

Life in Virginia's Growth Alliance

# The Virginian

Spring 2016





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### PHOTO CREDITS:

Cover - David Hoffman (MacCallum More Museum & Gardens - Chase City)  
Pg 2 & 7 wine bottles - VGA  
Pg 8 fishing - Virginia Tourism  
Pg 2 & 9 snorkeling - Rawlings Quarry Diving Company  
All others - Teddy Hodges

# WELCOME!

**Spring in Virginia** - Spring has sprung in the VGA!  
Spring in Virginia is a time for new beginnings - the landscape is in full bloom and the birds are singing!

Whether you're into touring vineyards or you're a real festivalgoer, or prefer to spend your time dining, on the water, biking, or hiking, we've got something for you.

Virginia's weather has been described as a "Goldilocks Climate" -- not too hot, not too cold, and Spring in South Central Virginia is just right!

The VGA includes the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward, and the City of Emporia. While we have many things in common, each of our communities also has its own unique offerings that should be experienced.

Nestled between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean, and midway between the Richmond and Raleigh/Durham metropolitan areas (and just a short two hours from the Port at Hampton Roads!) travelers throughout the state and up and down the East Coast are never more than a day's drive from us.

The Virginian magazine is presented to share with you some of our highlights, and to help welcome you to our friendly region.

*We hope you'll plan a visit to experience our hospitality first hand!*



*"Our roots run deep in the VGA.*

*Covering nearly 4,400 square miles – from the Blue Ridge Mountains to Virginia's largest lake – we're home to charming towns, nationally recognized festivals, state parks, national recreation areas and hundreds of historical sites.*

*We cultivate success with a global reach using a local touch."*

Jeff Reed,  
Executive Director  
Virginia's Growth Alliance



FABULOUS FESTIVALS,  
DELICIOUS RESTAURANTS, AND  
"FARM TO FORK" CULTURE  
ARE HARD TO BEAT.

# FESTIVALS & FOOD!

Even gangster Roy  
"Machine Gun" Kelly  
knew this is the place  
to have a great meal.

Our communities in the VGA footprint are dedicated to making life grand, whether it's through big annual festivals, or through the simple pleasures of the day to day.

The Town of Clarksville's annual Virginia Lake Festival was voted by the Southeast Tourism Society as "One of the Top 20 Festivals In The Southeast" in 2013. LakeFest attracts almost 100,000 visitors to enjoy attractions like hot air balloons, arts and crafts, live entertainment including music and dancing, great local and ethnic food, and the traditional "Gathering Of The Boats" and fireworks show.

Brunswick County holds the yearly Taste of Brunswick Festival and Cook Off with arts and crafts, rides for kids –trains, wagons, and even stage coaches– a huge



//  
*Our communities are dedicated to making life grand, whether it's through big, annual festivals or the simple pleasures of the day to day."*

car show, an antique tractor show, live Bluegrass bands, and the World Championship Brunswick Stew Cook-Off. (Don't believe the rumors out of Georgia; the famous stew started right here!)

Greensville County's annual Virginia Pork Festival is the world's largest outdoor barbecue, boasting over 15,000 attendees from 32 different states! The City of Emporia has been celebrating the Virginia Peanut Festival since 1962. The Peanut Festival has a carnival atmosphere, rides, games, delicious food, live music, a parade, and fireworks.

Farmville's annual Heart of Virginia Festival is a celebration of arts, crafts,

culture, and music and is known as "The Best Small-Town Festival in the World!"

