



ACPS FAMILY NEWSLETTER

September
29
2023

As September comes to a close, we have now completed six weeks of school and we are starting to settle into our routines. Overall, it has been a great start to the school year and I am extremely grateful for everything our families have done to get the school year off to such a good start.

Earlier this month the VDOE released the school accreditation results and I am proud to state that ACPS is fully accredited. This is a great achievement for our school division, but we know there is a large amount of work that needs to be done to overcome the effects the pandemic had on our students. We are focused on working to overcome those effects, but we need our students in school to fully benefit from these programs.

On a sad note, last Thursday September 21, we were made aware of the death of Mr. John Andrew Fister, a math and German teacher at ACHS. Mr. Fister had become an integral part of the high school community and was well liked by his students as well as the faculty and staff. He was not only an exceptional teacher, he was a great person who will be dearly missed. Mr. Fister leaves behind a wife and two young children ages four and six. Please keep the Fister family, as well as the high school students and staff, in your thoughts and prayers as they work through the grieving process.

We conducted our first community tailgate on September 1 in partnership with the #ShowUp Amherst team and it was a huge success as we had over 250 community members attend. Participants were able to enjoy hotdogs and hamburgers, prepared by yours truly, with chips, cookies, and a drink. We thoroughly enjoyed the evening and hope our families and community enjoyed the tailgate as much as we did.

In keeping with the family and community theme, I encourage our families and community to volunteer in our schools and become a larger part of Team Amherst. Instead of speculating about what is taking place in our schools, come volunteer and see first-hand the great things our schools are doing for our students and community. There are multiple ways you can volunteer and help support our students. Information on volunteering is included in this newsletter.

Students from MMS participated in an environmental education study on the James River at River Edge Park as part of the NOAA B-WET grant in cooperation with the James River Association. AMS students will participate in the program in October. The students participated in Biotic and Abiotic water quality sampling, learned about the James River and Chesapeake Bay watershed, and participated in food web activities that focused on the organisms that live in upper James River watershed. This is the third year of this program and our students have benefitted from the hands on, real world educational opportunities that this program provides.

Our second annual Show Up Day, as part of our #ShowUpAmherst initiative, was today and all of the schools in the division had activities for their students. This was a great way to recognize our students and staff for Showing Up today. It also provided opportunities for our community to Show Up for our students and for our schools to recognize members of our community. I want to thank our ATSS teams at the division and school levels for all the work they put into organizing the Show Up Day events.

Today, we also held the groundbreaking for the Amherst County High School construction/renovation project. This project has been needed for several years and will benefit our students and community. I want to thank the Amherst County Board of Supervisors for their financial support of the project. We anticipate beginning construction on a new parking area in October and on the auditorium and dining commons in November. We anticipate completion of the project in the fall of 2025.

Thank you for all you do for our students. We have had a great start to the school year, but we need to maintain our momentum. We need to keep moving forward even through challenging times. I know if our schools, families, and community continue to work together to support our students, we can overcome any obstacle that is placed in front of us. As always, please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance, or if you have any questions regarding Amherst County Public Schools. Thanks again for your support of ACPS and have a great weekend.

Sincerely,

William

Upcoming Events

October 9
Fall Break
No school for students or staff

October 10-Remote Learning Day
Students do not report to school, staff reports to school

October 20
End of Grading Period

October 23
Teacher Work Day
No school for students

October 27
Report Card Distribution



Congressman Good Visits ACHS

On Wednesday, September 6, Congressman Bob Good visited Amherst County High School. Congressman Good spoke with three of our Government classes about the role of a congressman in government and the legislative process. Division Administration also took Congressman Good on a tour of the CTE wing of the high school. Congressman Good was able to visit Building Trades, Welding, Auto Tech, Jobs for Amherst Graduates, and Culinary Arts. Congressman Good was also treated to a wonderful lunch prepared by Mr. Addison and our talented Culinary Arts students. Amherst County Public Schools is appreciative that Congressman Good was able to visit and witness first-hand the amazing things our educators and students are doing in Amherst County Public Schools.



