



Sharpensburg Town Crier



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Town of Sharpensburg
250th Anniversary
Commemorative Coins
Available at Town Hall



Happening Around Town

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of local Viet Nam Veteran and Chaplain Colonel Richard Hembrock.

Richard was a dedicated member of the Sharpensburg Community who served the Town in various capacities during our annual Memorial Day Parade, including as the 157th Grand Marshal of the 2024 commemoration honoring Veterans of the Viet Nam War; many will also remember him as the insouciant and cheerful "Chef de Train" of the 40/8 Engine, a staple feature of the parade to which Richard devoted many hours of meticulous restoration, and whose thunderous cannon was sure to make its presence known at any event.

Richard touched many lives throughout his career as a Pastor, and was an amazingly humble and gracious individual whom I was honored to consider a friend. He will be deeply missed, and we extend our sincerest condolences to his wife and family during this difficult time.



His life story can be read in the July 19th edition of the Herald Mail or found on the J.L. Davis Funeral Home website



FOUNDER'S DAY REFLECTIONS

For many of us, the month of July represents the epitome of all that summer has to offer. Between cookouts, pool parties and Independence Day celebrations, the traditional midpoint of the year seems to be the embodiment of all things Americana as far as summer is concerned; and that is especially true this year as we commemorate the 250th anniversary of our Nation's founding!

There is, however another seminal, equally important, yet heretofore underappreciated event for our community that also occurs in July. As many of us in town already know, the Town of Sharpsburg was founded on July 9, 1763 by Joseph Chapline and 2026 marks the 263rd anniversary of that momentous occasion, so what better year to begin a new tradition of community celebration in honor of our Founder than one which coincides with our Nation's semiquincentennial!

A community-wide Founder's Day event was scheduled for Saturday, July 11th, which only left just about a month following the completion of the Memorial Day Parade for planning, so there was little time to waste and still much to be done. Ultimately, though the time seemed to pass far too quickly (as it always does!), a suitable location was selected, all required permits obtained and preparations were made.

Inclement weather always seems to be a factor for outdoor events here in Sharpsburg, and is always a source of great consternation when planning an event, particularly with the recent soggy experience of Memorial Day still fresh in mind. Though the days leading up to July 11th generated some nail-biting, hair-pulling forecasts, that morning produced a beautifully sunny and stereotypically hot summer day. Setup and coordination for the event began in earnest that morning at the Community Playground and lasted throughout the afternoon.

As the clock rolled over into the evening hours and the start of the event at 6:00 p.m., the repellant heat began to give way to milder temperatures, and the first guests began to arrive. Music for the evening was provided by the extremely talented and versatile local artist Paul Watson. With food trucks on hand to offer some tasty alternatives, the Mayor and Council handed out free hot dogs, popcorn and other gifts to attendees while children lined up to score free ice cream cones in exchange for a bullseye at the axe throw game before burning off some pent-up energy in the bounce house! An extremely popular and fun feature of the event which proved to be a favorite for both children and adults alike – including yours truly – was the mechanical bull ride, which is a lot more challenging than it looks! I will definitely be looking forward to trying that again next year!

The evening was crowned by a stunning display of fireworks which exceeded everyone's expectations in both quality and quantity, and was accompanied by 18th century period-correct music impeccably performed by Old Line Fife and Drum. The display consisted of approximately 5,000 fireworks, and lasted for more than 22 minutes; and the accompanying music provided the perfect backdrop for the occasion. After some initial trepidation and uncertainty, the event turned out to be a great success that was attended by roughly 300 people, which isn't bad for a first-year endeavor.

For me, personally, helping to organize our first community Founder's Day Celebration was indeed a memorable experience. What I will always remember about that day are all of the smiles; everywhere you looked, there were smiling faces that radiated the type of joy that truly exemplifies what a small-town event is supposed to be. Most importantly, however, it was an opportunity for our community to come together, to commemorate our past and celebrate our future, and I think we accomplished that in a way that would make Joseph Chapline proud.

Thank you to all of our vendors, participants and volunteers, and most importantly, to the citizens of Sharpsburg – including our Founder, Joseph Chapline - for a successful event, and for demonstrating that Sharpsburg truly is “just what a small town should be.” Until next year!

Jacob Martz
Vice Mayor



~ *An Ode to another Birthday* ~

You know, I have been playing a trick on you for many years, and I suppose today I should confess. *Some have even suggested that confession is good for the soul*; not sure.

