



# BLACK'S FORT MESSENGER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA

Volume IV, Issue II

OCT/NOV/DEC 2010



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Go Green  
Community

A Call to Arms

Anniversary  
Celebrations

# THE TOWN OF ABINGDON

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## **Administration**

**Town Manager** Greg Kelly

Mark Godbey.....	<b>Finance Director</b>	<b>Town Clerk</b> .....	Cecile Rosenbaum
Myra Cook.....	<b>Tourism Director</b>	<b>Police Chief</b> .....	Tony Sullivan
Garrett Jackson.....	<b>Town Planner</b>	<b>Information Technology</b> .....	Floyd Bailey
Deb Icenhour.....	<b>Town Attorney</b>	<b>Economic Development/Grant Writer</b> .....	Jim Cowart
Marion Watts.....	<b>Building Inspector</b>	<b>Public Works Director (Streets Division)</b> .....	John Dew
Joey Burke.....	<b>Fire Chief</b>	<b>Public Works Director (Wastewater Division)</b>	Jim Smith
Jim Hicks.....	<b>Human Resources &amp; Safety</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Recreation Director</b> .....	Kevin Worley

**For questions or comments email: [abingdonnews@abingdon.com](mailto:abingdonnews@abingdon.com)**

# FROM THE UPPER DECK

As I sat down to write this quarter's message of the newsletter, I thought to myself, has it really been three months since our last edition? Sure enough, it has and sure enough that old adage holds true that "time flies when you're having fun" as well as when you're staying busy. And busy at having fun, we definitely have been. When I say we, I mean you too, of course, because my fun after all, is in trying to make and keep the public happy and satisfied with the direction that the Town is moving in. All I can say is that I still feel a strong vibe whenever I see people out at an event or just out strolling the streets and it's a good vibe. A good enough vibe that it traveled with me completely across the state as I was invited to attend the Rappahannock- Rapidan Regional Commission's "Living Towns" Conference in Culpepper, Virginia to speak about how and why Abingdon's tourism has continued to grow and prosper during the tough economy times of the past four years. Unbeknownst to me at the time, some members from that Commission recently visit Abingdon and were awestruck at the many things we had going on while they were here. The Commission entitled my presentation as the "Abingdon Renaissance." My message at this conference was simple. I just reiterated that we have a rich culture, a thriving arts and entertainment community and we have the great outdoors with all its recreational amenities at our disposal every day of the year. Not to mention, we now have a strong public commitment to our success. Put that in front of the backdrop of our scenic mountains and waterways along with Abingdon being strategically located in the heart of a booming Southeastern U.S. region and we sell ourselves quite effectively. I must say that during my trip, there were several presentations (none from as far away as Abingdon) and without a doubt we drew the most interest in the numbers of questions and positive comments. This was a very rewarding and productive trip for me as a manager and for you as a town.



I'm known among some of my professional peers as the eternal optimist. I don't go looking for problems, I don't stir pots to create problems but I try to go the extra mile to prevent them or to turn a negative into a positive. As a result, I now feel a synergy alive and well in Abingdon where more and more of our residents are joining our team effort in making good decisions and transforming negatives into positives. For that I am grateful for our strong community support. We have however had one noteworthy problem in Abingdon this past quarter; we have had way too much going on for everyone to be able to attend everything. A problem for sure, but a good problem to have, don't you think? It has definitely given people lots and lots of reasons to keep the "feet on the street."

Well that's my take on the last quarter. Until next time, be on the lookout for the opening of "A Summer for all Seasons: A Remembrance of Abingdon's very own Andrew Summers" at the Star Museum, a tribute to a native of Abingdon. Also be sure to take in a play or just spend the day shopping and dining. As always, my hats off to all the "worker bees" that make the honey for the Town. To all, enjoy your fall and rest assured more of a good thing is yet to come.

