

# Sharpsburg Town Crier

## *The Wetterer Edition*



Volume 29

April 2021

Number 3

### Feature Article

**Vaccine Hesitancy: The Next COVID-19 Battle**  
Brian Hose, PharmD; Owner, Sharpsburg Pharmacy

Until 2020, very few people who call this planet home could say that they lived through a global pandemic. Over the last year, I often found myself reflecting on what it must have been like a century ago to experience the Spanish Flu. How would I have obtained good information on public health measures and what would I have done to stay safe without the promise of vaccines or mass produced personal protective equipment? Without the internet or social media, how would I have safely stayed connected with friends and family?

So much is different 100 years later but for many, these two pandemics look incredibly similar. We have many Americans in 2021 that question infectious disease experts but completely believe those on social media who make baseless claims of conspiracy theories and miracle cures. I liken those who make these claims to the snake oil salesmen of long ago except, with the reach of social media, they are not just on the corner down the block but are in everyone's home or even the palm of our hand. As much as I try, it is often hard to contradict the beliefs of a close friend or family member no matter how baseless they are. I understand that it is difficult to disagree with those members of our

circle whom we have relied on for years to provide for us, protect us, and impart their years of knowledge to us.

As I said in the opening sentence, almost all of us are in uncharted waters, which is why it is so important to rely on the best science available to help mitigate the effects of this pandemic. We need to question those armchair experts on social media and look for good unbiased information from places like the CDC, FDA, and the WHO to name a few. Do not let the snake oil salesmen of 2021 keep you from doing what is best to protect your health. We live in an era of incredible medical advancements and the COVID-19 vaccines are a shining example of the progress we have made over the last 100 years. With the increased availability of no cost vaccinations, it has become easier than at any point in history to protect yourself and your family from severe illness. If you have concerns, look to the experts, talk to your primary care provider or ask your pharmacist but do your best to get vaccinated.

- Brian Hose



## Community Calendar

### April 2021

#### **MDOT SHA Hosts Virtual Public Meeting on a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan**

Apr 30 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm  
301-432-4428

### May 2021

#### **Town Council Meeting**

Town Hall  
May 3 at 6PM  
301-432-4428

#### **Dedication Ceremony at the Mark A. Smith Memorial Park**

May 23, 2 pm,  
205 South Church Street, Sharpsburg  
Come All Who Are Thirsty Veterans Group  
cawatveterans@gmail.com

#### **Sharpsburg Memorial Day Wreath Laying and Parade**

May 29 11:00 am – 2:30 pm  
301-432-4428

### June 2021

#### **Jim Smith – Civil War Lecture Series: “The most successful in its work”: Orlando Willcox’s division in the Maryland Campaign”**

June 2 at 7PM  
Jacob Rohrbach Inn  
301-432-5079

#### **Town Council Meeting**

Town Hall  
June 7 at 6PM  
301-432-4428

#### **Tom Clemens – Civil War Lecture Series: “Meet the Original Iron Brigade“**

June 9 at 7PM  
Jacob Rohrbach Inn  
301-432-5079

#### **Joseph Stahl – Civil War Lecture Series: “Faces of Union Soldiers at Harpers Ferry”**

June 16 at 7PM  
Jacob Rohrbach Inn  
301-432-5079

#### **Gary Rohrer – Civil War Lecture Series: “William B. Franklin and his impact on the 1862 MD Campaign.”**

June 23 at 7PM  
Jacob Rohrbach Inn  
301-432-5079

### July 2021

#### **Town Council Meeting**

Town Hall  
July 12 at 6PM  
301-432-4428

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#### **School Corner: *News from Sharpsburg Elementary***

This month, we are proud to recognize these student achievements.



Fiona Jones

5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
*Sharpsburg Elementary*

Nominated and earned a Carson Scholarship. Carson Scholars are nominated for being leaders in academics and community service. We were very proud to nominate Fiona to apply for a scholarship this year. Fiona is the first student that we’ve nominated in recent years to also earn the \$1000.00 college scholarship.



*Sharpsburg Elementary School*



Adalyn Williams

5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Sharpsburg Elementary

**Character Counts Washington County Coalition – Annual Recognition**

We are proud to nominate Adalyn Williams for the 2020 – 2021 school year for demonstrating outstanding citizenship. When we practice Citizenship, we do our share to make our school and community better. We cooperate, get involved, and are good neighbors. Good citizens obey the rules, respect authority and protect the environment. Citizenship is the pinnacle of the Character Counts! program, as Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness and Caring are each vital parts of Citizenship.



