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH"**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February 25 at 6PM: **Gardening Know-How with Trichia, Coyotes, Bears and Foxes, Oh My!**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

March Any Time Library is Open, **Spice Club, Lavender**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

March 11 at 6PM: **Share food and recipes including the spices.**

Sharpsburg Library

301-432-8825

## Recurring Events

January Any Time Library is Open, **Spice Club: Adobo**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

February Any Time Library is Open, **Spice Club, Turmeric**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

March Any Time Library is Open, **Spice Club, Lavender**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

Second Wednesdays from 12Noon to 1:30PM: **Lunch and Fellowship at the Brethren Church**

123 E Main St.  
301-432-4944 / sharpsburgcob@outlook.com

First Wednesdays of the month at 1PM

**Adults: Book Share**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

Thursdays at 3:30PM: **Storytime (Ages 3 and Up)**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

First Saturdays at 10AM: **Lego Club**

Sharpsburg Library  
301-432-8825

## Area Churches

**Christ Reformed Church**

117 West Main Street  
Sharpsburg  
301-432-6182  
Sundays: 9AM

**United Christian Fellowship**

18823 Shepherdstown Pike, Keedysville,  
MD 21756  
301-432-0110  
Sundays: 8:45AM Fellowship, 9AM Sunday School, 10AM Worship & Children's Church

**Sharpsburg Church of the Brethren**  
123 E Main St, Sharpsburg  
Sundays at 10AM, Sunday School at  
10:30AM  
301-432-4944

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
209 West Main Street  
301-432-7098  
Sundays: 10AM

**Burnside First Church of God**  
3904 Mills Rd, Sharpsburg  
Sunday Worship - 9:00am, Sunday School  
- 10:15am

**Sharpsburg Bible Church**  
5134 General Stuart Court, Sharpsburg  
301-432-5309  
Sunday School 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM, Sun-  
day Morning Worship & Children's Church  
10:30 AM to 11:30 AM

[https://www.facebook.com/  
TheTownOfSharpsburg](https://www.facebook.com/TheTownOfSharpsburg)  
Zoning Administrator-Tim Lung  
[Sharpsburg.md.zoning@gmail.com](mailto:Sharpsburg.md.zoning@gmail.com)

## Mayor & Councilpersons

Russ Weaver – Mayor

Jacob Martz – Vice Mayor

Joe Kudla

Anne Marie McCullough

Heather Waters

Robbie Waters

(Deborah Valentine Smith – Town  
Clerk)

106 East Main Street

PO Box 368

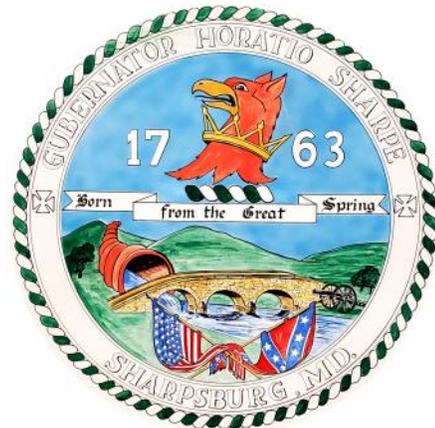
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[townofsharpsburg@comcast.net](mailto:townofsharpsburg@comcast.net)



Ver. 1.0 12/27/24

**Attachments:**

**SHARPSBURG MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**December 1, 2025**

The Mayor and Council of Sharpsburg, MD held their monthly meeting on Monday, December 1, 2025 at 6:00 PM in the Council meeting room of Town Hall located at 106 E. Main Street in Sharpsburg. In attendance were Mayor Russell Weaver, Vice Mayor Jacob Martz, Councilmembers Joseph Kudla, Heather Waters and Robbie Waters. Town Administrator Debra Valentine-Smith was also present and Zoning Administrator Tim Lung was present via zoom. Councilmember Anne-Marie McCullough was absent.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE** by Councilmember R. Waters.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Motion** by Councilmember R. Waters, second by Councilmember Kudla to approve. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** (*comments are limited to 3 minutes*)

- **Erin Short** of 225 E. Main Street inquired if Mayor Weaver received her letter dated November 4, 2025 stating that she “respectfully requests that the town government promptly comply with the town charter and elect a qualified person to fill the vacancy”.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting Minutes – November 3, 2025. **Motion** by Councilmember H. Waters, second by Councilmember Kudla to approve. Motion carried.

Amended Minutes – October 7, 2024 – Town Administrator Smith stated that she received an email from Mr. Robert Grogan stating the he was listed in the 10/7/2024 minutes as making a statement under citizens comments that he did not make and asked that the minutes be amended to remove his name. **Motion** by Councilmember R. Waters, second by Councilmember H. Waters to amend the minutes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT** -November 2025 **Motion** by Councilmember R. Waters, second by Councilmember Kudla to approve. Motion carried.

