

THE CIRCUIT

A NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

JACQUELINE C. SMITH

January 2026



SERVICES SPOTLIGHT:

COURT & COMMUNITY

IN THIS ISSUE...

Innovations

**HOW THE CIRCUIT COURT
CLERK IS BRINGING SERVICES
DIRECTLY TO YOU**

Community Happenings

**COURTHOUSE FAIR ON THE SQUARE
& SEAL THE DEAL**

**COMING SOON:
8TH ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY BASH
LAW DAY ART CONTEST**

COVER SPOTLIGHT

COURT & COMMUNITY

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK SERVICES
WAYS YOU CAN CONNECT

BY THE NUMBERS
POPULAR SERVICES OF 2025

CIVIL CELEBRATION EXPERIENCES
ELEGANT COURT-STYLE CEREMONIES

**A NOTE FROM YOUR
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK**

JACQUELINE C. SMITH

A NOTE FROM

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK, JACQUELINE SMITH



WELCOME TO OUR THIRD PUBLIC NEWSLETTER; THE CIRCUIT

Dear Community Members,

As winter brings a season of reflection, gratitude, and giving, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your continued support, engagement, and commitment to strengthening our community. Your participation in our programs and events is what makes them meaningful, and I am deeply appreciative of the connections we've built together.

This past year has been filled with milestones worth celebrating, and we are excited to share highlights while also looking ahead to 2026. Our programs continued to bring circuit court resources directly to you through our Seals on Wheels, Self-Service Kiosks, and online resources, including Property Alerts. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who stopped by, received services through these initiatives, and continue to help make these innovations a success.

On November 8, 2025, we hosted our first-ever *Courthouse Fair on the Square* in partnership with the Sheriff's Office and the County's Office of Public Safety. The event honored the legacy of our court square while bringing together families, food, and fun. We invite you to join us again next year to connect with local agencies and celebrate an afternoon with our community.

The fair also served as the drop-off location for our 2nd Annual Pet Supply Drive. Thanks to your generosity, essential supplies were donated to the Manassas City Animal Shelter, Hope & Serenity Farm Sanctuary, Prince William County Animal Shelter, and Byrdie's Buddies. Your contributions made a meaningful difference for animals in need.

We recently hosted our annual *Seal the Deal Civil Ceremony Experience* in Occoquan, one of our cherished celebrations of the year. This event offered couples an elegant way to say "I do" in intimate court-style ceremonies at Madigan's Waterfront restaurant. With an overlook of the Occoquan River, charming storefronts, and small-town atmosphere, this event reflected the very heart of our mission: to bring people together in ways that honor tradition and inclusivity. Photos from this special day are featured in this issue.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce our 2026 *Valentine's Day Bash*, where couples can enjoy court-style ceremonies with a touch of cupid's romantic charm. We encourage couples, families, and friends to join us in making this occasion the Valentine's Day event of the year. Be sure to save the date and watch for more details coming up in early January.

Another event on the horizon is our 6th Annual *Law Day Art Contest*, inspired by the American Bar Association's 2026 theme: "The Rule of Law and the American Dream". This contest blends civics with artistic expression, offering local students a unique opportunity to illustrate the role of law while encouraging thoughtful civil discourse. We are beginning to accept early submissions in February, giving students time to prepare and share their creative work. A special Law Day awards ceremony will be held in May to recognize participating students, and their artwork will be showcased in a local gallery. Please read on for more details.

As we reflect on this season of gratitude and giving, we are reminded of the enduring importance of community, generosity, and shared celebration. I wish you joy, rest, and renewal in the New Year.

*Thank you,
Jackie Smith*

THE CIRCUIT
January 2026

SIMPLIFYING WAYS YOU CAN CONNECT WITH CIRCUIT COURT SERVICES

The Circuit Court Clerk's Office is committed to making services accessible, convenient, and responsive to the needs of our community. Through innovative programs such as our self-service kiosks, Seals on Wheels outreach, Property Alerts system, and Historical Online Portal, we ensure that residents can access court services when and where they need them. Whether you prefer to visit a nearby location or connect from the comfort of your home, these resources place the Circuit Court Clerk's services near you and available outside of regular business hours.

At our self-service **Kiosks**, residents can access services in both English and Spanish, ensuring that language is never a barrier to justice or public access. These kiosks provide quick and secure options for Circuit Court Clerk services, including marriage licenses, deed copies, case information, pay fines, and even register to vote. By expanding kiosks into government buildings and libraries, we've strengthened our commitment to inclusivity and ensure that all members of the community can confidently navigate essential services.

