

# CITY CONNECTION

## Get ready for Planting Season



You know the moment: you go outside to pick one of your prized roses, only to find the whole bush eaten by those pesky metallic green Japanese beetles. Do you grab a bottle of bug spray loaded with chemicals you can't pronounce? Or do you fill a jar with soapy water and pick those beetles off by hand?

The choices we make to control insects—whether in backyard gardens, city parks, or street medians—can have a big impact on the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. Runoff from pesticides and fertilizers makes its way into drains and eventually into nearby waterways. Pesticides, when used on indoor or outdoor plants, can cause a variety of health problems when they linger in the air. Pesticides can also kill pollinators and beneficial insects like bees and butterflies, which help keep native plants healthy and help our gardens grow.

City arborist Dan Spoden and his Beautification crew know the benefits of controlling insects in a natural way.

"Our policy is not to spray for insects unless it is warranted. We do not use systemic (taken up by the plant internally) insecticides on flowering plants. We remove insects such as wax scale and aphids by hand," Spoden says. "If we do spray, we use horticultural oils

as much as possible, which do not harm pollinators or beneficial insects. We have even hosed plants off with plain water to remove insects."

These environmentally friendly practices are part of an Integrated Pest Management plan that fits with the city's long-term environmental goals and has won the city two notable designations. April's Arbor Day celebration on April 22 will mark more than 30 years as a Tree City USA community. Manassas was only recently named a Bee City USA community. Both designations require maintaining a healthy natural habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free of insecticides.

Spoden says his crew chooses plants that can withstand drought and stay relatively insect and disease free but still bloom well, and that they aren't afraid to replace problem plants.

"We have replaced many of our annual flower beds with flowering perennials that bloom at different times to sustain pollinators for longer periods. This also decreases our watering needs as opposed to annuals, while decreasing the need for annual rotation. The annuals that are planted are ones that are drought and heat resistant and have a great deal of flowers to attract pollinators."

Once the spring and summer

flowers are planted, the Beautification crew will keep a close eye on them, making sure they are properly pruned, mulched and watered to increase the plant's ability to ward off disease or insect damage. They will also be ready to pick off those annoying beetles.



The city also participates in the National Wildlife Federation Mayor's Monarch Pledge, where U.S. cities commit to creating habitats for monarch butterflies and pollinators, and to educate residents about how they can make a difference at home and in their communities.

What we decide to plant can also help support native plants and pollinators.





# A Moment with the Mayor



**Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger**

Happy April Everyone,

This month holds a lot of special days and celebrations and is one of my favorite months of the year! We start off with April Fools (made you look)... day, Administrative Professionals Day.. for which I am TRULY thankful for all of the administrative folks we have in the City who keep things running so

smoothly. Some folks will have Easter/ Passover family celebrations complete with Easter egg hunts and let's not forget Prom and spring break! This is also a great time to get some spring cleaning done and as a reminder you can rent a courtesy truck to help with removing your unwanted items. You can rent a street department truck after working hours from April through September. The truck costs \$150.00 and all you need to do is load it up and they will do the rest. Just call 703-257-8252 or visit [manassasva.gov/trash](http://manassasva.gov/trash). You can schedule curbside collection of bulk waste or large items as well.

Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting Ms. Anna Demeria's 2nd grade class at Round Elementary and I had a fabulous time...they asked some pretty tough questions and mostly wanted to know if I liked being Mayor. My answer to that question will always be YES! I was excited to share with them that I get to work with great folks and meet wonderful people and tell them all

about how wonderful our city is! Most of them were surprised that I lived in the same neighborhood as them. They thought that was pretty cool. I look forward to returning.

We have been hard at work on our budget. The City has so many competing needs and I am incredibly grateful for a solid council who works hard at looking at the needs of the entire community when making their decisions. It is by far one of the most difficult but important jobs of this Council. One thing is for sure, they will always put the needs of the entire community first.

Our Farmers Market will begin their Thursday market this month so please make sure to stop by the Harris Pavilion and pick up some great items. Our local vendors need your support!

As always, when you see me out and about, stop me for a chat and above all...be kind to one another! See you next month!

