



“Along the Gooney”

Browntown Community Center Association

June, 2025

Vol. 33 No. 06 Editors: Jackie Hodgkiss Jackie.BCCA@gmail.com & Tom Lacombe tomlacombe@comcast.net

BCCA Board of Directors - 2025

President	Martha Buracker	540-671-6349
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June 9th Mon. BCCA Public Meeting 7:30p.m.

June 14th Saturday, Flag Day

June 15th Sunday, Fathers Day

June 20th First day of Summer

June 24th Deadline for July newsletter articles

Browntown Baptist Church

12 Browntown Road

Bentonville, VA 22610

Pastor: Sherman Kaipha Brown

Worship Service @ 11 a.m. Fellowship @ 12 p.m.

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

Much appreciation to church member, Tracy Abbott, for his hard work on our website. Stay tuned for more updates. Below is the link.

[**browntownbaptistva@gmail.com**](mailto:browntownbaptistva@gmail.com)

Cool Spring Church of God

Pastor: Jeff Fletcher

Sunday School at 9:30 and Worship at 10:30.

Limeton Community Church

9 Limeton Main St. Bentonville, VA

Pastor Lorne Fyfe

SS at 10 and service at 11



NEWSLETTER

- FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED ASSISTED LIVING, ADVANCED AND MEMORY CARE
- WINNER 4 YEARS - AWARDED BEST ASSISTED SENIOR LIVING FACILITY BY NY DAILY
- AMENITIES - DINING, ACTIVITIES, HOUSEKEEPING, LAUNDRY, NURSING CARE



BIRTHDAYS

Residents

6/4 - Charlotte Vaughn
6/6 - Ruby Morrison
6/25 - Mildred Partlow
6/28 - Junior Griffith

Staff

6/1 - Katlin Alger
6/3 - Heidi Jones
6/5 - Taylor Thompsen
6/6 - Kayla Haase
6/18 - Jackie Delawder
6/18 - Athea Feaster
6/27 - Amanda Santmyers
6/29 - Aron Davison

Anniversaries

Ron + Miriam Parsons 6/11/99
Catherine + Paul Mishler 6/24/54

ACTIVITIES

Highlights

Make Ice Cream - June 2nd
National Cheese Day - June 4th
DIY Birdfeeders - June 9th
Ducklings - June 10th
Father's Day Cookout - June 13th
Summer Celebration - June 20th
Flower Pot Painting - June 23rd
Watermelon Social - June 27th

Bingo - Tuesday and Thursdays
Sew Circle with Joan - Thursdays
Gardening Club - Fridays
Weekly Cinema

OUTINGS

Tea and Talk - June 2nd
Joy Luncheon - June 4th
Picnic at the Park - June 18th
Jolly 60's Luncheon - June 19th
Walmart - June 11th
Library - June 23rd

HOLIDAYS

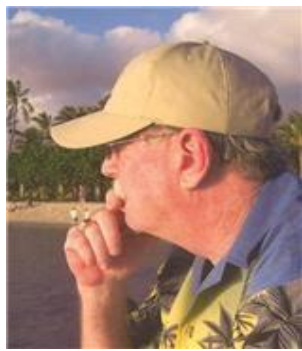
Flag Day 6/14
Father's Day 6/15
Juneteenth 6/19
First day of SUMMER 6/20

HIDDEN SPRINGS
— SENIOR LIVING

973 BUCK MOUNTAIN ROAD, BENTONVILLE VA 22610
WWW.HIDDENSPRINGSENIORLIVING.COM



Obituaries



Charles E. "Sonny" Cheeks Jr., 75, of Bentonville, Virginia passed away on Thursday, May 1, 2025 at his home. Sonny was born on July 9, 1949 in Marion, Virginia to the late Charles Sr. and Beulah McKinnon Cheeks. He was also preceded in death by his sister, Gloria Dodson. He graduated from Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, Maryland in 1968 and retired from both IBM and Lockheed Martin. After his retirement he worked for the ABC store in Front Royal, Virginia and at the Shenandoah Golf Course to keep busy. Sonny loved building anything out of wood, collecting coins and guns and playing golf. He loved his family and friends and would answer a call for help any time someone needed it. His heart was huge, his word was his bond and you could always count on him to tell you the truth. He was a member of the Front Royal Moose Lodge 829 and a lifetime member of the South Warren Volunteer Fire Department, serving as Fire Chief and President.