Our **Seals on Wheels** program brings the Clerk's Office directly into neighborhoods by setting up at local libraries, community events, and festivals. This mobile service allows residents to obtain many of the same services offered at the courthouse, such as marriage licenses, name changes, concealed handgun permits, filing petitions, and receiving certified copies of records; all within proximity of your home. By meeting people where they are, Seals on Wheels makes the court more approachable, accessible, and responsive to everyday needs.

The **Property Alerts** system provides peace of mind by notifying residents when documents are filed that affect their property records. This proactive tool helps protect against fraud and ensures homeowners remain informed about any changes to their property status. Signing up is simple, and once enrolled, residents receive timely alerts that safeguard their most valuable assets.

Finally, our **Historical Online Portal (HOP)** offers convenient access to archived court documents for research, genealogy, and historical study. From the comfort of a home computer, residents can explore records that shed light on local history and provide valuable insights for academic or personal projects. This digital resource preserves our community's heritage while making it readily available to anyone with an interest in learning more.

Continue reading to explore details about these services.

SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS



CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS



Convenient access to Circuit Court services outside of court hours, located at libraries and government administrative sites across the community.



Secure and quick access to Circuit Court Clerk services, such as obtaining marriage licenses, deed copies, and case information.



Access to various county agency services, including General District court information, voter registration, and payments for tickets and taxes.



Kiosks accept all major credit cards when paying Fines and Fees.

We're making it easier than ever to access essential services—no lines, no waiting, no hassle. Our self-service kiosks are now available at libraries, county administrative buildings, and the courthouse, giving residents the freedom to take care of important tasks on their own time. You can apply for a marriage license, look up property records, pay parking fees or taxes, or register to vote. Our **Kiosks** put access to the local government right at your fingertips.

Services Offered:

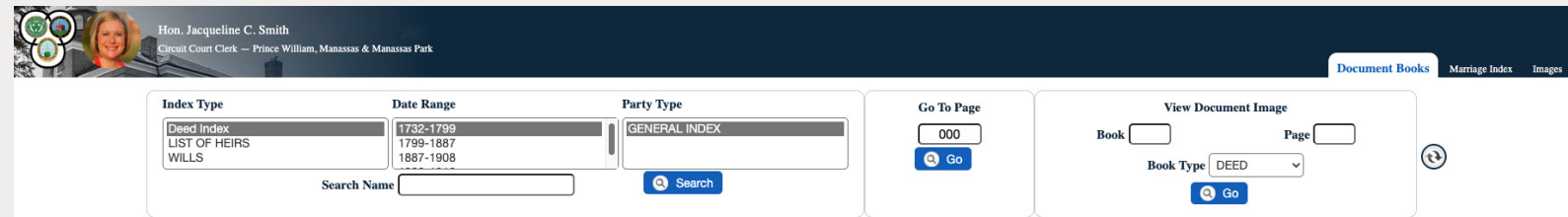
- **Circuit Court Clerk services:** marriage licenses, deeds, case information, certified records, and payments.
- **General District Court services:** access to case information and filings.
- **Other Government services:** voter registration, tax payments, and ticket payments.
- **Multilingual support:** services available in both English and Spanish.

Our Kiosks were developed in partnership with Advanced Kiosks, and designed to extend the Circuit Court Clerk's Office capabilities into multiple convenient locations across Prince William County, and the Cities of Manassas & Manassas Park.

Find a kiosk near you via <https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/circuit-court/news>.

