

TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER

Hello neighbors,

I just have to say: November was a wonderful month in Shepherdstown. Many of us enjoyed the change of season, honored our veterans, and gathered with family and friends to reflect on what we're grateful for.

It was also a productive stretch at Town Hall as we continued making improvements that strengthen our services and support our residents.

We're fortunate to have a dedicated staff, and this edition of the newsletter highlights several efforts that deserve appreciation. One of the month's standout moments was our annual Holiday Kick-Off the day after Thanksgiving. As always, it was festive and full of community spirit.

This year, we also recognized Judy Shepherd and Jimmie Crain for their many years of volunteer work in making Christmas in Shepherdstown possible. The Town Council issued a proclamation naming Judy the "Heart of Shepherdstown," a well-earned honor for her decades of enthusiasm and leadership.

With the holiday season now in full swing, I encourage everyone to spend time downtown—shop local, enjoy a meal, and spread the word. And remember: parking meters are free through the season!

Over the coming weeks, I hope you're able to enjoy our decorated streets, greet your neighbors, and share in the good cheer that makes Shepherdstown so special!



— James Gatz | jgatz@shepherdstown.gov

Celebrating Judy Shepherd and a Shepherdstown Holiday Tradition



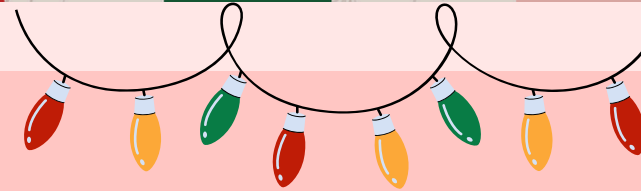
At this year's Welcome to Christmas & Tree Lighting celebration on Friday, November 28, the hundreds in attendance saw Mayor Gatz present longtime resident and holiday organizer Judy Shepherd with a special resolution honoring her as the "Heart of Shepherdstown." Judy will be stepping down from her role(s) with Christmas in Shepherdstown after this year.

For more than three decades, Judy has been the driving force behind the beloved December events—shaping the season with her creativity, energy, and love for the community. Her work has brought together volunteers, families, businesses, and visitors year after year,

During the ceremony, the Mayor also took a moment to acknowledge someone who has also quietly helped bring the magic to life—Jimmie Crain, who has served as Santa for the last 13 years. Though Jimmie moved to Maine after losing his home here to a fire, he and his wife, Tam, continued traveling back to Shepherdstown every Christmas to make sure Santa arrived on time and in style.

This year marked Jimmie's final appearance in that role, and the Town extends a heartfelt thanks to Jimmie, Tam, and Judy for the joy and festivity they've helped carry forward.

Together, they've created traditions that generations of residents and visitors have come to cherish. As Shepherdstown steps into another holiday season, we celebrate their contributions and the spirit of community they've helped to keep alive.



Holiday Happenings

Shepherdstown celebrates the holiday season all month long, with December filled to the brim with festive events, family traditions, and plenty of opportunities to shop local. From music and markets to seasonal specials around town, there's something happening nearly every day.

This week kicks off with First Friday on December 5, followed by the annual Shepherdstown Holiday Parade on Saturday, December 6 at 10 a.m.—always one of the most beloved events of the season.

Explore the full calendar of December holiday happenings, along with plenty of other community events, at [Experience Shepherdstown](#). (Zoom in below for a deep dive!)

Experience Shepherdstown
CHRISTMAS IN SHEPHERDSTOWN
LIST OF EVENTS DECEMBER 3-6 2025
FREE unless marked by a (\$) ALL AGES unless marked by a ()

Wednesday, Dec 3rd
6pm - Christmas Paint Night (\$ rsvp req'd) @Burnt Secrets Cellar @ Panagiota's Taste of Greece
9pm - Comedy Night (\$) @Panagiota's Taste of Greece

