



# FALL HOME

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**FALL RESTAURANT FLAVORS ON PAGES 12C-13C**



GLoucester-Mathews  
**GAZETTE-JOURNAL**  
Section C Thursday, October 13, 2022



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

The Mathews County Visitor and Information Center's Saving Sibley's Committee has worked hard to raise the funds to pay for important restoration work on the historic Sibley's General Store foundation. Among the many committee members who have devoted their time and effort to the fund drive are, from left, Greg Dusenberry, construction liaison and president of MCVIC's board; Hunt Thompson, fundraising committee chair and MCVIC treasurer; Emily Allen, project manager and executive director of MCVIC; and Bobbi Hatton, historic preservation advisor and MCVIC secretary.



Sibley's General Store has a rich history in Mathews County. A group of residents has made it their mission to preserve the historic building for future generations to enjoy.

## Sibley's Store to get a new foundation

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

The historic Sibley's General Store on Mathews Main Street needs a new foundation and associated preservation work, and the Mathews County Visitor and Information Center's Saving Sibley's Committee has been fundraising to make sure the work gets done.

The restoration will cost a hefty \$625,000, and private individuals and small businesses and organizations have already pledged 91 percent of that amount, or \$572,000, said MCVIC Executive Director Emily Allen.

Now, MCVIC is asking the community to help take the fund drive to the finish line,

giving everyone who cares about the beloved structure a chance to help preserve it well into the future.

Allen said that MCVIC itself committed \$100,000 to pay for the engineering and design phase of the project, so donors can rest assured that every dime they donate will go toward actual preservation costs.

### What needs to be done

The structural engineering firm Engineering Design Associates of Richmond found several years ago that the store's foundation was "at a critical stage," said MCVIC President and construction liaison Greg Dusenberry, with

work that would have to be done within a five- to 10-year time frame in order to avoid a structural failure that would significantly increase the cost of repairs. In addition to an aging foundation, there is water damage, he said, with structural timbers that need to be replaced or reinforced, including a beam that supports the second floor.

"Old buildings are so often lost because a girder suddenly fails," he said.

MCVIC talked to contractors, the county administrator, and members of the Mathews Board of Supervisors and the Mathews Plan-

SEE PRESERVATION WORK, PAGE 3C



# Dutton couple preserving history in unique Victorian-style home

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Some people buy an old house with a clear idea of what they want to do to make it their own. They go in with a plan to knock out a wall here, add a room there or turn a patio into a porch.

When Jesse and Dallas Wagner bought the 1897 Victorian-style house on Route 198 at Hudgins last year, they didn't have any such plan. The couple had decided to sell the house in Dutton that they had built from the ground up four years earlier, but that never

felt like home, and when they started looking for another place, Jesse kept being drawn to the two-story home with the cupola-shaped front room and old-fashioned front porch that she'd often noticed over the years.

Suddenly the house was on the market, and she immediately called her realtor, Candace Segalini, to schedule a viewing that day. She got her

mom to go along.

"It was magical from the time we pulled up," said Jesse. "There was this happy feeling, this warmth. I felt like we belonged here."

She said she and her mom "could care less about all the little things it needed." Her mom said the dining room was like her Grandma Benny's.

The next day, a Friday, Jesse was back again, this time with

Dallas and their three boys, 7-year-old twins Brock and Zane and 5-year-old Sawyer, in tow. The boys "thought it was so cool," she said.

An open house was held on Saturday, and Jesse couldn't

resist going for the third day in a row to "hang out and see what the competition would be."

"I wanted to make sure we could afford a fair price," she

SEE VICTORIAN HOME, PAGE 5C

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SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL  
 Dallas and Jesse Wagner enjoy some time alone at home while their three boys are at school. The couple decided to live in the Victorian home they purchased a year ago before making any major changes to it. "All we did was clean and Murphy Oil everything," said Jesse Wagner, at right.

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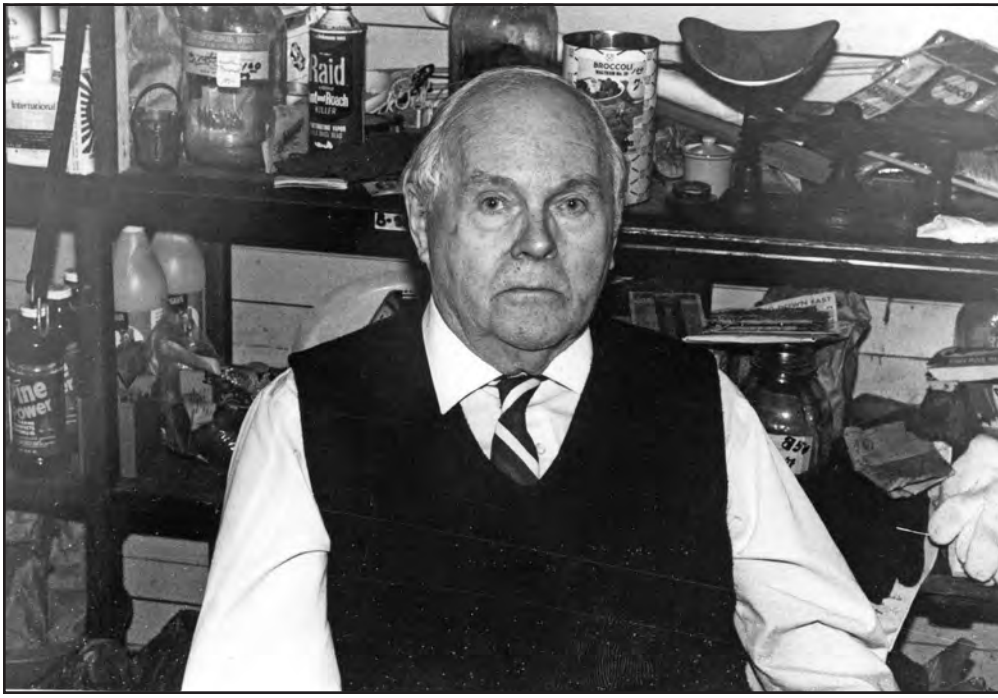
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Sibley's General Store has been a part of the fabric of life in Mathews for more than 120 years. Built in 1899, it was first owned by Cecil Sibley, top left, and most recently by Jerry Fruebrodt, shown seated at bottom around the year 2000 with Lloyd Norman. Top right, in an undated photo, a Chevrolet with an antique license plate sits in the foreground, with a view of Sibley's and the former Sight and Sound electronics store, which is now part of Mathews Memorial Library, in the background.