HISTORICAL ONLINE PORTAL

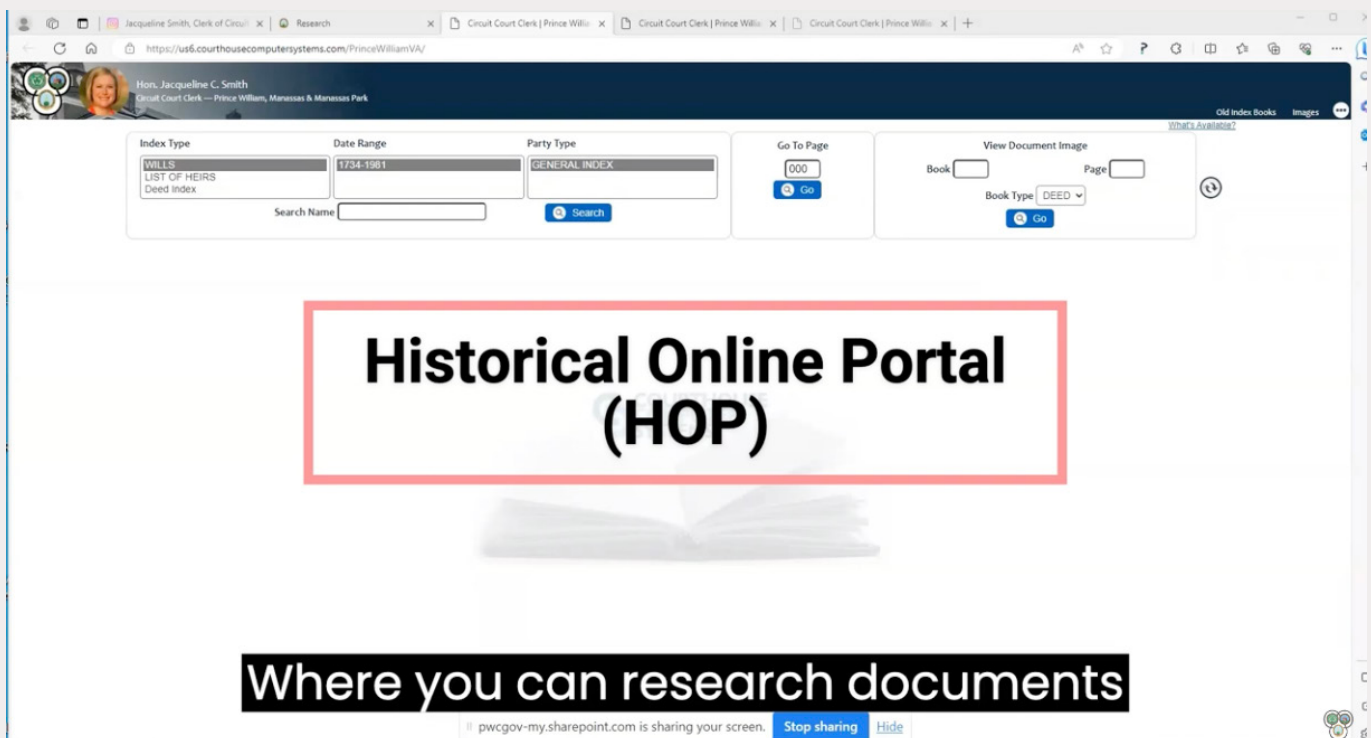
The **Historical Online Portal (HOP)** is a groundbreaking initiative that digitizes and opens access to the areas oldest court records. It combines convenience, preservation, and transparency, making centuries of local history available to the public for research, genealogy, and community engagement.



The screenshot shows the top of the HOP website. At the top left is a header with a logo and the text "Hon. Jacqueline C. Smith, Circuit Court Clerk — Prince William, Manassas & Manassas Park". To the right are navigation links: "Document Books", "Marriage Index", and "Images". Below the header is a search interface with several sections: "Index Type" with a dropdown menu showing "Deed Index", "LIST OF HEIRS", and "WILLS"; "Date Range" with a dropdown menu showing "1732-1799", "1799-1887", and "1887-1908"; "Party Type" with a dropdown menu showing "GENERAL INDEX"; a "Go To Page" section with a text input "000" and a "Go" button; and a "View Document Image" section with "Book" and "Page" text inputs, a "Book Type" dropdown menu showing "DEED", and a "Go" button. A "Search Name" text input and a "Search" button are also present.

Content Available:

- **Deeds:** Includes property records from colonial times through the early 1900s.
- **Wills and Lists of Heirs:** Probate records that document family lineages and inheritance.
- **Marriage Index:** Marriage Licenses that document couples married in the local area dating back to the 1800's.
- **Special Collections:** The "[Stolen Deed Book – Liber A](#)" a set of historical records that had been missing for over 150 years but were recovered and digitized. [Click this link to read the full story about the return of the court's stolen records.](#) Visit our [Historical Research](#) webpage to access the **H.O.P.**



SEALS ON WHEELS

Residents can save both time and money by accessing Seals on Wheels at convenient locations close to home. On one Saturday each month, Clerk's Office services are available, including marriage licenses, name changes, notary oaths, concealed handgun permits, and more. The 2025 Seals on Wheels program concluded with a successful year of community events, hosted in partnership with neighborhood libraries and local organizations. Looking ahead, additional dates will be added to the 2026 schedule. Updated information will be available at www.pwccircuitcourt.com.

