

THE CIRCUIT

A NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

November 2024

JACQUELINE C. SMITH



DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT:

PUBLIC SERVICES

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A NOTE FROM YOUR
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

JACQUELINE C. SMITH

A NOTE FROM CIRCUIT COURT CLERK, JACQUELINE SMITH



WELCOME TO OUR FIRST OFFICIAL PUBLIC NEWSLETTER

In this edition, you will discover several public services we offer at the courthouse and within the community. This issue highlights our programs available to residents, outlines the processes for obtaining public services, and shares upcoming community events. I encourage you to read on to explore the exciting services available to you.

We feature the public services that residents frequently access through our office. You may have heard about costly subscription based systems designed to secure property deeds. This year, I prioritized finding an efficient way to provide these same services at no cost to residents. I am excited to announce the upcoming launch of our new Property Alert system, which will notify residents of any public searches related to their property. Property Alert will be ready for sign-ups in early 2025, so please stay tuned for more information.

Our public services include everything from copies of records and oaths for newly certified public notaries to marriage licenses and civil celebrant ceremonies. In this issue, you can learn about the process of becoming a notary, obtaining a marriage license, and orientation information for local celebrants. Here at the courthouse, we offer civil celebrant ceremonies on Fridays, except holidays. Please remember that marriage licenses are required at the time of your ceremony, so schedule your appointment in advance.

We have a special Seal the Deal civil wedding ceremony event coming up! We are expanding our civil ceremonies to towns in the area, starting with the Town of Occoquan, which will host our Seal the Deal event on December 13, 2024. This event promises participating couples an afternoon filled with photographic memories at the Town Hall, located near boutiques, shops, and restaurants, all alongside the scenic river. After the ceremony, the town will host a Firelight Festival, where couples can continue celebrating their nuptials by a cozy fire with roasted marshmallows and hot cocoa.

Several times a year, I administer oaths at law enforcement and police ceremonies. These occasions are always a time for reflection as we honor and celebrate the achievements of recruits from the criminal justice academy and welcome them into their sworn positions to maintain a safe community. This issue provides insight into the recent graduation of the Prince William County Police and Sheriff's Criminal Justice Recruit Class #58. Congratulations to the graduates!

Thanks to our residents, the convenience of our Circuit Court Clerk Seals on Wheels program continues to thrive. This marks the second year of its implementation, allowing residents to access many courthouse services, including copies of records and deeds, concealed carry permits, filing petitions, obtaining forms, securing marriage licenses, and having civil celebrant ceremonies. Since the program began touring the County, Manassas, and Manassas Park, 17 couples have married through Seals on Wheels, and more than 840 services have been received. Our last Seals on Wheels stop of 2024 was at the Chinn Park Library on Saturday, November 16.

As we officially enter the holiday season, I want to wish you the happiest of holidays this year. Please mark your calendars for our holiday schedule, and I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. If you have any questions or need assistance with our services, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,
Jackie Smith



*Stay in Town for the
FireLight Event
Hosted by the Town
w/Hot Cocoa, Warm Fire
& Roasted Marshmallows

December 13, 2024 (12 p.m. - 4 p.m.)
Civil Celebrant Ceremonies at Town Hall
Town of Occoquan
314 Mill Street, PO Box 195, Occoquan, Virginia 22125



December 13, 2024 (12 p.m. - 4 p.m.)
After your ceremony, enjoy
local vendors, boutiques and the Town's Annual Firelight Festival.
This event is fully booked

SEAL THE DEAL IN OCCOQUAN

A Magical Civil Ceremony in Occoquan

Congratulations to all the couples choosing *Seal the Deal* for a truly special day! By December 13, the Town of Occoquan will transform into a winter wonderland, sparkling with twinkling lights, festive décor, and the warm glow of holiday cheer. The charming streets, adorned with garlands and wreaths, can create the perfect backdrop for a celebration of love.

At Seal the Deal, couples can customize their experience with options designed to make their day even more memorable.

A Selfie Booth for Magical Memories

Capture the magic of the moment with an on-site selfie station provided by MYB Events. This fun addition allows couples to take their first selfie together, creating lasting memories of their special day.

