



Along the Gooney

June 2026

Volume 34, Number 6

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The old stove sits in the middle of the Community Center kitchen after the kitchen was emptied to be renovated. The project is expected to be completed by the end of July. (Photo by Gène J. Raymond)

Project Kitchen Sink

(a.k.a. Updating the BCCA's Kitchen)

By Jim Sylvester

May has been a busy month in the kitchen!

The planning team meets every week to make sure the project progresses smoothly; mostly. We discuss woodwork details, cabinet selections, electrical locations, to name a few [topics]. We also compare calendars to make sure we have volunteers to keep the work flowing.

We began with demolition on the Monday after Redbud. Thanks to Dave Buracker for loaning his dumping trailer! The demo revealed some old insect damage as well as the anticipated water damage around the northwest window. We had Guardian Pest Control inspect everything we exposed to ensure the damage was old and there were no active critters. The repairs took a few days but the finished product will look good as new (old).

The carpentry team got busy levelling the ceiling and framing around the furnace exhaust pipes and the ductwork. The new soffits look great, as does the new bead board ceiling, selected to replicate the original ceilings in the building.

(continued on page 4)

Inside the BCCA

Upcoming Events

June 8 BCCA General Meeting
7:30 p.m.

View the entire online calendar of events at <https://browntowncommunity.com/calendar>

Center Temporarily Unavailable

The Center will be unavailable for rental from May 1, 2026 to July 31, 2026 due to scheduled repairs and renovations. Should the project end early, this will be reflected on the online calendar.

Get the Newsletter

To get the newsletter delivered to you by email, send an email to newsletter+subscribe@browntowncommunity.com

You'll get an email that acknowledges your request to join. Simply reply to the acknowledgement and you should receive a confirmation that you have joined.

Back issues of the newsletter are available on [our website](#).

Submission Deadline

Submissions for the July edition of the newsletter should be submitted by June 20. This is earlier than usual, but is necessary to ensure an on time publication despite limited availability of the editor.

Streamlining the Community Notices

By Gène J. Raymond

During the month of June, we will be undertaking a project to convert the current manual process of submitting and distributing announcements to our community members. Jackie Hodgkiss has been performing the tasks involved in maintaining the list of email addresses, receiving the requests for posts to be forwarded to the list members, and then sending those emails messages to the list members. We all thank Jackie for her years of continued service in this area.

The new system will give us another opportunity to use the Google tools that we use for mail groups such as the newsletter and other project teams within the organization. One of the major advantages of this implementation is that several of the member tasks that Jackie has done in the past will be able to be done by the member himself or herself. The second big advantage is that the membership list is entirely separate from the newsletter list. This means that the community will ultimately have the option to receive the newsletter, the announcements, or both of them.

During the month of June, we will subscribe the current newsletter recipients in batches to the new Community Notices group. You might receive an email asking you to confirm your addition to the group. If you don't want these announcements, just ignore the email. If you do want them, hit Reply and Send; no need to add any text.

The new list will become active for use on July 1. At that time, if you have an item that you would have sent to Jackie in the past for distribution, you should send it instead to community-notices@browntowncommunity.com. Please note that in order to post notices, you must be a member of the group. Initially, the list will be moderated. *(continued on next page)*

This means that once you send your post, it will be placed on a queue to be reviewed by a moderator before it is released to the members. Typically, this should happen within 12 hours. Once your message is distributed, people can reply to you directly simply by hitting Reply – the reply will only go to the original poster as the distribution list is intended only for announcements, rather than ongoing discussions.

Once the initial membership is loaded, a more detailed document will be distributed to help you make the best use of the list.

Treasurer's Corner

Well we got a quick taste of summer heat early and are finally getting much needed rain! Preliminary results indicate the Redbud Festival was a huge success! I am still collecting money for outstanding sponsors, tree sales, etc. Next month I should have a better breakdown by category.