Tristin Slack

5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Sharpsburg Elementary

**Principal’s Citizenship Award**

The Principal’s Citizenship Award is one of the highest honors we can award at the elementary level. Tristan consistently demonstrates pride and respect toward students, adults, the school, it’s rules and the property. He participates in class discussions, school activities and gives his

maximum effort. Out of the thousands of Washington County Public Schools 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, only 73 were honored this year.



Nicholas Duncan

5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Sharpsburg Elementary

**Principal’s Citizenship Award**

The Principal’s Citizenship Award is one of the highest honors we can award at the elementary level. Nicholas consistently demonstrates pride and respect toward students, adults, the school, it’s rules and the property. He participates in class discussions, school activities and gives his maximum effort. Out of the thousands of WCPS 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, only 73 were honored this year.

**American Legion Post 236: Americanism Essay Contest**

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students wrote essays on How can we address the health and well-being of our veterans, military and their families? The students listed below were selected for writing the strongest essays.

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Level

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Avery Larson

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Emily Franko

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Bellah Warner

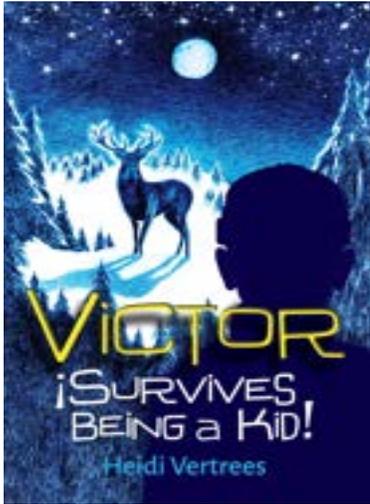
Honorable Mention:

Christiana Bittner

*(Photos and names are provided with explicit parental permission as established by school administration)*

**Local Children's Author, Heidi Vertrees Announces the Distribution of Her Book, "Victor Survives Being a Kid!"** available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

In Heidi's story, Victor faces a rough year! His family moves, he's at a new school, the bully hates him, a street thug targets him, and he has to survive on an icy-cold trail alone in the dark!



Adventurous, funny, inspirational... it's a story told by Victor Ortega, an Hispanic boy in a lower-income American neighborhood. Kids in any community can relate to his adventures and misadventures through the growing pains of the middle years.

In this beautifully illustrated story, Victor's narrative keeps the story witty and vivid as his troubles pile up.

Readers see a snapshot of interesting aspects of Hispanic culture, and enjoy the humor and adventure in Victor's journey. Kids are inspired and grow in their confidence and faith, and learn to be brave and strong.

Heidi adds, "Like Victor in my book, Victor Survives Being a Kid, my father came from another country, but one much smaller than Mexico. I grew up hearing two languages. Since then, I have traveled the globe and served in the U.S. Peace Corps. For a dozen years, I lived in a Hispanic area in Denver, taught fifth grade there, and was

blessed by the graciousness of the Mexican culture. This story is a big thank-you back."



*Children's Author, Ms. Heidi Vertrees*

### **Mark A. Smith Memorial Park Ribbon Cutting**

*Come ALL Who Are Thirsty* invites you to the The Mark A. Smith Memorial Park ribbon cutting ceremony on Sunday, May 23rd at 2 pm .

There is limited side street parking and no seating available, so bring whatever you need with you.



We had two "official" workdays (March 13 & April 10) with the Boonsboro Middle School FFA students and Technical Education teacher. Many thanks for the FFA grant money for military signs, flagpoles, benches, fill dirt and flowers and to Willow Run Farm, Keedysville who donated all the castle blocks and helped place them.

What progress! We looked back and saw that we have been working on this project since 2017, but in the last two months, it has really come alive! Stop by 205 South Church Street in Sharpsburg to see the updates.

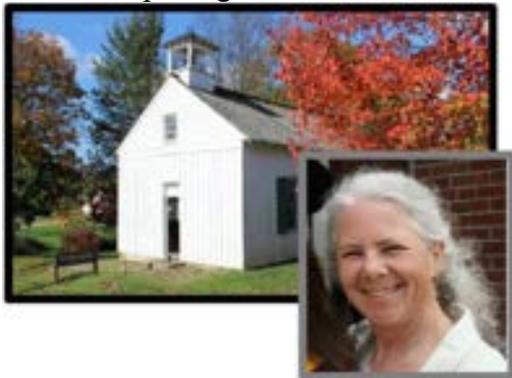
Beth and Dwayne Harris

## **Tolson’s Chapel and School Designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service**

On January 13, 2021, Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt designated Tolson’s Chapel and School, of Sharpsburg, Maryland, a National Historic Landmark. Tolson’s Chapel is nationally significant as an exceptional example of a post-Civil War African American community building and cemetery that served as church, school, and burial ground. It represents the national trend among African Americans during Reconstruction to establish independent community institutions in the context of racial segregation in the late nineteenth century

