

# ACPS STAFF NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

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 you 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 achievement is a testament to all of your hard work and dedicated service.

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.

I am in the process of completing my first round of classroom and school observations for this year and I have been pleased with what I have observed. I have had the pleasure of participating in the classes, working with the students, and observing quality, engaging instruction. I am looking forward to completing this round of observations and starting my next round in November. There is nothing more rewarding than getting into the schools and engaging with our staff and students.

The state has finally passed a budget. Part of the budget calls for a 2% pay increase for SOQ funded positions effective January 1, 2024. Although the budget has been released, we are waiting on the state to provide us with the calculation tool. Due to the complexities of the state funding process, we need the calculation tool to help ensure we are obligating funds in the proper manner. We have been told we will receive the calculation tool by the end of the week and will immediately begin working on the revised budget. I will update you as more information becomes available.

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. A special thank you to Sam Addison and the Culinary Arts program for prepping the lettuce, tomatoes, and onions for the hamburgers and hotdogs. I also want to thank Joey Crawford, Robert Curd and the high school staff as well as Brittany Mc Nerney, Gary Roakes, and Tim Hoden for their assistance with the preparation and breakdown of the tailgate. Those who stayed for the game were able to see the Lancers defeat G.W. Danville and see Coach Chris Moore record his first win as the Head Coach of the Lancer Football program. We have scheduled two staff tailgates in October. On October 13 we will host our Elementary teachers and staff. That evening the high school is recognizing our little league football and cheerleader programs at half time so we encourage you to stay for the game and support our current and future Lancers. Our last tailgate will be for our Secondary teachers and staff on October 27. This will be the last home game of the season and will be the senior recognition night for our fall athletes. We encourage you to stay for the game as we recognize our seniors.

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 and Jeremy Bryant for their financial support of the project. We anticipate construction beginning 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.

As part of our #ShowUpAmherst initiative, we have several opportunities to participate or volunteer in our community in October. The Sorghum Festival will be held Saturday, October 7 at the Clifford Ruritan Club, the Garlic Festival will be held on October 14 and 15 at Rebec Vineyards; the Apple Harvest Festival will be held on October 21 and 22 at Amherst County High School; and the Amherst County Fair will be held October 19 - 22 at the county fairgrounds. The county fair is in need of volunteers and I know your assistance would be greatly appreciated. You can go to the Amherst County Fair website to register to volunteer (<https://www.amherstcountyfair.com/volunteers>). I encourage you to Show Up for your community and make an attempt to be present at some of these events.

I know this is a stressful job and I encourage you to find ways take care of yourselves both physically and emotionally. Your physical and emotional wellness is vital to your ability to perform your work related tasks, whether they are teaching, providing transportation, preparing meals, or any of the other myriad of jobs that go along with providing quality educational opportunities to our students. I encourage you to focus on your wellness by finding healthy ways to reduce your stress levels and take care of yourself. All ACPS employees are vital members of Team Amherst and we cannot operate the school division without you. We hope to give you a break from the routine and an opportunity to regroup by providing a fall break on October 9 and teacher workdays on October 10 and 23.

Thank you for all you do for the students, ACPS, our families, and the community. 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 we continue to rely on each other and work together we can overcome any obstacle that is placed in front of us. Thanks again for all you do 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



## Amherst County Public Schools are Fully Accredited!

I am thrilled to announce that ACPS achieved full accreditation status by the Virginia Department of Education. This accomplishment is a testament to your dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment to providing a quality education to our students. I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you for this achievement. This would not have been possible without your tireless efforts, creativity, and resilience, especially during these challenging times. Your dedication to our students' success and your relentless pursuit of excellence have paid off.

This accreditation is a reflection of your exceptional teamwork, professionalism, and passion. It showcases our collective commitment to creating a positive and supportive learning environment for our students, where they can thrive academically and personally. I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for your hard work and unwavering commitment to our students' success. Your dedication is an inspiration to us all, and it reminds us of the importance of our mission of Every Child, Every Day.

As we celebrate this accomplishment, we know there is work yet to be done. Our students are still suffering from the effects of the pandemic and we need to focus our efforts on providing them with the resources they need to be successful.

Once again, congratulations on this accomplishment and thank you for all you have done to get us to this point. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. We need to continue working together to provide the best possible education for our students and to ensure that Amherst County Public Schools remains a place where excellence thrives.

**BREAKING NEWS!**

ACPS IS FULLY ACCREDITED!





## 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.

## IT Professionals Day



September 19th

## 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





A colorful illustration for National Arts in Education Week. It features various art supplies like paintbrushes, a palette, a paint can, and a star. The text "NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK" is prominently displayed in the center.