April 2026 – Income ~\$17,902

Redbud Festival – ~\$10,608 projected proceeds

April 2026 – Expenses ~\$20,162

The majority of the costs fall into these categories:

- Electricity – \$209
- Newsletter – ~\$49
- Redbud Merchandise – ~\$1,040
- Redbud Supplies – ~\$1,129
- Redbud Change and Prizes – ~\$2,345)
- Soffit and Gutter Contractor Balance – \$15,260
- Website/Internet Service/Telephone – ~\$121
- Printer ink – ~\$8

Many of our Redbud events had sponsors like the Duck Race so there will be no cost to the Community Center in the end.

Happy Father's Day to all our fathers in Heaven and on Earth! Wishing you a day of relaxation, love and laughter!

Nancy McDermott
BCCA Treasurer
nancymcd.bcca@gmail.com

Obituary

Joyce Grove Smeltzer, 88, of Front Royal, passed away on Monday, May 11, 2026, at St. Anne's Loving Arms in Warren County.

A graveside service was held on May 19, at Prospect Hill Cemetery with Pastor Cecil Jones officiating.

Mrs. Smeltzer was born February 11, 1938 in Front Royal, Virginia, daughter of the late George Newton and Velma Lone Baggarly Grove. She was married to the late Billy L. Smeltzer.

She retired after many dedicated years from the Town of Front Royal.

Surviving are two sons, Troy S. Smeltzer and wife Tina, and Mark L. Smeltzer and wife Michelle, all of Front Royal; and two grandchildren, Matthew Smeltzer (Amy) and Dakota Smeltzer Santana and husband David.

Bentonville Man Dies in Fatal Crash

Virginia State Police are investigating a fatal single-vehicle crash that occurred May 7, 2026, in Warren County.

According to a state police news release, Gregory Scott Williams, 66, of Bentonville, was driving a 2001 Jaguar S-Type eastbound on Strasburg Road near Andrews Road at approximately 9:52 p.m. when the vehicle veered off the right side of the road and overturned.

Williams, who was not wearing a seatbelt, died at the scene. The crash remains under investigation.

(continued from page 1)

The mechanical closet door has been relocated to allow for the addition of a coffee and condiment station.

Our Color Team (Roxy, Lisa, Mary, Diane) have been busy studying many palettes. We can't wait to see the selections come to life next month!

The cabinets have been evaluated from all aspects. Led by Jim and Bill, we evaluated the styles, functions, and construction of several options. Jim has led the charge with Lowe's to make sure we got the best sale (and more!) pricing. The users of the kitchen were incremental in choosing from the oh so many options. The final selections will provide more than twice the storage capacity and three times the work space! The Kitchen Team is excited to see this come to life. The new tops will be crafted by master cabinet maker and Browntown Boy, Bill Lacey.

Green 2 Ground will be rewiring the room this week (May 26-29). They will be back right before we finish up to turn on the lights.

We will be prepping the room for new paint in a couple of weeks. Precautions have been made during demo, and will continue during paint removal, to protect against the potentially lead-based original paint. The risks are low with proper safety measures. Once the prep is done, it will time for the volunteers to join us to make the new colors come to life!

The floors will be refinished at the end of the month. The kitchen will be closed to ALL traffic when this is going on.

There is a special feature in the works. But we can't talk about that... yet!

The Kitchen Team

Martha Buracker
Roxanne Campbell
Bill Lacy
Mary McKinney
Lisa Merz
Steve Merz
Patsy Pennington
Ben Short
Damon Sutton
Jim Sylvester



The vintage commercial stove stands in the center of the historic school-house's kitchen. Framed by scaffolding and stripped walls, the quiet space pauses in mid-transformation as modern renovations breathe new life into the space. (Photo provided by Jim Sylvester.)



The BEARR Group

Keeping Our Community Safe

By Brian Wilkinson

Reflective Address Signs

The cost is \$25 payable on delivery with free installation on an existing post or fence. To order, text or call Alan Thompson at 520-730-4272 or Brian Wilkinson at 703-389-7288.

