Manassas Museum is Open

As the newly renovated and expanded Manassas Museum opens this month, it will showcase not only a soaring exhibit space and an event-friendly courtyard, but a community’s commitment to preservation.

The Ribbon Cutting was held on July 28. It marks the completion of the building, the Museum and Echoes, the Museum Store. The Museum is open and free to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Saturday and 12 - 5 p.m. on Sundays.

The renovation offers more room for rotating and permanent exhibits and will also house artifacts that have, for years, been in offsite storage units. The new light-filled exhibit hall will be a great event venue, and offer more space for educational programs. A new timeline exhibit will be on display when the doors open, but look for an exhibit opening in the fall when the former main gallery will be transformed.

The Museum grew out of the community’s desire to preserve the town’s history as Manassas celebrated its Centennial in 1973. Life-long resident Walser Rohr assembled an enthusiastic committee of volunteers to help gather what would become the Museum’s first collection. Much of that first display—and the Museum’s present-day collection—came from Walser and husband Edgar Rohr (a former Mayor) who owned the beloved Rohr’s Five and Dime store and car museum down the street.

Residents emptied their attics and donated items to what was supposed to be a temporary exhibit in department store cases on the top floor of Hynson’s Store on Center St. (now home to CenterFuse). The exhibit was so popular that the community banded together to rent the old First National Bank building on Main St. (now Doug’s Deli) and the first curator, Ren Conner, accepted only 15 cents a mile as his paycheck.

The Museum became the steward of six historic sites, and advocated for the creation of an Historic Overlay District to preserve the Downtown’s unique architecture. With paid staff, volunteers, and more donations, the Museum quickly grew out of its cramped quarters. The community supported construction of a new museum, which opened on Prince William Street in 1991.

Eventually the Museum’s programming expanded, collections and program supplies overflowed into offsite storage, staff doubled up on work spaces, and the Museum needed more community space. There were stops and starts along the way as many plans to expand the Museum were halted by economic downturns. Through it all the Museum and its expansive front lawn remained a kind of town square where the community has flocked to events like the 4th of July and the Viking Festival, attended rallies, or just relaxed with picnics and pick-up frisbee games.

The community weighed in on plans for this latest renovation/ expansion in meetings and online surveys, helped ensure that the lawn was preserved, and recommended that indoor and outdoor public spaces would be expanded. Stop by and see the renovated Museum that was made possible by a 50 year-long community commitment. Visit www.manassasva.gov/museum to find out more.
A Moment with the Mayor

August is the month of last-minute summer trips, days in the sun and, for City of Manassas students, back to school. This is the month you will see more school buses on the road. August is when folks should become vigilant about watching at crosswalks and in school zones. We are counting on you to help keep our children safe as they travel back and forth to school.

August is also my mother’s 85th birthday. In her lifetime of 85 years, she has seen so many changes in our City and in the Country. Mom went to school at the Jennie Dean Industrial School for Colored Youth. Back when she was a girl, there was one door for white people and one for “colored” people. She has seen integration, the end of segregation, the growth of this community and her very own daughter become Mayor of the City she loves. Wow, now that’s a lifetime. If you see her in August, please tell her Happy Birthday.

What are you doing for lunch on Fridays? Have you thought about joining me at the Harris Pavilion from 12 – 1 p.m. on Fridays for lunch and conversation? You bring your lunch and I will bring the conversation and special guests. These Mid-day Meetups with the Mayor will continue through Aug. 25, 2023. Hope to see you there.

August is also the month of Council recess, which means that there will be no City Council meetings until Aug. 28. Do not fear. City business will continue. AND, we will be back on Aug. 28 to continue guiding the City in a good direction. Have a beautiful August.

When in Doubt, leave it out

Contamination in recycling terms is when one material accidentally ends up in another. Anything smaller in size than a credit card may end up some place it shouldn’t be during the sorting process. A small amount of contamination is expected, but contamination can be a huge problem because of the way the sorting process works.

The following are items you should not put in your recycling cart:
- Plastic Bags
- Shredded paper
- Hangers
- Hoses
- Cords
- Take out containers & cups
- Diapers, dirty or otherwise

Thank you for keeping our recycling stream clean!

City Leadership Academy

Have you ever wondered what makes City Government tick? Have you thought about the City budget and how that is put together?

Beginning Sept. 21, the City of Manassas will host the annual City Leadership Academy where residents will learn about and participate in the City of Manassas Government. This is a five-week academy, one Thursday night a week from 7 to 9 p.m.

Evening sessions include, general government, Public Safety, Public Works, Utilities, Community Development, Economic Development and more. No question goes unanswered. And, it is a lot of fun.

To sign up for this year’s class, visit www.manassasva.gov/CLA. We hope to see you here!
A Message from the City Manager

As folks are taking or thinking about summer vacations, a lot of conversation in Manassas has revolved around the proposal to bring Commercial Airline Service to the Manassas Regional Airport. As the busiest regional airport in the Commonwealth, currently you will find many private planes, corporate jets and chartered jet service at the Airport. Commercial service will for the first time allow the majority of City residents the opportunity to actually fly out of Manassas without owning or chartering an airplane.

Commercial passenger service has been in the long-range plans for Manassas for many years. Colgan Airways provided commercial airline service in the 1970's and 1980's but was ended with one of the airline mergers. An air traffic control tower was purchased and moved to the Manassas airport in 1992 followed by the funding and construction of a terminal building in 1996 to facilitate commercial air service. Expansion of the main runway from 5,700 feet to 6,200 feet was completed in 2012. Discussions with various airlines have occurred over these years but an acceptable deal was never reached.

