



“Along the Gooney”

Browntown Community Center Association

December 2025
Volume 33, Number 11

BCCA Board of Directors – 2025

President	Martha Buracker	540-671-6349
Vice President	Mary McKinney	540-635-4725
Secretary	Kristen Pence	540-230-1155
Treasurer	Nancy McDermott	703-975-8668
Trustees	Allan Brockway	540-635-7783
	Denny Pennington	540-635-5568
	Wes Deavers	540-631-0016

Upcoming Events

December 7	Santa’s Little Helper Workshop 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
December 8	BCCA General Meeting 7:30 p.m.
December 13	BCCA Open House 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

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

Submission Deadline

The customary deadline for content submission for the newsletter is the 24th of the month preceding the month of publication. Due to the upcoming holidays, content for the January 2026 edition must be received by December 19, 2025.

2025 Snow Flakes **Memories of Loved Ones**

Name	Sponsor
Rex Allen Andrews, Sr.	Linda Glavis
Susan E. Britten	Sherry Thorpe
Ralph R. Byrd, III	Sherry Thorpe
John A. Catlett, Jr.	Sherry Thorpe
Joy Smelser Fairfax	Linda Glavis
Beatrice M. Frame	Sandra Frame
Milton W. Frame	Sandra Frame
Wilford G. Frame	Sandra Frame
Margot Glavis	Linda Glavis
Jerry A. Gray, Sr.	Sherry Thorpe
Vernon Grumbly	Linda Glavis
Ashby T. Jones	Sandra Frame
Jason Wade Jones	Sandra Frame
Gloria L. Livingston	Sherry Thorpe
Don Miller	Linda Glavis
Gail Poe Miller	Linda Glavis
Pat Poe Miller	Linda Glavis
Tom Miller	Linda Glavis
Betty R. Morris	Sandra Frame
Lebert E. Morris	Sandra Frame
Anita Payne	Sherry Thorpe
Barbara Poe	Linda Glavis
Elizabeth Poe	Linda Glavis
George W. Poe	Linda Glavis
Jean Poe	Linda Glavis
Jesse W. Poe	Linda Glavis
Kenneth Poe	Linda Glavis
Rebecca Poe	Linda Glavis
Samuel A. Poe	Linda Glavis
John F. Shirley	Sherry Thorpe
Charles H. Shirley, Jr.	Sherry Thorpe
Charles H. Shirley, Sr.	Sherry Thorpe
Ray Smelser	Linda Glavis
Maria Thorpe	Sherry Thorpe
Thomas F. Thorpe, Sr.	Sherry Thorpe



Union Church Belfry Is Now Secured

A big thank you to Amy Proffitt, Wes Deavers, Xylem Tree Experts, and the Browntown Baptist Church for helping to save the oldest church in town. The Browntown Union Church, built in 1882, has served Lutherans, Methodists, Old School Baptists, and Southern Baptists. Since a March storm, rain has been coming into the belfry from where the steeple had once been. Next step will be fund raising to fix the steeple. Many in the community have already contacted the Gooney Valley History and Preservation Club to offer funding for this project.



Gooney Valley History Club

(This article appeared in last month's edition, however some of the content was inadvertently omitted. It is reprinted here in its entirety. Ed.)

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION: YOU OWN OVER 5 MILLION ACRES OF LAND IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA AND GEORGE WASHINGTON IS A CLOSE FRIEND – WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG!

Given that we will celebrate 250 years of independence in 2026, we thought it would be interesting for readers of this newsletter to know a little more about the history of this area in the 18th century, during most of which Virginia was still part of British America. That history is both fascinating and complicated, so this will be the first of a series of articles in which we will focus on some of the events that preceded and influenced the settlement of “Old Gooney” (i.e. Browntown and the Gooney Valley) in the 19th century.