Amherst County Public Schools are Fully Accredited!

Amherst County Public Schools is proud to announce that we are accredited based on the data released by the Virginia Department of Education earlier today. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our students, educators, and staff. While this achievement is a significant milestone, we acknowledge that there is still work to be done to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our students and to ensure their continued success.

The accreditation of Amherst County Public Schools reflects our commitment to maintaining high academic standards and providing a quality education to our students. This achievement is the result of the collective effort of our entire school community, including our outstanding educators, supportive families, and resilient students.

Addressing the Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic

We recognize that the Covid-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to our students and their academic progress. The disruptions caused by the pandemic have affected students' learning experiences and well-being. As we celebrate our accreditation, we also acknowledge that we must continue to work diligently to address these challenges. Amherst County Public Schools remains dedicated to providing comprehensive support to our students, including academic remediation, mental health resources, and innovative learning opportunities. We are committed to helping our students overcome the educational setbacks caused by the pandemic and ensuring they have the tools they need to thrive academically.

The Importance of Student Attendance

One critical factor in student academic success is regular attendance. We want to emphasize that attending school regularly is essential for students to fully benefit from the educational opportunities we provide. Consistent attendance ensures that students stay engaged in their learning, build strong foundations in various subjects, and develop essential life skills.

Parents and guardians play a vital role in ensuring their children's attendance at school. We encourage families to prioritize school attendance and communicate with our schools if they encounter any challenges that may affect their child's ability to attend regularly.

Amherst County Public Schools remains committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students. Together, we will continue to work towards academic excellence and address the ongoing challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Amherst County Public Schools values and promotes the active engagement of the community in our schools. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact the building administration at any of our schools to discuss opportunities.

Visit our website for more information!



If you have questions, please contact 434-943-9387 or by email at

bmcnerney@amherst.k12.va.us

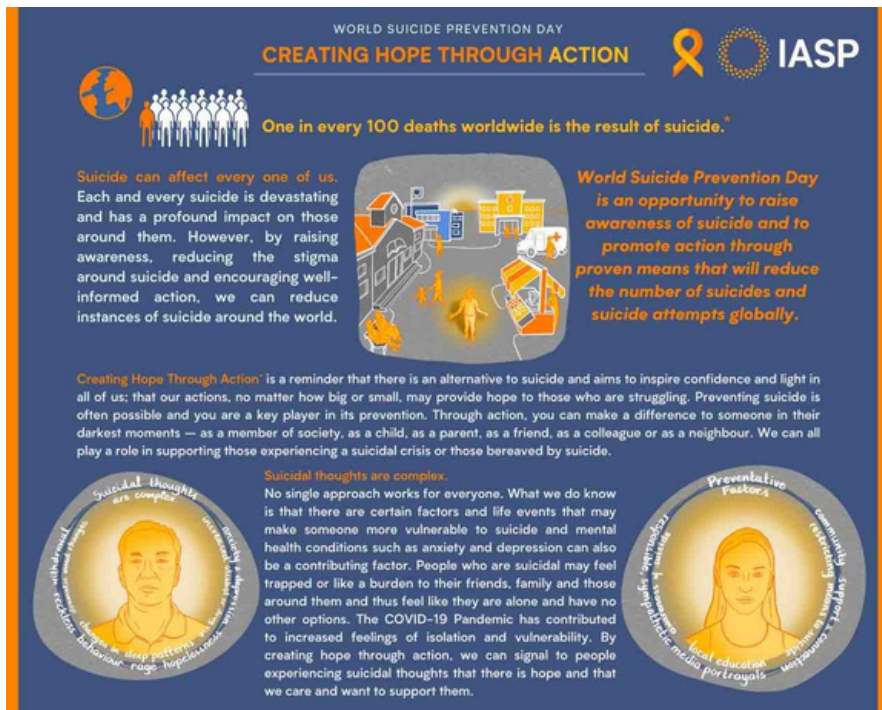
We appreciate your willingness to support the schools in our community!


