



THE CURRENT

Bridgewater's Monthly Newsletter

March 2026 • Volume 48, Number 3

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Municipal Calendar

March 2

Large Item Pickup Begins

March 8

Ice Rink Closes

March 10, 7:00 pm

Town Council Meeting

B-Town Opportunities

The Bridgewater Police Department is hosting Civilian Response & Casualty Care training on March 6, 12:30 - 4:30 pm at Arey Assembly Hall.

Learn what to do in an active shooter event. Find out more and register at bridgewater.town/ccrcc.

Make a rain barrel (or two!) with the Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District on March 28, 9:00 - 11:00 am, at Arey Assembly Hall. Register at bridgewater.town/rainbarrel.



2026 ABL Award winner Donna Barber with Mayor Ted Flory at the the Charter Day Celebration.

Donna and Larry Barber Honored at Charter Day

As part of our annual Charter Day Celebration, the Town presented the 2026 ABL Award to Donna Barber, honoring her decades of service to the Bridgewater community, and posthumously to her late husband and partner in service, Larry Barber.

The ABL Award—short for *A Better Life Exemplar*—is the Town's highest honor. Now in its third year, the award is presented annually to individuals whose sustained commitment and service have made the lives of Bridgewater residents better.

Donna and Larry Barber moved to the Shenandoah Valley from Bluefield, West Virginia in the early 1970s and quickly made Bridgewater their home. They raised their two children here and invested deeply in the life of the

town through education, volunteerism, and community service.

Donna devoted nearly two decades to teaching second grade at John Wayland Elementary School. She was known not only for her excellence in the classroom but for the care and attention she extended to students and families beyond school hours. She attended her students' sporting events and performances and built lasting relationships with families.

Following her retirement in 2011, Donna continued her commitment to education and community through service at the North River Library. There she helped to develop and sustain hands-on STEM and nature programming for children, including the creation of a pollinator area

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Egg Hunt at Wildwood Park



Wildwood Park
Saturday, April 4, 9:00 am

Our 5th Annual Egg Hunt at Wildwood Park will occur on Saturday, April 4. The Easter Bunny arrives at 9:00 am, and the hunt begins at 9:30 am. We'll have three hunts simultaneously for different age groups: 3 years old and younger, 4-6 years old, and 7-10 years old. Find the golden egg to win a prize! The hunt is for children who live in Town. Parking at Wildwood is limited, but additional parking is available at Bridgeview and Edgebriar Parks.

Note for businesses: Town businesses can contribute coveted B Egg-cellent Eggs to promote their businesses and provide special prizes. Call Katie Newman at (540) 908-4212 for more details.

Last Chance for Skating!

Generations Park
Through March 8

The Generations Park Ice Rink will close for the season on March 8 so get in your last few laps on the ice by then! The Ice Rink will re-open for the 2026-27 season on Thanksgiving Day.

As the Ice Rink closes, preparations begin for pickleball season. Follow the Buzz at bridgewater.buzz for more information about when the pickleball courts will open.

Golf Courses Set to Re-open

Sandy Bottom Park
Saturday, April 4

Opening Day for Sandy Bottom Mini-Golf and Par-3 is Saturday, April 4. The Par-3 course will be open daily 6:00 am until dark. Mini-Golf will be open Friday - Sunday, 12:00 - 9:00 pm until Memorial Day when it will begin daily operating hours.

Honored at Charter Day

Continued from page 1

designed to spark curiosity and learning. Many weekends found Donna hosting engineering projects or nature activities, ensuring that children of all backgrounds had access to engaging experiences.

Throughout this work, her husband Larry was a constant and enthusiastic partner. He was active behind the scenes setting up and running errands and was even known to dress as a butterfly to bring children's programs to life.

Through decades of service, Donna and Larry built a reputation as volunteers and tireless servants—exemplifying values that reflect the very best of Bridgewater's civic spirit. The Town is pleased to honor Donna Barber and the late Larry Barber for the lasting impact they have had on our community.

Responsible Medication Disposal

How do you responsibly dispose of expired medications and prescription drugs? Bring them to the Police Department's dropbox at the Town Office (201 Green Street). The secure dropbox is located just outside the Police Department's door and can be accessed during regular operating hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm).



Proper disposal of medications and prescription drugs not only helps to prevent substance abuse but also protects the environment, especially the water supply. Throwing them in the trash or flushing them in the toilet does not make them magically disappear; they can migrate to the groundwater or the river, poisoning the water supply.

Responsibly dispose of medications and prescription drugs by using the secure dropbox. It is an easy way for all residents to do their part to protect our community.

Save the Date: As you make your summer plans, keep in mind that we will hold our Summer Camp during the week of July 27. Registration will open on May 1. We can't wait to see you there!