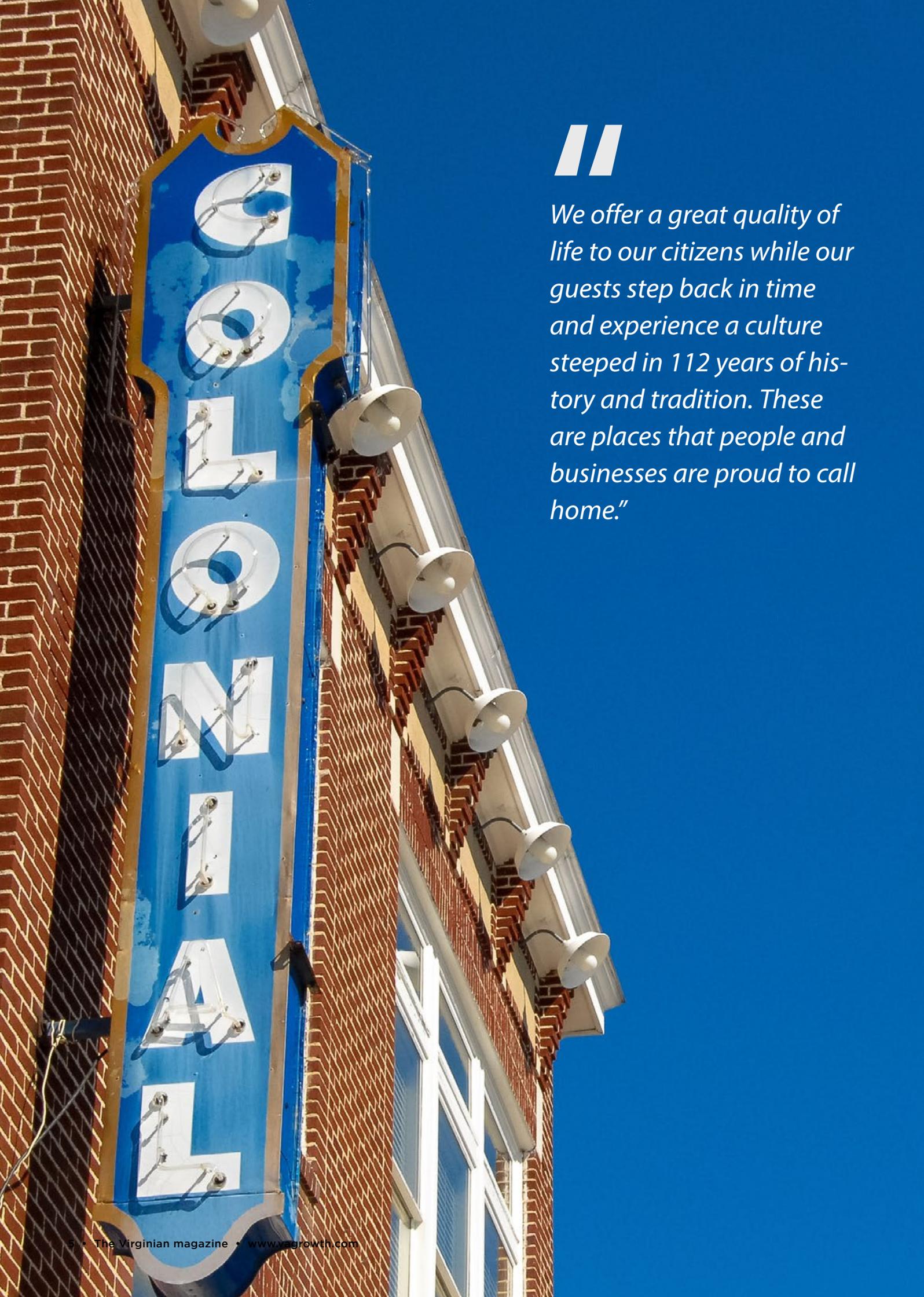
Visit local Farmers Markets to meet the farmers and buy fresh produce, or visit some of the many "pick your own" farms in the area for a real life harvesting experience. Local wineries also offer vineyard tours and wine tastings.

Many of our restaurants make great efforts to use local ingredients in their dishes. Enjoy riverside patio dining in a pre-Civil War tobacco warehouse at Charley's Waterfront Cafe & Wine Bar in Farmville.

The Horseshoe Restaurant in South Hill's most famous patron –gang-

ster Roy "Machine-Gun" Kelly– even found time to compliment the staff on the soup before surrendering after a three-month manhunt in 1938. The Copper Kettle Seafood Restaurant boasts fresh seafood, specialties, and fine wines, and occasionally has live entertainment on Saturday nights.