## NATIONAL 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 the month of September, we celebrated the benefits arts education has on our students' successes.

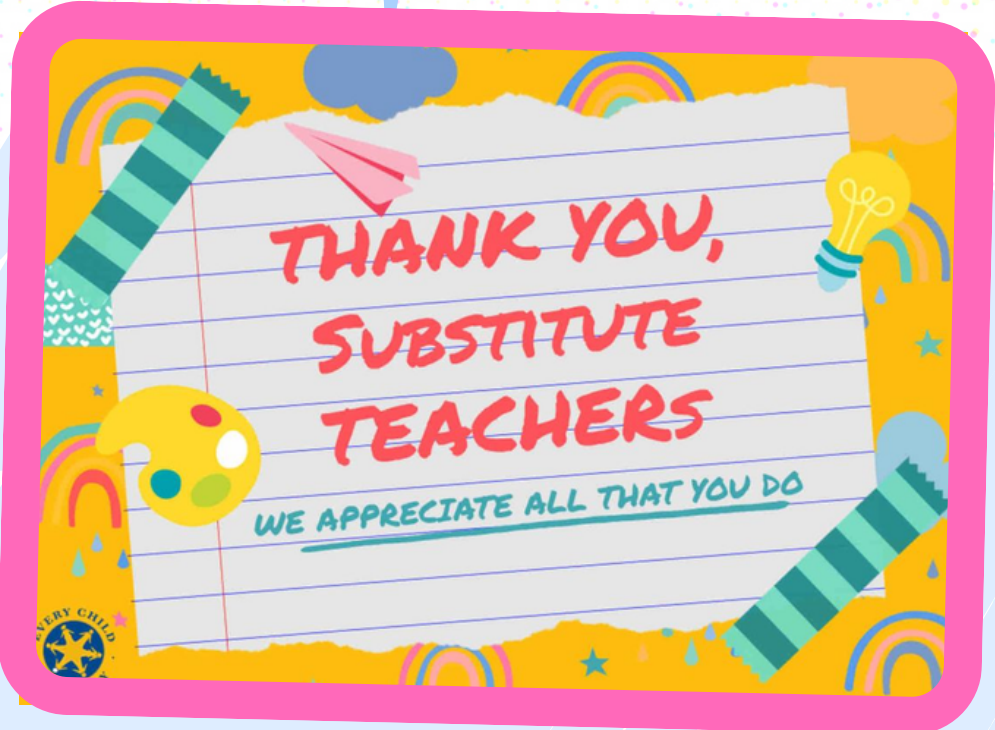
#BecauseOfArtsEd

## Arts in Education Week

## 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!

A colorful illustration for Substitute Appreciation Week. It features a piece of lined paper with the text "THANK YOU, SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS" and "WE APPRECIATE ALL THAT YOU DO". The background is yellow with rainbows, a lightbulb, and a paint palette. The text is in red and blue.

## THANK YOU, SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

WE APPRECIATE ALL THAT YOU DO



*Amherst County Public Schools*

# STAFF APPRECIATION TAILGATES

OCTOBER 13

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

OCTOBER 27

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

NON-SCHOOL BASED STAFF  
MAY ATTEND EITHER EVENT

EACH TAILGATE WILL BE  
FROM 5:00-7:00 PM AT  
AMHERST COUNTY HIGH  
SCHOOL LOCATED AT THE  
OUTDOOR CLASSROOM IN  
FRONT OF THE SCHOOL

Enjoy time with friends, family, and  
colleagues before the big game! Food,  
drinks, and games will be provided. We hope  
you can join us!

ACPS Staff &  
their families  
are invited!

RSVP



ACPS Staff  
receive free  
admission  
with their ID  
badge!



See a therapist or psychologist from home with LiveHealth Online

**Schedule an appointment ›**



Invest in yourself and get the support you need

Therapy is a great way to take control of how you're feeling. Whether you're struggling with stress or anxiety, depression or big life changes, a therapist can guide you and offer tools and strategies to cope.

With LiveHealth Online, you can work one-on-one with a therapist or psychologists from the comfort and privacy of home. Convenient appointment scheduling means you can have a visit weekdays, evenings, or on the weekend.

**Schedule an appointment ›**



**Psychiatrists are also available by appointment**

Our board-certified psychiatrists can prescribe medication for mental health concerns when talk therapy isn't enough.





# Protect yourself against breast cancer

Understanding your risk for breast cancer — and the steps you can take to reduce it — is an important part of taking care of yourself and staying strong for the ones you love.

## What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is cancer that starts in one or both breasts. It can affect women of any race, age, or ethnicity.