Very Truly Yours,



Think Green Live Green! is a phrase that you will be hearing and seeing a lot of in the future, it's the tagline of the Abingdon Go Green Committee's logo. The committee has been working hard this year to spread the word about the importance of "going green" in our community. The Go Green Committee or GGC currently has 18 members including Town employees, concerned citizens and representatives from area businesses.

The GGC has had many successes with various projects such as sponsoring an E-waste Recycling Day; a successful Earth Day 2010 celebration; sponsoring Rain Barrel and Stream Monitoring workshops and providing 2 local recycling trailers for community use.

Upcoming projects include participation in the America Recycles Day (an event held every year on November 15); a presence at the Home Energy Expo on November 6 to be held at the Abingdon Senior Citizen's Center and as always our huge Earth Day Celebration next spring.

The committee has more project ideas in the works and a new website coming soon! Be sure to check us out on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/abingdongogreen!](http://www.facebook.com/abingdongogreen!)

## KIM KINGSLEY

Kim Kingsley is the Administrative Assistant to the Town Attorney. She graduated from Abingdon High School and has worked in the legal field for thirty years. Kim assists the Town Attorney in civil actions, enforcement and prosecution violations of the Town Code, collection of delinquent accounts and debts of all types owed to the locality, various real estate transactions and various other duties.

Kim resides in Abingdon, Virginia with her husband, Ronnie. She enjoys spending time with her large family and selling Premier Designs Jewelry. She is a MiMi to two wonderful little boys and is anxiously expecting a third grandchild in May, 2011.



## ELIZABETH MINNICK



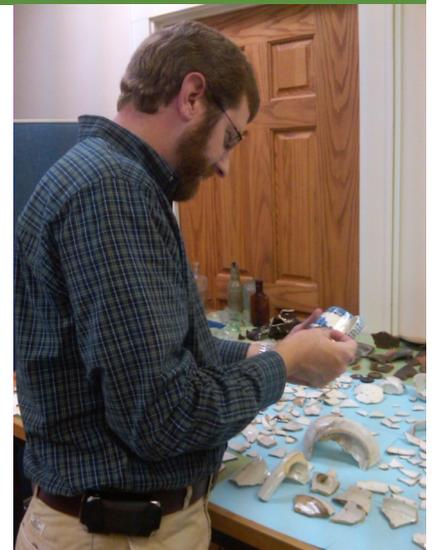
Beth is an Abingdon native and graduated from Abingdon High School in 1998. She attended VCU in Richmond, VA for one year before transferring to Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. Beth graduated from ASU in 2001 with a BS Geographic Information Systems. She was offered a leadership position with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) in Estes Park, Colorado, but had to fulfill that internship requirement with the Washington County Service Authority in Abingdon, in order to be closer to family. She has worked for the Town since August of 2002 as the GIS Technician in the Public Works Department.

Beth has 2 dogs; Sophie, a miniature schnauzer and Molly, a lab. She discovered her love for long distance running in October, 2005 and has completed 4 marathons, including Boston in 2007, 14- 50k Trail Races, 3 -40 Mile Trail Races, and her first 50-Miler, last fall, which she will be running again in November. When not running, Beth enjoys hiking, cooking, stained glass, reading, camping, biking, snowboarding, and travel.

## SEAN TAYLOR

Sean is a native of Emory, VA, attended Patrick Henry High School graduated from Emory and Henry College in 1998 with a BA History and a minor in Political Science. Sean is the Assistant Town Planner and concentrates on zoning and historic preservation initiatives. He became involved with historic preservation through an internship his senior year which involved historic surveying in Carter County, TN. Previous to his employment with the Town of Abingdon Sean worked in the libraries of King College and North Carolina State University. Sean has worked for the Town since April 2008. On July 31, 2010 he completed the qualifications to become a Certified Zoning Official in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Sean is married to Christi Boaz Taylor, an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church. They have one daughter; Emily who recently turned 2 years old and are expecting another daughter in March.