Friday, Dec 5th
4:30pm-7:30pm - Ho Ho Ho-liday Market @War Memorial Building
5-7pm - Festive First Friday @King Street (closed btwn Old Queens & German)
SVFD Bonfire w/s'mores, Hot Cocoa, Live Carolers on King St & Carolers raving about town, Shops open late - till 8pm
5-7pm - Game Knights photo booth & stocking stuffers at First Friday @King Street
5-7pm - Woven, Wooden & Whimsical @Evolve Shepherdstown
6pm - First Friday Candle-Making Workshop (\$) @Four Seasons Books
6pm - Full Moon Sound Healing (\$) @Mohalu Wellness
6-7:30pm - Ghost/History Tour with Shepherdstown Mystery Walks (\$) @Shep Welcome Ctr
7-10pm - Krampus Bar Krawl (\$ tickets req'd) @Meet at Panagiota's Taste of Greece
7:30pm - The Shepherdstown Film Society presents Wicked Little Letters (\$ PWYC) @Opera House
8pm - Sing Along Christmas Carols with Jordan Siwek* @Panagiota's Taste of Greece

Saturday, Dec 6th
9am-12pm - Christmas Cookie Walk @Shepherdstown United Methodist Church
10-11am - SHEPHERDSTOWN'S CHRISTMAS PARADE @German Street (closed)
Business Decoration Contest Winners announced
10am - Visit Santal @Historic Shepherdstown Museum
10am - Donation Flow Yoga (\$) @Mohalu Wellness
10am-6pm - Ho Ho Ho-liday Market @War Memorial Building
10am-4:30pm - Shepherdstown Holiday Marketplace @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
10am-2pm - Christmas Cookie Walk & Craft Show (& BBQ) @Trinity Episcopal Church
11am-11:30am - Music for Munchkins (\$) @Wind Gap Music
11am-3pm - Holiday Open House @Sacred Roots Herbal Sanctuary
11am-5pm - Historic Shepherdstown's Museum @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
12pm/1pm/5pm/6pm/7pm - Living Nativity @Trinity Episcopal Church
12-3pm - Shepherdstown Volunteer Fire Dept Annual Free Holiday Dinner @SVFD Fire House
1-4pm - Great Gift Tasting @Grapes & Grains Gourmet
3-5pm - Holiday Open House @The Bridge Gallery
3pm - Sip & Screen Series @The Shepherdstown Opera House
5-7pm - Woven, Wooden & Whimsical @Evolve Shepherdstown
6-7:30pm - Ghost/History Tour with Shepherdstown Mystery Walks (\$) @Shep Welcome Ctr
6:15-10:30pm - Holiday Contra Dance and Potluck @War Memorial Building
7:30-9pm - Cinemagical Holiday Gala with Shep U's School of Music @Frank Arts Center

 **Jefferson County**
WHERE ALMOST HEAVEN BEGINS



Experience Shepherdstown
CHRISTMAS IN SHEPHERDSTOWN
LIST OF EVENTS DECEMBER 7-13 2025
FREE unless marked by a (\$) ALL AGES unless marked by a ()

Sunday, Dec 7th
9am-1pm - Shepherdstown Farmers Market @South King Street - behind Market House
9am-4pm - Ho Ho Ho-liday Market @War Memorial Building
10am-4:30pm - Shepherdstown Holiday Marketplace @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
11am-4pm - Holiday Open House at Historic Popodicon @Popodicon
1-4pm - Historic Shepherdstown's Museum @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
1-3pm - Nutcrackers & Namaste - yoga & art workshop for kids (\$) @Mohalu Wellness
3pm - Sip & Screen Series @The Shepherdstown Opera House
3-4:30pm - Cinemagical Holiday Gala with Shepherd U's School of Music @Frank Arts Ctr
3:00pm-4:00pm - Community Christmas Caroling with Terry Tucker & Ardyth Gilbertson @McMurrin Hall
5:00pm-7:00pm - Woven, Wooden & Whimsical @Evolve Shepherdstown

Thursday, Dec 11th
4:30pm-6:00pm - A Very Merry Cookie Party (new children's book donations welcome) @The Shepherdstown Public Library
7:30pm - Eastern Panhandle Community Band - Sounds of the Season (Raffle!) @Frank Arts Ctr

Friday, Dec 12th
2-7:00pm - An ARRRRtful Holiday @Evolve Shepherdstown
6pm-7:30pm - Ghost/History Tour with Shepherdstown Mystery Walks (\$) @Shep Welcome Ctr
8pm - A Very Peregrine Christmas Spectacular (\$) @Black Box Arts Center