Clarksville's Lake House Restaurant offers daily lunch and dinner specials, a full bar and wonderfully tempting desserts. The Lamplighter Restaurant even delivers "dockside" right on the lake at the huge Town Dock! Coopers Landing is in a beautiful home built in 1830, and serves quaint romantic candlelight dining for two to fabulous festive gatherings for groups.



*We offer a great quality of life to our citizens while our guests step back in time and experience a culture steeped in 112 years of history and tradition. These are places that people and businesses are proud to call home."*

# BRIMMING WITH CULTURE & ART!

Whether it's Art, History, or Entertainment, the VGA communities are bubbling over with activities and attractions.

The Longwood Center for the Visual Arts features collections of Virginian, American, African, and Asian art and offers a wide variety of educational programs.

The Colonial Center for the Performing Arts in South Hill has an impressive roster of shows booked throughout the year, and houses several gallery spaces. The Colonial is one of the few remaining vaudeville theatres of its era in Virginia and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

We're also home to many wineries. Annefield Plantation's owners have found the conditions in Charlotte County to be perfect for producing the best tasting wine. They offer a variety of wines including Vidal Blanc, Pino Grigio, Vermentino, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Viognier. Mecklenburg County also offers its own established taste in Rosemont Winery. The Rosemont Estate has been in the Rose family since 1858, although the actual home place has been around since the mid-1700s. Rosemont Winery's wine list boasts Pinot Grigio, Traminette, Chardonnay, three varieties of red wines, including a custom red table wine, and two sweet wines.

History buffs can indulge in Revolutionary War History at The Patrick Henry National Memorial at

Red Hill. Patrick Henry retired here, resuming a private legal practice after spending 25 years in the legislature, five conventions, and five exhausting terms as governor.

Civil War History is never far away at The Staunton River Battlefield State Park with two visitor centers, walking tours, and two wildlife observation towers. Civil Rights History remains poignantly present at The Civil Rights in Education Trail and The Salem School, the only surviving building of the 7 original "Rosenwald Schools" built in Charlotte County. The Moton Museum in Farmville honors the courage and sacrifice of Prince Edward County students and families, and their leading role in moving America from segregation toward integration.

Charlotte County is home to three local museums. The Central High Museum teaches the public about the education of African-Americans in the county. Drakes Branch Museum is a large dark-fired tobacco market whose 8 warehouses and numerous prizeeries served farmers for over 100 years. The Museum of Charlotte County is in the Old Jail on Courthouse Square.

Mecklenburg County houses the Tobacco Farm and Life Museum of Virginia, The Model Railroad Museum and Wildlife Exhibit, and The Virginia S. Evans Doll Museum.

Whatever your preference for arts, entertainment, and culture, the communities of Virginia's Growth Alliance has it all. From historic sites to relaxing nights, life is great in the VGA!

CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY

REMAINS POIGNANTLY

PRESENT AT THE

CIVIL RIGHTS IN

EDUCATION TRAIL

Local Wineries have found the conditions to be perfect for producing a variety of wines.





# OUTDOOR LIFESTYLES

- BOATING, FISHING,
- SCUBA DIVING, HIKING,
- BIKING, CAMPING
- HUNTING - TAKE YOUR PICK OF ACTIVITIES!

Spring is just the beginning of your outdoor year.

Living life to the fullest in the great outdoors is easy in the communities of the VGA footprint, and Summer means outdoor fun is in full swing!

Lake Gaston boasts nearly 350 miles of shoreline over more than 20,000 acres and boat ramps are plentiful. Ever wanted to try scuba diving? Visit the Rawlings Quarry Diving Company at Lake Rawlings to dive in their spacious reservoir.

