



Pulaski County Citizen Newsletter

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www.pulaskicounty.org
143 Third Street NW, Suite 1, Pulaski, VA 24301

(540) 980-7705



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County Administrator

Pulaski County's Experiential Center

Pulaski County announces the Experiential Center project that will creatively and strategically showcase the County's assets and resources.

Due to COVID-19's economic impact, the project aims to recognize and elevate Pulaski County's untouched economic potential and Pulaski County's assets, including education, industry, housing, health systems, lifestyle and outdoor recreation.

"It is essential that we differentiate ourselves from other communities that compete in our market for available talent and investments," said Jonathan Sweet, Pulaski County Administrator. "It is now more important than ever that we enhance our assets and innovation marketing sales methods to be a winner in this highly competitive post-COVID environment."

Pulaski County's Experiential Center will serve as a one-stop-shop resource and sales center for residents, developers, investors, employers and visitors. The Center aims to celebrate and serve the Pulaski County community by celebrating all aspects of the Pulaski County Community as well as the County's future.

"The number one commodity of the 21st Century is people, and people are what is going to make our economy strong, our community sustainable and our future prosperous," Sweet said. "Thus, we need to utilize every strategic approach to showcase all the exceptional elements of the County and grow to a healthy and favorable population of 40,000 by the year 2030."

The Experiential Center will be located at Pulaski County's current Visitor Center located in Dublin off of exit 98 on I-81. "Our building is beautiful and enriched with Pulaski County pride, but it is underused," said Peggy White, Pulaski County Tourism Director.

Pulaski County built the Visitor Center in 2002 and saw its peak in 2009 with 12,000 visitors. By 2018, the number of visitors declined to 6,000 with the influx of technological advancement and online resources. With COVID-19 and online reservation systems, the number of visitors to the center has declined to 495 visitors per year.

"What some see as the end of an era, we see as the beginning of an opportunity," White said.

Visitor Centers across the commonwealth are shutting down or reinventing themselves due to lack of utilization and online trends. Various visitor centers across the New River Valley have shut down in recent years.

As the concept for the Experiential Center developed, Pulaski County leadership had an opportunity to experience firsthand a sales center concept at the VDEP's Talent Accelerator in Richmond. From that encounter the excitement grew when they realized what a synergistic approach could do to promote and serve Pulaski County.

"The Experiential Center will position Pulaski County with the unique ability to showcase all the assets we have to offer under one roof," said Bill Cunningham, Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce President and Pulaski County Economic Development Authority Board Member. "This concept, along with all the other forward thinking projects we have in our County, will provide us the opportunity to become a next-level rural community."

The transformation aligns with Pulaski County's strategic plan and future housing and lifestyle developments.

The Experiential Center project and transformation will begin in Spring 2022.

The Time is Now

The one important component other than 'location, location, location', that most people agree is critical to the success of siting an important project is - 'Timing is everything'. I could not agree more, quite frankly, with both of these elements of success. With Pulaski County quickly evolving into a Next-Level Rural Community, many would believe the timing for many strategic initiatives are now. One specific project that has eluded Pulaski County for a very long time that became even more apparent as a result of the residual effects of COVID-19 is a community center for all our citizens to access and enjoy. With the shutout of our public school facilities to host sports and recreation activities within their gyms and other formerly accessible spaces, it further elevates the need and paradoxically the demand for such community facilities. The County recently undertook a complete restoration and upgrade of Central Gym using CARES funding and labor provided by our Parks & Recreation and General Properties Departments. The end product resulted in a beautifully restored gym that is now the most used indoor public sports facility in the County. Unlike many localities during the pandemic, Pulaski County worked creatively and resourcefully to safely continue to provide important recreational programming to our youth. We had to run the entirety of our Parks & Recreation youth and adult programs out of only two County gymnasiums - Central and Old Riverlawn. Although this was a difficult and daunting feat of logistical brilliance, it significantly limits the County and our citizens with what programming we can offer. Because of what we are now learning to be the post-COVID mental health impacts from closures, social distancing, loss of access to healthy outlets, and all of the other negative residual fallout, it has never been more important for communities to focus on what healthy programs and activities we can provide to our citizens. I know what you are thinking because I have done my homework on the subject matter, and know that the County pursued the dream of a recreation facility in the not so distant past. That effort was met with fierce objection by a few and the project never had the opportunity to advance. That was over 10 years ago, and now here we are. Perhaps having had that level of capacity along with the dedicated and creative Parks & Recreation Team we have today, would have allowed us to have continued on with programs, activities and initiatives for our youth and our young and seasoned adults during and after the pandemic. Unfortunately, we will never know. I appreciate that there are a lot of questions to answer before we can embark on such an important and noble cause, such as: "what exactly? where exactly? and, how much exactly." As the County looks to keep our most important asset here (our children), attract new talent to our community and create an environment that will host new economic opportunity, it may be the appropriate time to answer those important three questions. At this juncture I do not know what exactly we would build, where exactly it would go, or exactly how much it would be, but one thing I do know considering the critical need for indoor recreational space and the importance of youth and adult sports and programs are to our physical and mental health - the time is now.