## Town holds leash-cutting ceremony at new Dog Park!

On Thursday, August 12th the Town opened it's dog park on the grounds of the Harry L. Coomes Rec-reation Center. The park is located behind the skate park, with a parking lot and access off of Walden Road. Sitting on a 1-acre lot, with 3/4 of the lot enclosed by a 5' high vinyl coat double gated fence, the park gives pet owners a place to unleash pets and allow them a bit of exercise.

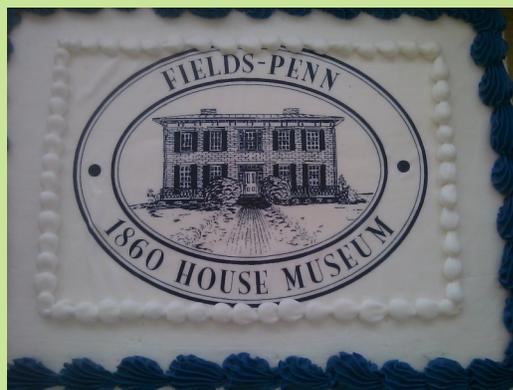
The park is open 7 days a week from daylight to dark. Benches and doggie bags are provided for your convenience. Come and socialize as your dogs enjoy some wide open exercise.



## Fields-Penn Celebrates 150 years!

Fields-Penn 1860 House Museum celebrated 150 years on September 25, 2010. Betsy White spoke to the more than 30 people who attended a breakfast honoring the Fields and Penn families and the work of those who began the house museum. Town officials were in attendance in the early afternoon, birthday cake and art projects were available to all that attended despite the rainy weather.

At the Fields-Penn House, visitors can experience nineteenth-century middle-class life in Southwest Virginia through the eyes of two families. James Fields originally built the home in 1860 for his wife, Susan, and their growing family. George and Estelle Penn and their eight children moved into the home in the 1890s and lived there for over half a century. Tours through the house's rooms display a range of furniture, costumes, paintings, and decorative arts from the nineteenth century. Visitors can explore the kitchen garden, featuring flowers, herbs, and vegetables grown during the period. In addition to the home's period rooms and their furnishings, the museum also features pieces from the William King Museum's Cultural Heritage Collection, which includes regional furniture, pottery, and other decorative arts. The Cultural Heritage Project seeks to preserve the artistic legacy of Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee.



## Abingdon Baptist Church is turning 100!

The church will officially turn 100 years old on Saturday, October 23, 2010. The congregation has been “Celebrating the Journey” all year long. They will be culminating this special occasion from October 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>. On October 16, 2010 Abingdon Baptist members and special guests will meet at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center for dinner with guest speaker Fred Anderson, Executive Director Virginia Baptist Historical Society. Sunday morning worship service will also be held at the SVHEC on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am.

On Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, the church will host the Virginia Baptist Male Chorale at the Barter Theater at 7 pm. This event is free to the public and is a “thank you” to the town of Abingdon and the other main street churches. The congregation is holding this event in honor of the members of the community who in 1907 saw a need for a Baptist church building in Abingdon.

These individuals collected funds, selected trustees and were given a lot by Captain Henley M. Fugate in honor of his son, the Reverend Henley Fugate. People from all denominations in Abingdon assisted in the erection of the building. Abingdon Baptist was the first church in Abingdon to have a building before it had a congregation.

Abingdon Baptist continues to grow under the direction of Pastor Dr. Steven Pollard and Minister of Music Park Deans. The church has also have compiled a cookbook. They are for sale at the church for \$20.