We're also home to Virginia's largest lake, Bugg's Island Lake. The fun

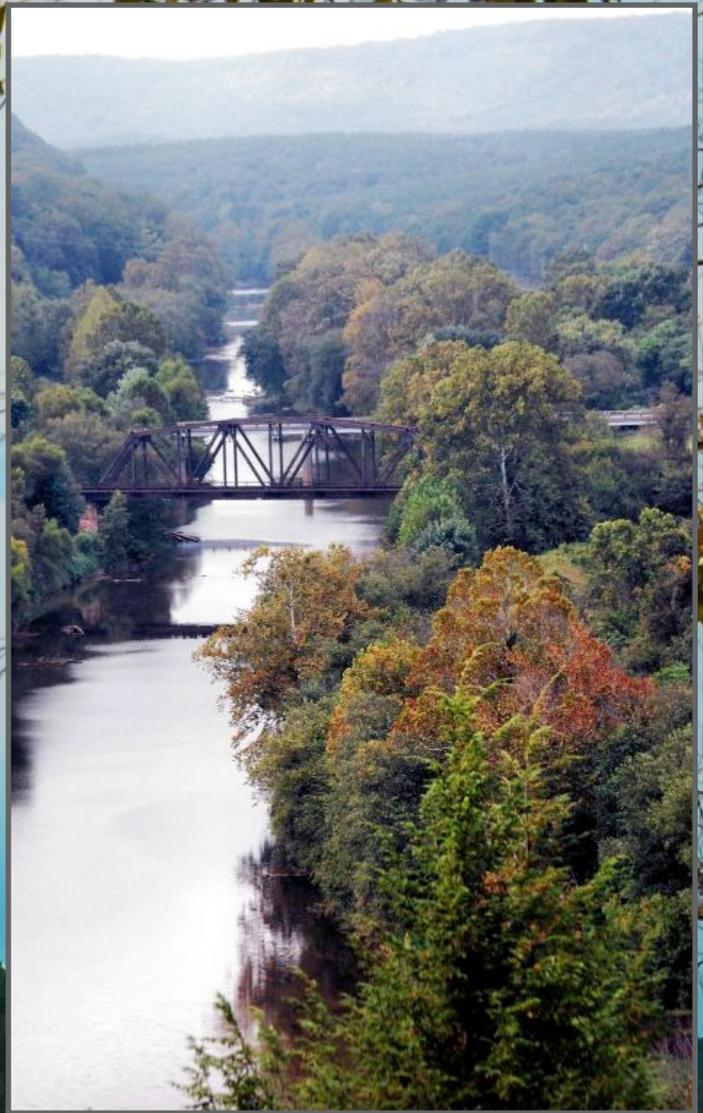
doesn't have to stop after dark, either. Clarksville has flipped the switch on 76 green fishing lights –both above and below the Highway 58 Bridge pylons– for freshwater night-time fishing. The lights attract millions of feeder fish which attract larger game fish. Anglers from across North America come here for Large Mouth, White- and Striped-Bass and catfish.

Occoneechee State Park, named for the Native Americans who lived in the area for centuries, is on Buggs Island Lake and has eleven cabins, two lodges and forty-eight camp sites for tents and RVs. There are even elev-

en equestrian camp sites, free boat launches, and a 15-mile round-trip, multipurpose trail for hiking, biking, and horse back riding!

If your preference is for larger game, there are many hunting opportunities and large and small game can be found in great abundance. For example, Amelia Wildlife Management Area's 2,217 acres offer hunting, fishing, and field trial events, plus shooting ranges and other year-round opportunities.

We have more State Parks, National Forests, and State Forests than you



can shake a stick at, where you can do anything from hiking and biking to fishing, swimming and horseback riding. There are also organizations like Upper Reach that not only plan paddling events, but also build accessible ramps to help others enjoy our waterways.

Summer's colors are beautiful from the road, but why not get even closer and enjoy the many miles of the Tobacco Heritage Trail? Surrounded by unspoiled woods and tobacco farms that have been passed from generation to generation, the THT – covering some 160 miles of abandoned railroad right of way – is a

multi-use public trail that preserves this historic corridor for biking, walking, and horse-back riding.