PROPERTY ALERTS

Preserving property deeds recorded at the Clerk's Office is a top priority. We recently launched a Property Alert System, which empowers residents and local property owners to be notified of any public searches related to their property records, at no-cost to the public. For more information, please visit our Property Alerts Webpage at <https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/circuit-court/property-alerts-system>.

Locations/Dates



Court services in your community.

SEALS ON WHEELS

Jacqueline C. Smith, Esq.

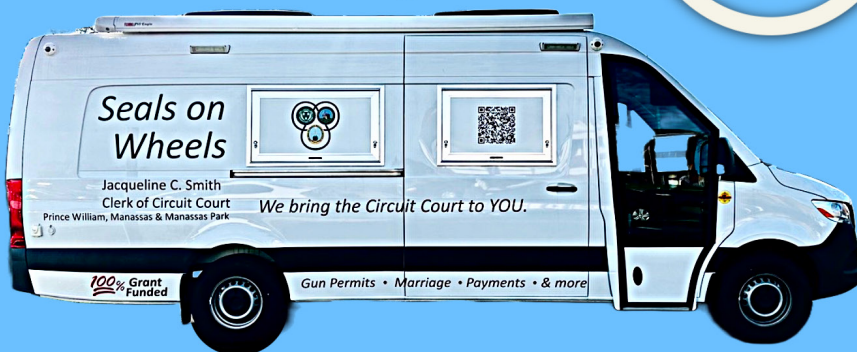


Clerk of the Circuit Court
Prince William County,
& the Cities of
Manassas and Manassas Park



FREE PROPERTY ALERT SYSTEM

Monitoring property records for your peace of mind.
*Sign Up to get notified.



THE CIRCUIT

January 2026

OUR INAUGURAL COURTHOUSE FAIR ON THE SQUARE

The first-ever Courthouse Fair on the Square took place on Saturday, November 8, 2025, at the Judicial Center in Manassas, Virginia. The event honored the legacy of the courthouse square and brought together residents of all ages for an afternoon of celebration and civic engagement.

Courthouse squares long served as the symbolic heart of American counties, and Prince William County's courthouse history reflected its growth from a colonial outpost to a modern suburban center.

Each move throughout the County marked a new chapter in court history and local development. The current Judicial Center in Manassas stands as a central setting for civic life and a prominent symbol of community.

The fair offered a free, family-friendly experience that brought together 60 local agencies and organizations, food trucks, live demonstrations, and hands-on activities. Our office hosted the event in partnership with Sheriff Glendell Hill and the Office of Community Safety.

The fair also served as the official drop-off site for the 2nd Annual Pet Supply Drive. Residents contributed supplies that supported the Manassas City Animal Shelter, Hope & Serenity Farm Sanctuary, Prince William County Animal Shelter, and Byrdie's Buddies, helping provide for the essential needs of animals across the community.

The success of this year's fair created momentum for the future. We hope to see you at our Fair on the Square next year!



BY THE NUMBERS: KEY SERVICES IN 2025

The Clerk of Circuit Court’s Office is organized into four divisions:

- **Public Services**
- **Civil Services**
- **Criminal Services**
- **Court Support Services**

Among these, the most frequently requested services include Concealed Carry Permits, Divorce Filings, Marriage Licenses, Name Changes, and Oaths; each reflecting important milestones and responsibilities in residents’ lives.

This table highlights the top services requested by residents in Prince William County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. It reflects the types and total number of services delivered, along with year-over-year percentage changes between 2024 and 2025.

The most dramatic shift came in Concealed Carry Permits, which surged by an impressive 34% year over year change in 2025. By contrast, Divorce Filings saw a decline. Demand for services rose with an overall total 8% increase from 2024 to 2025, underscoring the vital role of the Clerk’s Office in serving the community.