## Celebrate the Journey



## Fishin' at the Cement Pond!

Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> was a perfect day for the kids!!! 102 kids registered and the morning began with lots of fishing, and continued with several other events throughout the day. We focused on Kid's Fitness, Fun and Safety. Children were given cards with all of the stations, and in order to qualify for the grand prizes, they had to visit each one. Stations included: Boothe Chiropractic – Back Pack Safety; Virginia Department of Health – Handwashing 101; Champion Cycles – Helmet Safety; Washington County Sheriff's Dept – Fingerprinting; Pediatric Dentistry – Dental Hygiene; Anita Givens, R.D, Southeast Culinary College – Building Healthy Snack Stations; CRC Staff – Sports Clinics; CRC Lifeguards – Water Safety; CRC Staff – Fall Arts and Craft station; CRC Staff – Nature Scavenger Hunt; CRC Staff – Wall Climbing / Bouncers. Everyone in attendance received a free brown bag lunch as well as lots of other give-aways throughout the day, to include a kid's bike, family membership, and more!!



ABINGDON PARKS AND RECREATION PRESENTS

# SLEEPY HOLLOW

Saturday, October 23, 2010  
Market Pavilion  
6-9 pm

Come out and Play...  
if you Dare!!

An evening filled with spooky fun and games, food, fortune telling and live entertainment. Get there early for storytelling and our famous costume parade!!

Free Admission



*“Community Energy Event Planned for this Fall”*

A Community Energy Expo planned for this November will raise awareness and educate the community about how to make local residents’ homes more energy efficient and healthy and reduce high utility bills. Topics will include air-sealing, energy audits, insulation, other weatherization practices, renewable energy and more. Props and other materials will be used for hands-on demonstrations. People Incorporated of Virginia and Transitions Abingdon/Washington County are planning a community energy event for this fall. The event will feature speakers and demonstrations by People Inc. staff and other local professionals.

Sponsorship and demonstration opportunities are available for local businesses that would like a booth at the event. Businesses that offer products and services that homeowners, business owners and other residents can use to apply energy efficiency topics discussed are encouraged to participate. Current sponsors include Berry’s Home Center, Advanced Heat & Air and the Town of Abingdon Go Green Committee.

The event will take place at the Abingdon Senior Center on Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to 4:00pm. This event will be free and open to the public. Please contact Nick Safay at People Inc. for more information at [nsafay@peopleinc.net](mailto:nsafay@peopleinc.net) or 276-619-2254.

## Your house is leaking energy & \$\$\$\$ ! Learn how to tighten it up ~ FREE



### Community Home Energy EXPO Everyone welcome—home owners, renters

Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am-4pm,  
Abingdon Senior Center

Energy-efficiency info to “do-it-yourself”  
Home weatherization and rehab demonstrations  
Renewable energy presentations  
Home energy auditors ~ contractors ~ vendors  
Free Snacks ~ The Gauges will offer lunch for sale

**Sponsors:** Berry’s Home Center, Advanced Heat & Air, People Incorporated of Virginia, Transition Abingdon/Washington Co., and the Town of Abingdon—Go Green Committee.

**Directions:** From I-81 Exit 17, go north towards Abingdon on Cummings St., one block past Main St., turn right on Valley St. Take the third left after Johnston Memorial Hospital on Whites Mill Rd. Make first right turn onto Senior Drive. The Abingdon Senior Center is the large building on the left.

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**This event is open to the public at no charge.** Contact Nick Safay at People Inc. for information—[nsafay@peopleinc.net](mailto:nsafay@peopleinc.net) or 276-619-2254.

# Still Going Green ...

In an effort to provide recycling opportunities for those not served by the Town's curbside recycling, we have placed recyclable collection trailers at the accessible locations below:

**Latture Field** parking lot, next to the Abingdon Police Station  
425 West Main Street



**Coomes Center** parking lot  
300 Stanley Street



The trailers have separated bins to collect the following materials:

**Aluminum and Metal Cans**

**Plastics** – No. 1 and No. 2 (look for number stamped on the plastic inside “recycle triangle”)

**Mixed paper** – Office paper, newspaper, magazines, mail items

**Cardboard** – please break down boxes

\*\*\* Please help us make this effort successful by keeping trash out of the trailers \*\*\*

The Town of Abingdon is now going online to sell surplus equipment and vehicles.