A Special Bouquet to Celebrate Love

To add even more beauty to the wedding celebrations, the Town has partnered with local florist Brandon's Flowers to offer two exclusive Seal the Deal Bouquet Packages. These stunning floral arrangements will enhance the day with a touch of elegance. Couples can order a bouquet, by clicking on [Brandon's Flowers](#).

Embrace Picture-Perfect Moments

After the event, couples can continue their celebration by exploring the town, capturing more magical moments. Occoquan offers numerous picturesque settings, ideal for romantic photos. Some highlights include:

- **The Historic District:** Lined with festive lights and charming storefront displays.
- **Ellicott Footbridge:** A peaceful spot with breathtaking views of the river and nearby waterfall.
- **LOVEworks:** The iconic LOVE sign in River Mill Park is the perfect symbol of your commitment.
- **The Gazebo:** Nestled in Mamie Davis Park, this quiet spot provides a storybook setting for intimate photos.

Stroll Through Town to Visit Local Boutiques, Artisans, and Restaurants

Newlyweds can stroll through the heart of Occoquan, exploring its unique boutiques, artisans, and restaurants, offering the perfect opportunity to discover the town's charm.

A Firelight Night to Remember

As evening descends, Occoquan comes alive with the Firelight Night celebration, starting at 6:00 p.m. outside the Mill House Museum. This free event is a perfect way to cap off the day—cozy, intimate, and magical. Couples can cuddle up by a fire, enjoy holiday treats, and toast to your future together under the stars.

A Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Partners

The Seal the Deal civil celebrant ceremonies is possible with the contributions of incredible local businesses and organizations. If you would like to contribute to the couples' special day, please contact cchoi@pwcg.org. A huge thank you to the following participating local businesses and entities:

The Town of Occoquan
Art A La Carte
Ballywhack Shack Café
Brandon's Flowers
Hitchcock Paper Co.
Jerry's Occoquan Jewelry



Leaf & Petal
Man Overboard
MYB Events
Occoquan Outfitter
Organic Allure
Puzzle Palooza

PROPERTY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Residents of Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park have expressed concerns about the security of their property deeds. Property deeds recorded at the Clerk's Office are public record and there are processes in place to help prevent fraud from our systems. With this in mind, preserving this information is a top priority. To address any concerns, we are launching a Property Alert System, which empowers residents and local property owners to be notified of any public searches related to property records. When fully implemented it will be at no-cost to the public. The Property Alert system will be offered to the public in early 2025. Please stay tuned for information.

PUBLIC NOTARY OATHS

By law, public notaries must appear before the Clerk of the Circuit Court, provide identification, and take an oath of office to qualify for their commission. You can complete this process at our office on the third floor of the courthouse or at the Clerk's Seals on Wheels. To learn more about becoming a public notary, please visit <https://www.pwcva.gov/department/circuit-court/notary-appointments-renewal>.

LEGAL AGE FOR MARRIAGE

Effective July 2024, the legal age for marriage has been established by Virginia law (HB994). The legal age to marry is now 18 years, and the law eliminates the ability for a minor to be declared emancipated based on the intent to marry. For more information about the new age requirement for marriage, please visit <https://legacylis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?241+sum+HB994>.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Our office provides official marriage licenses, which serve as important legal records of your marriage. These records are essential for name changes, obtaining benefits, and filing taxes. To obtain a marriage license, please schedule an appointment with our office, complete the application form, and visit our public service window on the third floor of the courthouse or at the Clerk's Seals on Wheels. During your visit, you will receive a copy for your officiant to sign and return within five (5) days of your marriage ceremony to ensure legal validity. For answers to frequently asked questions, information on fees, forms, and to schedule your marriage license application appointment, please visit our marriage license webpage at <https://www.pwcva.gov/department/circuit-court/marriage>.

*Please note that the marriage license appointment for application is separate from a civil celebrant ceremony at the courthouse.

CIVIL CELEBRANT INFORMATION & ORIENTATION

COURTHOUSE CIVIL CELEBRANT CEREMONY: In addition to Seal the Deal, the Clerk of the Circuit Court performs civil celebrant ceremonies at the Judicial Center every Friday, except on holidays. To schedule your courthouse ceremony, please contact us at circuitcourt@pwcgov.org. *A marriage license application is required before the ceremony. Please schedule your marriage license application in advance.