Services Received	2025	2024	% Change (YoY)
Concealed Carry Permits Issued	7,074	5,293	34%
Deeds Recorded	43,520	41,155	5%
Divorce Filings Filed	1,179	1,190	-0.92%
Marriage Licenses Issued	2,919	2,914	0.17%
Name Changes Filed	953	814	17%
Oaths Taken	1,435	1,396	3%
Total	56,810	52,762	8%

The Code of Virginia assigns the Clerk more than 800 responsibilities, many of them complex and demanding. These include: serving as recorder of deeds and probate judge, issuing marriage licenses, acting as the official court administrator for all civil and criminal cases. The Clerk manages court files and records, prepares orders and jury lists, contacts jurors, and issues summons and court processes.

Unlike many states where these responsibilities are divided among multiple offices, Virginia consolidates judicial and administrative functions into a single Clerk’s Office, enhancing efficiency and saving citizens significant tax dollars

BY THE NUMBERS: KEY SERVICES IN 2025

From everyday needs to life's milestones, every interaction reflects our commitment to supporting you through these moments.

This chart shows the variety of services provided to residents throughout 2025. We delivered 56,810 services—whether at our main office, through Seals on Wheels, or at our convenient self-service Kiosks. The majority of these services were deeds recorded, with an impressive 76% of all services.

As we close the chapter on 2025, and with steady progress, we anticipate offering more services in 2026! For more information about our services, please visit www.pwcva.gov/department/circuit-court.

Quick Facts:

56,810 services delivered in 2025

Services offered through our Main Office, Seals on Wheels, and Kiosks.

Looking ahead: Expanded services planned for 2026

Every service tells a story—whether it's a marriage license, name change, or deed recorded.

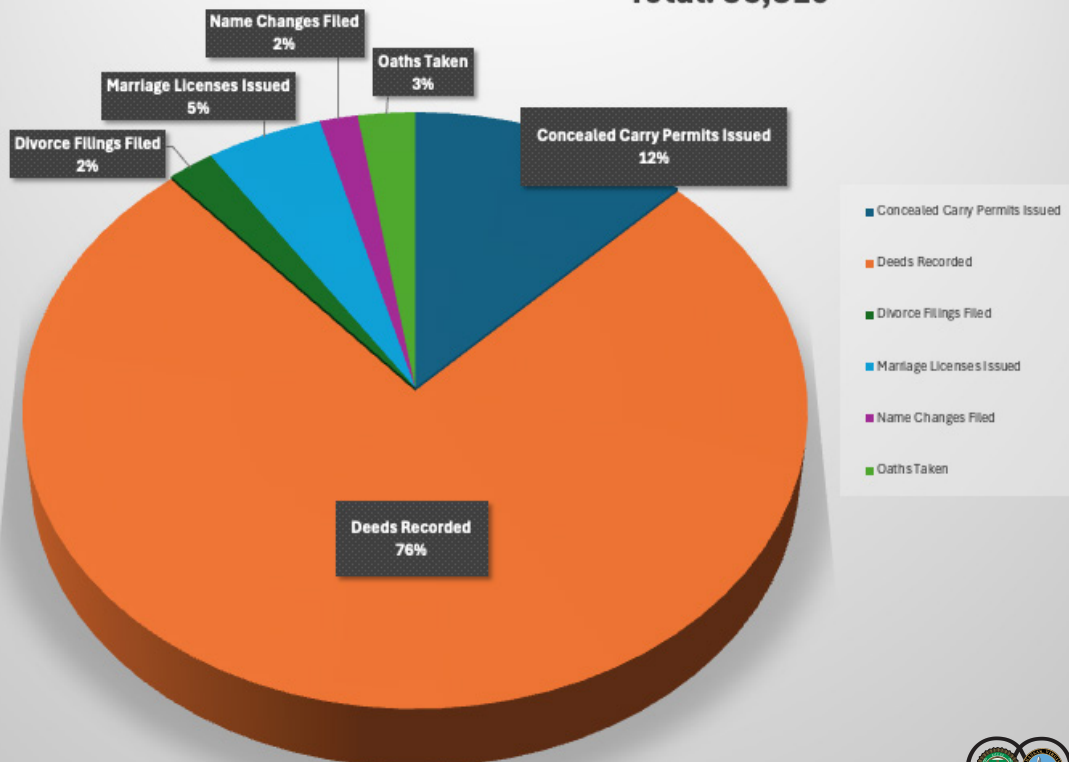
What's Next?

More community outreach events

Enhanced digital services for faster access

Ongoing commitment to delivering judicial services that maximize value for taxpayers.