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**1 in 8**  
**women**

will develop breast cancer  
in her lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

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Breast cancer is the  
**2nd most**  
**common**  
type of cancer among adult women  
in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

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## Lowering your risk

There's no sure way to prevent breast cancer. Some factors that can put you at a higher risk are out of your control — like getting older and having a family history of breast cancer. You can reduce your risk by staying healthy in the following ways:



Maintain a healthy weight



Exercise regularly



Drink alcohol in moderation, or not at all



Talk to your doctor about scheduling a mammogram. To find a doctor near you, use the SydneySM Health app or go to **anthem.com**.

## Breast cancer screenings

Mammograms and breast self-exams are both useful tools for early breast cancer detection. Learn how they work together to protect your breast health.



### Mammograms

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. Mammograms are the best way for doctors to find breast cancer early, when it's easier to treat — sometimes up to three years before symptoms show.<sup>2</sup>

Most women should begin having mammograms every one to two years starting at age 40, and then every year once they turn 50.

You should talk to your doctor about the right schedule for you, since they might recommend screening earlier and more frequently if you have certain risk factors.



### Breast self-exams

In between mammograms, performing breast self-exams about once a month is a good way to check for anything out of the ordinary. Simply look and feel for changes to your breasts in front of a mirror. These symptoms don't mean you have breast cancer, but if you notice any of the following, you should talk to your doctor:

- ▣ A new lump in the breast or armpit
- ▣ Swelling, redness, soreness, or a rash
- ▣ Any nipple discharge other than breast milk
- ▣ Change in breast size or shape
- ▣ Dimples, puckers, or bulges on the skin of your breast

# Article: Protect your health with regular mammograms

<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society: [How Common is Breast Cancer?](https://www.cancer.org/) (accessed July 2022); [cancer.org](https://www.cdc.gov/).  
<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [What is a Mammogram?](https://www.cdc.gov/) (accessed July 2022); [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/).

Breastcancer.org: [Breast Self-Exam \(BSE\)](https://www.breastcancer.org/) (accessed July 2022); [breastcancer.org](https://www.breastcancer.org/).  
Cancer.org: [Can I Lower My Risk of Breast Cancer?](https://www.cancer.org/) (accessed July 2022); [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org/).

Sydney Health is offered through an arrangement with Caredon Digital Platforms, a separate company offering mobile application services on behalf of your health plan ©2020-2022.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of: In Colorado: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc. Copies of Colorado network access plans are available on request from member services or can be obtained by going to [anthem.com/co/networkaccess](https://www.anthem.com/co/networkaccess). In Connecticut: Anthem Health Plans, Inc. In Georgia: Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthcare Plan of Georgia, Inc. In Indiana: Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. In Kentucky: Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky, Inc. In Maine: Anthem Health Plans of Maine, Inc. In Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area): RightCHOICE® Managed Care, Inc. (RHC), Healthy Alliance® Life Insurance Company (HALIC), and HMO Missouri, Inc. RHC and certain affiliates only provide administrative services for self-funded plans and do not underwrite benefits. In Nevada: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc., dba HMO Nevada. In New Hampshire: Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. HMO plans are administered by Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. and underwritten by Matthew Thornton Health Plan, Inc. In Ohio: Community Insurance Company. In Virginia: Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc. trades as Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Virginia, and its service area is all of Virginia except for the City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the area east of State Route 123. In Wisconsin: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wisconsin (BCBSWI), underwrites or administers PPO and indemnity policies and underwrites the out of network benefits in POS policies offered by CompCare Health Services Insurance Corporation (CompCare) or Wisconsin Collaborative Insurance Corporation (WCIC). CompCare underwrites or administers HMO or POS policies; WCIC underwrites or administers Well Priority HMO or POS policies. Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.





## EXPLORE YOUR WELLNESS BENEFITS

**We make wellness easy,**  
with everything you need,  
all in one place.

**Visit your member portal, and  
explore wellness:**

- Daily workouts
- Guided meditation
- Exclusive wellness content
- Healthy recipes

**Discover a whole health approach  
to wellness.**

- We cover all dimensions of total well-being
- Our workout videos are tailored for all levels
- We provide 'wellness your way' with self-led tools and on-demand activities



## How to GET STARTED

1. Visit [www.allonehealth.com/support](http://www.allonehealth.com/support)
2. Click on Member Portal, and login or create a new account using your company code: **amhco**
3. Click on Explore Wellness and start your journey



# 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](http://AmherstCountyFair.com)



PRESENTING SPONSOR



## 2023 VIRGINIA WINE & GARLIC FESTIVAL

[WWW.REBECWINERY.COM](http://WWW.REBECWINERY.COM)