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**PRESERVATION WORK:**  
*Sibley's General Store project*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1C)

ning Commission "in order to make sure the work is done in a sound, cost-efficient, effective manner," said Dusenberry. In addition, Mathews resident and MCVIC board member Frances Hudgins, who is an architect, came up with a plan for the project.

In order to ensure that the building is able to last "multiple decades or even centuries into the future," said Dusenberry, a concrete slab will be poured under the entire structure, and the foundation will be raised one to two feet higher than it currently is. A drainage system will also be installed.

Before these tasks begin, the building will have to be elevated. It will then be lowered onto the new foundation when it's completed.

The work also includes demolishing the hyphen that attaches the back part of the building, a one-story structure built in the 1840s, to the front part, which was built in 1899, and adding a new hyphen that will house a kitchenette, a bathroom, a mechanical room, and handicapped-accessible stairs to access the second floor of the two-story front section. The rickety exterior steps on the Maple Avenue side of the building, currently the only way to access the second floor, will be demolished.

Finally, some pieces of siding will need to be replaced, and the entire structure will get a brand-new paint job.

Allen said it's important to preserve the historical character of the building, so nothing about the facade will change, except that there will be one or two additional steps up to the door.

**The fundraiser**  
 The project committee, which was led by fundraising chair Hunt Thompson and historic preservation advisor Bobbi Hatton, felt it was crucial to use a professional consultant to raise so much money, said Allen, and the committee was advised to start fundraising with private donors first. The fund drive began in 2020 and was conducted in honor of Jim Taylor and in memory of Amanda Taylor, who was "a very important figure in acquiring the building and making sure

MCVIC could be a central component of the community," said Allen. The initial fund drive raised \$185,000, and that has grown over time. Among the donations, the County of Mathews has included \$20,000 in its Capital Improvement Plan for the project, and that is being matched by a private donor. The Mathews Economic Development

SEE SIBLEY'S PROJECT, PAGE 4C

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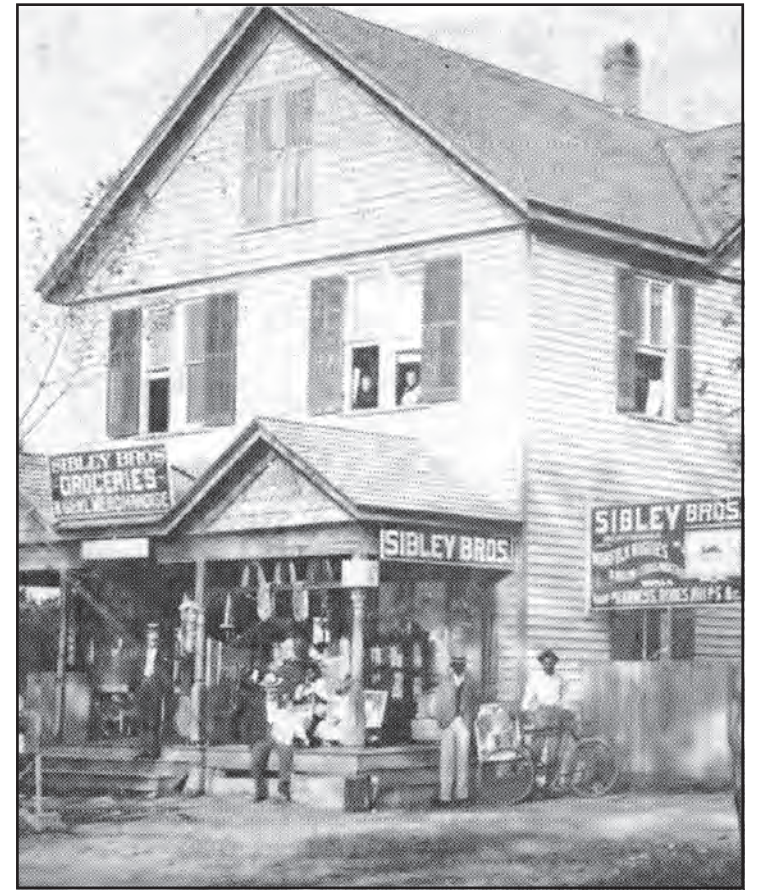
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In this 1955 photo, crowds line the streets of Mathews Main Street as the Spring Festival Parade passes, with some people watching from the porches of Sibley's General Store, the now-defunct Tatterson Brothers Department Store, and the former Farmers Bank of Mathews, now Mathews Memorial Library.



Sibley Brothers Store, as it appeared in 1902, just a few years after it was built.

## SIBLEY'S PROJECT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3C)  
 development Authority has com-

mitted \$50,000, and the Cabell Foundation in Richmond has approved a \$30,000 matching grant to help incentivize donors. Allen said that even visitors to the county have been

helping with the fund drive, sometimes donating clothing for the visitor's center to sell to raise money.