Runners and walkers also have their choice of many events throughout the region, including the 10k Run/5k Fun Walk that's part of the annual Heart of Virginia Festival in Farmville each May.

However you prefer to enjoy the beauty of Summer, the communities of Virginia's Growth Alliance make it easy.



*Lakes, rivers, State Parks, State Forests, National Forests, Wildlife Management Areas, Tobacco Heritage Trail...If you like it outdoors, you'll love it here!"*

# REGION INITIATIVES

## SHOP LOCAL

ShopLocalVGA.com will provide the capability for regional businesses to sell both physical and digital products through one dedicated online store. Site visitors will be able to purchase from multiple vendors in one transaction and the funds will be distributed automatically to each vendor. Each vendor will receive order information for their own sales only.

Vendors will manage their products and orders through a control panel, and can even create coupons that can be applied to their products. Participation in the ShopLocalVGA.com online

Three legs to local business success - Shop Local, Tourism, and Entrepreneurship - are addressed in new websites that Virginia's Growth Alliance (VGA) economic development region is launching. Understanding that many localities and small businesses within this rural region aren't able to develop and maintain a professional website, these sites can supplement existing websites or even be used by some businesses and localities as their primary online presence.

store is free of charge (except for associated credit card fees which will be deducted automatically by the merchant services provider). Free workshops will be held throughout the region to assist businesses in setting up their store section. Service-based businesses are not forgotten, though. ShopLocalVGA.com also includes a business directory to help promote these businesses. Information about why local shopping is so important is also included, and a colorful infographic is available for download.

Virginia's Growth Alliance  
**SHOP LOCAL**  
Because what you need is just around the block.

HOME SHOP ONLINE BUSINESS DIRECTORY WHY LOCAL? ABOUT US SELL ONLINE CONTACT

Login Facebook Twitter

Businesses in the VGA region can sell products through our online store. Find out more!

Recent News: [VGA Launches Shop Local Initiative Featuring Regional Online Store](#)

Local Shops vs. Big Chains infographic: For every \$100 spent, locals give back \$68 to local economy. That's over thirty percent more than the average chain. Local Businesses give as much as 250% more to community non-profits.

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# ENTREPRENEUR EMPOWERMENT

VGAgroundswell.com, is developed as a portal to help guide business owners and entrepreneurs to the resources they need to help them be successful. While there are many resources already available, including a good number that are free, many people either aren't aware of them or feel intimidated in asking for help.

The entrepreneur portal will provide a central online source for entrepreneurs to find the resources they need. It also

includes a calendar of entrepreneur-related events, and a blog with practical information written in a casual, conversational manner.

VGA recognizes that the majority of new jobs and business growth come from small business, and that local businesses are more dedicated to the community, give more to local non-profits, and help to make our communities more unique.

**Virginia's Growth Alliance**  
ENTREPRENEUR **EE** EMPOWERMENT

Because your dream is our future.

HOME STARTUP FUNDING MARKETING RESOURCES BLOG EVENTS

f t r

### New Businesses

Practical advice, checklists, glossaries, and more. Get started on your entrepreneurial journey. [More](#)

### Existing Businesses

Pick up advice for [marketing your business](#), or learn more about [funding sources](#) to help you grow.

### Young Entrepreneurs

The world is your oyster! Learn to think entrepreneurially, recognize opportunities, and take control of your future. [More](#)

### Resources

Many resources exist to help you reach your goals. [Longwood Small Business Development Center](#) and others are here to help you. [More](#)

Recent News: [Free Marketing Workshops Kick Off September 18](#)

### Develop Your Business Plan

- Finance Your Business
- Increase Your Sales
- Manage Your Business

### Hot Topics

What You Need to Succeed

#### Sandwich Marketing

Like choosing toppings for a sandwich, there are many marketing choices available.

#### Free Marketing Workshops

Learn to use integrated marketing to merge traditional and digital marketing in a coordinated way.

#### Mentoring

Volunteer to mentor an entrepreneur, or sign up to find a mentor for yourself.

