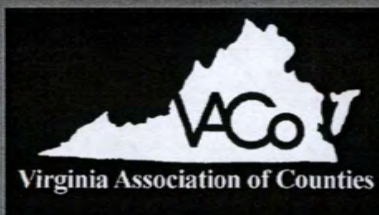


Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



## 2014 Achievement Awards

**Call for Entries**



## 2014 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 2, 2014

### Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2014.**

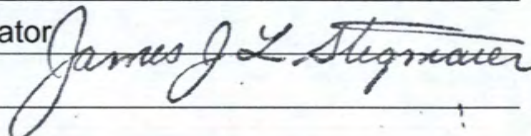
#### Program Information

Locality Chesterfield County  
Program Title Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum  
Program Category Community & Economic Development

#### Contact Information

Name Latisha W. Jenkins  
Title Revitalization Manager  
Department Chesterfield Economic Development  
Complete Mailing Address 9401 Courthouse Road, Suite B  
Chesterfield, VA 23832  
Telephone # 804.748.1065 Fax # 804.796.3638  
E-mail JenkinsL@chesterfield.gov

#### Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name James J. L. Stegmaier  
Title County Administrator  
Signature 



## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

In recent years, Chesterfield County has shifted from managing fast growth and development to a county that is focusing its efforts on redeveloping existing commercial corridors and communities. Empowering citizens to maintain and revitalize their neighborhoods in the county is the motivation for an "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum". The Sustain Our Communities Committee (SOCC), a Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors appointed group, created this positive event to address its mission, which is to "identify best practices and disseminate information to individuals and organizations to maintain or improve communities."

In February 2012, the first forum was held. The program is marketed regionally and is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is preferred; however, on-site registration is available and promoted. During this half-day Saturday program, individuals are educated, encouraged, and empowered to meet the challenges they are facing or may face in their communities. Hundreds of area residents have benefited from sessions delivered by professionals on crime prevention, fighting blight, code compliance, how to organize a civic group, aging in place, homeowner association law, and increasing your home's curb appeal. The SOCC will continue to present this program, because of the need to educate and empower Chesterfield County residents.

The "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" is a targeted government program and a new concept for the county. It has been received positively by residents and county administration. Residents who participate in the forum are educated about government programs and are encouraged to utilize them to assist with increasing their quality of life. Maintaining and improving communities in Chesterfield County benefits property owners and the county's tax base, and it will attract new home buyers to older communities. The forum is an effective educational tool that promotes neighborhood maintenance and revitalization.



## **THE PROBLEM/NEED FOR THE PROGRAM**

There are numerous programs, organizations, real estate professionals, and home improvement stores that can inform individuals on how to improve their homes, stay in compliance with laws, and prevent crime. Unfortunately, they are not often located together or work with each other. A one-stop program was needed so that community and revitalization professionals could collaborate and offer one-on-one consultation to residents for free. County staff visits organized groups who request program presentations. Those groups are informed and utilize the programs to maintain their neighborhoods. Regrettably, residents that live in communities that do not have a civic organization are not receiving valuable program information on ways to maintain their homes and neighborhoods.

The SOCC's purpose is to "educate, involve, and support" the residents of Chesterfield County by finding ways to maintain or improve communities. Since 2006, when the SOCC was officially established by the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, the committee has received many presentations, attended events, taken tours, and published documents on best practices to maintain and revitalize communities. Outlined in a document called *The Path Forward*, which was produced by the SOCC and Chesterfield County Revitalization, the forum concept was developed. In 2011, the committee decided to take the five years of knowledge they gathered and created a forum to disseminate positive and needed information.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM**

Annually, the Sustain Our Communities Committee (SOCC) advances its mission, which is to "identify best practices and disseminate information to individuals and organizations to maintain or improve communities". The "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" is a program that supports residents, and the SOCC believes that the best way to give support is to empower them to



help themselves. By educating and informing residents about programs available to them, they can gain knowledge and access resources to improve their quality of life.