**PWC Circuit Court Clerk
Services Received in 2025
Total: 56,810**



CIVIL CEREMONY EXPERIENCES

Couples in Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park can begin their journey together with ease through our Circuit Court Clerk's Office. After completing the marriage license process, they may choose a heartfelt civil ceremony in the circuit courtroom every Friday, except holidays, or take part in one of the Clerk's annual celebrations such as the Valentine's Day Bash or Seal the Deal experience, where approximately 20 couples exchange vows in beautifully timed ceremonies. Through our popular Seals on Wheels program, we have also officiated 25 weddings across the community, bringing the joy of marriage directly to neighboring libraries and community festivals.



The Marriage License Process: A wedding ceremony becomes legally valid *only after* the couple obtains and certifies their marriage license. To start, both partners complete an online application and schedule an appointment with the Circuit Court Clerk's Office, this can streamline the process and reduce wait times. The application requires full and truthful answers, as the information directly appears on the official license and the couple swears an oath validating the information.

Once a marriage license appointment is scheduled, couples visit our Public Services office at the Judicial Center (third floor) or meet the Clerk's team at Seals on Wheels. Both spouses must be present with valid photo IDs. Together, they swear under oath that the details on their application are complete and accurate. This begins the process to obtain a marriage license.

Wedding Ceremonies: After the marriage license process has been started, the couple can have their ceremony, the officiant, whether religious or civil, returns the signed license to our office. Couples receive a packet outlining this process, and the license itself includes specific instructions. Once filed at our office, the marriage license is officially recorded, and the marriage is legally recognized, finalizing the marriage license and marking the beginning of the couple's union.

Court-Style Civil Ceremonies: An option for an affordable courtroom civil ceremony can be scheduled through our office, offering couples a simple path to marriage. Our office also partners with local business entities to host our annual civil ceremony events. Couples can connect with these celebrations on social media via @PWCCircuitCourt.



Like & Subscribe
@PWCCircuitCourt

You 

Find full details to obtain a marriage license at www.pwcva.gov/marriage and our [YouTube Channel](#).

Read on to discover more about our special civil ceremony experiences.

Congratulations!



**SEAL THE
DEAL**
Weddings

SEALED WITH LOVE: 19 COUPLES CELEBRATE THEIR VOWS IN OCCOQUAN



This winter, couples let their love shine amid the charm and warmth of the Town of Occoquan. On Friday, December 12, 2025, Prince William County Circuit Court Clerk Jacqueline C. Smith, in collaboration with the Town of Occoquan, hosted the **2nd Annual Seal the Deal**, one of our signature civil wedding experience.

Set against Occoquan's historic streets and waterfront views, the event took place at Madigan's Waterfront, a cozy venue and fine dining restaurant along the Occoquan River. Nineteen (19) couples exchanged vows in elegant courthouse-style ceremonies beneath a beautifully crafted arch, surrounded by family and friends. The elegant simplicity of the ceremonies kept the focus on each couple, offering a romantic alternative to traditional

wedding planning. After their ceremonies, couples enjoyed celebratory refreshments and indulged in "wedding cupcakes" at Madigan's. The involvement of local businesses made the day magical, transforming *Seal the Deal* into a true community celebration.

We extend gratitude to the Town of Occoquan and the local business community for their generosity for the couples' wedding gifts. Contributions came from: Madigan's Waterfront, Ballywhack Shack, Brandon's Flowers, Curate, Evidi Massage, Forever Young, Glory Be, Hello Jackson, Hitchcock Paper, Jerry's Occoquan Jewelers, Leaf & Petal, Mark Summerson Photography, and Occoquan Outfitter. Together, these partners helped create a day where love stories unfolded in a town sparkling with romance, community, and holiday magic.

For updates and information about our civil ceremony events, follow us at @PWCCircuitCourt on social media or visit our website at www.pwcva.gov/departments/circuit-court.



THE CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S 8TH ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY BASH

On February 14, 2026, love will take center stage as our office will host the annual Valentine's Day Bash at the Manassas Museum. Previous celebrations have filled the Old Manassas Courthouse, Three Monkeys Pub, and the ARTFactory, and this year promises to be just as captivating.

We'll transform the Mae Merchant Hall at Manassas Museum into a Valentine's romantic haven adorned with décor, sparkling lights, and whimsical touches. Couples will exchange vows in civil ceremonies that feel intimate and timeless. Guests can enjoy playful details like a photo "kissing booth" and heart-shaped decor, perfect for commemorating newlywed bliss.