Suicide Prevention Week


Suicide is a major public health problem with far-reaching social, emotional and economic consequences. It is estimated that there are currently more than 700,000 suicides per year worldwide, and we know that each suicide profoundly affects many more people.

“Creating Hope Through Action” is the triennial theme for the World Suicide Prevention Day. This theme serves as a powerful call to action and reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and that through our actions we can encourage hope and strengthen prevention.


#WSPD #BethLight #ShowUpAmherst



WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY
CREATING HOPE THROUGH ACTION 

 One in every 100 deaths worldwide is the result of suicide.*

Suicide can affect every one of us. Each and every suicide is devastating and has a profound impact on those around them. However, by raising awareness, reducing the stigma around suicide and encouraging well-informed action, we can reduce instances of suicide around the world.

 World Suicide Prevention Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of suicide and to promote action through proven means that will reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts globally.

Creating Hope Through Action™ is a reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and aims to inspire confidence and light in all of us; that our actions, no matter how big or small, may provide hope to those who are struggling. Preventing suicide is often possible and you are a key player in its prevention. Through action, you can make a difference to someone in their darkest moments — as a member of society, as a child, as a parent, as a friend, as a colleague or as a neighbour. We can all play a role in supporting those experiencing a suicidal crisis or those bereaved by suicide.

Suicidal thoughts are complex.
No single approach works for everyone. What we do know is that there are certain factors and life events that may make someone more vulnerable to suicide and mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression can also be a contributing factor. People who are suicidal may feel trapped or like a burden to their friends, family and those around them and thus feel like they are alone and have no other options. The COVID-19 Pandemic has contributed to increased feelings of isolation and vulnerability. By creating hope through action, we can signal to people experiencing suicidal thoughts that there is hope and that we care and want to support them.

Preventative factors
Community support, professional help, local education, mental health services, family and friends, religious/spiritual support, peer support, crisis lines, helplines, and support groups.



Community Tailgate

Thank you to all of our staff, students, families, and community for **SHOWING UP** at our **#ShowUpAmherst** Community Tailgate and **ENGAGING** with us!

Everyone was able to enjoy a meal, cooked by our very own Dr. Wells, and time together before the big game. We would like to share a special thanks to all who made this wonderful event possible.

#TeamAmherst #ShowUpAmherst



IT Professionals Day

On September 19 we celebrated IT Professionals Day! Our IT Professionals work hard to ensure that students and staff have the devices needed for learning. They are constantly fulfilling help desk tickets, repairing Chromebooks, and ensuring that our technology is a helpful tool.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Let's celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 - October 15th!

#TeamAmherst

“Preservation of one’s own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures.”

– Cesar Chavez





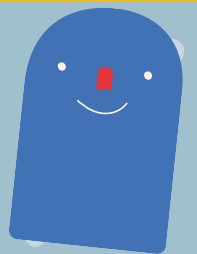
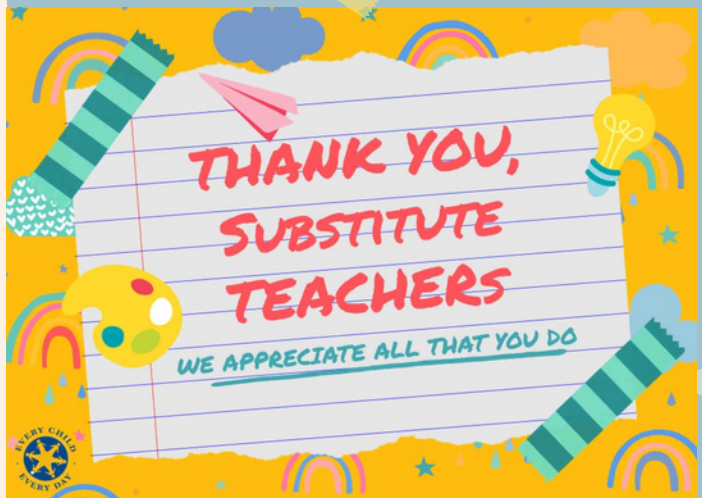
ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK

Arts education, comprising a rich array of disciplines including dance, music, theatre, media arts, literature, design, and visual arts, is a core academic subject and an essential element of a complete and balanced education for all students. During September, we celebrated the benefits arts education has on our students' successes. [#BecauseOfArtsEd](#)



SUBSTITUTE APPRECIATION WEEK

In September we celebrated National Substitute Appreciation Week! We certainly can't serve every child every day without these wonderful people who stand in the gap when our employees are out. Thank you, substitutes!