↑



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Farmer's Day  
Sat. 4 Oct. 2014
- Arthur H. Robertson Archaeology Day  
Sat. 4 Oct. 2014
- Tasting on the Terrace at Red Hill  
Sat. 4 Oct. 2014
- Arsenic and Old Lace - C.A.T.S. Community Theatre Production  
Sat. 4 Oct. 2014
- Arsenic and Old Lace - C.A.T.S. Community Theatre Production  
Sun. 5 Oct. 2014

**WHAT'S YOUR INTEREST?**

- Outdoor Adventures
- Golf & Sports
- Local Wineries
- Experience the Past

Our region has something for everyone; read a quick overview to get ideas for planning your trip.

**INTERACTIVE MAP**

Explore the region.

For those who don't follow the masses...  
**YOUR ADVENTURE, YOUR WAY.**

**SMALL TOWNS  
UNIQUE COMMUNITIES**

No cookie cutter stuff here.

**NATURAL SURROUNDINGS  
OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**

Spend a day or a week.

**ARTS & CULTURE  
STUNNING ART**

Visual delicacies.

**THE UN-MASSES, SPREADING THE FUN**

Join in on Instagram with #vafun to appear in our feed!



GREAT ADVENTURES GREAT COMMUNITIES

**WHO WE ARE**

Virginia's Growth Alliance is comprised of the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Lunenburg, & Prince Edward, and the City of Emporia.

**GET OUR EMAILS**

Email Address:

Shop online with our local businesses or find local service providers.



# PROMOTING THE REGION

## VIRGINIA'S GREAT ADVENTURES

Plan your adventure, your way

VirginiasGreatAdventures.com is a tourism website developed to promote the travel and hospitality businesses in the VGA region. Virginia's Great Adventures features an interactive map that currently has over 100 locations listed, with more being added. The map will let visitors get directions and even check the weather forecast.

An events calendar provides a central spot to promote upcoming events in the region. The site also includes a directory of tourism-related businesses and attractions; unlike many tourism directories, this one also includes practical listings like groceries and laundries.

# think **BIGGER**

## BUSINESS EMPOWERMENT

The VGA has launched a new business empowerment initiative called, Think Bigger. The initiative combines a series of bootcamp-style entrepreneurial training courses with integrated marketing workshops, and is designed to promote entrepreneurial thinking by providing a wealth of business and marketing resources and training to local entrepreneurs

and existing small businesses. Partnering with Longwood Small Business Development Center, Longwood University and Glerin Business Resources this series is designed to provide a unique combination of small business and entrepreneurial training that is rich in resources and strategies to encourage growth and success.



UpStart, (entrepreneurial training), is offered in partnership with the Longwood Small Business Development Center and Longwood University. With both face-to-face and online components, the series is designed for students to be able to learn most of the subject matter interactively and online, prior to class time, so that the face-to-face and live experiences will focus on hands-on application with real world experts.



A distinguishing element of the UpStart experience is that you will not find an instructor talking at the students for hours on end. The students learn interactively using the best content from around the world and apply it with professional experts and peers locally, in real time, with the ultimate goal of providing a rich and rewarding experience that is meaningful for all, where everyone learns together via questioning, applying, failing forward and succeeding.



The class builds community and cohesion, creating an environment to promote higher order thinking and hands-on application; all of this takes the exploration of good ideas of each participant and brings them to a place where they can create great ideas that solve migraine-level problems in the world in which there is a proven market.

Participants create and test assumptions with real potential customers in a structured way that allows them to track their progress, as they work together with experts to develop a meaningful business model.



The Integrated Marketing workshops are a review of the major social media outlets, explaining what each is, how they differ from each other, what they're used for, and how they can be used together in a coordinated way.

Topics covered in the series include social media channels, building marketing collaterals, using blogging and newsletters & how you can successfully tie those all together into a coordinated marketing campaign.



