

THE HRHA NEWSLETTER

News, announcements, and more from the
Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



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Vine and Fig: Fresh Veggie Series Impact

Vine and Fig is a local organization dedicated to connecting food-insecure households with fresh, nutrient-dense, locally grown produce and offering educational resources to help minimize food waste.

Through their collaboration with local farms, Vine and Fig has worked hard to ensure residents at Commerce Village and Lineweaver have access to fresh vegetables. Earlier this year, in April, that support expanded to even more HRHA households. As the gardening season comes to a close, we extend our sincere thanks to everyone at Vine and Fig and all participating farms for their commitment to providing residents with nutritious, locally grown food.



2025 Kelley St. Garden Season

The Kelley Street Garden concluded another successful gardening season in November, marking another year of growth, learning, and community connection. Over the past six months, HRHA-supported residents cultivated a variety of vegetables across the garden's 11 beds with support from dedicated master gardeners. These experts continued to offer hands-on guidance during bi-monthly meetings, helping residents with crop selection, planting techniques, and problem-solving throughout the season.

This year, HRHA and residents were especially grateful to receive a donated garden shed from the Central Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners, which will store tools and materials, improving both organization and functionality in the garden space. On November 17th, community partners, volunteers, residents, and staff gathered to celebrate the end of the season with pizza and teamwork—covering the garden beds with newspaper and cardboard to protect them through the winter months.

A sincere thank-you goes out to everyone who contributes to making the Kelley Street Garden a thriving and welcoming space. HRHA looks forward to continuing this partnership and building on the garden's success in 2026.



Empowering Residents to Navigate Change with Confidence

On October 8th, HRHA partnered with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board (HRCBSB) to host an empowering workshop titled Building Resiliency and Managing Uncertainty. This interactive session invited residents and FSS participants to explore practical strategies for developing resilience and navigating life's unknowns with greater confidence.

Throughout the workshop, attendees learned step-by-step approaches to managing the stress that uncertainty can bring and practiced real-life techniques they could immediately apply in their daily lives. Participants left with valuable tools to strengthen their ability to adapt, recover, and thrive through life's challenges.

Events like this highlight HRHA's continued dedication to promoting whole-person wellness—supporting residents' emotional, mental, and physical health as part of their journey toward stability and self-sufficiency.

Community Resource Spotlight:



Central Valley
Habitat
for Humanity®

In our newsletters, we will highlight non-profits and service organizations that provide resources in our community and surrounding areas. In this issue, we speak with Ann Toliver, Homeownership Services Manager, for the Central Valley Habitat for Humanity.

What role does your organization play in addressing community needs?

We are a Christian housing ministry dedicated to building decent, affordable homes for low-income families. Our organization constructs homes and sells them to qualified homeowners.

Our organization addresses the critical need for affordable housing in our community. In addition to building new homes for ownership, we have also repurposed rental units to help meet the growing housing shortage, as well as existing homes, which allows low-income families to stay in their homes. Our city currently faces a significant housing deficit, and our work aims to help close that gap.

What are some of the most urgent issues facing the community from your organizations perspective?

The most urgent issues include a shortage of available housing units, overcrowding, and a general lack of affordable options. There is a pressing need for new construction projects to meet future demand, as 50-75% of families in the area are considered cost-burdened by their housing expenses.

What trends or changes have you seen in community needs over the past few years?

Over the past few years, we have seen a steep decline in housing affordability. We have also seen an increase in the number of "invisible homeless"—people without stable housing who are not always immediately visible to the public. We receive a growing number of calls from families and individuals living in hotels or cars, and some have been forced to move more than an hour away and commute back to the area for work.

What's one thing you wish more people in the community knew about your organization?

We want the community to know that Central Valley Habitat for Humanity faces challenges in identifying families who meet the qualifications for our homeownership program. Although we believe many families in our area could qualify, not enough are applying. Over the past two years, we have worked harder to reach more potential applicants, which has led to an increase in applications. However, during the approval process, the number of qualified applicants drops significantly. Out of 100 applications, we often find only 2-3 families who meet the eligibility criteria for our program. We need the community's support to spread the word about our program, encourage more families to apply, and share information about the dates when we are accepting applications.



COMMERCE VILLAGE II - OPEN HOUSE

Join us as at the ribbon cutting ceremony for Commerce Village II, a new 16-unit housing community designed to provide permanent supportive housing for veterans and non-elderly disabled residents in Harrisonburg.

Property Features

- Living Room
- Dining Room
- 1 Bedroom
- 1 Bathroom
- Kitchen
- Patio/Balcony

There will be unit showings and remarks from our Executive Director and community partners.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Date: December 8, 2025

Time: 3:00–4:30pm

Location: 34 Elon Rhodes Lane, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Have any questions or comments? Please contact info@harrisonburgrha.com to learn more.



Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

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To reach all HRHA offices, call: (540) 434-7386

Website



www.harrisonburgrha.com

Facebook



[@harrisonburgrha](https://www.facebook.com/harrisonburgrha)

HRHA Board of Commissioners

HRHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Harrisonburg City Council. The Board establishes the Authority's policies and procedures and appoints the Executive Director.

Board of Commissioner meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00PM. Meeting location/access will be posted prior to meetings and in line with local health guidelines.

+ Michael Wong, (Not a commissioner)
Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer

+ Luciano Benjamin - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2028

+ Gil Colman - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Shonda Green - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Amanda Leech - Commissioner

Term Expires: October 13, 2028

+ Janet Awkard-Rogers - Commissioner

Term Expires: April 25, 2027