Attendance Awareness

In the month of September we recognized Attendance Awareness Month! Addressing chronic absence is a key component of improving graduation rates, increasing academic achievement and giving young people the best chance at success in their adult life. Join the Attendance Awareness Campaign and make a difference for your community.



Absences
Add up!

#SCHOOLEVERYDAY

Missing just 2 days a month means a child misses 10% of the school year.



#showinguptogether



We all prosper when students gain skills & abilities that prepare them to contribute to their communities

Truancy Vs. Chronic Absence

TRUANCY

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal & administrative solutions

Vs.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused & suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based, positive strategies



Join Team Amherst!

Professional openings:

Social Studies Teacher (ACHS)

English Teacher (MMS)

Agricultural Science Teacher (MMS)

Part-time Speech Language Pathologist

Classified openings:

Custodian (ACHS and Elon)

Part-time Parking Lot Attendant (ACHS)

Child Nutrition Program Assistant -

Full-time and Part-time (ACHS, MMS, Elon)

Instructional Assistant (Amelon and MHES)

School Health Assistant (Elon)

Maintenance Worker

APPLY NOW



Questions? Contact us!

hr@amherst.k12.va.us

434-946-9376

AMHERST COUNTY FAIR

Join us this October at the Annual Amherst County Fair for rides, food, games, and entertainment.

WHEN

October 19-22

WHERE

Sweet Briar Drive

WEBSITE

AmherstCountyFair.com



PRESENTING SPONSOR



2023 VIRGINIA

WINE & GARLIC FESTIVAL

WHEN & WHERE

OCTOBER 14TH & 15TH
2023

REBEC
VINEYARDS

WWW.REBECWINERY.COM

Volunteers Needed

Volunteer to be part of a favorite Amherst County tradition.



OCTOBER
19-22

WE NEED HELP WITH :

- Volunteer Check In
- Main and ADA Parking
- Main Gate
- Bounce House
- Golf Carts
- Trash
- And More



Register using the QR code above or by emailing volunteer@amherstcountyfair.com

Clifford Ruritan Club Sorghum Festival

Saturday October 7, 2023
9 AM—6 PM

Clifford Ruritan Club, 755 Fletcher's Level Rd, Amherst, VA

FOOD

Clifford Ruritan Brunswick Stew, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Italian Sausage. Sodas, Vendor Food and more inside at kitchen.

RAFFLES & More

QUILT, 50/50
Homemade Quilt Display
Corn Hole Contest

BOOTHS

Sorghum, Honey, Apple Butter, Craft Vendors, Business Vendors and Kids games, Bouncies & Activities

Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023

9 am Sorghum Festival Opens
11 am Performing : Amherst Dance Academy
12 pm Stage : Welcome and Announcements
12:30 pm Music Stage : Country Proud
1:30 pm Performing : Hill City Cloggers
2:30 pm Music Stage : Rebecca Bryant
3:30 pm Music Stage : New Standard
5:00 pm Music Stage : 635
Cakewalk, 50/50 raffle pulls, etc : Betw. Performers

Reedy's Archery will be there for target practice.
11am to 3pm. They will have archery equipment to use.
Do not bring yours.

Quilters

This year there will be a Homemade Quilt Display! They will be judged before the festival and winners labeled.