**ZONING ADMINISTATORS REPORT** – Tim Lung

- Responded to inquiries and questions regarding zoning and permitting requirements.
- Prepared documents and attended Nov19 Board of Zoning Appeals hearing BZA-25-001 St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Variance request for sign setback and size. Setback variance was approved with no conditions. size variance was withdrawn due to an error in size calculation.
- BZA-25-002 Town of Sharpsburg. Town Historic Park. Variance request for sign setback. Approved with no conditions.
- Prepared BZA Decision documents.
- Discussed a recent stream restoration project in Keedysville with Dee Price, Wash County Soil Conservation District manager regarding the possibility of a similar project in Sharpsburg.
- Submitted the executed memorandum of understanding for County Historic Tax Credits to the Board of County Commissioners which is set for adoption on 12/9/2025

**MAYORS COMMENT(S)** – Mayor Weaver

- Speed bump data to be gathered and reviewed in January/February
- Vice Mayor Martz worked with state delegation to get Sharpsburg exempted from state accessory dwelling housing requirements.
- Thanked Town Administrator Valentine-Smith for the work put into mailing the community survey.
- Discussion on easy tasks that can be done to achieve town beautification efforts.
- Historic Park - A few last-minute details remain – light, new flag pole and flag have been installed, identification sign in front has been designed and is contracted for after passing BZA, placards to be installed Tuesday.
- Lutheran Cemetery– Focal item for this fiscal year. Asking Anne Marie to lead
- Big Spring – Permits in place and begin date now early spring (likely April).

- Sign at Elementary School–No progress.
- Financial Status - -Entering 2026 in excellent shape.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- Plaque to the Town received from the Fire Company for their dedicated support
- C&O Canal Trust, Inc. Economic Development and Marketing Support invoice for \$500. Consensus to table Canal Trust/Town support until museum is operational.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT**

Council Member R. Waters – the town Christmas tree was installed and trimmed with lights today. (*Sharpsburg Elementary students will decorate the tree this week*)

Council Member Kudla – SHA removed the speed cushions today due to the predicted winter weather. Speed study results will be prepared and shared soon.

Vice-Mayor Martz –

- Assisted with annual Veterans Day ceremony in the town square.
- Participated in Miss Sharpsburg interviews
- Met with Atlantic Security Technician to replace broken equipment in town shed
- Replacement flag pole installed at historical park
- Coordinated the installation of historical markers at new park
- Purchased new PA System for town
- Continued Memorial Day planning. Next meeting of Memorial Day Committee on 1/6/26 at 6:00 p.m.

Council Member H. Waters - the door decorating contest begins today and ends on the 20th. Will need to purchase the gift cards for the winners. (1<sup>st</sup> place is \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> place is \$50 and 3<sup>rd</sup> place is \$25)

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Officer Watkins – Resident Deputy - November end of month report:

Antietam Station - 4 checks.	Traffic Enf. - 1.5 hrs.	Total WCSO Events - 69.
Elementary School - 4 checks.	Training - 1.	Suspicious person / vehicle - 2
Little League - 4 checks.	Special Event - 1 (Veterans Day)	Undesirable - 1 Accident - 2
Park - 4 checks.	120 E Main St. - 4 checks.	
Calls for Service - 2.		

Chris Vincent – Antietam Battlefield Advisory Committee – the luminaries are scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>. Next meeting scheduled for Wed., Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mike Arant – Town Crier -Last edition will be in December. The community calendar is covered, but looking for an editor to cover the main stories.

**MOTION** by Vice-Mayor Martz to close the regular session and convene in closed session under Maryland Annotated Code General Provisions Article §3-305(b): **3** to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related to the acquisition at 6:55 P.M. second by Councilmember R. Waters. motion carried.

**MOTION** by Councilmember R. Waters, second by Councilmember Kudla to reconvene in open session and close the meeting at 7:35 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Valentine-Smith  
Town Administrator

TOWN OF SHARPSBURG, MD

106 E. Main Street  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782  
301.432.4428

[townofsharpsburg@comcast.net](mailto:townofsharpsburg@comcast.net)



**HOMETOWN HERO BANNER REVISED ORDER FORM**

The Hometown Heroes Banner Program proudly recognizes active duty and veteran service members of our community both serving and those who have served and sacrificed in defense of our nation.

If you would like to recognize a Sharpsburg Community\* Veteran/Service member with a Hometown Hero Banner, please complete the information below and return it to Town Hall.

VETERAN/SERVICE MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

VETERAN/SERVICE MEMBER ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_

HOW IS VETERAN RELATED TO SHARPSBURG: \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCH OF SERVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

YEARS SERVED: (EX. 1954-1960) \_\_\_\_\_

PHOTO: Please bring a quality military photo to be scanned (and returned)

PAYMENT in the amount of \$160.00 is due with the application in the form of cash or a check made payable to the Town of Sharpsburg.

CONTACT PERSON NAME/PHONE/EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*The Sharpsburg Community area is limited to the Sharpsburg Elementary school district. Banners are hung throughout the town from Memorial Day (after the Memorial Day Parade) through Veterans Day. Once removed from the poles, they are cleaned and placed on display in the town hall.*