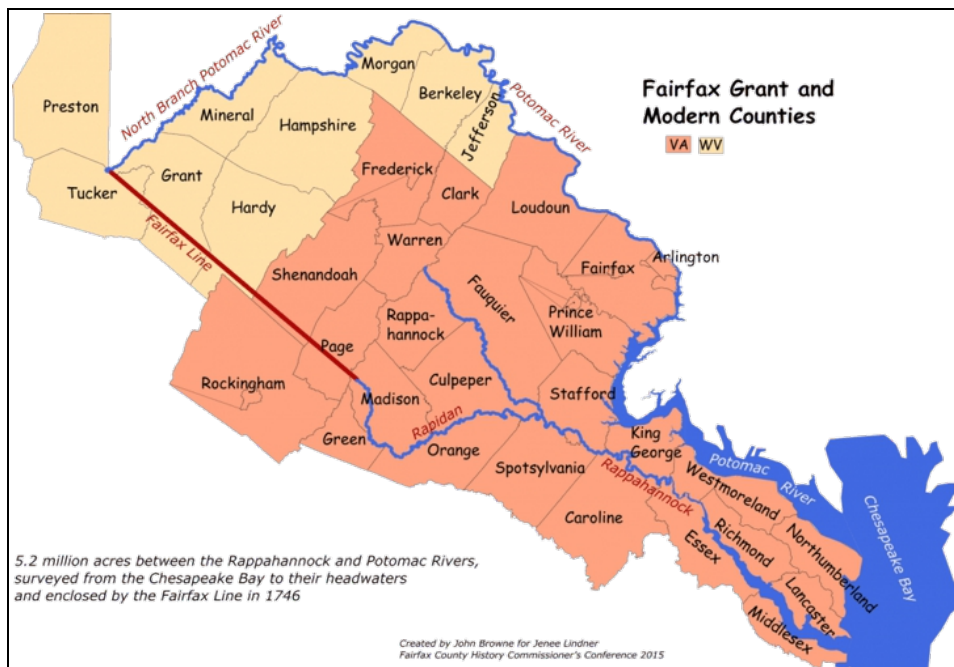
Many early Virginians were essentially land speculators who were determined to secure land for their heirs. For them the acquisition of land was an indication of both wealth and social standing. Unfortunately, chicanery on the part of colonists and interference by the crown served to create quite a bit of havoc in regards to the land grant system of colonial Virginia.

Not until the first quarter of the 18th century did Virginia's land policy settle into a manageable system. Of the many people who played a part in bringing order out of chaos one figure stands out above all others, namely, Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax.

Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron (1693-1781)

Thomas Fairfax, 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron was a British-born landowner and farmer. The only member of the British peerage to reside full-time in British America, Fairfax owned the Northern Neck Proprietary (or Fairfax Grant) in the Colony of Virginia, where he spent the most of his life. The proprietary had been granted to Fairfax's ancestor John Colepeper, 1st Baron Colepeper by Charles II of England in 1649.

The Northern Neck Land Office controlled 5,282,000 acres in land grants located between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers. Agents of the Northern Neck Proprietary issued the first land grant in 1690. The Proprietary operated until the death of Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax in 1781. As can be seen below, Warren County was right in the middle of the land controlled by Lord Fairfax.



The Creation of Gooney Run Manor

In 1748, Lord Fairfax ordered William Greene to survey an area several miles south of Greenway Court, (his home in what is now Clarke County). Lord Fairfax believed that this particular area, located between the “Bleu Ridge” and the South Branch of the Shenandoah River, consisted largely of unoccupied “waste and unwanted land” suitable for leasing to new settlers. The resulting survey referred to this new territory as

(continued on page 5)

President's Message

Greetings everyone.

As we enter into this last month of 2025, I hope that all of you are doing well. One thing I think that makes our area special is that we do care about one another pretty well. As a realtor, I have clients tell me that they didn't even know their neighbors from their previous location and that always surprises me. While at the Browntown Bazaar yesterday the place was filled with people shopping and eating. But they also stopped to talk to friends, neighbors and the vendors. I met people that had never been to Browntown and said they had such a good time they couldn't wait to come back for our Redbud Festival. So, during this holiday season I'm asking that you think about any of your neighbors that might be struggling and if you can, give them a hand. Sometimes it's a meal if they aren't well and can't manage to cook, or shovel a sidewalk if it snows, or a ride to town if they can no longer drive. We do get caught up in our own day to day schedules, but lend a hand if you can because sometimes people don't ask for help.

Christmas Bazaar – Our Christmas Bazaar on Nov. 22 was big success! We were packed from the time we opened until the Silent Auction ended! Thanks to everyone who helped! Some behind the scenes and some front and center: Roxanne Campbell, Patsy Pennington, Emma Bricker, Cyrus Cornwell, Mary McKinney, Peg Fryxell, Missy Moore, Lisa Merz, Debbie Sutton, Nancy McDermott, Lorraine Smelser, Sherry Thorpe, Denny Pennington, Damon Sutton, Linda Arnold and anyone else I might have missed. Thanks for all the awesome baked goods for our Bake Sale and Kitchen.

