



HENRICO COUNTY VIRGINIA

SEPTEMBER 2014

Sept. 19, 2014

CONTACT: John A. Vithoukas

PHONE: (804) 501-4386

Totty named director of Mental Health & Developmental Services



Henrico County Manager John A. Vithoukas announces the appointment of Laura S. Totty as director of Henrico Area Mental Health & Developmental Services (MH/DS), effective Sept. 20.

Totty has more than 31 years of experience with MH/DS, having served as a residential counselor, residential service specialist, program coordinator, program manager and director of the Clinical and Prevention Services division. She has served as acting director since August, when Michael D. O'Connor retired as director. He had served MH/DS for more than 35 years, including 10 years as director.

MH/DS provides community-based mental health, intellectual disability, substance abuse, prevention and early intervention services to residents of Henrico, New Kent and Charles City counties. As director, Totty will work with the MH/DS Board to oversee an agency with a budget of \$34 million and 355 employees in fiscal year 2014-15.

Totty holds a bachelor's degree in management, housing and family development from Virginia Tech and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Sept. 11, 2014

CONTACT: Dawn Miller, Tourism Supervisor, Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks

PHONE: (804) 501-5137

Tourist spending in Henrico climbs to \$783.6 million County's 5 percent increase outpaces other top destinations

Henrico County captured \$783.6 million in spending by domestic travelers during 2013, the most of any locality in central Virginia and the fifth most in Virginia, according to data from the U.S. Travel Association.

Tourist spending in Henrico increased by 5 percent for the second consecutive year — well above Virginia's increase of 1.4 percent. Similarly, the state's top four destinations for tourist

spending — the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the city of Virginia Beach — saw their expenditure totals increase by less than 2 percent or decrease slightly, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

“The secret is out,” County Manager John A. Vithoukaskas said. “Henrico has long been a preferred choice among homeowners and businesses. Now, more visitors are discovering all that makes Henrico special, including its parks and recreational amenities, historic sites and abundant shopping.”

Henrico’s expenditure total reflects spending on food, lodging, transportation, entertainment, retail and other services by travelers from within the United States who had taken day or overnight trips at least 50 miles from home.

In 2013, tourist spending in Henrico supported more than 7,800 jobs with a combined payroll of \$184.5 million, and it generated tax receipts of \$23.8 million for the county and \$28.2 million for the state. Overall, Virginia attracted \$21.5 billion in visitor spending, which supported nearly 213,000 jobs and provided more than \$1.4 billion in state and local taxes.

The U.S. Travel Association compiled the data for the Virginia Tourism Corp. Its report, *The Economic Impact of Domestic Travel On Virginia Counties 2013*, is available at vatc.org/research/economicimpact/.

Henrico has worked to boost tourism in recent years by launching the Visit Henrico County campaign to attract leisure travelers as well as youth and adult recreational sports tournaments. A website, VisitHenrico.com, and a smartphone app help visitors plan where to stay, shop and eat, and what to do.

This month, about 1,000 Civil War reenactors from across the country will come to Henrico to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of New Market Heights. The free event, featuring battle reenactments and living history exhibits, will be held Sept. 27-28 at the Runnymede property adjacent to the Malvern Hill site of the Richmond National Battlefield Park, 8750 Willis Church Road.

In addition to its many historic sites and sports complexes, Henrico’s attractions include Richmond International Raceway — the site of two NASCAR races per year — as well as Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Three Lakes Park and Nature Center, and the Dabbs House and Meadow Farm museums.

“Tourism is another growth industry and a smart investment for Henrico,” Vithoukaskas said. “Visitors support our hotels, restaurants and other businesses, and they have minimal impact on public services. Every dollar spent by a tourist helps to maintain low taxes and high-quality services in Henrico.”

Sept. 4, 2014

CONTACT: Linda Leigh, Executive Assistant, Henrico County Board of Supervisors
PHONE: (804) 501-4208

Tuckahoe town meeting Sept. 22 to highlight Henrico parks

Tuckahoe District Supervisor Patricia S. O’Bannon will hold a town meeting Monday, Sept. 22 to discuss Henrico County’s park system, including its history and plans for improvements.

The meeting will include sessions at 1 and 7 p.m. at the Tuckahoe Area Library, 1901 Starling Drive.