Call Catherine at 434-946-2727 before Oct 1st to Enter

(*We will have some chairs, but BRING LAWN CHAIRS IF CAN)

Sponsors :

Adam's Floor Sanding
Allied Auctions
Blue Ribbon Auction Services
Cash Brothers Real Estate
Cash's Garage
Century 21—All Service Amherst
Childress Electric
Claudia Tucker—Tucker Family Farms
Elite Realty & Property Management
GS Morcom Services - Greg Morcom
Hill Hardware
Independent Lifestyles
James River Equipment
Martin's Body Shop
Nostalgic Motors—Mike Brockman
Outdoor Escapes
Paige's Auto Repair
Pool Doctor
Regional Auto Sales
Spring Green
State Farm Insurance—Richard Buck
others that may come in after printing



Parking : \$5 /Vehicle (pass good for re-entry)

Information: 434-826-1163 or

www.cliffordsorghumfestival.org or Facebook



SAVE THE DATE FOR AMHERST
COUNTY'S LONGEST RUNNING TRADITION



AMHERST APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL 2023

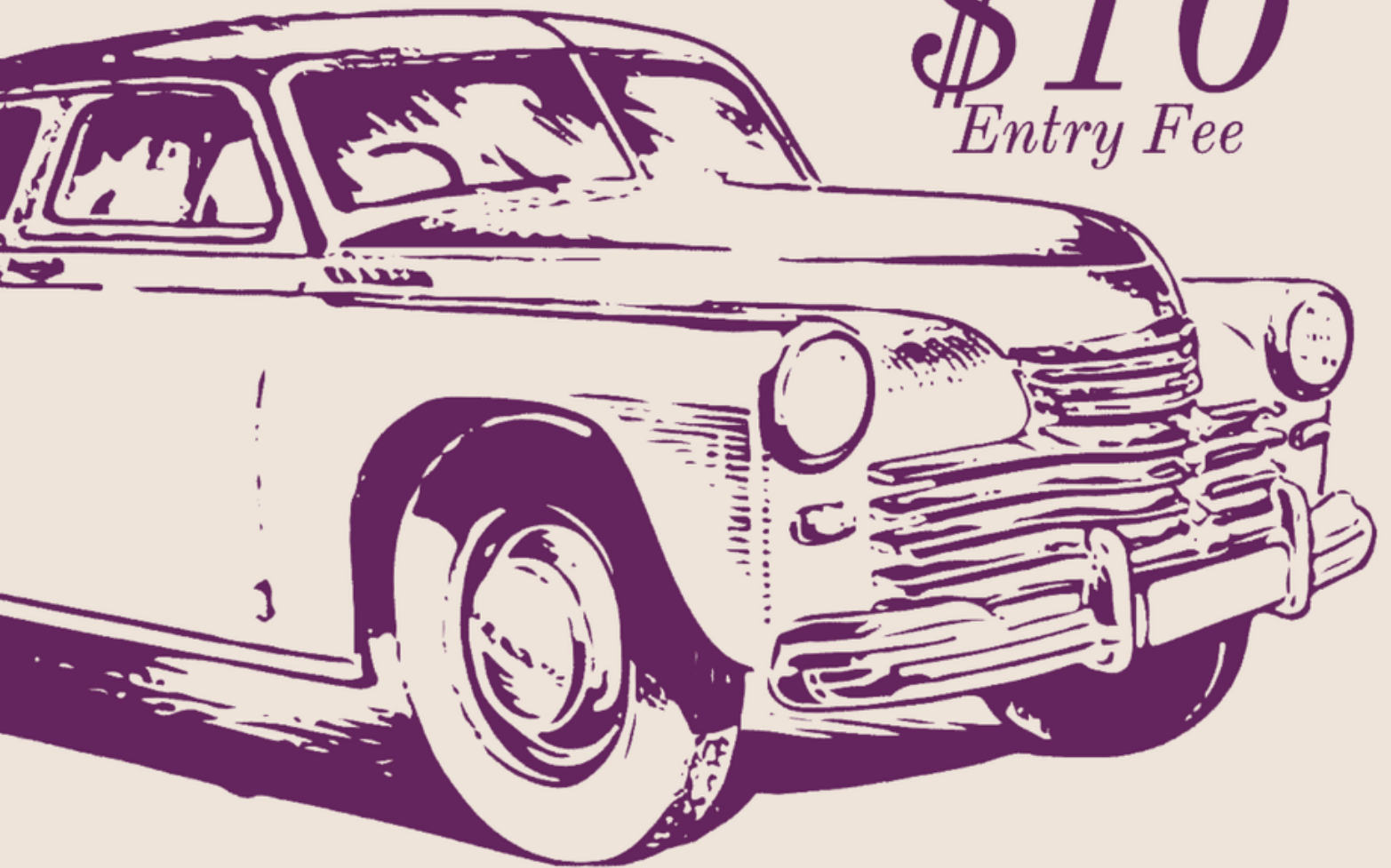


AMHERST APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL

3RD ANNUAL CAR SHOW

RAFFLE - BEST IN SHOW CONTEST - MUSIC

\$10
Entry Fee



OCTOBER 22, 2023

12PM-3PM

**FRONT PARKING LOT OF
AMHERST COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**

The Amherst Apple Harvest Festival is partnering with the the Amherst Police Department to kick off their



2023 Holiday Toy Drive



Bring a new & unwrapped toy or gift wrapping material to the APD booth at the Apple Festival for your chance to win a gift card!



October 21-22, 2023

Amherst Apple Harvest Festival

139 Lancer Lane

Amherst, VA 24521

www.amherstappleharvestfestival.org



Amherst County Recreation
Department Invites you to join us for

our
HALLOWEEN
Spooktacular



27

October, 2023

COOLWELL PARK

646 North Coolwell Rd
Amherst, VA

DOORS OPEN

6:00PM

CANDY HUNT BEGINS
PROMPTLY AT

7:30PM

Games, Arts & Crafts AND The Candy Hunt
(Be sure to bring a flashlight and a bag to hold your candy)

Costumes not required, but encouraged!

FREE ENTRY

For more information call 434-946-9371



AMHERST COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Join Our

COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS GROUP

*We want to
hear from you!*

PLEASE #SHOWUP