In addition to cash donations, the community will also have the opportunity to purchase a "Save Sibley's" line of apparel beginning next month, said Allen. There will be T-shirts and other items of clothing available.

"We're committed to having the full amount pledged before we start construction," said Dusenberry.

"We're optimistic we'll reach the goal by the end of the year," added Allen.

**Sibley's impact**  
 Dusenberry said that Sibley's is a symbol for small-town life and has played a large part in creating the atmosphere in downtown Mathews. Allen said the store has maximized the impact that MCVIC has had in the community and has helped the organization be a part of the activities and events that happen downtown.

For Allen personally, she said, the volunteers that help out and the visitors that drop by and share stories from the past "have brought this place to life and created nostalgia for the charm that Mathews has."

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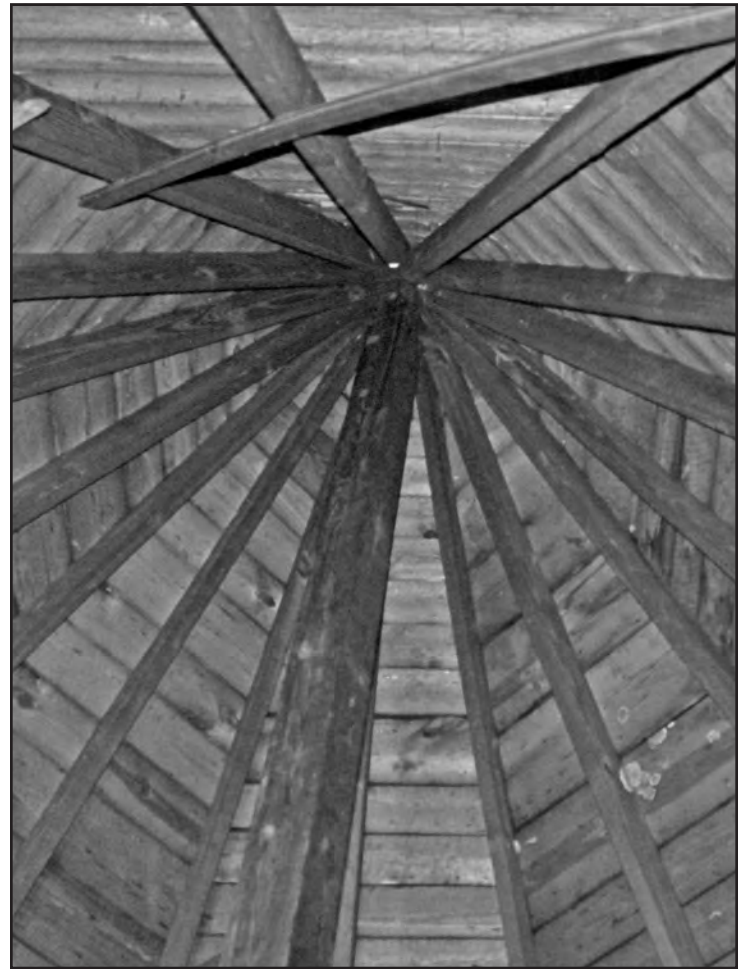
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Jesse and Dallas Wagner, from left, bought this 1897 Victorian-style home at Blakes last year and are gradually giving it their own touches, from clearing out overgrowth "to let the house breathe" to creating a new entry for the downstairs bathroom and adding much-needed closet space. They said their three young sons' favorite space is "the tower," or the attic space above the cupola-shaped front part of the house, shown in photo at right.



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## VICTORIAN HOME: Couple works to restore it

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2C)

said. "We put in an offer and the owner accepted, and it was, like, 'okay, here we go.'" The family moved in without touching anything. All they did was "clean and Murphy Oil" before they hung their pictures on the wall "and called it a day," said Jesse. "We wanted to get in and decide what we wanted to do so we could preserve as much as we could without sacrificing any structural stuff."

The house already had new HVAC and a new electrical panel box, and the master bathroom had been updated and modernized, but the family found out fairly quickly that one renovation would be needed. They had the twins' birthday party in January, and the kitchen stayed so crowded that people who needed to go to the attached downstairs bathroom had trouble getting in and out through the crowd. The solution was simple. They decided to close the kitchen access to the bathroom and open up a door from the entry hall. A wall-to-wall closet in the entry hall became two closets with a door in between.

The work still isn't complete, however. "It's been such a long process trying to get people," said Jesse. "It's a much longer process than we

anticipated."

A woman who once lived in the house dropped by one day and told the Wagners that her grandfather had built the house, and she had grown up in it. She told Jesse about the original layout of the rooms—the current laundry room was once a back porch, and the current kitchen was a kitchen prep area. The living room was once the dining room, with an oil-burning stove and a huge dining table.

The cupola-shaped front room, with windows on each angle of the wall, was her family's living room, although the previous owner had used it as a dining room. Now Jesse, a hairdresser, hopes to turn it into a hair studio.

Upstairs, on the second floor, the Wagners pulled up most of the carpeting, and they plan on refinishing the floors, but Jesse couldn't part with the floral print carpet in the cupola-shaped front guest room.

"I kind of like the idea of it being a little more warm in here," she said.

SEE HOME RENOVATION, PAGE 6C

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SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

The Wagners are gradually making the house their own. In the photo at top left, they moved the door of the first-floor bathroom out of the kitchen and into the entry hall, cutting a path through the hall closet and creating a mechanical room on one side and a linen closet on the other. The boys' bedroom, top right, hasn't changed, but their bathroom is undergoing an overhaul. At left, the former owner added a modern master bath above a porch.

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## HOME RENOVATION

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5C) The boys' bathroom is undergoing renovation, with Jesse slowly working on installing a ceramic tile shower herself. She proudly said she paid just \$40 for all the tile on sale. "We'll be excited when it's finished," she said.