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Virginia's 4:00 p.m. Burning Law No Longer In Effect



Call Warren County Communications Center at 540-635-4128 to let them know before you start burning brush. If the fire is beyond your control, stop and call 911.

Be safe with outdoor grilling!

- July (15%) is the peak month for grill fires, followed by June (15%), May (13%) and August (11%).
 - The grill had not been cleaned in roughly one-fifth (20%) of these fires.
 - Nearly one-quarter of grill structure fires start on an exterior balcony or open porch.
- Gas grills are involved on in over 9,000 home fires per year. 6% of gas grill structure fires and 13% of outside gas grill fires were caused by leaks or breaks. On average over 21,000 patients per year go to emergency rooms because of injuries involving grills.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Safety Tips

- For propane grills, check the gas tank for leaks before use in the months ahead.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Place grill well away from the home, deck railings, and out from under eaves and over-hanging branches.
- Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grilling area.
- If you use starter fluid when charcoal grilling, only use charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or other flammable liquids to the fire. Let coals cool completely before disposing in metal container.
- Never leave your grill unattended when in use.

Become a Volunteer Fire-Fighter

Ensure The Browntown Fire Substation Will Continue To Serve Our Needs

For more information, please contact Allan Brockway, Fire Chief, South Warren Volunteer Fire Department, at 540-635-7783 or 703-915-4573.

Warren County Fire Station and Staffing Review Now Available

This is an independent, data-driven report. It is intended “to provide a strategic blueprint to meet Warren County's current and future emergency response demands.” It is a long and complex report and it is currently unclear exactly what actions will be taken as a result of its recommendations. On first reading, it is difficult to see how this review addresses some of the urgent emergency response resource and staffing problems currently facing South Warren. To read a copy of the report and make up your own mind about its usefulness, go to Warren County Fire and Rescue website at

<https://www.warrencountyfire.com/399/Fire-and-Rescue-Services>.



A Mystery Solved: Meet The Doffermyre Family Of Browntown

By Tom Lacombe

Our 2025 Calendar "Browntown: The Way We Were" contained many historic photos, most of them of people who we were able to identify. However, we did include a few great photos of people whose name and history were unknown to us. Our hope was that someone looking at the calendar would be able to identify these folks. Well, at long last we have had some luck!

Thanks to help from Candace Summers, we now know the names of all four people in this photo. They were all members of the Doffermyre family who originally came from Page County. The man with the beard is Candace's great grandfather, John Henry Doffermyre (also spelled "Doffermire") who was born in 1858 and moved with his family to

Browntown in the early 1900s. The rather stern-looking lady on the left is Susan Margaret Clatterbuck Doffermyre who was John Henry's wife (she was also known as Katherine Doffermyre). Their youngest son, Carroll, is third from the left and their eldest and tallest son, Brook, is standing with his arms folded on the far right. We believe that the photo was taken in about 1910.

We are currently trying to learn more about the Doffermyre family's time in Browntown. We know that John and Susan Doffermyre and Carroll moved to Linden and then Front Royal a few years after this photo was taken. Brook stayed in Browntown and married a local girl, Susanne Esther Swartz. They had three children. Sadly, their daughter, Ola, would die aged 10 months in 1919 from bronchial pneumonia ("Spanish Flu").

Note on Browntown and the Influenza ("Spanish Flu") Outbreak of 1918-1919

In March 1919 the Shenandoah Herald newspaper reported that influenza in Warren County, "following the line of attack observed in Page County, was moving from one section to another, skipping some neighborhoods which were later visited by the epidemic, alike, almost claiming whole families."