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Patricia I. Cheeks of Bentonville; honorary granddaughter, Selei Buracker of Norfolk, Virginia; four Godsons, Bob Love, Mike Love and Bruce Love all of Lufkin, Texas and Zachary Keyser of Frederick, Maryland; Goddaughter, Kelly Adams of Manassas, Virginia; two sisters, Regina Medlin of San Antonio, Texas and Rebecca Keyser of Damascus, Maryland; brother, Roy E. Cheeks of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; sister-in-law, Linda Bates of Sand Springs, Oklahoma; brother-in-law, Donald M. Ingram of Kearneysville, West Virginia and his fur babies, Peanut and Chicka.

Memorial gifts may be made to the South Warren Volunteer Fire Department, 3330 Stonewall Jackson Highway, Bentonville, Virginia 22610; to the Humane Society of Warren County, 1245 Progress Drive, Front Royal, Virginia 22630 or to the Ragged Mountain Dogs, 1415 Nethers Road, Sperryville, Virginia 22740.

JUNE NEWS RESIDENTS OF HIDDEN SPRINGS

A glimpse of summertime is finally making an appearance at Hidden Springs! While recent rain and mild temperatures have kept things cool, there's no doubt that summer is just around the corner. For our residents that means longer days, warmer weather, and the chance to soak in the surrounding beauty. We are excited to welcome the season and all the outdoor moments it brings like picnics, porch rocking, and sunny afternoons. Not five, not eight, but ten rockers all in a row and ready for summer porch fun. They also provide the perfect opportunity for friendly welcomes from our loosely organized (but highly spirited) meet and greet regulars! These rockers are making it easy to gather, bird watch, and enjoy warm weather. Who knows? With ten rockers, we might need to formally organize an HSSL Porch Rockers Club! Taking care of our brains through regular activity, healthy eating, social connection, and mental stimulation helps us live fuller, more active lives at every stage. June brings raised awareness to Alzheimer's and brain health as we recognize how these diseases affect memory, thinking, and behavior. We show our support to those living with these conditions and talk about the importance of brain health at every age. We honor individuals, families, and caregivers affected by these challenges.

O.J. Rudacille Gen. Mdse.

Check us out on Facebook for Browntown History

Phone 540-636-2149

Serving Browntown since 1884



Hours: Mon-Sat 9 to 5

Sunday Noon to 4

Call Phoenix for auto detailing- 434-978-8968

Our 2025 Historic Browntown Calendar was a great success. We printed 275 and SOLD OUT. Please help us do the same in 2026.

Time to Dig Out Those Old Photos!

GOONEY VALLEY HISTORY CLUB

WHY OUR VILLAGE COULD BE CALLED JAKE'S TOWN, RATHER THAN BROWNTOWN



NOTE: This is the second of two articles – the first (in the May 2025 Newsletter) focused on the time before Browntown existed as a village. This second article, focuses on the man (i.e “Jake”) who actually built most of the historic buildings in Browntown.

The first known reference to a village called “Brownton or Brownville” was in a Confederate Civil War Map prepared by Captain and Engineer Jedediah Hotchkiss in 1862. The map shows only about 11 houses in the village.

The name “Browntown” was first used in a local newspaper in 1870, although “Gooney Manor” continued to be the more common name for the Browntown area until 1874. In the late 1870s everything changed! Two 1879 articles in the Warren Sentinel declared that: “The village of Browntown seven years ago would hardly have deserved that name, for it could only boast of three or four houses, a blacksmith shop and, in apple time, a brandy camp.....Browntown is improving fast and now has a population of 155.”

WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT THIS CHANGE?