Every couple's story adds to the romance. Some write their own vows, others renew their love after years of marriage, and others, like once school sweethearts, expand their love story through this civil wedding experience. Every ceremony unfolds as a treasured chapter in the couple's story, filled with love and affection.

Couples can reserve their time slot for the event by calling 703-792-6036. Stay connected and follow us at @PWCCIRCUITCOURT on social media for updates.

CIVIL CEREMONIES AT THE COURTHOUSE:

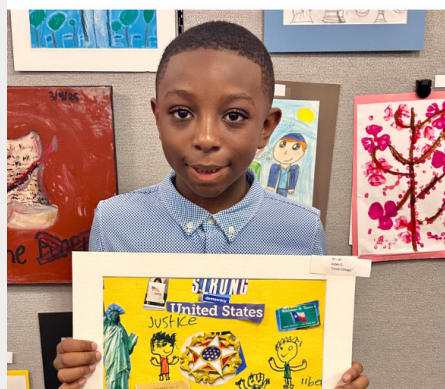
The Clerk's Office offers civil ceremonies every Friday (except holidays) at the Judicial Center and at Seals on Wheels, and community events like Valentine's Bash and Seal the Deal. Couples enjoy a convenient, meaningful path to marriage recognized by law. Celebrate love with the Clerk's Office civil ceremonies, they are intimate, heartfelt, and simple. Creating affordable and timeless memories. For answers to frequently asked questions, information on fees, forms, and to schedule your marriage license application appointment, visit <https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/circuit-court/marriage>. *Please note that the marriage license appointment for application is separate from a civil celebrant ceremony at the courthouse.

COMING SOON: 6TH ANNUAL LAW DAY ART CONTEST

Mark your calendars and get ready to unleash your creativity! The Clerk's Office will host an art workshop at the [Makerspace](#) at the [Prince William Public Central Library](#) on Saturday, February 21, 2026 at 1 p.m. to launch our [6th Annual Law Day Art Contest](#).

Every year in May, law professionals across the country commemorate Law Day to promote an understanding of the legal profession and the importance of law in society. This year, we explore "The Rule of Law and The American Dream." This emphasizes the principle that no person is above the law, ensuring that people have the right to live freely and to pursue their dreams.

This year (2026), the Clerk of Circuit Court, Jacqueline C. Smith is calling for student artwork that reflects the American Bar Association's Law Day Theme: "The Rule of Law and The American Dream." The goal for the [Clerk's Law Day Art Contest](#) is to provide an exciting and educational way for students to deepen their understanding of the many ways law and the legal process protect our liberty, strive to achieve justice, and contribute to the freedoms that all Americans share. This contest inspires civil discourse about the common good and the framework of our democracy.



Clerk Smith invites all students in grades 1st-12th enrolled in private, home, and public schools in Prince William County, and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park, to submit artwork illustrating the theme, "The Rule of Law and The American Dream." Details about the Clerk's call for student artwork for her 6th Annual Law Day Art Contest are included in this [packet \(click here\)](#). Local schools and teachers are encouraged to share this information with their students.

Contest Eligibility The contest is open to all local students enrolled for the 2025-2026 school year in grades 1 through 12 in Prince William County, as well as the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. We can't wait to see what you create!

CIRCUIT COURT HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

2026

January 19
Monday - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
(CLOSED)

February 16
Monday - Presidents' Day
(CLOSED)

May 25
Monday - Memorial Day
(CLOSED)

June 19
Friday - Juneteenth
(CLOSED)

July 3
Friday - Independence Day (Observed)
(CLOSED)

September 7
Monday - Labor Day
(CLOSED)

October 12
Monday - Columbus Day/
Yorktown Victory Day
(CLOSED)

November 3
Tuesday - Election Day
(CLOSED)

November 11
Wednesday - Veterans Day
(CLOSED)

November 25
Thanksgiving Wednesday
(CLOSED at Noon)

November 26
Thursday - Thanksgiving Day
(CLOSED)

November 27
Thanksgiving Friday
(CLOSED)

December 24
Thursday - Christmas Eve
(CLOSED)

December 25
Friday - Christmas 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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January 2026

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VOL. 03

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CIRCUIT COURT CLERK**

JACQUELINE C. SMITH

Chief Deputy Clerk
Kristyn Gleason

Communications Manager
Candi Choi

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Clerk of the Circuit Court
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Website: www.pwcva.org/ccourt

Social Media: @PWCCircuitCourt



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