Plans for the master bedroom consist of creating a bit more closet space, said Jesse, but for now, they're happy with it the way it is.

The spacious third floor, much of it used as storage space, has a large playroom with a wall of windows where the boys spend much of their time, but perhaps their favorite space is in the attic of the cupola on the front of the house, with its peaked ceiling.

"The boys love to play in 'the tower,'" said Jesse with a laugh.

The Wagners are outdoor people, and much of their time has been spent clearing acreage that had become overgrown with underbrush, pulling out a few trees and flowering shrubs that were growing close to the house.

"The house just needed to breathe," said Jesse.

A chicken house and fencing went up in the yard, along with a tree fort for the boys, and a fire pit and seating area were placed close enough to the house for convenience. Jesse said she and her family sit on the porch most nights with a fire in their outdoor terra-cotta stove and visit with whatever friends drop by.

"I've always had this Victorian style love," she said. "I just love preserving history if I can do it. They just don't make anything like they used to. To know people came in with their hands and hand-carved things. You just don't have that craftsmanship anymore ... I love this house so much. I will do whatever I can to try to keep her standing."

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**Fall festivals**

Be sure to check out all the local fall festivals and events happening now. Pictured clockwise from top left are snapshots of events from last year: Lindsay Nazak and her son Asher Nazak, and Sabrina and Alexis Davis, from left, try their hand at decorating pumpkins at Bethany United Methodist Church's fall festival; children taking a hay ride at Gloucester Moose Lodge's Annual Harvest Festival; and ghouls and goblins walking through Gloucester Main Street Trick or Treat event.

FILE PHOTOS

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# Protect your health as the seasons change

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

As the weather gets cooler and more time is spent indoors, the likelihood of contracting viruses that lead to the common cold, influenza and COVID-19 increases. However, there are ways to protect yourself and others from experiencing severe cases of these diseases or even getting them at all.

"One of the things that I would encourage is just general wellness," said Kathy Koehl, System Director of Pharmacy Clinical Services at Riverside Health System. "I think it's important for people to take care of themselves. Make sure they're getting enough sleep. Make sure they are managing their underlying conditions."

Koehl said people should work with their primary care provider to best manage any

underlying conditions they may have during this season.

"Vaccination is really important to wellness during these months," she said. "So, I encourage everyone to get their flu vaccine. I also encourage everyone who's eligible to receive their COVID-19 vaccine, and if they've already received their primary series, get your booster."

According to Koehl, most people are eligible to get a Covid booster at least eight weeks after the last dose of vaccine they received. Trying to time a booster to a surge or increased Covid activity in a community is difficult to do, so her recommendation is for people to get the vaccine as soon as they are eligible for a dose.

"I wouldn't try to time it towards an outbreak," said Koehl. "I would say go ahead and get it so that we're all

entering flu and cold season with maximum protection."

Koehl's recommendation is the same for the influenza vaccine. "Right now is a great time to get your influenza vaccine," she said. "If you get it now, it should continue to offer you good quality protection for the duration of the traditional flu season."

Since there are so many symptoms that can all be attributed to the cold, flu and Covid, people can have a hard time distinguishing which illness they have contracted.

One difference between the diseases is length of exposure. "With Covid, you can be exposed up to 14 days before you may have symptoms appear," said Koehl. "With flu, it's much faster. Typically after an exposure to influenza, you'll start to show symptoms one to three days from that time."

A fever can also be a helpful hint when determining the cause of your illness.

"It's really common to have fevers with Covid or with influenza, but very rare to have fevers with [the] cold," said Koehl.

Another symptom is sneezing, which is common with the cold and flu, but less common with Covid.

For those still unsure, Koehl simply recommends for them to get tested. Rapid tests for Covid are widely available and tests for the flu can be done at a patient's primary care provider's office.

**Protecting others**  
Members of a community can do their part to help protect the health and well-being of those around them at this time, especially those who are immunocompromised.

"If you're sick, you should stay home," said Koehl about protecting immunocompromised people.

Koehl said for those who are sick and need to go out for medical appointments or essentials should wear a good-quality and well-fitting mask. This will help decrease the amount of infectious particles spreading to other people.

Hand hygiene is also important, she said. Using soap and water for 20 seconds is the recommendation, but hand sanitizer will also work.

"Vaccination is really important for protecting others," said Koehl. "Make sure you're up to date with your flu vaccine and your Covid vaccine and any eligible boosters."



## Pumpkin painting

Guests of Machicomoco State Park in Hayes can take part in a pumpkin painting activity with park rangers every Saturday in October at the campgrounds area of the park. Pumpkins cost \$10 each with funds going to the nonprofit group Friends of Machicomoco. The pumpkin painting times will vary each week, currently they are scheduled for 10-11 a.m. on Oct. 15, 1-2 p.m. on Oct. 22 and at 10-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. on Oct. 29. For more information, go to [www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/machicomoco](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/machicomoco).

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Halloween is a holiday full of traditions, many of which have a lengthy history.

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## A look at the oldest Halloween traditions

(METRO) As with many celebrations, Halloween is steeped in traditions—many of which can be traced back quite some time. Since Halloween is believed to have

originated from Celtic pagan, ancient Roman and early Christian events, its traditions are varied. The following is a look at some old traditions associated with Halloween.

**Bonfires**  
Historians trace many traditions of Halloween to a Celtic holiday known as Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The Celts lived 2,000 years ago in

parts of what is now Northern France, Great Britain and Ireland.