Saturday, Dec 13th
10am - Community Yoga PWYC (\$) @Mohalu Wellness
10am-4:30pm - Shepherdstown Holiday Marketplace @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
10am-7pm - An ARRRRtful Holiday @Evolve Shepherdstown
10am-6pm - Ho Ho Ho-liday Market @War Memorial Building
11-11:30am - Music for Munchkins (\$) @Wind Gap Music
11am-5pm - Historic Shepherdstown's Museum @Historic Shep & Museum - Entler Hotel
12-9:00pm - Solve the Case: Missing Santa! (teens & adults) @Game Knights
1pm - A TUBAChristmas! @McMurrin Hall Lawn (Reynolds Hall if inclement weather)
1-4pm - Amanda's 3rd Annual Wine Tasting @Grapes & Grains Gourmet
5-8:00pm - Omar Richardson, violinist @Panagiota's Taste of Greece
6-7:30pm - Ghost/History Tour with Shepherdstown Mystery Walks (\$) @Shep Welcome Ctr
7:00pm - Book Club Christmas Cookie Exchange @Four Seasons Books
7:00pm - Live Reading of a Christmas Carol by Phil Bakin* @Burnt Secrets Cellar @ Panagiota's
7:30pm - Rejoice! Music for this Season @Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
8:00pm - A Very Peregrine Christmas Spectacular (\$) @Black Box Arts Center

 **Jefferson County**
WHERE ALMOST HEAVEN BEGINS





Did You Know?

As part of our annual holiday tradition, all parking meters in downtown Shepherdstown are free November 26th through January 5th.

We encourage residents and visitors to take advantage of the extra flexibility while shopping, dining, and enjoying seasonal events throughout town.

Town Adopts Donations Review and Acceptance Policy

The Town Council recently approved a new Donations Review and Acceptance Policy to provide clear guidance on how Shepherdstown reviews, approves, and records all gifts and contributions.

The policy applies to both monetary and in-kind donations made to the Town and its committees—ensuring consistency, transparency, and alignment with community values. The Town Council review will include an analysis of the long-term costs to the Town for maintenance of any donated property and for any offers to redesign or improve Town property.

All approved gifts will be recorded for public record, including their purpose and donor information.

The Town extends sincere appreciation to all individuals and organizations whose generosity enhances the quality of life and services in Shepherdstown.

Building Commission Lands New Members



The Municipal Building Commission has been authorized in town ordinances for many years, but the Commission had been dormant and without appointed commissioners. However, the Town Council appointed three members to that commission at the November 2025 meeting: Elise Bach, Andrew Singletary, and Stephen Skinner.

The Commission is authorized to oversee the acquisition, maintenance, and operation of public buildings, facilities, and property. Members serve five-year terms without compensation, and must be residents of the Corporation of Shepherdstown. [Click here](#) to find out more.



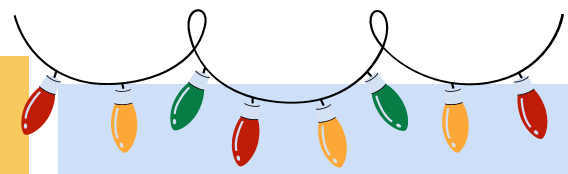
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Town Selects Historic Preservation Intern

The Town of is pleased to announce that Shepherd University senior Tabatha C. Delphi has been selected as the first participant in the new Shepherdstown Historic Preservation Internship, a partnership between the Town and Shepherd University designed to support local preservation work and provide real-world experience for students.

The internship will assist the Shepherdstown Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) with projects that document and protect the Town's historic district. As part of her role, Delphi will help update the Town's historic database, expand public access to preservation information, and develop resources for residents, realtors and business owners.

To learn more about Tabatha as well as the internship, [click here](#).



Tree Commission Report

The Tree Commission reviewed an extensive list of ongoing tree actions, noting several locations with pending work and others that have recently progressed, including approved maintenance bids and completed fall treatments.

The sugar maple recently removed at Town Hall prompted discussion about installing a small knee wall with a root barrier, with plans to prepare materials for Historic Landmarks before seeking bids.