## Illicit discharge in our storm drains

***Illicit discharge does not just impact water quality issue, it impacts our quality of life!***



When it rains or when snow melts, untreated stormwater runoff flows to the storm drainage system. Ponds, creeks, and streams are flooded with nutrients, bacteria, and other pollutants that end up reaching the Chesapeake

Bay. Fishing, boating, swimming, and other recreation activities are impacted and it makes a real mess!

Illicit discharge is caused when any liquid or material that isn't pure stormwater flows to a storm drain. Leaky vehicles, excess grass and leaves, pet waste, and soapy wash water are all examples of illicit discharges. It does not take much for illicit discharge to add up and create big issues. So remember... only rain down the storm drain!



**RecycleFest! 2022**

# RecycleFest!



**Saturday, May 7, 2022**  
**8 a.m.—12 p.m.**  
**Manassas Transfer Station**

Antifreeze • Fertilizers • Gasoline • Glues  
Motor Oil • Paint • Swimming Pool Chemicals  
Cell Phones • TV's • Computers • Scanners  
Small Copiers • Game Consoles • Monitors  
Personal Documents ( 4 box limit )

\* Commercial/Business Waste will not be accepted for collection.



More Information: (703) 257-8252 or [www.manassasva.gov/trash](http://www.manassasva.gov/trash)

# A Message from the City Manager



**City Manager**  
**W. Patrick Pate**

As we move from winter into spring, it brings a renewed sense of need to prepare for the upcoming growing season. Avid gardeners would tell us to get our shed and tools in order, clean out any old debris, prepare the soil and plant your garden. They would also note that there is a lot of work necessary to enjoy a good harvest.

It is also easy to get caught by distractions of lazily enjoying the longer days of warmer weather, neighbors stopping by to visit and chat, or just indulging in the latest new topic or fad on social media that eats up our time. If that is the case then this is clearly the time to start planning our visits to the farmer's market!

This is also a good analogy for our budget process. Council has been preparing for a new year by gathering resident input and thoughts on community priorities, clearing out old projects and planting the seeds for new initiatives that will hopefully blossom into new growth and a better quality of life for the community.

The proposed budget, which can be found online at [www.manassasva.gov/budget](http://www.manassasva.gov/budget), shows economic growth that is the highest in over a decade. There is increased local funding for public education and plans for the replacement of Dean School to grow the minds of our children. Included are additional Fire and Rescue positions and equipment to enhance community safety. An emphasis is being placed on public

safety, infrastructure improvements, transportation options, park enhancements, and equity and inclusion principles. There is also a commitment to provide competitive pay and benefits to support recruitment and retention of dedicated individuals who provide city services.

We also end up dealing with a number of distractions. The General Assembly continues to debate a budget that could cut local revenues or mandate new programs. We must prepare for continued economic impacts from the pandemic like supply chain shortages along with other global concerns. We are often caught in the never-ending debates on civic issues that have little bearing on how local services will be efficiently delivered to our residents.

I encourage you to take a look at the priorities outlined in the proposed city budget and discuss with your neighbors what services and programs are important to you. Then you could attend the April 25, 2022 budget public hearing or write to your Elected Officials to let them know what priorities you want them to commit to funding this year. Let them know how you want our community to be presented to the world as we celebrate our 150 years of existence in 2023.

Then you can enjoy those long summer days watching your garden and your City grow into what you have envisioned. For spring is the time for imagining all that might be possible in the new year.

Together let's prepare for an incredible community harvest!

*W. Patrick Pate*

## Getting Ready to Celebrate 150 Years

The City of Manassas is getting ready to celebrate 150 years as a community in 2023. We would love for you to take part in the celebration. Below are a few projects that we are starting now to help with the celebration.

- Neighborhood videos - show us your unique neighborhood in the City of Manassas
- Then and now -- Do you have pictures of the City from days gone by? We'd love to see them and get a copy.
- Tell us your story - Have you lived in Manassas a while, a lifetime or just a few years? We'd love to put you on video telling your story.