During Samhain, people believed that the door between the worlds of the living and the dead was blurred. On Samhain, Celts believed the ghosts of the dead returned. Also, Druids (members of the learned class among the ancient Celts) made predictions about the future at this time of year. It was customary to build large, sacred bonfires and burn crops and other sacrifices to the Celtic deities.

While large bonfires are not typically part of Halloween celebrations today, revelers can light fire pits in their yards that are reminiscent of ancient celebrations.

**Trick-or-treating**  
Christianity spread through Celtic regions and blended with other rituals. Pope Gregory III expanded on a holiday that Pope Boniface IV established to honor Christian martyrs to include all saints and martyrs. All Saints' Day on Nov. 1 commemorates the venerable saints, and All Souls' Day on Nov. 2 celebrates loved ones who went on to eternal rest. All Hallow's Eve (Halloween) was a time to pay homage to the dead. Poor children would go door to door in more affluent neighborhoods offering to say prayers for residents' deceased loved ones in exchange for some food or money. This was known as "souling," which became the basis for trick-or-treating. Later the tradition became known as "guising" in areas of Scotland, where children would go around in costumes.

**Witches**  
Images of witches riding broomsticks are everywhere come Halloween, and witch costumes remain a standard. Almanac.com indicates that, during the Middle Ages, women who practiced divination were dubbed "witches," from the Anglo-Saxon word "wicce," or "wise one." It was believed the witches could go into a trance-like state, and would do so in front of their fireplaces. Superstitious people believed the witches could fly out of their chimneys on broomsticks and terrorize others with magical deeds.

**Bobbing for apples**  
Bobbing for apples is not quite as popular as it once was, as more people have become concerned about spreading germs. During the Roman festival for Pomona, which occurred around Nov. 1, Pomona, the goddess of fruit and orchards, was celebrated. Romans believed the first person to catch a bobbing apple with his or her teeth would be the first to marry. It also was believed apple peels contained the secrets to true love.

**Carving pumpkins**  
Removing the insides of pumpkins and carving them into funny or fearsome faces may be messy work, but it's tradition on Halloween. Turnips were the material of choice in ancient Ireland, but were replaced by pumpkins when immigrants came to America. The "lanterns" were made with scary faces and lit to frighten away spirits.

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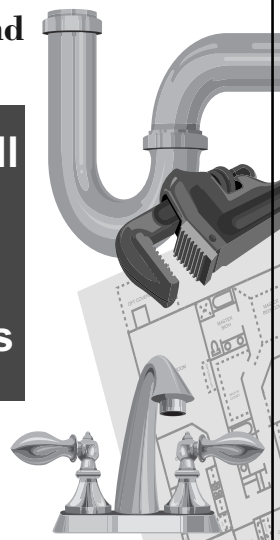
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# Fall Fun Roundup

A listing of things to do as the days grow shorter and pumpkins begin to glow. Here are some of our finds.

## THURSDAY, OCT. 13

**LET'S DRAW HALLOWEEN**, Gloucester Main Library, 6 p.m., for kindergarten through fifth grade students. Learn to draw a jack-o-lantern, black cat, vampire bat and more. Registration for this free event is now open.

## SATURDAY, OCT. 15

**MATHEWS MARATHON AND HALF-MARATHON**, 7 a.m. start, sponsored by Mathews Outdoor Club, beginning at Put-In Creek Park behind Mathews Court Green. For more information, visit [mocva.net/marathon](http://mocva.net/marathon).

**CRAFT BAZAAR**, 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Church of St. Therese, Gloucester Main Street. Free admission. Concessions of hot dogs, chili and

soda available. **LEARN WILDLIFE**, at Gloucester Library, Main Street Center, 1 p.m. Learn about the behaviors, diets and habits of local wildlife. Family event. Registration is required for this free event. Registration began Oct. 1.

## THURSDAY, OCT. 20

**GLOUCESTER HOMECOMING PARADE**, Main Street, 5:15 to 6 p.m. Parade entries will line up at Main Street Center and the parade will finish at Botetourt Elementary. Homecoming continues on Friday, Oct. 21 with a tailgate from 5-7 p.m. at the GHS student parking lot and the homecoming football game against Warwick High at 7. The homecoming dance will be held from 7-10 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 22, in the GHS commons.

## SATURDAY, OCT. 22

**TRUNK-OR-TREAT**, 4-6 p.m. at Salem

United Methodist Church, Diggs. Snacks, games and more for the whole family.

## SATURDAY, OCT. 29

**NATURALIST PADDLE**, at Beaverdam Park main entrance from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Join the guided paddle and learn about local wildlife and enjoy the sunset on the reservoir. Cost is \$5 if you bring your own equipment, \$15 for rental equipment. For ages 16 and older, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Deadline to register is Oct. 22.

**FALL FESTIVAL**, West Mathews Community League, Bohannon, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., with clam chowder, fall plants, yard sale, music, apple press, corn sheller.

## MONDAY, OCT. 31

**HALLOWEEN AT THE LIBRARY**, Gloucester Library, Main Street Center, 5-7 p.m. Trick-or-Treat in the library.

All ages welcome.

## WEDNESDAY, NOV. 2

**MUSEUM AND CEMETERY TRIP**, Best Years Trip, for ages 55 and older, visit the American Civil War Museum and Hollywood Cemetery, both in Richmond. Robert Kelly of the Gloucester Museum of History to lead. Bus departure time TBD. Cost is \$38. Deadline to register Oct. 26.

**CHIPPOKEE STATE PARK**, Best Years Trip, for ages 55 and older, 8 a.m. until 3 p.m., ride the bus to the park, bring a lunch. Cost is \$15. Register by Oct. 26.

## THURSDAY, NOV. 3

**"MATILDA THE MUSICAL,"** Harry M. Ward Auditorium at Mathews High School, Nov. 3-6, show times and ticket prices vary. Visit [courthouseplayers.org](http://courthouseplayers.org) for more information.