Pulaski County is...Ready to Move Forward.

Jonathan D. Sweet, ICMA-CM
County Administrator

Pulaski County Employment Opportunities

PSA Deputy Director of Water/Wastewater
PCPS Fire/Medics
Planning & Zoning Director
E-911 Telecommunicators
Randolph Park Aquatics Director & Assistant
Aquatics Director
Randolph Park Seasonal Positions

Please visit
www.pulaskicounty.org
for additional information and current openings



Friends of Peak Creek's Annual Spring Creek Clean Up is Saturday, April 23, 2022 beginning at 10 AM. We will meet at 41 NE First Street (the parking lot behind the Senior Center). Trash bags, gloves, grabbers, masks, water and snacks will be provided. Please wear long sleeved shirts, long pants and sturdy shoes.

Check our Facebook page for updates or rescheduling due to weather.

Email info@friendsofpeakcreek.org for more information.

Commissioner of the Revenue Office Updates

52 W. Main Street, Suite 200
 Pulaski, VA 24301
 Open M-F, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 (540) 980-7750, Personal Property Dept.
 (540) 980-7753, Real Estate Dept.

- ◇ We are proud to announce that *Patricia Huff* and *Anthony Phillips* were recently awarded the distinguished designation of *Master Deputy Commissioner* after extensive training through Virginia’s Constitutional Officer Education Program. Please help us congratulate these two on their professional accomplishment!
- ◇ Did you know? Our office acts as your tax advocate by listening to your concerns and answering questions related to tax laws and any changes we are required to implement in Pulaski County from the Virginia General Assembly and local Board of Supervisors.
- ◇ We provide FREE Virginia Income Tax filing assistance in addition to an Accelerated Refund screening. Bring your ID, Federal Tax Return, and necessary tax documents to our office by the May 1, 2022 deadline.
- ◇ Visit us online for tax relief program information, forms and applications: www.pulaskicounty.org/cor

Kim Matthews, Commissioner of the Revenue



From live music at Rock House Marina to the sound of a race car crossing the finish line at Motor Mile Speedway, enjoy **Pulaski County’s Sounds of Summer** all season long!



MUSIC & MERCHANTS

Downtown Pulaski
May 21



@visitpulaskiva

CLAYTOR LAKE MUSIC FEST

Rock House Marina
May 26-May 30

VISITPULASKIVA.ORG

For events all summer long, visit Pulaski County Tourism’s website!



NEW RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FIDDLE, BANJO & DANCE CLUB
 20 YEARS presents

Dailey & Vincent

Friday, April 29 7:30 p.m.
 Edwards Hall, New River Community College

ADVANCED: \$35 RESERVED*, \$25 GENERAL ADMISSION
 AT THE DOOR: \$40/\$30

*Reserved seating available online only at nr.edu/fiddle.
 General admission available online at nr.edu/fiddle,
 NRCC Business Office, 23 Godbey Hall and
 Pulaski County Visitor Center, 4440, Cleburne Blvd, Dublin.
 Cash or check only for in-person purchase.

INFORMATION
nr.edu/fiddle tjones@nr.edu (540) 674-3683 [nrccfiddle](https://www.facebook.com/nrccfiddle)



Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce Announces Relocation

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce (PCCC). Even through the vast changes in business over these 70 years, the mission of this network of businesses and community leaders continues to strengthen the local economy and better our way of life here in Pulaski.