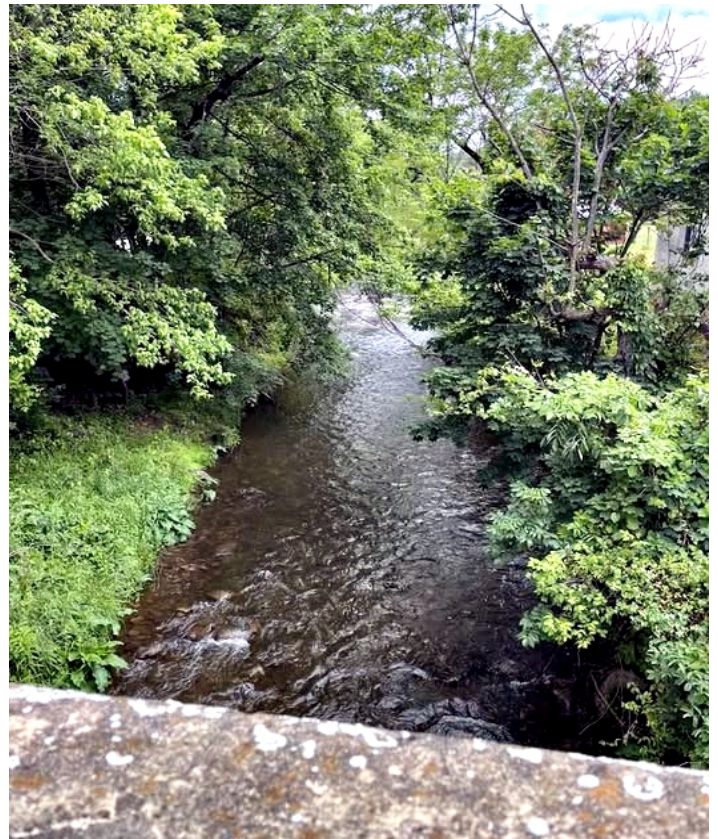
There were 25-30 cases reported in the Browntown district, but there are no reliable estimates of how many people in Browntown actually died from the flu. Although Ola Doffermyre appears to have been the only member of the Doffermyre family to die from the disease, we do know that several members of Susan Margaret Clatterbuck Doffermyre's extended family (i.e. the Clatterbucks) died suddenly after becoming infected. The Alexander Gazette in March, 1919 reported that "Spanish influenza established a new record for fatalities in Warren County Wednesday when the wife, daughter and mother-in-law of James Clatterbuck, who lives near Browntown, died within three hours. All of the deaths were due to pneumonia which followed the influenza... Clatterbuck and several other members of his family are still critically ill."

Fun June Holidays

By Gène J. Raymond

Most people are aware of the Juneteenth federal holiday, which falls on June 19. But did you know that June 5 is National Donut Day? Mark the holiday by stopping at your preferred donut vendor; whether it be the bakery at your local grocery store, the Dunkin' Donuts in town, or maybe you've tracked down the Strite's truck. Get one for yourself and maybe one for a friend. Or is that one for now and one for later? Sit down with your traditional glazed, a jelly-filled that's dusted with powdered sugar, or a Boston Cream ring along with your accompanying beverage. Then read [this article from the Smithsonian](#) about the history of this treat.

June 19 is not only the Juneteenth holiday; it is National Martini Day. A recipe for the original drink, which was sweet, was published in the 1880s. Traditional martinis use a base of gin, although modern flavored versions tend to use vodka instead and are sweeter than the traditional dry martinis. The dry drink is sometimes garnished with a citrus peel, but often with olives stuffed with pimento or blue cheese or cocktail onions. Sweet versions are often served in sugar-rimmed glasses. Martinis are a classic, easy-to-make drink that requires only a few items. Part of the fun is finding which gin or vodka suits your palate. There are many variations including the traditional gin and vermouth blend of the 1950s and 1960s, the Lemon Drop of the 1970s, the Espresso Martini of the early 1980s, the popular Cosmopolitan, and the Appletini of the 1990s. And for those who don't drink alcohol, there are non-alcoholic versions of the drink as well. Check out [The Martini Socialist](#) website for more interesting facts.