Since 2003, I have been writing columns in this newspaper under a pretentious disguise that *I am a boy from Dargan*, and I suspect in my own little mind I have always been a young lad from those woods.

But the truth of the matter is simply this: I am growing old, and each year I search the quotes of others to see how they travelled this road of life.

There is an old Chinese proverb that suggests "To know the road ahead, ask the one who's coming back." Learning how others have confronted that aspect of aging can often be enlightening.

Let's take a peek at a few words of advice that I have been offered. Perhaps some of them might even assist you in your own travels up the hill.



"Just remember once you are over the hill you continue to pick up speed," said cartoonist Charles Schultz.

A Native American proverb offers this advice on living: "When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice."

I have always remembered this lofty spiritual advice. And sometimes when I find myself on an errant path, I am reminded.

And then there is that line from Jonathan Swift, who offered his own take on aging: *"No wise man ever wishes to be younger."*

Now this one provoked a lot of thought. When those aches and pains of this old body wake me each morning, I often remember all that energy and painless and priceless fun I used to have in my youth. I can tell you straight forwardly that I wouldn't at all mind being 16 again.

But wait, that was an age and time where wisdom avoided my acquaintance. For sure this is a reminder from Mr. Swift. I'm not sure I would want to make all those same mistakes over again. *Wisdom is very often a good friend.*

Betty White, the ageless actor who left us at age 99, reminded us of her optimism: "The older you get the better you get, unless you're a banana."

And remember George Burns, that elder statesman who liked his cigars and died at the age of 100, with this reminder: "Nice to be here? At my age it's nice to be anywhere."

When I came back from Vietnam in August 1968, I got married on the first day of winter (Dec. 21) that year. I told my wife at our wedding that I had a premonition that I was going to die young. "You're crazy," she said, "you're healthy as an ox."

In 1972, I then knocked over a telephone pole at age 24 and almost died young. As I laid in a hospital bed for six weeks, one day she came to visit me and agreed "Maybe you are going to die young." I was mistaken; next week I will turn 75 should I survive the next few days.

Each birthday always causes one to examine life a little closer. So many friends, relatives and neighbors have already made their journey across the river (I'm remembering Ron Ingram and Wayne Ridenour here).

It seems too that each one of us is standing in line and possesses a number for our turn.

Marcus Aurelius, a philosopher king of Rome once offered his own take on living: "Live not one's life as though one has 1,000 years, but live each day as the last."

I have attempted to keep this thought on the first line of my things to do list.

George Santayana was a pragmatist who also offered this reality that's also at the top of my priority list: "There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval."

And going through some old cards of endearment my wife, Sheila, had saved over the years, I found one the other night I had given to her on Aug. 4, 2014. It had a picture of a young Indian warrior and his favorite maiden on the front of the card. Inside was written the following verse:

*"Look for me;
Our love will always be young.
Even when we are old and I am gone.
I will always be with you;
Look for me."*

A fitting epitaph of love, I'm thinking, when birthdays are done.

May peace be with you.

*Pete Waters, a Sharpsburg resident who writes for The Herald-Mail.
Article printed in the HM 7/9/2023*



If you think today's weather is crazy, consider this article, which was printed in the August 1980 issue of the Woodmen Magazine and contributed to the Crier by Carella Semler in March of 1995.

Back in 1815 a volcano named Tamburo erupted in Indonesia, creating powerful whirlwinds, gigantic tidal waves, and taking an estimated 12,000 lives. Then during the following year, Eastern United States and part of Europe experienced one of the strangest summers in history. The earth looked as though it had been ravaged by a plague. Crops were dying, cattle starving and people eating seed to remain alive. There were fears the sun was cooling. Prayers asking God's mercy were raised in churches, newspapers, and homes. But summer never came.

The year was 1816. Every month brought frost. Snow fell in June. Ice, thick as window glass, formed in July and August. No one remembered such weather, nor was the world to again suffer through a year without a summer.

War had come to an end the year before in both Europe and America. Europe had rid itself of Napoleon and the fledgling United States had survived the power of Great Britain. The turmoil of war was to be replaced, however, by the ravages of nature.

The year opened with little hint of the severe weather it was to bring. In parts of the northern United States the temperatures were so mild, people allowed their hearth fires to go out. The sun shone almost every day and the little snow that fell quickly melted. The mild weather continued until the end of February when a snow storm hit. Cold, blustery winds blew until the latter half of March. Northern Americans then saw milder weather until April ended with ice and snow. "May was a bitter disappointment," wrote a New Yorker in his diary. "Buds came out and so did the frost, and in one night laid all vegetation in a blackened waste." The corn crop was devastated and had to be replanted.