Chesterfield County's Economic Development Department provides staff support and guides the SOCC with advancing its mission. By early 2010 with staff assistance, the SOCC had produced a number of documents, such as a *Citizen's Guide to Service*, a *Community Revitalization Toolkit*, and *The Path Forward*. All of the documents sought to educate and support residents who needed answers and guidance. The Path Forward benchmarked Chesterfield County's revitalization and community efforts against other Virginia localities, and recommended county programs to sustain older communities. Strengthening the community's ability to self help was a recommendation that lead to the creation of the forum.

In 2011, the forum concept was developed by members of the SOCC and Chesterfield County staff. The date of Saturday, February 11, 2012 was selected as the first "Empowering Neighborhoods Forum". An agenda was created and community and revitalization professionals were invited to speak on the following topics;

- ♦ Community Association Law (Restrictive Covenant Enforcement),
- ♦ County Code and Zoning Enforcement,
- ♦ Neighborhood Enhancement: Property Maintenance Inspection Program,
- ♦ Neighborhood Watch: Proactive Crime Prevention, and
- ♦ The Challenge of Maintaining Vibrant Suburban Neighborhoods.

The initial forum format was a half-day event held on a Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The entire event occurred in one large room that contained the presenters, attendees, exhibitors, and refreshments. Everyone received all the same information and was able to hear all questions posed to presenters and subsequent answerers. With over 100 attendees and many positive evaluations, the SOCC viewed this program as a success and began planning the next forum.



On Saturday, March 9, 2013, a second forum took place utilizing some of the same features of the initial forum. The event featured online pre-registration, which helped the SOCC build its outreach database and ascertain which county magisterial districts and civic organizations were represented. On-site registration reflected great numbers as well. This forum featured the public release of the SOCC's latest publication, “Chesterfield's Home Modernization Guide”. The guide's consultant presented this county funded resource, which will be used to promote and aid revitalization countywide.

The Home Modernization Guide is geared to homeowners, prospective purchasers of homes, neighborhood leaders, realtors, contractors, home improvement retailers, and others. The guide can be accessed at [www.chesterfieldcommunities.com](http://www.chesterfieldcommunities.com) and reference copies can be viewed at all Chesterfield County Public Libraries and at all county home improvement retailers.

Our current forum took place on Saturday, February 8, 2014. This event featured a new central location for the venue, a new program format, a for-profit exhibitor's fee, and the addition of a SOCC Community Awards Program. A new venue location was selected to better serve the requests of county residents who wanted to participate, but desired a county central location. Manchester Middle School located on Route 360 (Hull Street Road) was selected due to its location on a major thoroughfare, and the cost to use the facility was free for county departments.

Past forums took place in one large room. The new location provided the SOCC with the opportunity to provide attendees with a new format that gave them a choice on which presentations to attend. Two workshop sessions were created that each offered four choices to participants, some presentations were repeated due to past popularity. The following workshops were offered;

- ♦ Aging in Place,
- ♦ Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Watch,
- ♦ Fighting Blight and Code Compliance,



- ♦ HOAs: The Top 10 Things You Should Know,
- ♦ Increasing Curb Appeal and Preparing Your Home for Sale, and
- ♦ Neighborhood Associations: Establishing and Running an Effective Organization.

At every forum, exhibitors whose organization or products advance the SOCC's mission have been invited to participate. This year for-profit exhibitors were asked to donate \$100 to participate. County departments and non-profits were allowed to exhibit with out a donation. The SOCC collected \$600 to assist with future events and programs.

The SOCC has had many discussions for years about how to honor and recognize the accomplishments of outstanding organizations and individuals from across the county who work tirelessly to enhance the quality of life in their communities. The first ever SOCC Community Awards Program took place as the forum's closing event. Over 16 volunteers and organizations from across the county were honored.