Now the City has a proposal from Avports (which serves 11 airports and has operated airports for nearly 100 years) to provide commercial airline service in Manassas. This service would occur under a franchise agreement with the City that allows Avport to upgrade facilities for public air travel based on compliance with all Federal FAA standards and TSA regulations. These services include renovation and expansion of the terminal building, construction and operation of parking facilities, space for 3 or 4 airline gates and securing airlines to provide a few daily departures to start, with the possibility of expansion to 18-36 daily departures as the market becomes viable.

In our regional market, these flights are expected to provide convenient, affordable air travel options for local residents from airlines that are not already in the market area. None of the current regional airlines at Dulles or Reagan are expected to move any flights to Manassas. Planes flying out of Manassas are considered small and medium body jets like those that already use the airport for private or chartered service.

Questions around which airlines would want to provide service and which destinations would they choose to serve, can only be determined after the franchise is awarded and the process is completed to receive a 139 Airport Operating Certificate from the FAA, which allows for air carrier service. What we do know is that no local taxpayer funds will be used to fund the costs of completing the required studies or the upgrade of facilities. We also know that the required studies will also take a comprehensive look at all of the potential costs and benefits of this proposal.

In addition to providing air services to local residents, the expansion will also provide existing business and private plane owners more benefits, including increased services, enhanced security and access to increased federal funding for projects like a new air traffic control tower along with future airport maintenance.

Thinking about vacations, I will be taking one in August where Sandra and I will be celebrating our 38th wedding anniversary. Being City Manager is a demanding position and I want to thank Sandra for all of the love and support that she has given me all these years that I have dedicated to public service. It actually started the day after our honeymoon when we arrived in a new community to start work and has continued ever since. Sandra, I love you.

To finish off for this month, and just as you are getting used to less summer traffic, remember that school starts on August 16th. There will be some new speed monitoring devices that will initially be at Metz, Dean and Round to help improve traffic safety for our returning students and parents during school hours. So, pay attention to your speed in and around school zones! It is our responsibility as residents to be alert as we all get used to the new school schedules and traffic patterns. We don’t want anybody to be a statistic.

Enjoy the remaining dog-days of summer.
Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to www.historicmanassas.org

Now - Oct. 7 - Battle Street Live - listen to live local bands on Battle Street in Historic Downtown Manassas

Aug. 4 from 6 – 9 p.m. - First Friday Dog Days of Summer in Historic Downtown Manassas

Aug. 5 from 8 a.m. - noon - Household Hazardous Waste & eWaste drop off at 8305 Quarry Road

Aug. 5 from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. - The African American Heritage Festival at Metz Middle School - www.maahf.com

Aug. 5 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert featuring Quimba Latin Band at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 6 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. - Salvadoreno Festival at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 8 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with Shane Gamble at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 12 at 2 p.m. - Liberia House Basement to Attic Tour

Aug. 13 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday – Prince William Community Band at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 15 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with Darryl Marini at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 19 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert featuring Shenandoah Run at Harris Pavilion

Aug. 22 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with Jason Masi at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 26 from 10 a.m. - Living History: Jennie Dean and Manassas Industrial School at Jennie Dean Memorial

Aug. 26 at 7 p.m. - Saturday Night Concert Series with the US Navy Sea Chanters at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 27 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday – Manassas Symphony Orchestra at the Harris Pavilion

Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with Elevado at the Harris Pavilion

Sept. 1 at 7 p.m. - Fresh Music Fridays with Joe Balione Quintet at the Harris Pavilion

Sept. 2 from 8 a.m. - noon - Household Hazardous Waste & eWaste drop off at 8305 Quarry Road

Sept. 2 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Sounds Concert featuring Lil’ Maceo at Harris Pavilion

Sept. 4 - Labor Day Holiday, all City of Manassas government offices closed

Sept. 5 at 7 p.m. - Acoustic Tuesday with Shane Gamble at Harris Pavilion

Sept. 9 at 2 p.m. - Liberia House Basement to Attic Tour

Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. - Manassas Ballet Theatre’s Season Opening Reception at 9121 Grant Ave.

Sept. 10 at 12 p.m. - Suicide Prevention Awareness Walk at Harris Pavilion

Sept. 10 at 12 p.m. - Arts Alive! 2023 at Hylton Performing Arts Center Parking Lot

Sept. 10 at 7 p.m. - Sunday Funday – U.S. Navy Band at Harris Pavilion

Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. - Prince William County Historic Towns Tour in Manassas. Call 703-792-4754 for more information

Sept. 16 from 12 - 6 p.m. - La Feria – Raices Latinas, Latin Roots at Metz Middle School

Sept. 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Old Town Manassas Art Show and Craft Fall Fair at the Manassas Museum Lawn

Sept. 23 at 8 p.m. - Vocativ a cappella group at Hylton Performing Arts Center

Sept. 30 from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Annual Latino Festival at Harris Pavilion

Oct. 1 at 3 p.m. - Sunday Funday – Carleigh Jane at Harris Pavilion

Oct. 6 – 15 - Prince William Little Theatre presents The Westing Game at Hylton Performing Arts Center

Oct. 7 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. - 40th Annual Manassas Fall Jubilee

Oct. 7 from 8 a.m. - noon - Household Hazardous Waste & eWaste drop off at 8305 Quarry Road

Oct. 13 and 14 from 4 p.m. – 9 p.m. - Haunted Hallows at Harris Pavilion

Oct. 14 at 4 p.m. - Manassas Chorale “The Places We’ll Go!” Fall Concert at the Hylton Performing Arts Center

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To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email pprince@manassasva.gov