## SATURDAY, NOV. 5

**FALL FOLIAGE PADDLE**, at Beaverdam Park main entrance from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Join park rangers to paddle around Beaverdam Reservoir to learn about native foliage and enjoy the scenery. Cost is \$5 if you bring your own equipment, \$15 for rental equipment. For ages 16 and older, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Deadline is Oct. 29 to register.

## FRIDAY, NOV. 11

**NIGHT HIKE**, at Beaverdam Park main entrance, must check-in between 4:30-5:30 p.m. Must check in and out at Ranger Station. This is a self-guided, after-hours hike on the marked 5K trail. For ages 17 and over; 16 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Bring a flashlight and sturdy shoes. Cost is \$5. Deadline to register is Nov. 4.

**NIGHT FISHING**, Beaverdam Park main entrance, boat/canoe/kayak/tee and bank fishing will be open until midnight. Fee \$5 per person (does not include launch fee or rentals of boats/canoe/kayak). Deadline to register is Nov. 4.

## SATURDAY, NOV. 19

**OWL WALK**, at Beaverdam Park main entrance, 5-7 p.m. Participants are encouraged to bring a flashlight and wear appropriate footwear as the group will be walking the trails at night. Bring binoculars and camera if you like. Cost is \$5 per person. For ages 16 and older. Space is limited. Register by Nov. 12.

## SATURDAY, NOV. 26

**BEAVERDAM UNDER THE STARS**, 5-7 p.m. enjoy the park at night, main entrance, \$5 per person. Deadline to register is Nov. 19.

# Healthy Halloween snack options

(METRO) Halloween is a magical time of year. Homes are adorned with festive fall accoutrements, including hay bails, pumpkins and mums as well as the black, purple and orange decorations that are unique to a season of ghouls and goblins.

Although decorating is a large part of the fun of Halloween, the sweet treats that are distributed to trick-or-treaters and presented at Halloween parties are arguably the most popular component of this beloved holiday. Candy is everywhere come Halloween. The National Confectioners' Association reports that Halloween is the largest confectionary holiday, followed by Easter and Christmas. The National Retail Federation and NCA indicate the average American consumes 3.4 pounds of candy around Halloween, and 600 million pounds of candy are purchased across the country for the holiday.

Is it possible to escape the Halloween sugar overload? For those who want to enjoy some healthier options to candy corns and other sweet staples, these ideas are not so frightening.

—Pizza mummy: Use slices of toasted sandwich bread or



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For those who want to enjoy some options healthier than candy corn and other sweet staples, these ideas are not so frightening.

English muffins to make some spooktacular fare. Coat the bread with pizza sauce. Then place thin vertical slices of mozzarella cheese in a haphazard pattern to replicate the look of gauze on a mummy. Two pieces of sliced black olives serve as the eyes.

—White, orange and yellow platter: Simulate the look of candy corns' white, orange

and yellow color palette with healthier offerings. Stack cauliflower, or another white food like Monterey jack cheese, baby carrots and yellow bell peppers on a platter. Serve with your favorite dip.

—Deviled brains: Turn regular deviled eggs into something more sinister for Halloween buffet tables. Simply add food coloring to the fill-

ing to create a pinkish-brown hue that resembles a human brain. Then use a piping bag fitted with a thin icing tip to pipe the shape of brains on the hard-boiled egg halves.

—Veggie skeleton: Use assorted vegetable slices, cheese sticks, fruits, nuts and more to inspire a Halloween-inspired charcuterie board. Arrange everything to resemble

a skeleton on the platter. —Ghostly bananas: Insert popsicle sticks into the bottoms of bananas and freeze until solid. Prepare white melting chocolate according to directions, then dip the frozen bananas into it. While wet, stick on two mini chocolate chips to make the eyes of the ghosts. Place in the refrigerator to harden.

—Spider crackers: Use buttery Ritz® crackers or something similar for this recipe. Spread a relatively thick layer

of cream cheese (or peanut butter if allergies are not a concern) on one cracker. Cut thin pretzel sticks in half and use four on each side to make spider legs, sticking them into the cream cheese. Top with another cracker and secure to the cream cheese. Raisins connected with more cream cheese complete the eyes of the spiders.

Anyone can use his or her imagination to make delectable and healthy Halloween offerings in lieu of more sweets.

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# Tips for planting fall vegetables

(METRO) Tending to backyard vegetable gardens can fill many hours of enjoyable downtime in the great outdoors. What's more, the bounty produced by such gardens provides healthful, fresh foods to gardeners and their loved ones.

Although spring and summer are widely seen as the peak of gardening season, the mild temperatures of autumn can be a prime time for planting vegetables as well. Certain late-season treats like carrots, kale, spinach, and turnips can thrive in fall gardens. Many different foods are quick crops that can go from seed to table in about six weeks. When sown in early fall, these vegetables will be ready to put on the table for mid-October feasts. Beets, green onions, broccoli, and cabbages

can be planted in late summer for fall harvest. Gardeners who live in hardiness zones 8 through 10 (the southern portion of the United States) can plant fall vegetables as late as December. Many of these plants can tolerate light frost, which may even help sweeten the vegetables.

A handful of unique factors need to be taken into consideration when planning fall vegetable gardens:

—The summertime location of the garden may still be adequate, but be sure to choose a location that gets eight full hours of sunlight per day;

—If using an existing garden site, clear out any detritus from summer plants and any weeds that have sprouted. If you are planting a new garden, remove any turf before tilling the soil;



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A handful of unique factors need to be taken into consideration when planning fall vegetable gardens.

