

# Bridgewater Current

Volume 46, Number 4 April 2024



## Bridgewater's Oldest Resident

Here in Bridgewater, we are privileged to be home to a first-class retirement community and many wise residents. But did you know that our oldest resident is well over 300 years old?

Along First Street behind the Blue Ridge Christian School stands the Old Oak Tree. It is believed that this white oak dates back three centuries to the year 1700. Measurements taken during the year 2000 show it to be 70 feet tall with a trunk diameter of 5.5 feet.

White oaks have been important in the history and economic development of this area. The most important lumber tree of the oaks, the white oak's high grade wood is useful for many purposes. In colonial times it was used for ship building. It has also been called the "Stave Oak" because its wood is often used to make barrels for whiskey and other liquids.

In 2020, a storm damaged the Old Oak Tree and broke large limbs. Sean Haniffee, a local chainsaw and custom-carving artist, was commissioned to craft some items from the broken limbs that were saved.

He created two benches, one that resides in the lobby at Sipe Center and another one housed at the Bridgewater Historical Society.

In addition, he created a set of commemorative planks with the Town seal or an image of the Old Oak Tree (available for purchase at Town Hall). More recently, Sean Black of Black Forest Sawmill crafted a river waterfall table that proudly sits in Town Hall near the Help Desk.

If you've never noticed our Old Oak Tree, it is worth a stroll by to appreciate just how large and beautiful it truly is as it begins to bud out this spring.



## Bridgewater is now a Tree City USA!

Visit [bridgewater.town/treecity](https://bridgewater.town/treecity) or use the QR Code to read the full story.



## Earth Day/Arbor Day Celebration

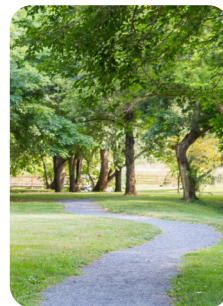


In celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day this month, visit us at the Sandy Bottom Recycle Center between April 24 and April 27 to learn more about the Center and the wide variety of materials

we accept. While you're there, enjoy refreshments and receive a free reusable water bottle as well as a free red maple seedling to plant at home (while supplies last)!

## Honor a Loved One with a Tree

Honor a friend or loved one by making a donation in their name to dedicate a tree. With your donation of \$200 per tree, you will contribute toward planting more trees throughout the parks and town as a whole. Your contribution will include a plaque at a tree of your choosing in one of our 13 parks. More information will be available during the Arbor Day Celebration at Sandy Bottom Recycle Center.



## Upcoming Live Performances at Sipe

### 6 Guitars

Saturday, April 6, 7:30 pm

One man, six hilarious guitar-playing characters!



**An Evening with David Sedaris**  
Thursday, April 11, 7:30pm  
The best-selling author hosts a sold-out show!

### Redd Volkaert

Saturday, April 27, 7:30 pm

A true giant of country music & the Telecaster guitar!



Learn more and buy tickets at [sipecenter.com](http://sipecenter.com).

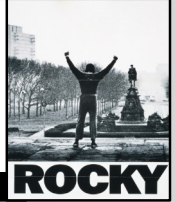


**Mark Your Calendars:** The Spring Yard Sale Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 1.

## Upcoming Movies at Sipe Center

### Rocky (PG)

Thursday, April 4 6:30 pm  
Friday, April 5 6:30 pm  
Sunday, April 7 2:00 & 5:30 pm



Free Popcorn for Buzz Subscribers!

### Ordinary Angels (PG)

Friday, April 12 6:30 pm  
Saturday, April 13 4:00 & 7:30 pm  
Sunday, April 14 2:00 & 5:30 pm



### Bob Marley: One Love (PG-13)

Thursday, April 18 6:30 pm  
Saturday, April 20 4:00 & 7:00 pm  
Sunday, April 21 2:00 & 5:30 pm



Dates subject to change based on film availability from studios.



Coming Soon...  
Dune 2

Find the latest info here!



## What B-Towners Need to Know About... Recycling

Our Sandy Bottom Recycling Center makes it easy for you to recycle a large array of items and keep resources out of our local landfills.

### What materials do you accept?

- #1, #2, and #5 plastics
- Glass
- Aluminum beverage cans
- Steel and bi-metal cans
- Cardboard
- Office paper/junk mail
- Newspaper and magazines
- Paper shredding
- Household batteries
- Plastic bags
- Printer cartridges
- Computer hard drives, SSDs, flash drives, phones, and chipped credit cards for destruction



### Do I need to sort out plastics by type?

No. #1, #2, and #5 plastics are collected together.

### Are there any materials I do need to sort?

Metals cans need to be sorted into aluminum and steel. Paper needs to be sorted into office paper/junk mail, newspaper/magazine, and paper for shredding. Please remove plastic windows from any envelopes in the junk mail.

### Do I need to remove labels from plastic and glass bottles or metal cans?

No. You can leave the labels on.

### How can I encourage my kids to participate in recycling?

Kids up to age 10 are encouraged to participate in their family's recycling efforts through the Recycler's Punch Card program. For each trip they make to the Recycle Center, they receive a punch on their card and work their way toward prizes!

**Questions?** Call B-Connected at (540) 908-4212.

Visit [bridgewater.town/recycling](http://bridgewater.town/recycling) or scan this QR Code for more information about the Sandy Bottom Recycle Center.