The severe frost continued through May. Traveling during the late part of that month through Buffalo, New York, then only a small village, David Thomas, an American horticulturist, found the mornings "so cold that we shivered in a winter dress, with great coats and gloves ..." Ice formed an inch thick on streams and ponds. As one settler described it, "June was a month of desolation." Most vegetation was destroyed. A June 1st notice from Canandaigua New York described chilling winds withering foliage going a "dreary aspect" to the fields. "The cold weather for a week past," continued the report, "has thrown a deep gloom over the prospect of the season." In some areas farmers abandoned all attempts to raise crops and hoarded the previous year's harvest.

June had opened with temperatures in the nineties when on June 5th a sudden shift of winds plummeted the mercury below freezing. In Massachusetts temperatures fell almost sixty degrees within twenty-four hours. There was severe frost from Canada to Virginia. Snow measuring in inches fell in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and across northern New England. A letter from Waterbury, Vermont, described snow eighteen inches deep dumped by a June 6th storm. July offered no relief. High winds swept the Atlantic coast on the Fourth of July. During the holiday, ice formed throughout New England, New York, and parts of Pennsylvania. The Richmond (Virginia) Enquirer complained of July frosts threatening the corn crop. The crop in the northern states had already been wiped out. Erie, Pa., reported July temperatures "so cold as to render fires necessary for comfort within, and great coats over woolen clothing without doors."

Even more cheerless was the month of August. Winter clothing was being worn on August 16th as ice formed one half inch thick. The frozen corn was cut for fodder. Grain crops withered. The first two weeks of September provided a relief from the cold and then ice and frost returned. There was no break in the weather until December but, as one pioneer wrote, "By then it did not matter."

People experienced fear and hunger. Poor harvests brought skyrocketing prices. Corn went from twenty-five cents per bushel up to five dollars. Flour more than doubled in price reaching as high as eighteen dollars a barrel. This at a time when farm labor earned seventy-five cents per day and skilled labor might receive two dollars for a day's work in the cities. Even if one could afford the high prices, provisions were not always obtainable. In some areas of the country the first six months of 1817 were called the "starving season." Residents of frontier settlements descended upon older towns for food. Other settlers shelled wheat and rye while still in the milk, then boiled and ate it as a substitute for bread. People were driven to the woods for fish, game, wild roots, and herbs. Seed potatoes were dug up and eaten. Trees were felled to allow hungry cattle to feed on the sparse foliage. The poor crops and unusual weather brought fears that the sun was cooling.

Whatever caused* the unusual weather of 1816, it did not prevent spring from arriving the following year. More fruitful seasons were to follow. For those who lived through it, however, none forgot the year without a summer

**Editor's note: The Little Ice Age believed to be caused by weak sun activity and no sun spots in addition to the volcano's eruption are believed to contribute to the unusual cooling period.*

106 East Main Street
PO Box 368
Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782
Phone: 301-432-4428



Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
8:30 AM – 3:30 PM
Closed Fridays

NEWS FROM TOWN HALL

Real Estate Property Taxes

Town taxes were mailed on Wed, July 1st to everyone who owns property in the Town of Sharpsburg. If your taxes are escrowed with your mortgage company, your tax bill is for informational purposes only as we anticipate payment from your mortgage company.

If you are responsible for your taxes, please note that the months of August and September payments are the base tax amount. Starting in the month of October, interest of 2% per month is added.

Upcoming Events

September 19th: Sharpsburg Day (9-5)

October 12th-16th: Fall Brush Collection

October 31st: Trick or Treat (6-8PM)

November 17th: Town Election

December 4th: Christmas On the Square

Follow us for Updates...