The SOCC's forum concept continues to evolve as we learn and implement best practices. The Home Modernization Guide has been a valuable added resource that has been featured at two past forums. Workshops derived from the guide, like "Aging in Place" and "Increasing Curb Appeal", speak directly to the program's audience, who want to be educated about ways to modernize their home or accommodate their lifestyle. The "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" is a great educational resource, outreach mechanism, and property revitalization tool.

#### USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In 2009, Chesterfield County Revitalization launched a new web address and page for the Sustain Our Communities Committee (SOCC) at [www.chesterfieldcommunities.com](http://www.chesterfieldcommunities.com). This web page connects the public to the SOCC. Publications, past forum presentations, and connections to valuable programs can be accessed on this site. Also located on the site, is the forum's pre-registration form. Using this online form and on-site registration information obtained from forum



participants, assists the SOCC with keeping a community database, which allows the opportunity for future outreach efforts.

Chesterfield County Public Affairs, the county's strategic communication link between county government and the residents of Chesterfield County, provided forum promotional support by way of press releases to print and news media, social media promotion, and features in electronic newsletter distribution to their database. Subsequently, a local news network covered the 2014 forum program. The county department of Information Systems Technology provided valuable technical support by providing the forum with six laptops, presentation software, and Wi-Fi service for the actual event. With the support of many county departments, staff and programs, the possibilities of the "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" are promising.

#### **THE COST OF THE PROGRAM**

This initiative was developed and launched with a very limited budget. The SOCC is not a funded county committee; therefore, SOCC members and support staff collaborate on ways to finance this valuable endeavor. Annual costs are about \$850. Program savings occur due to the numerous in-kind donations and services provided by county departments and businesses. The event venue, use of computer equipment, program materials, and event publicity were all donated. These useful donations make this annual program possible and cost effective.

The Department of Economic Development, which supports the Committee, budgets funds annually for the initiative. This year the SOCC raised over \$600 from for-profit vendors/exhibitors who wanted to display their services to Chesterfield County residents at the Forum.



The costs are as follows:

<b>Annual Costs</b>	
Materials	\$125.00
Event Signage	\$75.00
Custodial Services at Venue	\$150.00
Refreshments	\$500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$850.00</b>

### THE RESULTS/SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

The "Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" is an educational program marketed to individuals, neighborhoods, and civic organizations. It is designed as a self-help initiative that connects the public with various resources that will assist them to achieve tasks. Over the past three years, hundreds of residents have participated in the forum program and the results have been positive. Each year the SOCC evaluates forum attendees, presenters, and exhibitors. These evaluations are studied and assist the SOCC with organizing the next forum. A comment that is usually written in many evaluations is that the participant did not know about the many programs available to assist them. Educating and informing the residents of Chesterfield County has made the program a success. The following are a list of results gathered from evaluations and county program staff.

- ♦ The forum has increased the knowledge of county residents about county programs, such as Code Compliance, Property Maintenance, Neighborhood Watch, and others.
- ♦ It has increased the participation of county residents in county programs, such as Chesterfield Alert, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Crime Solvers, the Anti-Litter Program, and others.
- ♦ The forum has connected community-based business owners to homeowners, neighborhoods, and organizations to work together to improve and maintain their properties and communities.



- ♦ It provides an annual opportunity for county departments to introduce new county programs to residents, like Chesterfield Alert. Where residents will be alerted about emergencies and other critical information quickly, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods.

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS (Attached PDF Documents)**

**Attachments Include**

- ♦ Forum Flyer
- ♦ Forum Post Event Write-up
- ♦ Forum Pictures



# Chesterfield Empowering Neighborhoods Forum

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Eanes-Pittman Public Safety Training Center—Chesterfield Government Complex  
6610 Public Safety Way  
Chesterfield, Virginia 23832

**Saturday, March 9, 2013**  
**8:30 a.m.**

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Chesterfield County's Sustain Our Community Committee (SOCC) will present their second "Empowering Neighborhoods Forum" on Saturday, March 9, 2013. At this event, attendees will gain a wealth of knowledge that will prove beneficial to their neighborhoods. They will obtain information about valuable tools, including property maintenance, code enforcement, and crime prevention that will help kick off the revitalization of their communities. Also, be present for the unveiling and presentation of Chesterfield's new **Home Modernization Guide**.