Santa's Helper Workshop on Sunday, December 7 from 1 – 4 p.m. for kids aged 7 – 11. Class space is limited so please get your kiddos registered as early as you can. This will be Christmas-themed crafts and holiday gifts that they can create. \$45 per child, all materials included. Snacks provided. Contact Jessie Sprouse at imaginewithjessie@gmail.com.

Christmas Open House Social – Saturday, December 13 from 6 – 8. Join us for music and fellowship! Our decorations are up and the Christmas Tree with memorial snowflakes are on the tree. A complete list of all the memorial snowflakes will be in our January newsletter. Howard Johnson and Wayne Deavers have volunteered to be our musical entertainment! Please bring the kids and family and get in the Christmas spirit with your friends and neighbors. There is no charge, we just ask that you bring an appetizer or dessert to share! We will also have a "Christmas Store" where the kids can shop for bargain priced ornaments and gifts to take with them. (We are talking about items for less than a dollar). They can even wrap them or get a gift bag to take with them.

Chili Cook-Off – Plans are in the works for the Chili Cook-Off in late January or early February. Stay tuned for date and details on our Facebook page and the January Newsletter.

(continued on next page)



Martha Buracker, Realtor
Weichert Realtors
824 John Marshall Hwy
Front Royal, VA

"Your Shenandoah Valley Expert"

Licensed in Virginia

Cell: 540-671-6349
Office: 540-635-8000
marthaburacker@gmail.com



Weichert

REALTORS®

(continued from previous page)

One final note: Recently our Buildings and Grounds crew along with Roxanne Campbell and Mary McKinney removed all the “stuff” from the back boiler room/storage area and installed some great shelving units. Then everything was sorted (some trashed), labeled and put back. I went in to grab our signs for the bazaar and wow the difference was amazing. It really looks great and everything has its own “place”. The green and white storage building is now Yard Sale Donations Only. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to keep our Community Center running. Thanks to all our volunteers that made this happen. We are now accepting Yard Sale Donations for our March Yard Sale. If you have something to donate, please contact Patsy Pennington at 540-635-5568 to schedule a drop off.

Our newsletter goes out once a month, but our Facebook page and website are always there with updates. Plus our email distribution for “other info” is also available.

See you soon!

Martha Buracker, President
Browntown Community Center Association, Inc.

(continued from page 3)

“Gooney Run Manor,” giving homage to Lord Fairfax’s favorite hunting dog, Gooney, who (reputedly) drowned there on a hunting trip several years earlier. This new manor contained 13,920 acres. Heavy settlement of Gooney Run Manor lands did not actually begin until about 1770. Lord Fairfax would not sell his land, so the settlers leased 200 and 300 acre lots of the ungranted waste land. These leases required that the settlers build a cabin with a stone or brick chimney, and plant 100 fruit trees.

As we will see in the next article in this series, the settlement of Gooney Run Manor would prove to be rather more eventful than Lord Fairfax might have anticipated and, despite the Lord’s close friendship with George Washington, was at the center of a major dispute between leaseholders and Lord Fairfax’s family in the decade following the Revolutionary War.

NOTE: Anyone who owns property in or around Browntown today is living on land that was originally part of Gooney Run Manor. Despite searching various archives, we have been unable to locate a copy of one of the original Gooney Run Manor leases. If you do know someone who owns one, please let Tom Lacombe know as we would love to see it.

Browntown Road Cleanup

Please join the Izaak Walton League on December 14 for our quarterly cleanup efforts on Browntown Road. We will meet at 1:00 p.m. in the parking lot of the Mormon Church at the 340 end of Browntown Road. Please wear good walking or hiking shoes, gloves, and bring a water bottle. Trash pickers, trash bags, and safety vests will be provided. If it helps, please know that fresh pizza and fresh chocolate chip cookies will be provided. For more information, please contact Bill Lacy, Izaak Walton League Anti Litter Coordinator at Blacy358@gmail.com. Hope you can join us!