WHEN & WHERE

OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> & 15<sup>TH</sup>  
2023

REBEC  
VINEYARDS



# 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](mailto: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

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

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

### 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](http://www.cliffordsorghumfestival.org) or Facebook





**NEIGHBORS  
HELPING  
NEIGHBORS**



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/>





SAVE THE DATE FOR AMHERST  
COUNTY'S LONGEST RUNNING TRADITION



# AMHERST APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL 2023





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](http://www.amherstappleharvestfestival.org)***

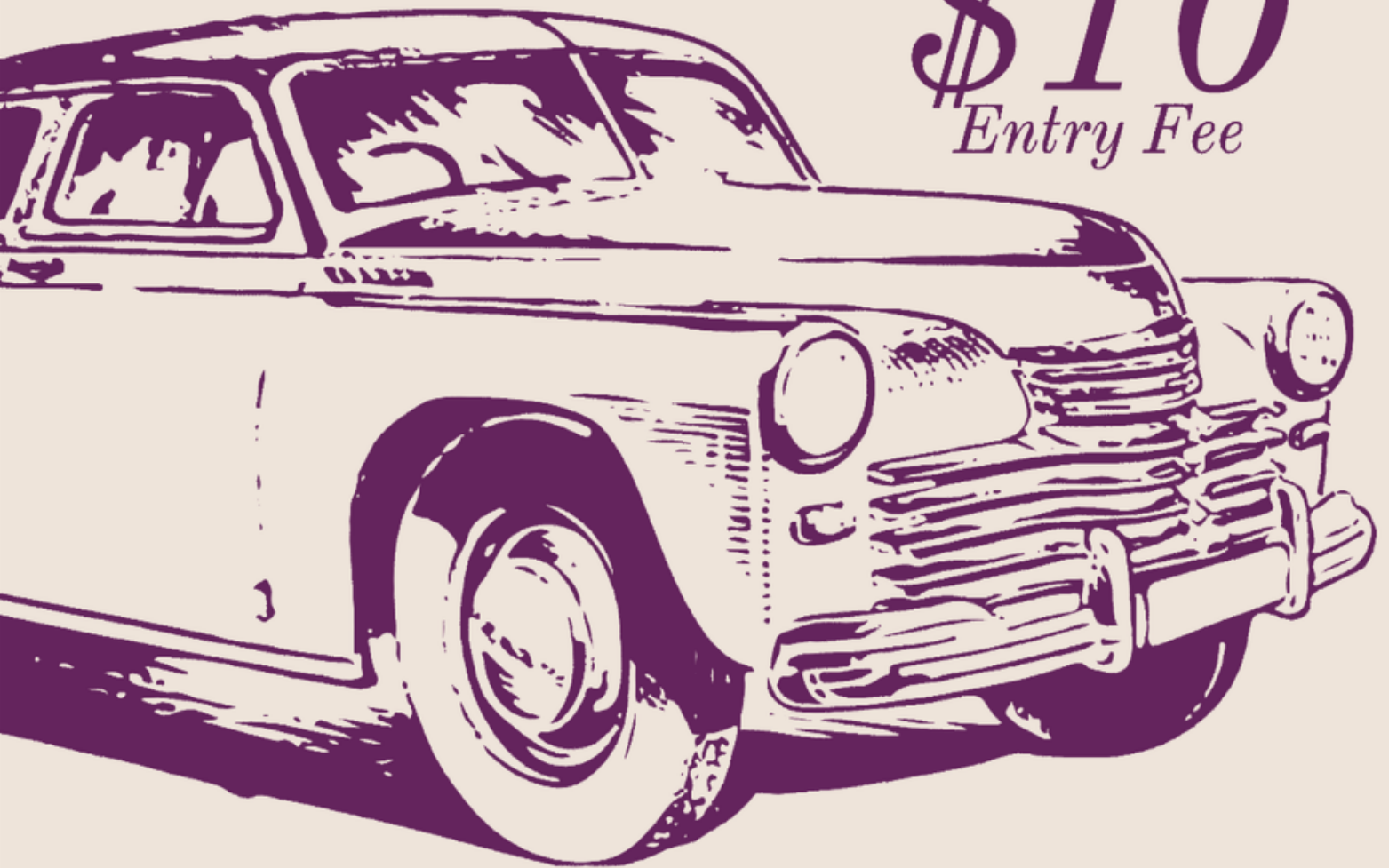


# **AMHERST APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL**

## **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**





# ***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](mailto:smoehlenkamp@amherst.k12.va.us) or (434)946-2898



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

# 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](http://www.tallcopsaysstop.com)

434-841-4253

[Teegan.Deuso@HorizonBH.org](mailto:Teegan.Deuso@HorizonBH.org)



**CVARR**  
Central Virginia Addiction  
& Recovery Resources  
*Where hope meets possibility*