This event is free and open to the public.  
**Register now** at [www.chesterfieldcommunities.com](http://www.chesterfieldcommunities.com)

## EVENT SCHEDULE

- 8:30 a.m. Registration – Exhibits
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Overview of Program
- Ben Thorp, Chairman, Sustain Our Communities Committee
- County Zoning and Code Enforcement*
- Barry White, Chesterfield County Building Inspections
  - Ted Barclay, Chesterfield County Planning
- 211 – Get the Help that You Need*
- Tina Bessent, 211 Virginia – United Way
- 10:30 a.m. Break – Refreshments – Exhibits
- 10:45 a.m. *Chesterfield's Home Modernization Guide*
- Bill Frazier, Frazier Associates
- Community Association Law*
- Andrew G. Elmore, Chadwick, Washington, Moriarty, Elmore & Bunn P.C.
- 12:00 p.m. Conclusion and Evaluation
- 12:30 p.m. Adjourn

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For more information — Contact Latisha Jenkins at  
804.748.1065 or [JenkinsL@chesterfield.gov](mailto:JenkinsL@chesterfield.gov)





# **Chesterfield Empowering Neighborhoods Forum**

February 8, 2014

Manchester Middle School

7401 Hull Street Road, Richmond, VA 23235

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Chesterfield County's Sustain Our Communities Committee (SOCC) has presented another successful "Empowering Neighborhood Forums" on Saturday, February 8, 2014 at Manchester Middle School. Over 100 county residents received a wealth of useful information to assist them with revitalizing their own communities. Workshop sessions featured crime prevention, fighting blight, code compliance, aging in place, home owner associations, and increasing curb appeal to prepare your home for sale. Attendees visited many exhibitors whose focus was to educate residents on ways to strengthen and revitalize neighborhoods and communities.

The SOCC also held an awards ceremony celebrating and recognizing the accomplishments of over 16 volunteers and organizations from across the county who work tirelessly to enhance the quality of life in their communities. The following three nominees were selected winners;

**Organization of the Year** - Journey Christian Church

**Association of the Year** - Woodlake Community Association

**Volunteer of the Year** - Norma Jean Corbin

We would like to thank all participants, award nominees, exhibitors, businesses, Manchester Middle School, and Chesterfield County departments who assisted us with making this an outstanding event. Please stay tuned for future events by visiting [www.chesterfieldcommunities.com](http://www.chesterfieldcommunities.com).

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## **FORUM CONTRIBUTORS**

### **Chesterfield County**

Building Inspections  
Economic Development  
Fire & EMS – CERT Program  
Information Systems Technology  
Manchester Middle School  
Planning  
Police – Crime Solvers  
Police – Neighborhood Watch Program  
Public Affairs  
Sustain Our Communities Committee

211 Virginia  
AARP  
Association Community Services West, Inc.  
Carousel Sign and Designs  
Craze Law  
Housing Opportunities Made Equal of VA  
Kroger Marketplace at Stonebridge  
Lawn Beautician  
Pleasants Hardware at Chesterfield Meadows  
Power Wash This!  
Property Keepers



## FORUM CONTRIBUTORS

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**ACS West**  
INCORPORATED

**CRAZE LAW**



**CHESTERFIELD**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
Business Starts Here



VIRGINIA  
**2-1-1**  
Get Connected. Get Answers.

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Most Anything Since 1915

**AARP**  
Real Possibilities

crime  
solvers  
CHESTERFIELD  
COLONIAL  
HEIGHTS

**CHESTERFIELD  
ALERT**

**CERT**  
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE TEAM





"Annual Empowering Neighborhoods Forum"  
Chesterfield County, Virginia

Program Pictures