Town meetings, events, cancellations and changes are all posted on the Town's Facebook page

www.facebook.com/TheTownofSharpsburg
and the towns website

<https://sharpsburgmd.com>

The Mayor and Council meet the 1st Monday of the month @ 6PM in the meeting room located on the 2nd floor of Town Hall

Town Administration

Debra Valentine-Smith

Town Administrator

301.432.4428

townofsharpsburg@comcast.net

Tim Lung

Zoning Administrator/Permits

Sharpsburg.md.zoning@gmail.com

Town Cell: 240.816.1230



Mayor and Council

Russ Weaver – Mayor

r.weaver@sharpsburgmd.com

Jacob Martz – Vice Mayor

jacob.martz@sharpsburgmd.com

Town Council

Joe Kudla

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Anne Marie McCullough

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Heather Waters

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Robbie Waters

r.waters@sharpsburgmd.com

Sharpsburg Community Calendar

July to October 2026

July 27 at 7PM: Timothy R. Snyder **The Most Terrible Experience during the War: Stonewall Jackson's Winter Campaign to Bath, Hancock, and Romney**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

August 1: **Ice Cream Social** from
12Noon to 2:30PM
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 West Main Street
301-432-7098

August 3 at 6PM: **Town Council Meeting**
Sharpsburg Town Hall
106 E Main St
301-432-4428

August 3 at 7PM: **Benjamin L. Cwayna Slaughter along a Stone Wall: Gregg's South Carolina Brigade during the Maryland Campaign**
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

August 10 at 7PM: **Jack Dempsey "No Further Record" — POWs of the 7th Michigan Infantry**
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

August 11 through 13 from 1:30PM to 6:30PM: **Dinosaur Stations**
Young Children (0-6),
Sharpsburg Library
301-432-8825

August 17 at 7PM: **Steven Eden Battlefield Calculus: Tactics, Technology, and the Battle of Antietam**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

August 24 at 7PM: **Jim Rosebrock and Aaron Holley "Make me a Map" The Creation of the Artillery Atlas of Antietam**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

August 31 at 7PM: **John Schildt A Farmer, a Physician, and a General: Henry Rohrbach, Nathan Mayer, and Isaac P. Rodman**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 W. Main St.
executivedirector@antietaminstitute.org

September 19: **Sharpsburg Day**
[Times TBA]
106 E Main St
301-432-4428
<https://www.facebook.com/TheTownOfSharpsburg>

October 10 at 5:50PM: **Community Music Night**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 West Main Street
301-432-7098

Recurring Events

Wednesdays from 5:30PM to 6:30PM
Open for Quiet Prayer

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
209 West Main Street
admin@stpaulssharpburg.com

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
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,
Sunday Morning Worship & Children's
Church 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM



Town of Sharpsburg

106 East Main Street

Sharpsburg, MD 21782

Phone: 301-432-4428

<http://sharpsburgmd.com/>

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

August 6, 2026

Town Hall, 106 East Main Street, Sharpsburg, MD at 7:00 p.m.

DOCKET NO. BZA-26-001: An appeal was made by Randal P. Marcoux (Greenhouse Holdings) for a Special Exception to establish a short-term residential rental (STR) use in an existing owner occupied single family dwelling, owned by the applicant and located at 215 West High Street, zoned TR-Town Residential.

Pursuant to the Maryland Open Meetings Law, notice is hereby given that the deliberations of the Board of Zoning Appeals are open to the public. Furthermore, the Board, at its discretion, may render a decision as to some or all of the cases at the hearing described above or at a subsequent hearing, the date and time of which will be announced prior to the conclusion of the public hearing. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Debra Smith, Town Administrator at 301 432 4428 no later than July 30, 2026. Any person desiring a stenographic transcript shall be responsible for supplying a competent stenographer.

Applicants shall have ten (10) minutes in which to present their request and may, upon request to and permission of the Board, receive an additional twenty (20) minutes for their presentation. Following the Applicant's case in chief, other individuals may receive three (3) minutes to testify, except in the circumstance where an individual is representing a group, in which case said individual shall be given eight (8) minutes to testify.

For extraordinary cause, the Board may extend any time period set forth herein, or otherwise modify or suspend these Rules, to uphold the spirit of the Ordinance and to do substantial justice.

The application may be reviewed at Town Hall during normal business hours. Those unable to attend the Public Hearing may submit written testimony that shall be received at Town Hall by no later than August 5, 2026 in order to be made part of the record.

Timothy Lung
Zoning Administrator

2026 SHARPSBURG DAYS

FREE EVENT



SEPTEMBER 19TH

**TOWN OF SHARPSBURG
9AM-5PM**

FREE EVENT

- LIVE MUSIC
- FOOD VENDERS
- CRAFT VENDERS
- MEET TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS
- AND MUCH MORE!



**FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT:**

**HEATHER WATERS
(240)-469-8660**

H.WATERS@SHARPSBURGMD.COM