In the early 1870s James Boyd began to sell half-acre lots along both sides of the Gooney, north of the mill, and a village was born which would soon become a major manufacturing center

In 1874 the Cover Brothers, two Lutherans from Pennsylvania, bought up huge tracts of land in the valley and opened a tannery which employed large numbers of workers. Besides the men who worked in the tannery, there were timbermen who cut the oak, peelers who removed the bark from the trees, and the teamsters who hauled timber, bark, and the finished products. Other factories that existed in Browntown were a hardwood factory, a stave factory, and a handle factory. There was also a cooper shop and a wheelwright shop, licensed distilleries and taverns, and up to three or four stores. In 1882, Old School Baptists, Missionary (Southern) Baptists, Methodists, and Lutherans purchased a lot and erected a union church. A decade later, the affluent Lutherans bought another lot and erected their own church.

In 1890, the Browntown School was relocated to the lot next to the union church and in 1907 a new school was built, that is now our Community Center. This industrial boom ended when the tannery closed and moved to North Carolina. Other factories also closed soon after, leaving only C.T. Edmonds woodworking factory which finally closed when Mr. Edmonds died in 1927.

SO WHY COULD “JAKE’S TOWN” BE A MORE APPROPRIATE NAME THAN BROWNTOWN?

The reason is simple – most of the historic buildings that you see in Browntown today have nothing to do with the Brown brothers from Brownsville, MD. The man who built Browntown was Jacob (“Jake”) Masemer, a Lutheran, born Hanover, Pennsylvania 1852, who moved to Browntown in 1871 as a single man. He was married three times & had 8 children and died in Browntown in 1925.

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President's Message

Greetings Everyone,

Well it's almost summer. The kids are out of school and, with all this rain, the gardens are growing by leaps and bounds! Please be careful on the roads as there will soon be tractors and equipment out and about as hay season begins. As always, a reminder to drive a little slower, be safe and enjoy the view.

With the Redbud Festival behind us, we are on to summer events.

First will be the **Kids Art Camps** in July. The kids had a great time last year at Art Camp, and so this year Jessie has expanded it with a different theme for each camp and the camps designed for different age groups. See our flyer in the newsletter for more info and on our Browntown Community Center Facebook Page for additional info on each camp and what it entails. Space will be limited so get your kiddo's signed up early.

Next will be our **Community Yard Sale** on Friday, July 18 and Saturday July 19th. This one is for your own personal Yard Sale tables. Our front room will be available and table's are \$15 each per day. We have a limited number of spaces inside so reserve that spot ASAP if you want a table or two. The backroom is currently filled with items for our BCCA Fall Yard Sale, so that room is not available. However, we have lots of spaces available outside. Outside space is \$15 per day, but you will need to bring your own tables, tent, etc, but you get a much larger space. So those of you with lots of stuff, outside may be your best bet. We will have our kitchen open for food sales and the restrooms available for all. There is a flyer in the newsletter with additional info and I've also posted this on the Browntown Community Center Facebook Page. So stay tuned on Facebook for updates!

The regular BCCA Fall Yard Sale will be two weekends, September 12 & 13 and 19th and 20th. So "Save the Date" on your calendar; if you have donations, contact Patsy Pennington at 540-635-5568.

As for the Community Center building, our Trustees and Buildings and Grounds Committee have been meeting to determine immediate needs, future needs and also our "wants". Obviously, immediate needs take precedence and our current soffit, fascia and gutters are in dire need of replacement. Along with replacement of the urinals in the men's room as they are ancient and work kinda iffy, (which isn't good). So stay tuned in the future as we may have a fundraising dinner this summer to help offset the cost of our upcoming projects. The little kids cabin outside in the play area had deteriorated and has been removed. Our kitchen will be getting a new stand up freezer, (as a vote at the last meeting was to get a new one. The current small freezer isn't big enough for both the BCCA needs and food storage for the Food Pantry. Along with that purchase one of our members and active volunteers decided it would be a good idea to have a matching refrigerator, so thank you to Jim and Debbie Sylvester for the donation of the matching refrigerator!

Our Browntown Website is now being updated so stay tuned for a new look.

<https://browntowncommunity.com/> BCCA Member Gene Raymond has stepped up and offered to help with this, and George Hodgkiss has decided he's good with being Gene's back-up. George is our original Website Manager and we can't thank him enough for all the work he has done, both on the website and for the Browntown Community Center itself, over the last 30 years!