In keeping with that mission, PCCC has relocated to the Pulaski County Innovation Center in Fairlawn. The relocation will offer easy access to the Chamber, large meeting spaces, and advanced virtual meeting technology, all to better serve our membership. The Chamber will continue to reach the entire business community through Chamber events and in person member visits.

This property, owned by Pulaski County Economic Development Authority (EDA), is home to more than 35 businesses and organizations creating a robust business community. In addition to the services of the PCCC, businesses seeking assistance can find all they need under one roof with cohort business organizations such as the Pulaski County Small Business Solutions, Virginia Career Works, and the New River Valley Regional Commission.

The Chamber staff welcomes you to visit their new location at 6580 Valley Center Dr., #302, Fairlawn, VA, between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, beginning March 15, 2022.

For more information on Chamber services and programs, visit www.pulaskivachamber.org.

COURTHOUSE WAR EXHIBIT NEARING COMPLETION JULY 4, 2022 DEDICATION DATE PLANNED FOR EXHIBIT

Work on Pulaski County's war exhibit is near completion. Located on the 3rd floor of the Old Pulaski County Historic Courthouse, the exhibit is entitled, "Remembering the Sacrifices for Freedom", and is dedicated to the local men and women who have served in our armed forces. Historic war items from all major wars and conflicts, beginning with the Revolutionary War and ending with the Afghanistan War, will be on display. The exhibit includes a "Collage of Soldiers" wall with local soldiers' photos, two war dioramas for World War II and the Vietnam War, military uniforms, pictures, medals, written war narratives / timelines, a military library with books, tapes, and other materials pertaining to war subjects, and many more unique items that have been either donated or loaned to the county by citizens.

This exhibit has been a project of the Pulaski County Courthouses Exhibits Committee for several years. Committee members are very excited to share this exhibit with county citizens and others. Therefore, an open house and dedication ceremony for the exhibit is being planned for July 4, 2022. The exact time and other program details have not yet been determined, but will be on the county's website and in the local newspapers as soon as the details are finalized. So, please make plans to attend this very special event on July 4th as we honor and pay tribute to our local soldiers.

Lastly, the Courthouses Exhibits Committee would like to thank all those many citizens who have donated or loaned items for this exhibit. In addition, much appreciation is extended to the CE Richardson Foundation for their award of grant funds, and to the Board of Supervisors for providing funds for this exhibit. If anyone has any questions on this matter, please feel free to contact the Chairperson of the Pulaski County Exhibits Committee, Nancy M. Burchett, at 540-980-6776.



Fine Arts Center
for the New River Valley

Hello, Springtime! We at the *Fine Arts Center for the New River Valley* are gearing up for an eventful, creative season! We have a lot of great things planned, and we're looking for YOUR input on what more we can offer. We want to know what types of classes, concerts and other ways to connect with the arts that we, your community arts center, can provide for you. Please visit FACNRV.org to find our community input survey and share your thoughts with us.

We may be seeking input for the future, but we also have lots of great programming already scheduled! Here's just a sampling of what's going on this spring:

- FREE! First Friday Listening Room Concerts, presented by the Fine Arts Center in partnership with *Max on Main*. Advance tickets required.

Friday, April 1, 2022 - *Reed Island Rounders*

Friday, May 6, 2022 - *Georgia Randall*

Friday, June 3, 2022 - *Melanie Robinson*

AND, looking forward, please be sure to **SAVE THE DATE** for the return of our extremely popular summer music and food extravaganza, *Rhythm, Ribs and MORE!* to be held on **Saturday, July 23, 2022**, in historic downtown Pulaski. New for 2022 will be the addition of dozens of art and craft vendors demonstrating and selling their wares. *Art and food vendor applications will be available in early April.*

Other happenings at the arts center this spring include:

- The reopening of our soon to be restocked gift shop, featuring the work of artists from throughout the NRV (*applications for inclusion now available, all types of fine art and fine art crafts will be considered*)
- Regularly changing art exhibits with opening receptions, artist's talks and more
- The continuation of Kid's Art Kits To-Go
- New in-person adult and youth arts classes

Want to get involved with the Fine Arts Center? Please stop by, call, email or visit our website to find more information about our upcoming events or for information about teaching your craft, submitting work for inclusion in our gift shop, volunteer opportunities, how to exhibit your work in our gallery and how to become a member. ***And while you're there, don't forget to complete our community survey to help us to better serve you!***