At 112 W. German St., the Commission evaluated options to enlarge the existing concrete tree well to improve doorway clearance, with site measurements and sidewalk assessments underway.

Commission Members also discussed new planting opportunities, which includes the area on W. High St. (west of Duke) and at key town entry points.

Additional updates covered stump grinding on W. German St. and New St., coordination challenges at a grading-problem site, and a recent pruning request at E. High St.

New business included evaluating a possibly dead tree on Old Queen Alley, setting guidance for decorations on the historic Market House crabapple tree, and noting the removal of a storm-damaged tree at Rocky and High Streets.

“Almost Heaven” Swing Now Open at Rumsey Monument Park

Shepherdstown celebrated a joyful Dedication & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Saturday, November 29, marking the official opening of the new “Almost Heaven” West Virginia Swing at Rumsey Monument Park. The project was a partnership between the Rotary Club of Shepherdstown and the Town. The swing is now a permanent Town-owned feature in one of our most scenic public spaces.

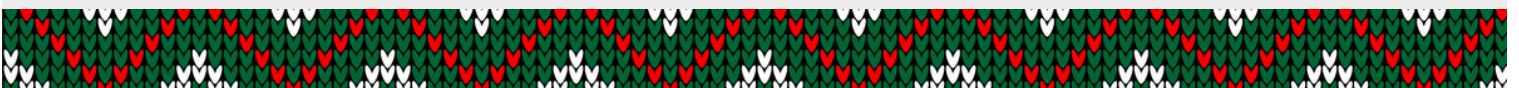


The idea first came to the Rotary Club from Karrington Childress, Miss West Virginia 2023, who noted that—despite all the “Almost Heaven” swings across the state—none were located in Berkeley or Jefferson Counties. She identified the overlook at Rumsey Monument Park as a perfect location, and Rotary immediately stepped in to help make it happen.

Working with the Nicholas County Career and Technical Center and the West Virginia Department of Tourism, Rotary secured the swing and selfie-sign components through the state’s Cooperative Advertising Program, funded the materials, and coordinated the build. The Town provided the installation site, park access, and will maintain the swing going forward.

Rumsey Monument Park is among our Town's most cherished and historic parks. Overlooking the Potomac River, the park marks the site of James Rumsey’s groundbreaking 1787 steamboat trial, honored today by the 75-foot monument erected in 1915. Adding the swing gives people yet another reason to visit—offering a peaceful spot to rest, enjoy the view, and experience a little slice of West Virginia’s natural beauty.

To visit the swing, head into town via WV-480/Duke Street, turn east onto High Street, then left onto Mill Street, and follow Rumsey Monument Road up the hill. Free weekend parking is available on Mill Street, with limited parking at the park. Make a point to enjoy this special new addition to our community!





Upcoming Dates/Times for Town Council and Committee Meetings (Town Hall)

All meetings are typically convened in-person at Town Hall and broadcast via Zoom, with the exception of Age-Friendly Shepherdstown—which is held only via [Zoom here](#).

For all meetings, if a Zoom link is available for that meeting, it can be found [on this page](#) by clicking on the respective meeting and "2025"—and then the Video link within the "Resources" column that coincides with that date/time.

Meetings:

- Town Council: Wednesday, December 10, 6:30pm.
- Age-Friendly Shepherdstown: Wednesday, December 17, 1:30pm.
- Board of Zoning Appeals: Tuesday, December 2, 6pm.
- Finance Committee: Wednesday, December 3, 6:30pm.
- Grants Committee: Tuesday December 2, 6:15pm.
- Parks and Recreation Committee: Tuesday, December 23, 6pm.
- Planning Commission: Monday, December 15, 6pm.
- Public Works Committee: Monday, December 22, 6pm.
- Special Water & Sanitary Board: Thursday, December 4, 6pm.
- Special Town Council: Tuesday December 9, 5:30pm.
- Tree Commission: Thursday, December 11, 6pm.



Mayor's Office Hours:

Fourth Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm, Town Hall.
Email jgatz@shepherdstown.gov with any questions.

Municipal Court hours: Third Wednesday of every month starting at 5:30pm, Town Hall.
[Click here](#) for more information.