FIND A LOCAL CIVIL CELEBRANT: Couples who receive a marriage license from our office and are seeking a local officiant for their wedding can contact a celebrant from the list located at the bottom of our [civil celebrant webpage](#).

RELIGIOUS CELEBRANTS: Section §20-23 of the Code of Virginia outlines the requirements for authorization as a religious celebrant.

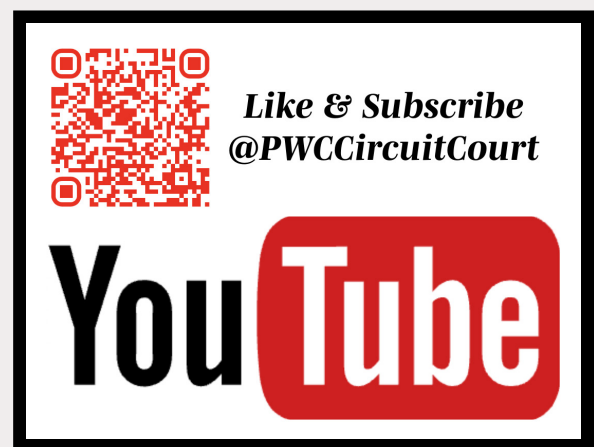
Our office approves ministers of any religious denomination who serve or reside in Prince William County, Manassas, or Manassas Park to perform the Rites of Marriage.

The Clerk's Office does not approve individuals to perform the Rites of Marriage solely based on Internet ordination.

For an application to perform the Rites of Marriage in Virginia and information about applicable fees for religious celebrants, please visit <https://www.pwcva.gov/department/circuit-court/celibrant-information>.

ONE-TIME CELEBRANTS: We also issue one-time authorization for religious and non-religious celebrants who minister out of state or want to perform a marriage for a resident of Prince William County, Manassas, or Manassas Park.

For the one-time celebrant petition form and information about applicable fees, please visit our [civil celebrant webpage](#) and watch our [short officiant orientation video](#).



HAPPILY EVER AFTER

In April 2024, just over forty years after their first meeting in their Greek hometown, the Hilios reaffirmed their vows at the Prince William County Circuit Court Clerk's Office. For the first time, she spoke her vows in English, expressing her feelings directly from her heart. She described the occasion as if the stars had aligned, bringing a cascade of delightful surprises, including a gourmet wedding cake handmade by their daughter, a talented local baker. This vow renewal was profoundly significant for them, symbolizing the enduring love and perseverance that had helped them overcome life's challenges as immigrants in America.

Their life, with three children and a teacher's salary, did not unfold as they had initially envisioned. They had dreamed of marrying and living in Greece, where daughters typically receive family support for housing and basic needs as they came of age—a tradition Demetria compared to the life depicted in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. She saw the film's portrayal as a reflection of their relationship: "Women are the neck, able to turn the head as she pleases." She once imagined enjoying the comforts of her family, friends, and hometown. However, their reality was different. In 1982, Charlton E. Gnadt, Clerk of the Circuit Court, married them on the steps of the Old Manassas Courthouse.



As newlyweds, they raised their family in a two-story townhouse in Dale City. He pursued education, earning a bachelor's and master's degree before embarking on a long career with the Prince William County School system. Meanwhile, she dedicated herself to raising their children and expanding her knowledge on various subjects, including English fluency and financial security. After six years in America, it became clear that moving back to Greece was not an immediate option. Over time, they found satisfaction in their adaptability and willingness to embrace new ways of doing things.

Making a commitment through marriage created an everlasting bond that is a part of their foundation. Both believe that each spouse brings unique strengths to their relationship, serving as the glue that holds it together. They note, "When people invest time and energy in personal development for the sake of their families, the desire to evolve together remains constant." He admires her unwavering determination and ability to tackle the toughest challenges, which inspires him to meet his own commitments and obligations. After forty years together, they understand that even when things go awry, there is always a new day to look forward to.

They find solace in imparting life's great lessons to their growing family. Their love for each other has never faltered, for better or worse. Their vow renewal was more than a symbol of their love; to the two and their children, it represents assurance that love can endure even after four decades of marriage. Their devotion is a testament to a supportive and lasting bond that they hope to pass on to future generations. Click [here](#) for Marriage Licenses and the Clerk's Civil Celebrant Ceremonies.