—Complement the soil with sand, compost, manure fertilizer, and any other nutrients needed depending on the

types of vegetables you intend to grow.

While fall vegetables can be grown successfully from seeds, it may be more time-friendly to work from larger transplants, advises the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension.

Some plants may need a little protection as they grow if temperatures begin to dip. Cover with a blanket, cardboard box or plastic tunnel to insulate.

Remember to water according to the vegetables planted and to keep an eye on readiness for vegetables. Turnips, beets, rutabagas, and carrots can be dug out when the roots are plump and crisp.

Vegetable gardens need not cease when the last days of summer vanish. Fall produce is delicious and can be easily planted and harvested even after the first frost.

## 'Fire won't wait, plan your escape'

National Fire Prevention Week is being observed this week and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs reminds Virginia residents to check smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in their home.

The 2022 Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Fire Won't Wait, Plan Your Escape," works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe from home fires.

Working smoke alarms are an essential part of any home fire escape plan. According to the NFPA, three out of five home fire deaths result from properties without working smoke alarms.

"You may have as little as two minutes—or even less time—to safely get out of your home during a fire," said Ken Brown, Community Risk Reduction Coordinator. "A properly installed and maintained smoke alarm greatly increases your chances of surviving a home fire."

Follow these tips to protect

you and your family:

—Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including inside and outside bedrooms and sleeping areas;

—Choose interconnected smoke alarms, so when one sounds, they all sound;

—Test smoke alarms monthly by pushing the "test" button and change the batteries at least once a year, if your model requires it;

—Check the manufacturer's date. If the alarm is 10 years or older, it needs to be replaced, and

—Teach children what a smoke alarm sounds like and what to do if it goes off.

VDFFP is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Fire Prevention Week.

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# Fall flavors abound in our local eateries

Fall flavors abound in our area, with plenty of great places to eat throughout Gloucester, Mathews and beyond. Here are just a few of the nearby culinary hotspots.

### Tony & Milena's

Tony & Milena's offers old-world Italian food from its Hayes restaurant. Located in the Hayes Plaza Shopping Center since 2007, the restaurant has roots in Sicily. Although a popular stop for pizza, the menu is wide and varied, with a number of traditional specialties, such as Veal Marsala, Chicken Florentine and Gnocchi con Spinache. Family means everything to the Fiorello family, and Tony, Milena and their four children believe dining with them should be a whole experience,

making their customers feel like family. For more information, visit [tonyandmilena.com](http://tonyandmilena.com).

### Chesapeake Doughnut Co.

The Chesapeake Doughnut Company has been serving doughnuts and a whole lot more since the opening of its first store at on Rappahannock Drive in the heart of White Stone. They source local and organic ingredients, crafting a selection of delicious doughnuts. But that's not all they have. They also sell high-quality Virginia-roasted Blanchard's coffee, lattes and cappuccinos, both hot and cold, along with a selection of cold beverages in a refrigerator case. They serve both breakfast and lunch, with savory breakfast sand-



wiches, crispy chicken and salads. In January 2021, Chesapeake Doughnut opened a second location in Warsaw and, this past summer, a third clear across on the other side of the Chesapeake Bay at Waldorf, Maryland. For more information, visit [www.cdoughnut.com](http://www.cdoughnut.com).

### Creekside Café

Creekside Café & Market opened in December 2020 in the Coleman's Crossing development in Hayes. Owners Dorsie and Jason Reese of Gloucester started Creekside Catering Company several years before they opened their storefront. The Creekside Catering Company began solely as a catering company, but success led the Reeses to venture into the food truck scene, as well. Dorsie said that after a few years of operating both, they needed a way to continue to grow.

The menu features sandwiches, baked goods, and other items, all made with locally sourced ingredients. They are proud to use local meats, seafood and other products from Virginia, and that even the beer and wine they carry are from Virginia-based businesses.

The café did not replace the food truck, or the couple's established catering business. Instead, it is another part of their growing business. The market side of the restaurant is a place where customers can buy locally sourced vegetables, meats, drinks and more. The market has grab-and-go items such as crab dip. Creekside Café & Market can be found online at [creeksideva.com](http://creeksideva.com).

### Scout's/Olivia's

Since 2003 Gary Ward and family have been serving the finest seafood, steak and pasta on the Middle Peninsula. Olivia's in the Village (named after Gary and Karen Ward's daughter) features fresh seafood, steak and pasta. The restaurant is open seven days a week, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. In March 2020, Ward and the restaurant were featured in an NPR segment about how the restaurant's business model had retooled in the early days of the pandemic (offering things like family pack meals and other to-go options) and the incredible support from the community. Olivia's has weathered the storm and offers everything from its signature crab cakes, made-to-order ribeye steaks to traditional Italian dishes.

At Gloucester Point, Scout's BBQ, also owned by Gary and

Karen Ward, has been winning customers and awards for its signature barbecue. In 2019, Scout's was the winner of Virginia Living Magazine's BBQ Bracket Battle, coming out on top of more than 250 restaurants in the state.

Scout's, which opened in 2015, is named with the nickname of Karen's grandfather, the late R.L. Emerson of Gloucester Point. Located at the corner of Route 17 and Tidemill Road, Scout's serves a mostly different menu than Olivia's, but a few signature dishes from Olivia's also are offered at Scout's such as clam chowder, fish and chips and crab cakes. Scout's staff uses a large pit smoker to cook the barbecued pork, beef and turkey. The hickory and oak wood, with varying combinations of the woods, are used to flavor the meats. Visit [oliviasinthevillage.com](http://oliviasinthevillage.com) and [scoutsbqb.com](http://scoutsbqb.com) for more information.