Y: Jay's Column About Policy

A Speed Trap for Charity

When we installed the speed camera in the John Wayland school zone in 2022, we said it wasn't about the money. It was about slowing cars down so children could walk to school more safely. We know some of you responded, "Right—and any revenue is purely coincidental." That skepticism is understandable. It doesn't help that one Virginia county reportedly brings in \$49,000 a day from speed cameras.

For perspective, we bring in less than that in a whole year. Still, the principle matters. Fines and forfeitures should not be viewed as good news. They represent someone breaking the rules. Our goal is fewer violations, not more revenue. And we should never create an incentive to enforce laws more aggressively than safety requires.

As staff prepared the FY27 draft budget, we looked carefully at our "fines and forfeitures" line. We also looked at our "donations" line. That category can raise questions too. How much of your tax money should go to support, say, the Little League and Volunteer Fire Company among others? After all, you're free to donate on your own if you choose.

That's when we noticed something interesting. Fines are money that comes to the Town because someone acted in a way we're trying to discourage. Donations are money the Town gives to support activities we're trying to encourage. One reflects behavior we don't want. The other supports behavior we do.

So we decided to connect them. In the draft budget, the total amount we donate to community organizations will be roughly equal to the amount we receive in fines and forfeitures. In simple terms: if there is wrongdoing, it will help fund something good.

The two amounts were already very close, so this wasn't a dramatic shift. But it does make the principle clear.

And if someone says we're running a speed trap, perhaps we can reply, "If we are, at least it's a speed trap for charity."

-Jay Litten, Town Manager

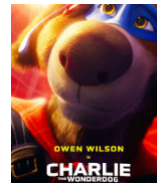


This Month at Sipe Center

Movies Coming Soon...



Song Sung Blue



Charlie the Wonderdog



I Was a Stranger



Solo Mio

See www.sipecenter.com/movies for showtimes and tickets!

Live Performances

A Comedy Night with The Funny Womacks & Friends

Friday, March 6
7:30 pm – Tickets \$28



Beatlesque

Rescheduled
and Second Show Added

Sunday, March 15
2:00 & 5:30 pm – Tickets \$30

Jessica Crawford

Local favorite

Saturday, March 21
7:30 pm – Tickets \$25



Off Broadway Players Present Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie

March 27-28, 7:30 pm
March 29, 3:00 pm
Tickets \$17

Visit www.sipecenter.com/liveperformances for tickets!

Sipe Center Box Office

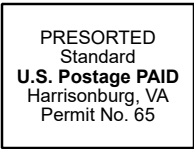
Open Thursday – Sunday

3:00 – 8:00 pm

(540) 908-4208

www.sipecenter.com





Local Postal Customer

Project Status Updates

Crosswalk Signals

Working with VDOT on additional funding allocation. Hoping to bid projects in March.

Wellness Quarter

Steel framing underway. Concrete slab and roofing installation follows.

Fountainhead Subdivision

Plans are 99% complete.

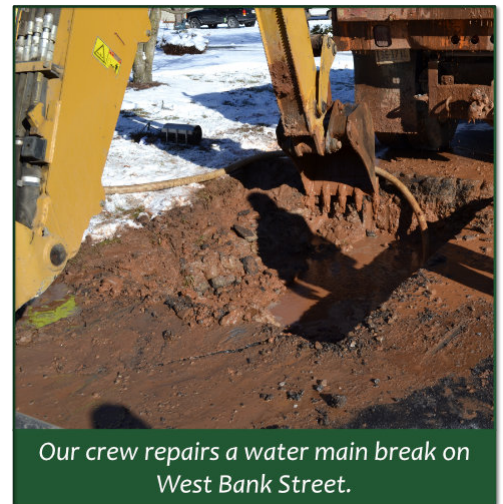
For more information and a full description of these projects, visit bridgewater.town/projects.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Give the gift of life by donating blood on April 7 at Arey Assembly Hall (201 Green Street). Sign up for a slot at bridgewater.town/blooddrive.

Watch Out for Water Main Breaks

Although water main breaks happen throughout the year, the winter and early spring months are especially hard on infrastructure. The freezing and thawing cycles can cause the ground to shift and put stress on pipes. Add in pipe corrosion, soil conditions, a history of previous breaks, and age, and a water main break can result.



Our crew repairs a water main break on West Bank Street.

Where Is the Leak?

- If you suspect the water main or line leading to your house is leaking, call B-Connected at (540) 908-4212 immediately at any time.
- A maintenance crew member will investigate the problem.
- If the leak is on our side of the water meter, we will make the repair.
- If the leak is on your side of the meter, you'll need to call your plumber of choice. We can still provide them with useful information.

The first sign of a water line break is usually a puddle of water that mysteriously appears alongside the street or in the utility easement. When this occurs, fast action on the part of the maintenance crew is required. You can help us by reporting a suspected break to B-Connected at (540) 908-4212. The Town's priority is to restore water service to the homes and businesses experiencing water outages as quickly as possible. With your help reporting suspected main breaks, this process can be expedited.