2025 VALENTINE'S DAY EVENT

Save the Date

Circuit Court Clerk, Jacqueline Smith's

7th Annual

Valentine's Day Bash

A Day of Civil Celebrant Ceremonies & Vow Renewals

February 14, 2025

at the ARTfactory

downtown Manasss, VA



PWC POLICE & SHERIFF RECRUIT CLASS #58 - GRADUATION & OATHS



2024 CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S SEALS ON WHEELS



WINTER PET SUPPLY DRIVE WITH THE PWC BAR ASSOCIATION



Autumn (ID 41923/2186)
Pet ID 72875910

- Sex Female
- Age Adult
- Breed Pit Bull Terrier
- Description Medium dog
- Health
 - Spayed/neutered
 - Vaccinated
- Temperament
 - House-trained
 - Not good with children

Adopt me!



Meet Autumn! This adorable pumpkin spice girl is about 2 years old and she's the perfect companion for cozy fall days. Autumn is loving, affectionate, and she greets our volunteers and staff every day with her warm, full-body wags. She's never met a stranger and thinks that everyone she meets are her best friends. Her previous owners describe her as loyal, well-mannered, snuggly and an overall great dog. She's also a fun-loving, active pup who would love to join you for hikes where she can crunch through the leaves by your side. Ask to meet Autumn today, we're sure you'll fall in love with her!

Prince William County Animal Services Center
11057 Braddock Road Manassas, VA 20112, US



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

CIRCUIT COURT HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

2024

**November 27
Thanksgiving Wednesday
(CLOSED at NOON)**

**November 28
Thursday - Thanksgiving Day
(CLOSED)**

**November 29
Thanksgiving Friday
(CLOSED)**

**December 24
Tuesday - Christmas Eve
(CLOSED)**

**December 25
Wednesday - Christmas Day
(CLOSED)**

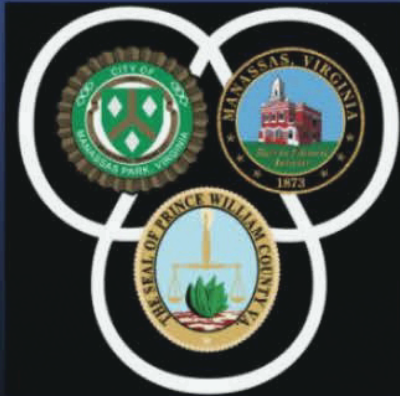
**December 26
Thursday - Christmas Day Observed
(CLOSED)**

**December 31
Tuesday - New Year's Eve
(CLOSED)**

**January 1
Wednesday - New Year's Day
(CLOSED)**

WHICH COURT?

COURTS SERVING PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY,
CITY OF MANASSAS & MANASSAS PARK



9311 LEE AVENUE, MANASSAS, VA 20110



CIRCUIT COURT

Clerk of Court: Jacqueline C. Smith, Esq
Phone: 703-792-6015 | Email: CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org | 3rd Floor

SERVICES

Jury | Criminal Felony Cases | Concealed Handgun Permits | Civil Cases Over \$25K
Deeds & Land Records | Wills & Estates | Marriage & Divorce
All Circuit Court Case Numbers Begin with the Letter "C"

Connect w/us @PWCCircuitcourt



General District

Clerk of Court: Keshara Luster
Phone: 703-792-6141 | 2nd Floor

SERVICES

Traffic Court | Pay Traffic Tickets | Misdemeanors | Small Claims Court
All General District Court Case Numbers Begin with the Letter "G"



Juvenile & Domestic Relations

Clerk of Court: Monica Burnett
Phone: 703-792-6160 | 1st Floor

SERVICES

Family Court | Juvenile Court | Emergency Protective Orders
All Juvenile District Court Case Numbers Begin with the Letter "J"

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CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

JACQUELINE C. SMITH

Chief Deputy Clerk
Kristyn Gleason

Communications Manager
Candi Choi

Contact Us:
Clerk of the Circuit Court
9311 Lee Avenue
Manassas, VA 20110
Tel: 703-792-6015 (TTY: 711)
Email: circuitcourt@pwcgov.org

Website: www.pwcva.org/ccourt

Social Media: [@PWCCircuitCourt](https://www.instagram.com/PWCCircuitCourt)



**Serving Prince William County,
Cities of Manassas & Manassas Park**