Tolson’s Chapel was built in 1866 by the African American Methodist Episcopal congregation formed by Rev. John R. Tolson. Many original members were formerly enslaved, their bondage ended by the new Maryland constitution of 1864. In 1868, the chapel congregation agreed to house a school, arranged by the Freedman’s Bureau. The American Union School operated in the chapel in 1868 and 1869. Beginning in 1872, the county-run Sharpsburg Colored School was housed in the chapel and continued there until 1899 when Washington County built a schoolhouse nearby on High Street.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.tolsonschapel.org](http://www.tolsonschapel.org)



*Ms. Edie Wallace, Historian, Tolson's Chapel in Background*

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**“Born From the Great Spring”**  
*Sharpsburg Town Motto*

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## **Civil War Sharpsburg**

During the Battle, the house at 112 N. Mechanic Street, was owned by Judge David Smith. Mrs. Smith and her four children were hiding in the cellar when a shell exploded out front and a chunk of shrapnel passed “through the front door, hit the floor, on through the back door, into a closet, broke a jar honey, struck the side of the closet and lay on the shelf.” Her son saved it as a souvenir. His sister Sue retrieved a 20-lb. Parrot shell from the yard, but a Confederate soldier who sheltered with them later in the day warned that it could explode, so they carried it outside and poured water on it.



*Photo - From left to right - Lillie Virginia (Smith) Rohr, Judge David Smith and his wife, Mary Ann (Keedy) Smith, c. 1866.*

Chris Vincent  
President  
Sharpsburg Historical Society



*Sharpsburg Street Scene, local artist Lee Weaver*

## Church Infrastructure Improvement

Folks around town have noticed some improvements at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, one of the historic churches in Sharpsburg. The beautiful stained glass windows are much more visible through new plexiglass. The exterior window trim has all been painted. But what's most noticeable is the light shining out through the bell tower window. It's just one way the Church is trying to shine some light in the world. You would have to come into the church for an evening service to see is the light shining through the altar windows into the church. These improvements were made possible by members of the congregation and the community who love the Lord and his Church.

Father Connor Newlun



## Antietam Unit 236 to Collect Worn American Flags

Sharpsburg American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 236, will place a collection barrel in front of Sharpsburg Town Hall from April 29 to May 28, where residents can place worn, torn and tattered American flags for proper disposal.

The unit reminds all Americans that every day is a good day to display an American flag in good condition, especially on patriotic holidays.

Ava Gift, President



## Mayor & Councilpersons

Russ Weaver – Mayor  
Jacob Martz – Vice Mayor  
Mia Parsons – Council  
John Hammond – Council  
Ed Beeler-Council  
Robbie Waters – Council  
Joe Kudla – Council

106 East Main Street  
PO Box 368  
Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782

Phone: 301-432-4428

Fax: 301-432-8990

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

Zoning Administrator-Tim Lung  
[Sharpsburg.md.zoning@gmail.com](mailto:Sharpsburg.md.zoning@gmail.com)



**April 2021 Council Meeting Minutes  
Attached**

msa ver1.0 04/23/2021

## ATTACHMENT

Mayor & Council of Sharpsburg  
Meeting Agenda

**April 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes DRAFTED**

6 pm-In Attendance-Russ Weaver, Ed Beeler, Jacob Martz, Joe Kudla, Mia Parsons, John Hammond, Tim Lung, Mike Arant, Kevin Tucker, Chris Vincent, Carrie Estell, Jen Bruni, Perry Jamieson

- I. Call meeting to order and pledge-at 6 pm
- II. Swearing in by Kevin Tucker from the circuit court swore in the new Vice Mayor, Jacob Martz, and Joseph Kudla for council person.
- III. Meeting minutes from March 2021 were unanimously approved, these minutes were electronically sent to all members.
- Iç. Treasurer Report-treasurer report was discussed by the Mayor-basics were discussed; salaries stated are high, but two months were combined. Snow removal exceeded the budget, Highway User Funds were first tagged as a fixed income, for our purposes we made this account as income.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**-there were none

### Mayor's Report

Thank you to councilpersons for going above and beyond with their tasks and roles. Planning meeting was highlighted as they are doing many tasks, keeping the rural/residential aspect as this is the main concept of town's comprehension plan and keeping the residents in the forefront of its planning. Street scape aesthetics of the town-councilpersons to work and support each other and the plan of the town. Many things have been accomplished.