The BEARR Group Keeping Our Community Safe

Web
Instagram

BEARRGroup.com
[@bearr_group](https://www.instagram.com/bearr_group)

Facebook
X

[BEARR Group](https://www.facebook.com/BEARR_Group)
[@BEARR_Group](https://twitter.com/BEARR_Group)

Reflective Address Signs

3
5
1
2

These signs are invaluable to first responders trying to find your house in an emergency. The cost is \$25 payable on delivery. Order yours at our website, by email to Chris Lewis at chris@bearrgroup.com, or call Brian Wilkinson at 703-389-7288.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE! If you have already bought one of these signs but have not yet installed it, please contact us ASAP. We will be happy to install it at no charge other than the cost of a new post, if required.

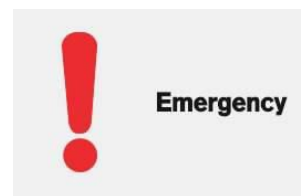
WILDFIRE RISK LIKELY TO INCREASE OVER COMING WEEKS OWING TO A COMBINATION OF DRY FUELS, GUSTY WINDS, AND LOW HUMIDITY.



On November 4 and November 16, the NOAA and the US National Weather Service issued their first Red Flag Warnings for our area this fall. On November 7, three brush fires broke out in Warren County, including one that burned about 100 acres on Buck Mountain. (see photo on left). Reportedly all three brush fires were from downed power lines.

Unless we get more rain in the coming months, the probability of more wildfires breaking out will remain high. Make sure you get an early warning of any brush fires in your immediate area and any Red Flag Warnings.

The American Red Cross has recently enhanced its free Red Cross [“Emergency” app](#) to help you to be better prepared. You can use it to set up personalized alerts, including local weather and wildfire risks. You can download the app onto your iPhone or Android phone.



If you are using Facebook, also check out the Warren County Fire and Rescue Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/warrencountyfire/>. This page is a good backup, rather than substitute, for the Red Cross Emergency App).

Browntown Baptist Church

12 Browntown Road
Bentonville, VA 22610

Pastor: Sherman Kaipha Brown

Worship Service @ 11 a.m.

Fellowship @ 12 p.m.

browntownbaptistva@gmail.com

Check out Browntown Baptist Church's new website:

- Watch/listen to sermons
- Send in a prayer request
- Log on to Bible Study every Wednesday night
- Read about the history of our church
- See calendar of events

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.

GO FETCHETT LAWN CARE LLC

DAVID JENKINS | OWNER

☎ (540)823-0744 & (540)636-4952

✉ davidjenkins930@icloud.com

📍 511 Fetchett Road
Browntown, VA 22610




**HIDDEN SPRINGS
SENIOR LIVING**

SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY IN BENTONVILLE VIRGINIA

Your next adventure starts here...

Life is a journey and every stage has its milestones. At Hidden Springs Senior Living, we honor the path traveled and help embrace the road ahead with purpose and support. Located in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley just minutes south of Front Royal, experience Assisted Living, Advanced Care and Memory Care in a community designed for comfort and connection.

**ASSISTED LIVING
ADVANCED CARE
MEMORY CARE**

Hidden Springs
Senior Living
973 Buck Mountain Road
Bentonville, VA 22610
540-636-2008
hiddenspringseniorliving.com



Browntown Community Center Association
96 Browntown Road
Browntown, VA 22610

Return Service Requested

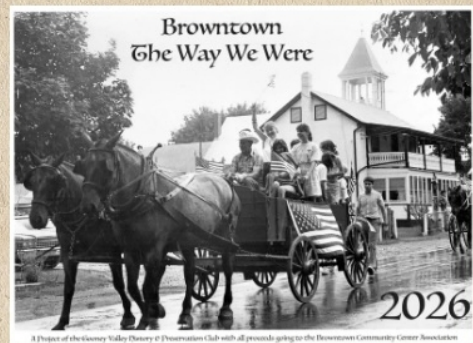
Postal Customer
Bentonville, VA 22610

The Browntown Boys

These old boys were fantastic. Their first performance was Nov. 19 and they played to a packed house at the center. Folks were clapping their hands and singing along. Songs ranged from old-time favorites like “Shenandoah” to Hank Williams to the Beatles. Tom can’t wait for them to perform again.



2026 HISTORIC BROWNTOWN PHOTOS CALENDAR



\$20

**AN IDEAL PRESENT
FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY**

Buy now at O.J. Rudacille Store
& Glen Manor Vineyards