and share your feedback and thoughts with us. Please click the QR code to sign up or use the contact information below.

QUESTIONS?



(434)946-2898 ext. 30243



smoehlenkamp@amherst.k12.va.us



139 Lancer Lane
Amherst, VA 24521



<https://achs.amherst.k12.va.us/>

LANCER PRIDE



VOLUNTEERS * Needed *

ACHS students want to participate in clubs! We need adult volunteers to sponsor after-school clubs for our students. Responsibilities include: supervision of students, offering guidance and support related to the club, and communication with administration about any concerns or questions that arise.

JOIN US!

SHARE YOUR INTERESTS ←

BE AN AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB SPONSOR

For more information contact Stephanie Moehlenkamp
at smoehlenkamp@amherst.k12.va.us or (434)946-2898

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday, November 1st
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM



OFFICER JERMAINE GALLOWAY PRESENTS:

HIGH IN PLAIN SIGHT

This **FREE** virtual workshop will provide parents, educators, clinicians, law enforcement, medical providers, and community members the ability, knowledge, and confidence to help prevent and quickly identify:

- Alcohol, vaping, marijuana and other drug use trends
- Risk and warning signs of use
- Latest information on products, stash compartments, clothing brands, lingo, musical lyrics, etc.

For each person to help prevent youth and adult substance misuse, you **MUST** know what is going on in your community. The session will provide over 70 visual aids, local substance use information, and discussion on the impacts of legalization. This event is for adults only and is open to the public.



“TALL COP SAYS STOP”

SCAN TO REGISTER:



For more information, visit:
www.tallcopsaysstop.com

434-841-4253

Teegan.Deuso@HorizonBH.org



CVARR
Central Virginia Addiction
& Recovery Resources
Where hope meets possibility



**NEIGHBORS
HELPING
NEIGHBORS**



5K



**Run &
Walk**



October 21, 2023 @ 9:00AM
Sweet Briar College



Register on Riverside Runners

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

151 Mitchell Bell Road

Madison Heights, VA 24572

<https://www.nhnamherst.org/>