Improve Communications-FB to have Town Crier-get the Facebook page be more dynamic.

Blow your own horn! Facebook should know all about what we're doing; street improvements, parade work, send thank you notes. Note cards are available for thank you for councilmembers; state and county people to be thanked as well for emails, utilize those cc lines.

Humane Society of Washington County Gala, Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup> The town will send two people who are willing to represent the town.

**Tim Lung-zoning administrator**-during his time here questions/queries and calls have been mostly dealing with sheds and fences. He has been dealing with processing permits. Tim's contacts put together a better mapping GIS from the county. They developed a web-map that can be accessed through the town's website, parcel # zoning information/ordinances, a link to the state's tax assessments, flood plain, sensitive areas, the county has finished their work. Tim will forward their work to council members and we can tweak as we go through and provide feedback. Tim reiterated the need for county employees to be thanked. The wall map is updated, the printer is out of commission-a copy can be run off from a zip drive. The GIS map will be very useful for tax purposes, planning green projects. Fridays many calls on fences, sheds and there will be some clarity on those processes.

The Mayor complimented Carrie and Tim as the first faces of the town with some positive feedback from residents.

Council comments

- Ed Beeler-Historical Planning, town archives, communications, grants

- Welcome baskets idea-small gift bag with a decorative bulb, councilmembers' information, town hall letter, businesses with menus, coupons, Ed has a motion, Jacob seconded, all approved of this idea for new residents within the town's city limits.
- Museum to be open May 6<sup>th</sup>, Thursday, Friday, & Saturdays from 9-4, other times by appointment.
- The Mark A. Smith & Veteran Memorial Park ribbon cutting, Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2-5. Veterans have done a lot of work; the town should be part of this opening. Active park, insurance will need to be addressed. Carrie to reach out to LGIT the company who handles town land/buildings insurance.
- Joe Kudla-streets & safety issues-during the planning walk through a small portion of town many observations were made:
  - uneven sidewalks 17, holes in sidewalks, drainage issues, 3, broken handrails, maintenance of sidewalks, broken walk areas, ordinance violations, open trash, trees/bushes/stumps, featured improvements-will get ideas of costs.
  - Safety and Streetscape will have the two larger headings of these findings. Tim and Russ to meet with Joe concerning the issues found on the walk done with the planning committee on March 24.<sup>th</sup> the culverts were cleaned, and the drains will be done on a regular basis. Joe met with a resident to discuss the walls off Main Street, mindful of the stone, mortar and aesthetics of the current walls, quotes will be asked for from a few masons, cost cannot be the only factor as these are historic structures. The Big Spring, the wall on 34 at the top, fixing many of these wall issues will be part Joe's tasks. Some costs/estimates should be in by the end of next week, April 23.<sup>rd</sup> Gutter pans, sewer and water failing asphalt will be repaired by agency that did the work; Butch Glenn to get a possible free street sweeping before the parade. Some street signs were found but signs
  - Curbs to be painted red will fall to the town's expense. The sloping issues to be fixed too-off Church and Main, the asphalt is shearing off, visually see this imperfection, Joe will have the people fix the streets that recently repaired them. The crosswalks we have are the newest and safest. Middletown's street on their state road is very nice, however they may have used stamped concrete.
- John Hammond-Spoke of the water/sewer issues, he has been in contact with H & H welling, their suggestion is to drill a test well 6" ideally two 8" wells would be recommended, 25K was a ballpark estimate, this being on the higher side. Drilling wells would make us more energy efficient, however, the county people mentioned that the water may have to be treated. There is more needed to be learned about the water system, the water tower belongs to the county. John strongly suggested that the town attorney be part of the contract and negotiations. Drilling wells and selling water to the county could be a solution. Maintenance, repair and distribution are all costs to put into consideration. Neighboring municipalities have similar issues with treated water and wells could be a good way for Sharpsburg to have their water costs significantly lowered. Chemicals were put in the pond to kill some of the invasive species, the slide is getting fixed.
- Jacob Martz-Vice Mayor, communications, Memorial Day Parade-60 groups have filled out applications, flags replaced with help from Potomac Edison and CTAWAT, flags for the front will be replaced. The parade committee continues to meet on a weekly basis.
- Robbie Waters-parks, railroad station, town operations (not in attendance) Park is open, 25\$ refundable fee to be refunded after any reservation, all trash must be taken. Grant monies were not all used and the remaining funds were used to paint the railroad.
- Mia Parsons-Planning-(Streetscape), Planning commission walk was covered in Joe's report, April 1<sup>st</sup> was the meeting for planning, discussion with Tim updating ordinances concerning livestock, chickens, naming alleys, condition of sidewalks