### Short Lane Ice Cream Co.

The Short Lane Ice Cream Company in Gloucester is known for its wide variety of handmade ice cream. The board behind the counter is filled with a list of all the flavors currently available. The shop, located at the corner of Short Lane and George Washington Memorial Highway, has been in operation for about 20 years. In addition to ice cream, Short Lane also features a daily deli menu, with sandwiches, burgers, hot dogs and pizza. They also sell an assortment of homemade cakes and cookies, along with soft drinks.

The business has two dining rooms—one downstairs and the other upstairs. The two dining rooms, plus seats outside under umbrellas, bring the total to about 100 seats. Short Lane can accommodate private parties, and also works with nonprofit groups to sponsor fundraising events there to benefit those organizations. Visit the Short Lane Ice Cream page on Facebook for the latest information.

### Carrot Tree

Carrot Tree Kitchens, with locations on Water Street in Yorktown and Jamestown

Road in Williamsburg, is a scratch bakery and eatery, serving sandwiches, soups, SEE FALL FLAVOR, PAGE 13C

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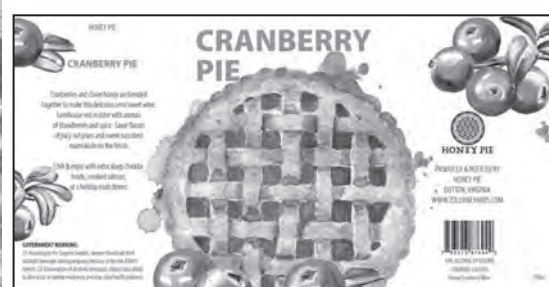
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## FALL FLAVOR: *Be sure to check out local cuisine*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12C)

deli salads, BBQ, cakes, pies, cupcakes, cookies and much more. With tried-and-true fam-

ily recipes, they gather ingredients from their gardens and source the best produce from local growers.

In 1984, challenged by a res-

taurant manager to produce a better carrot cake, Carrot Tree owner Debi Helseth did so; by calling her grandmother at midnight for the family recipe and shopping and baking till 3 a.m. She burned up a few home ovens before building her first commercial bakery ... in her home garage. That was 1990. In 1995, she opened Carrot Tree Kitchens on Jamestown Road. Café operations evolved over time. In 2003, they opened the Cole Digges House in Historic Yorktown. For more information, visit [www.carrottreekitchens.com](http://www.carrottreekitchens.com).

### Zoll Vineyards

Zoll Vineyards planted roots in Dutton in 2018 with several acres of grapes, blackberries, and farm-to-table gardens. Zoll Vineyards is a chef-owned winery that focuses on food and beverage pairings in its tasting room. Chef Frank Zoll owner, pastry chef, and vintner emeritus has created award-winning wine, sangria, cider and mead since 2005.

Visitors are invited to come to tasting room and large outdoor dog-friendly patio. Tasting room menu and patio menu are available Wednesday through Sunday. A number of sweet and savory pairings are on the menu. The vineyard hosts a wide array of cooking demonstrations, live music and other events, such as Murder Mystery nights, and its great room is available

for reception rentals.

Of course, the main attraction is the vineyard's selection of wines, sangrias, ciders and meads. And those wines have been getting their share of attention, with two gold and three silver medals in the Virginia Wineries Association's 2022 Governor's Cup competition.

Zoll Vineyards has some special fall selections, including Getting Saucy—a cranberry hard cider—and Strawberry Pie and Cranberry Pie meads.

For more details, visit [www.zollvineyards.com](http://www.zollvineyards.com).

### LuLu Birds Kitchen

LuLu Birds Kitchen has been a part of the Gloucester culinary scene since first opening its doors in 2014. The upscale eatery was based on a simple concept—use as many fresh ingredients as possible in creating a varied, seasonal menu.

Keyvan Benham and his wife, Isabelle, opened the Main Street restaurant with what Isabelle called an "eclectic American" menu. The restaurant was named for the couple's daughter, Layla, whom they often call "Birdie."

The Benhams retired earlier this year, handing the reins over to Dave Coleman, who has sought to use his experience to honor the integrity of

what the founding owners established.

The from-scratch kitchen, with every dish prepared fresh off a hot line, features a beautifully balanced wine list and a dining space thoughtfully crafted to create a warm, comfortable, and fun feel.

While primarily American, the cuisine also includes something for the lover of Asian and Italian food. The restaurant is open for dinner Wednesday through Saturday. For more about LuLu Birds, visit [www.lulubirds.com](http://www.lulubirds.com) or find it on Facebook.

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**Pop-up pumpkins**  
Eighth graders at Ware Academy held a pop-up pumpkin sale on Sept. 21 to raise money for the annual eighth grade trip. The students go camping, biking and rafting in Pennsylvania for a week in the spring. Pictured are students, front row from left, Fenton Scott, Brody Marshall, Xander Powell; second row, Brady Vaughn, Henry Fleet, Mekhi Ward, Charli Miltenberger, Callie Penick, Hannah Harris, Mia Paton and Katelyn Carnes.

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**AP Homes to open wedding venue**

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

In addition to building custom homes, completing remodeling projects and creating outdoor living spaces, AP Custom Homes, based in Williamsburg, is taking on a new project: a wedding venue in Gloucester.

Owner Adam Peck, a resident of Williamsburg, has his eyes set on opening a wedding venue somewhere in Gloucester next year. He is currently looking at two different sites for this project that will not only be capable of hosting weddings, but also conferences and other events. Peck also plans to be able to begin accepting reservations for the venue starting next year.

Peck, who has been in the home business for 15 years, has been in business for himself for a year now. He specializes in building fine, custom homes in Williamsburg, New Kent and York County. Peck spends a lot of time with each project and even helps in the design process. He has strong relationships with businesses from Virginia Beach to Richmond.

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