# Y: Jay's Column About Policy

## Popcorn Democracy

Occasionally we send coupons for free Sipe Center popcorn to subscribers of the Bridgewater *Buzz*, our daily blog. We don't send the coupons to encourage people to go to the theater but rather to encourage people to subscribe to the *Buzz*. In our view, the *Buzz* is a vital piece of a democratic and emotionally healthy community.

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Knowledge allows people to understand the world around them, to intervene to protect their interests, and to evaluate their government.

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JMU grads probably know of James Madison's argument that "*the diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty.*" Far be it from us to quibble with the architect of the U.S. Constitution, but we would take the principle further. In our view, keeping people informed is a lynchpin of any thriving community. Knowledge allows people to understand the world around them. (For example, we weren't just digging a hole at Oakdale; we were building a pond to satisfy our obligation to help clean up Chesapeake Bay.) Knowledge allows people to intervene to protect their interests. (Thus last month's Y Column warned of possible changes to signage regulations in the future.) And knowledge allows people to evaluate their government. (So we print our annual "Big Mac Index" to reflect the cost of living in Bridgewater.)

Historically, local governments have counted on the news media to "diffuse" knowledge, as Madison would

say. But with the obvious downsizing at the *Daily News-Record*, we hardly ever see a reporter any more. WHSV covers us to some degree, but not regularly. For many people, Facebook remains their sole source of news yet provides some of the most unreliable information out there. (And I'm obviously not speaking of you, loyal Y readers.)



So, with knowledge being the admission ticket to full membership in a democratic society, and with the news media no longer supplying that ticket, we introduced the Bridgewater *Buzz*, and we have now produced over 1,250 (at-least) daily issues. Occasionally there is fluff, such as an invitation to the upcoming meeting of the Shenandoah Flapjackers. Just as often, though, the *Buzz* contains information that you really need to be a citizen of Bridgewater. Obviously, stories are told from our standpoint. You're more likely to read "*Jay was surprised by events*" than "*Jay, as usual, was asleep at the switch.*" But we do try to be extremely faithful to the facts—not because we're so great, but because we want this to be a great community.

So, I guess the popcorn is our way of inducing people to hunger for knowledge. Subscribe to the *Buzz* and eat up!

Sign up at [bridgewater.buzz](http://bridgewater.buzz) for the latest in Bridgewater news and free popcorn!



### Sandy Bottom Par-3 & Mini-Golf Open in April

Sandy Bottom **Mini-Golf** opens on **Saturday, April 6** at 12:00 pm. The course will remain open weekly Friday - Sunday, 12:00 pm - 10:00 pm through Memorial Day. Beginning May 27, Mini-Golf will be open seven days a week.

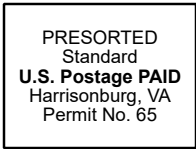
**Par-3** opens on **Saturday, April 27** and will be open daily 6:00 am until dusk. We regret the necessary delay in opening as we repair recent vandalism to the course.



### Spring Floral Workshop

Tuesday, April 16, 6:30 - 8:30 pm at Sipe Center

At this workshop we will be working with some of the first cut flowers of spring. You will be able to put together two of our "joy shot" vases! This workshop is by Katie Swartzendruber of Thyme after Thyme, a cut flower farm in Bridgewater. All materials and equipment will be provided. This workshop is \$35 for town residents and \$40 for non-residents. Wine and soda will be available for purchase during this event. Register by visiting [bridgewater.town/workshop](http://bridgewater.town/workshop) or call us at (540) 908-4212.




**Local  
 Postal Customer**

**Got a Question? Call B-Connected at (540) 908-4212**

# Bridgewater Current

In this issue:

- Earth Day/Arbor Day Events
- What to Know About Recycling
- Popcorn Democracy
- And more!

Park restrooms re-open the beginning of April.

**Municipal Calendar & Events**  
 April 9, 7 pm – Town Council Meeting  
 April 23, 7 pm – Budget Hearing  
*Budget books will be mailed in mid-April for residents to review before the hearing.*

**Open Mic Night at Sipe Center**  
 Friday, April 19, 7:00 pm



Singers, musicians, spoken word poets, dancers, and performers of all kinds are invited to show off their talent! Open mic sets are limited to 10-15 minutes maximum. Bring your own instruments or whatever you need to perform. Instruments must be played acoustically. Full drum kits are discouraged. Email [info@sipecenter.com](mailto:info@sipecenter.com) by Wednesday, April 17. Pre-registration is highly encouraged.



**Thursday,  
 June 6**


**Arey Assembly Hall**

**RED CROSS  
 BLOOD DRIVE**

*When you sign up, join the group "Bridgewater Gives"*

Sign up here! 

**Project Status Updates**

For more information and a full description of these projects, follow this QR code. 

Project	Status
Riverwalk Phase II	Construction should be completed by early April.
Riverwalk Phase III	30% plans completed and submitted to VDOT for review.
Grove & College Parking Lot	Construction continues; completion expected by late April.
Bridgewater Website	Refresh of <a href="http://bridgewater.town">bridgewater.town</a> underway.
Main Street Repaving	Paving scheduled for mid-April.