If you are interested in viewing or bidding on the Town's surplus items, follow this link:

<http://www.publicsurplus.com/sms/abingdon.va/list/current?orgid=98036>

You can also view and bid on other surplus items from all of the United States and Canada from the provider's homepage at [www.publicsurplus.com](http://www.publicsurplus.com). The site offers features including a search specific item or category, and a search by state, territory, or specific agency.

You must register with the site to bid on items.



It was a week of celebration and anniversaries at the Abingdon Muster Grounds! This year marks the 230<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain Campaign and the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Town's 'A Call to Arms' Colonial Education Program. Though numbers were down from last year's, over 1100 students, teachers and parents attended the 3-day program from September 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. The Overmountain Men were in town for their annual commemorative 'muster days'.



Children came from as far away as Hurley, VA, in Buchanan County and re-enactors from as far away as Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina, and as close as right here in Abingdon were on hand to demonstrate life in the Colonial Backcountry. Students learned Colonial Common Knowledge, Colonial Geography and Surveying and about the African-American and Native American experiences. The French Lace-make, from Mount Vernon, and his wife were on hand again this year; always a favorite of the children. This year was also special because for the first time, an archaeological "test-pit" was open for the students to view and even take home a special treasure, like one might find in such a dig. Thanks to all the re-enactors, Town staff and community members who made this event possible and a continual success!

## Town Dedicates New Interpretive Center to Local Leader

With a crowd of over 150 in attendance, the Town dedicated the Muster Grounds Interpretive Center on the evening of September 23<sup>rd</sup>, officially naming it the "W. Blair Keller, Jr., Interpretive Center", in honor of the man who has personally kept the story alive since 1978. Mr. Keller, a Washington County native and who has been a leader in the Scouting community for over 60 years, serves on the Muster Grounds Steering Committee. Mr. Keller has walked the length of the Overmountain Victory Trail annually, for the better part of 32 years; even once on horseback, the entire 330 miles!

The Watauga Fife and Drums from Sycamore Shoals, Elizabethton, TN, were on hand to ring in the festivities. Special guests Ms. Patricia Hatfield, State Regent, Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution, Mr. Paul Carson, Superintendent of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and Ms. Julia Glad, Communications and Outreach Coordinator for the Partnership for National Scenic and Historic Trails, all spoke on why the project was so spe-



cial for our Commonwealth and Country and should be a symbol of pride for the citizens of Abingdon.

The Interpretive Center is Southwest Virginia's first (and only) Revolutionary War center. Through January 1, 2011, the exhibit "Redcoats: The British Soldier in the South During the American Revolution" is on display. The Charleston Museum in Charleston, South Carolina has loaned the exhibit to the Town until our own exhibit will be completed by the National Park Service Design Team out of Harper's Ferry, WV. Also, stop by to browse through the retail shop. Saw a souvenir at Jamestown you didn't purchase and regret it? No problem! The Center will stock most gift shop items that you would find in Yorktown, Jamestown, Kings Mountain or any other National Park! Better yet, teachers and students get discounts on all purchases!

**The Muster Grounds is the northern trail-head of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and a National Park Certified Site.**



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Town Council Meetings  
First Monday of Each Month  
7:30pm  
Town Hall  
Public Welcome

Board of Architectural Review  
First Wednesday of Each Month  
5:00pm  
Town Hall  
Public Welcome

Board of Zoning Appeals  
Second Tuesday of Each  
Month (if called)  
6:00pm  
Town Hall  
Public Welcome

Town Offices Closed  
Oct. 11th  
Columbus Day

Town Offices Closed  
Nov. 11th  
Veterans Day

Planning Commission  
Fourth Monday of Each Month  
5:30pm  
Town Hall  
Public Welcome