The Gooney Creek is running at a fast pace after recent rains in the latter part of May. (Photo by Tom Lacombe)

Late May Rains Helping

By Tom Lacombe

The rains came late Wednesday afternoon, May 20, accompanied by high winds, which knocked down some trees in the area and left some folks on the Greasy side of the Gooney Manor Loop without power. As of Sunday, May 24, Browntown has had 3.2 inches of rain in the past five days. With more rain in the forecast, we can hope to go into this summer with enough rain to avert the drought conditions, that have been with us for awhile.

The Browntown Boys Offer Gift

by Gène J. Raymond

Ron Miller, one of the members of the local music group "The Browntown Boys," told the attendees at May's general meeting that the group had performed for the Town of Front Royal's recent Lone Pine Festival. Throughout the day, passersby left the group \$822 in tips, which The Boys donated to the roofing fund. Roger Tomhave, also a member of the music group, announced that they will be performing at the Community Center for the opening of the newly remodeled kitchen.

At the same meeting, Martha Buracker announced that the Community Center had also received \$2000 from Warren County.



Mike Prosis replaces the weathered flag outside of the Community Center earlier this spring. Jim Sylvester reported at May's general meeting that the Building and Grounds Committee also replaced the halyard. (Photo by Gène J. Raymond)



The banner hanging from the bridge marks the starting line of the Gooney Creek Duck Race at April's annual Redbud Festival. (Photo by Gène J. Raymond)

Browntown Baptist Church A Legacy of Faith

Dedicated to Seeking God and Serving People

Thank you all for supporting our Drive-Thru Dinner on May 6. It was a great success.

We sincerely thank you for your support in helping provide for children in our community through The Hike Kidz Foundation's Boxes of Basics program. Community support like yours is what makes this work possible. The first collection of donations was picked up on May 21 and we learned at that time that we can continue the program with no interruptions. We accept *new* clothing, shoes, socks, and underwear for all seasons for children (newborn to age 17). Donations can be dropped off at the Fellowship Hall on Thursdays (3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.) and Sundays (12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.).

Front Royal-Warren County Congregational Community Action Project (C-CAP) is currently in need of toiletries and hygiene products for all. We will accept donations for these products at the same day and time as the Box of Basics program (see above).

We had our first Quarterly Community Gathering on March 21. Our next one is planned for June 20. It will be a Community Ice Cream Social from 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. This is a free event designed to unite people in a warm, spiritual and loving atmosphere, where we celebrate with each other through food and laughter. Help us celebrate a "sweet time" together.

Save the date! Vacation Bible School will be July 8-10 from 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Be Hopeful

Tina Presley

Clerk of Browntown Baptist Church

Questions? parishoner@browntownbaptist.com

	<p>Martha Buracker, Realtor Weichert Realtors 824 John Marshall Hwy Front Royal, VA</p> <p><i>"Your Shenandoah Valley Expert"</i></p> <p>Licensed in Virginia</p> <p>Cell: 540-671-6349 Office: 540-635-8000 marthaburacker@gmail.com</p>	 	<h1>Weichert</h1> <p>REALTORS®</p>
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Service Directory

Browntown Baptist Church

12 Browntown Road
Bentonville, VA 22610
Pastor: S. Kaipha Brown
Sunday School @ 10 a.m.
Worship Service @ 11 a.m.

Cool Spring Church of God

Pastor: PG Coverstone
Sunday School at 9:30 and Worship at 10:30.

Limeton Community Church

9 Limeton Main St., Bentonville, VA
Pastor Lorne Fyfe
Sunday School at 10 and service at 11

O. J. Rudacille Gen. Mdse.

Check us out on Facebook for

Browntown History

Phone 636-2149

Serving Browntown since 1884



Hours: Monday-Saturday 9 to 5
Sunday Noon to 4

Don't forget! We carry lots of
Browntown merchandise year 'round:
Hats, Sweatshirts, Cookbooks, etc.

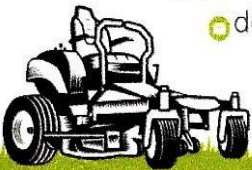
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