How do you get involved?  
It's simple. Just give us a call or drop us an email. 703-257-8456 or [pprince@manassasva.gov](mailto:pprince@manassasva.gov) - Hope to hear from you soon.  
[www.manassasva.gov/150](http://www.manassasva.gov/150)



# The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to [www.visitmanassas.org](http://www.visitmanassas.org).

**Art, Dance, and Theatre** Workshops, Dinner theatre and more at the ARTfactory [virginiaartfactory.org](http://virginiaartfactory.org)

Now through April 16 - **Artistic Expressions** Osbourn High School Art Exhibit at Jirani Coffee House

Now through April 30 - ARTfactory Presents **"The Other Side of the Coin"** Solo Exhibit by Kurdish-American Artist, Lukman Ahmad

April 1 from 6 - 9 p.m. - **First Friday Downtown Hopping**

April 2 from 8 a.m. to noon - at the Manassas Transfer Station - **household hazardous and ewaste drop off**

April 7 - Opening of the **Thursday Farmer's Market** for the season

April 9 & 16 - **Hop Around Downtown** - Sweet surprises and a grand prize too.

April 9 from 2 - 4 p.m. - Family Workshop: **Jennie Dean and the Manassas Industrial School** - \$10 Adults, \$5 children

April 9 - June 25 - **Mayor on the Move** - on Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. take a walk or a ride with Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger starting at Osbourn High School

April 10 at 2 p.m. - **Stories of Preservation and Progress** - Jennie Dean and the Manassas Industrial School at the Manassas Industrial School site

April 11 at noon - **Archaeology at Annaburg** - Grab your lunch and visit historic Annaburg! Meet the Archaeologists who are working to find clues about the history of the house and its occupants. This is an informal, drop-in conversation.

April 14 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. - **Museum at the Market** (Farmers Market)

April 16 at 2 p.m. - **Liberia Basement to Attic Tour**

April 22 at 10 a.m. - **Arbor Day** at Liberia House

April 23 from 9 a.m. to noon - **MS Walk** at the Harris Pavilion

April 23, 2 - 6 p.m. - **Artist Inventory Sale** at the Harris Pavilion

April 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - **Manassas Arts & Crafts Spring Fair** - on the Museum Lawn

April 24 - **Manassas Runway 5K, 10K and 1 miler** - [BishopsEventRegistrations.com](http://BishopsEventRegistrations.com)

April 24 at 4 p.m. - **Manassas Museum History Hikes** - sign up at [cityofmanassas.recdesk.com](http://cityofmanassas.recdesk.com)

April 30 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - **Manassas Reads** at the Harris Pavilion

May 6 from 6-9 p.m. - **First Friday - Downtown Derby Day** - Stick horse racing, Derby Day Hat Contest and more.

May 7 from 8 a.m. to noon - **RecycleFest** at the Manassas Transfer Station - household hazardous and ewaste collection with shredding

May 7 from 2 - 4 p.m. - **Family Gardening** at Liberia - [cityofmanassas.recdesk.com](http://cityofmanassas.recdesk.com)

May 14 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - **Manassas Viking Festival**

May 15 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - **Larexpo** at the Harris Pavilion

May 19 - **Museum at the Market** (Farmer's Market)

May 20 - 22 - **Cinderella** by Manassas Ballet Theatre at the Hylton Performing Arts Center

May 21 at 2 p.m. **Liberia Basement to Attic Tours**

May 21 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. **Manassas KidFest Spring Fair** on the Museum Lawn

May 22 at 4 p.m. **Manassas Museum History Hikes** - sign up at [cityofmanassas.recdesk.com](http://cityofmanassas.recdesk.com)

## City of Manassas and Manassas Public Schools

**City of Manassas Council**  
Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger

**Vice Mayor**

Pamela J. Sebesky  
Theresa Coates Ellis  
Lynn Forkell Greene  
Tom Osina  
Ralph J. Smith  
Mark D. Wolfe

571-206-8433

571-330-5514

571-247-6729

571-364-2184

571-621-4069

703-303-8530

703-257-1702

**City of Manassas School Board**

Chair Suzanne W. Seaberg  
Vice Chair Lisa A. Stevens  
Christina S. Brooks  
Carl Hollingsworth Jr.  
Alex Igbal  
Jill Spall  
Robyn Williams

571-377-7494

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## Get Social!

Visit the City at [www.manassasva.gov](http://www.manassasva.gov)



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[www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva](http://www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva)

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email [pprince@manassasva.gov](mailto:pprince@manassasva.gov)