Neil Luther, director of the Division of Recreation and Parks, will join O'Bannon for a presentation and will answer questions. Tuckahoe town meetings are open to the public. For more information, call (804) 501-4208 or go to www.patobannon.com.

Sept. 3, 2014

CONTACT: Dawn Miller, Tourism Supervisor, Henrico Division of Recreation & Parks

PHONE: (804) 501-5137

Henrico to mark historic Civil War battle with reenactments, activities Sept. 27-28

Henrico County will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of New Market Heights — a battle significant for the role played by African-American soldiers serving in the U.S. Colored Troops — with reenactments and living history exhibits Sept. 27-28. Descendants of some of the soldiers will be recognized as part of the activities.

The event will be held at the Runnymede property adjacent to the Malvern Hill site of the Richmond National Battlefield Park, 8750 Willis Church Road, located between Darbytown Road and Route 5/New Market Road. Gates open at 9 a.m.

Admission and parking are free. Handicapped parking will be available at the site. Other visitors will be directed to off-site parking and then shuttled to the event. Visitors should plan to arrive at least one hour prior to a battle reenactment. Directions, maps, schedules and other information are available at civilwarhenrico.com.

The event will feature more than 1,000 reenactors from around the country bringing to life three battles fought in Henrico — New Market Heights and Fort Harrison, both of which took place on Sept. 29, 1864, and the Second Battle of Deep Bottom, which stretched from Aug. 14 to 20, 1864.

Fourteen African-American soldiers received the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award, for their heroism in combat at New Market Heights. Two white officers serving in the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) earned the award that day as well (black soldiers were barred from holding commissioned ranks of lieutenant and above). Over the course of the Civil War, 18 Medals of Honor were earned by black infantry soldiers.

The reenactment of the Battle of New Market Heights, set for 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, will be a highlight of the weekend's activities. Spectators will watch from an area in the middle of the battlefield. As the action unfolds, a narrator will describe the combat and troop movements.

Following the reenactment, Henrico will hold a ceremony honoring the Medal of Honor recipients. The descendants of three medal winners — Sgt. Alfred Hilton, Sgt. Edward Ratcliff and Lt. Nathan Edgerton — will attend and be recognized.

When they aren't watching a reenactment, visitors can take in the sights and sounds of Civil War camp life.

Activities will include string, fife and drum, and brass bands performing music from the era; demonstrations of baseball as it would have been played in the 1860s; period crafts and games for kids; and food, beverages and merchandise reminiscent of the era. A variety of 21st-century food and drink will be sold as well. In addition, historians will give presentations on the military significance of the campaign for Richmond, the impact of the war on local civilians and other topics.

For more information, contact Henrico Recreation and Parks at (804) 501-7275.

The Battle of New Market Heights was part of a broader Union assault against Confederate defenses southeast of Richmond. Several regiments from the USCT spearheaded an attack on Confederate positions along New Market Road near Four Mile Creek. At the same time, additional Union forces moved against Fort Harrison a little more than 2 miles to the west.

USCT units suffered heavy casualties but dislodged Confederate forces from New Market Road; simultaneously, Union troops captured Fort Harrison.

The actions of the USCT units at New Market Heights helped dispel the notion, widely held at the time, that black soldiers were unfit for combat.

Sept. 3, 2014

CONTACT: Lisa T. Sanderson, Extension Agent, Henrico County office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension
PHONE: (804) 501-5160

Henrico Extension to offer Literature in the Garden class for home-schooled youth

The Henrico County office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension will offer this fall Literature in the Garden, a six-week class for third-, fourth- and fifth-graders who are home-schooled.

The class will meet from 10 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays Oct. 15 through Nov. 19 at the Armour House and Gardens at Meadowview Park, 4001 Clarendon Road. The class costs \$20 per student. The deadline to register is Tuesday, Oct. 14. For information, contact Lisa T. Sanderson at (804) 501-5160 or lsanderson@vt.edu.

Literature in the Garden, part of the Junior Master Gardener Golden Ray Series, will provide hands-on activities that will accompany the reading of six nature-themed books, including *Plantzilla* and *Miss Rumphius*. Students also will learn basics of gardening.