- Names of the alleys that are up for naming are: Alley #1 Mill Alley, Alley #10 Garrison Alley, Alley# 3 and #4 Bluebirds Alley. Mia motioned for the alleys to be named, Ed seconded, leave it open to discussion, all favored, signs for the alleys to go through the county. Box of street signs that are here, it will be a nice to have all signs at town street intersections be of the same style to show consistency in the town's signage. Street scape looking at plantings, arborist to get some suggestions for shrubs/trees. Consultation will assist with a detailed plan for the street scape.
- Chris Vincent-advisory board-temporary visitor center for the battlefield to be open in July.
- Mike Arant-120 recipients for the Town Crier, second mail group with reoccurring events-community calendar to be part of the Town Crier, to be posted to the town's website, Mr. Althouse, (principal of Sharpsburg Elementary School) would like to have a school corner-this will be 300 words, a call for input came in, featured articles, Mr. Weaver, the mayor's brother, will have some original art featured, business card free ads for now internal interests, looking into paper distribution-funding, paper stuffing, mailings, volunteers to assist, feature article for May edition.

### **Old Business/ACTIONS**

Light in the municipal parking lot-summer coming, Joe to check into this task

Train Station roof completed and paid for, waiting on reimbursement

High Street signs-this to be addressed

Park Opened and pavilion will be painted in April or May

Meet with Dave Trone-ownership and maintenance of stone walls-Carrie to request meeting with him

Bricks on walkway around telephone poles to be replaced Joe working on this

West Antietam Street barrier-Tim and Russ to walk to this and discuss further

Big Spring wall needs to be addressed

Resolutions: Jacob -Memorial Day parade for 2020 to be recognized as an official parade-Jacob made a motion to pass, seconded by Ed Beeler, all were in favor, all councilpersons will sign and this will be part of a parade paraphernalia for the museum.

Tim-ordinances were revised in 2018, changes to complaints in regard to fencing paragraph was omitted, accessory structure is a fence, apply these rules to walls and fences-405 simple rules where fences can be located, without 405 Tim would have to apply the standards, 405 was omitted in error, but to get things to adequately addressed, adopt an emergency ordinance of 405-(6 ' or less).

### **New Business**

Bulk Trash-May 12<sup>th</sup> with regular trash pick-up, flyer posted on FB and in the Post Office

Summer Job Internship opportunity-discussed the program, Carrie call Angie and

Covid testing to be done May 7, 2021 in the parking lot from 10-2

Vaccines are available at the Sharpsburg Pharmacy

Mia makes a motion to adopt the ordinance correction, John seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Next ordinance was regarding fees, there are fees that reflect the county, which are types of permits that would need to review, building code review-new house, addition-anything under a building code-these fees are expensive with the lowest at \$50. Permits required are fences, less than 7 feet in height, sheds less than 400 square feet, there is not a specific fee for these, the review with what other towns charge, other towns' charges are higher, a fee of \$30 to charge for a permit, this is a document and shows documentation.

Permit's purpose is a verification of the review of the project by the zoning administrator. Each permit is good for a year. Jacob motion, Joe seconded the motion, all were in favor. Discussion on chickens is ongoing, the current ordinance states that chickens are not permitted, bee keeping was also asked about not agriculture, chickens and bees to be addressed later.

Tax Rate- Constant Yield Rate, the rate in Keedysville were discussed. It would be ideal to lower taxes, but if we are not able fund current and future projects, it would be difficult to raise taxes to the current level or higher. The open space project was highlighted, and Project Open Space was very excited by the ideas we presented thus far, a user experience will implement what happens when you go to the park. Some council members voiced a more basic park that would reflect the needs and wants of the residents, more like an open space for picnic tables and greenery. This is a big project that will need a lot of work and grant funding. The town tax to remain the same, with the .35 tax rate to remain the same, an amount to rebate to folks for sewer and water, seniors to get a larger portion. Council members to address the amount of the rebate for residents later. Russ asked for a motion, Jacob seconded the motion, the council all were in favor of keeping the tax rate at its current rate of .35, no increase in property taxes.

EXECUTIVE MEETING-this meeting was closed to the public; basic discussion was for a need to audit the accounting and to oversee payroll expenses and taxes.

Adjourn at 9:15 pm