The next meeting of the BCCA will be Monday, June 9th at 7:30.

Take care,

Martha Buracker, President BCCA



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®

The Browntown Community Center is sponsoring a

Browntown Community Yard Sale

Friday, July 18 & Saturday July 19

9 am - 3pm both days

Sell your stuff! Make some cash!



**Inside Tables \$15 ea
Outside Space \$15 bring your
own tables and tent**

Food will be sold by BCCA in the Kitchen

**For more information or
reserve a spot call**

**540-671-6349 or email martha buracker at
marthaburacker@gmail.com**

**96 Browntown Rd,
Browntown, VA
22610**



**Creativity
Awaits**

KIDS SUMMER ART CAMP

**Browntown Community
Center
96 Browntown rd
Bentonville VA 22610**



Camp Dates & Theme (all camps are 2 days 9am-3pm)

- Food Sculptures (Ages 8-12) July 7th/8th
- All Things Bugs (Ages 4-8) July 10th/11th
- Fairy Garden (Ages 6-11) July 22nd/23rd
- Art CAMP (Ages 8-12) July 24th/25th
- Unicorns & Rainbows (Ages 5-9) July 28th/29th

Registration Information:

please reach out to me (Jessie Sprouse) to register your kiddo or feel free to ask me any questions. All materials are included. snacks and drinks will be provided. Please pack a lunch.



**Join Me for a Summer
Filled with Fun, Learning,
and Exploration!**

Admission
per camp
\$100

Text or Email

540-622-4592

jessielynnsprouse@gmail.com



JUNE, 2025 UPDATE - THE BEARR GROUP "KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE"

THE BEARR GROUP IS NOW ONLINE at BEARRGroup.com

Facebook: BEARR Group Instagram: @bearr_group Twitter: @bearr_group

911 REFLECTIVE SIGNS -- HAVE YOU GOT YOURS YET?

These signs are invaluable to first-responders trying to find your house in an emergency.

Cost: \$25 (payable on delivery)

Order yours at BEARRGroup.com or email Chris Lewis at chris@BEARRGroup.com or call 540-538-9928.

HELP AVAILABLE FROM WARREN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

EMERGENCY ALERTS- Want to receive emergency alerts for inclement weather alerts & other emergencies in Warren County? Warren County Sheriff's Office is partnering with Smart911™.

If you are interested in signing up for alerts, visit: smart911.com



Text-To-911 is the ability to send a "short message" (SMS) to 911 when you are unable to make a voice 911 call.

Texting provides a method for individuals to contact a 9-1-1 center for help in situations where their safety could be in jeopardy if they were to be heard speaking. It also provides individuals with special needs or who may not be able to speak, access to emergency services when they need help or want to report an emergency.

****NOTE:** Like other 911 calls, Text-to-911 should only be used for emergencies. While text to 9-1-1 offers an additional means to contact emergency services, voice communication is always preferred as the best form of communication.

If you try to send a text to 911 where Text-to-911 service is NOT available, you will receive a "bounce-back" message stating Text-to-911 is unavailable & you should contact emergency services by another means, such as a voice call or telecommunications relay services (the latter for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability).

GO FETCHETT LAWN CARE LLC

DAVID JENKINS | OWNER

(540)823-0744 & (540)636-4952

davidjenkins930@icloud.com

511 Fetchett Road

Browntown, VA 22610



Browntown Community Center Assoc.
96 Browntown Road
Browntown, VA 22610
Return Service Requested

Postal Customer
Bentonville, VA 22610

Continued from page 3

His occupation is listed on his death certificate simply as “contractor”, but during his life he was one of Browntown’s most well-known farmers, builders, and merchants.

Although Jacob Masemer’s name is unfamiliar to most of the current inhabitants of Browntown, his legacy can be seen in the many historic buildings in the village of Browntown, including the 1907 school building (now the BCCA), the Union and Baptist churches, the O.J. Rudacille store and the beautiful “Creekside” house at the corner of Smith Run and Gooney Manor Loop. Without Jacob, our beautiful village would not exist. So, step aside Abraham and Samuel. You got us started but there really is only one man who can lay claim to being the founding father of Browntown.