# HEADLINES

NEWS - AROUND THE REGION



## 149 New Jobs Possible with VCBR Expansion

The Commonwealth of Virginia is planning an addition and renovations to the Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation (VCBR) in Nottoway County. This expansion will provide residential and treatment space for an additional 183 residents, with the ability to expand to serve another 75 individuals. Construction is estimated to cost approximately \$80 million.

*Read More at [www.vagrowth.com/news](http://www.vagrowth.com/news)*

## 339 Jobs Predicted at Fort Pickett's FASTC Site

FASTC will provide hard-skills security training to State Department personnel and the foreign affairs community. The U.S. Department of State, working with the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) worked extensively to conduct environmental studies at Fort Pickett, which showed that the site was suitable for FASTC.

*Read More at [www.vagrowth.com/news](http://www.vagrowth.com/news)*



*Micro Loan Program now available!*

*Great news for entrepreneurs looking start a new business or expand their current business! VGA is launching our new Pack Fund micro loan program, through which you can borrow up to \$40,000 at low interest rates.*

*Read More at [www.vagrowth.com/news](http://www.vagrowth.com/news)*



## The VGA kicks off its third FREE Workshop Series as part of the think BIGGER Entrepreneurial Initiative

Virginia's Growth Alliance is sponsoring the "Think Bigger" entrepreneur initiative, partnering with Longwood Small Business Development Center, Longwood University and Glerin Business Resources to provide a unique combination of small business and entrepreneurial training that is rich in resources and strategies to encourage growth and success.

*Read More about think BIGGER, visit [thinkbiggervga.com/grow](http://thinkbiggervga.com/grow)*

# SPRING 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*A sampling of things to do*

## APRIL

**2** Masters of Soul - Colonial Theatre, 220 S Mecklenburg Ave, South Hill

**9** Clarksville Lake Country Wine Festival - Clarksville  
5K & Fun Run / Walk Benefit - Wells Fargo Bank, 215 Virginia Ave, Clarksville

**16** Poker Run: MacCallum More Museum & Gardens - Chase City  
Brunswick Spring Festival - Downtown  
LeAnn Rimes in Concert - Meherrin River Arts Council

**22** Cumberland County Patriot Day Celebration - 1 Courthouse Circle, Cumberland

**23** Farmers Market: Opening Day - South Hill Farmer's Market South Hill, VA - Every Saturday until October

**29** Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn - Clarksville Fine Arts Center

**30** Historic Garden Week in Blackstone - Town of Blackstone

**12** The 10th Annual Farmville Area Chamber Centra-Southside Golf Classic

**13** Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce 9th Annual Golf Tournament - Briery Country Club, 395 Country Club Rd, Keysville  
3-Day Intertribal Pow Wow - Fairground Road, Chase City

**14** Catfish Showdown Pro Series - Staunton View Park 2299 Staunton River Road Clarksville

**14-22** Steel Magnolias - Colonial Center for the Performing Arts, South Hill

**19-21** Amelia Family Bluegrass Festival - Amelia Family Campgrounds

**29** Patrick Henry's Birthday Celebration - 1250 Red Hill Rd, Brookneal

**30** Memorial Day Observance - Veterans Memorial Monument - Clarksville

## MAY

**01** Jazz in the Gardens - MacCallum More Museum & Gardens, 603 Hudgins St, Chase City

**04** 34th Annual Seafood Feast - Lawrenceville / Brunswick Municipal Airport, Lawrenceville

**06** Spring Into History This Month at Red Hill! - 1250 Red Hill Rd, Brookneal  
First Fridays - Riverside Park, Farmville - every first Friday

**07** Big Lake Flea Market - Clarksville  
Heart of Virginia Festival - Downtown Farmville  
Festival Fireworks - Farmville Regional Airport  
2nd Annual Wings, Wheels & Crafts - Mecklenburg / Brunswick Regional Airport, Brodnax

## JUNE

**04** Cruise-In - Downtown Clarksville  
Catfish Showdown Pro Series - Lake Gaston

**08** 43rd Annual Virginia Pork Festival - Emporia

**18** Rosemont Wine & Art Festival - Rosemont Vineyard, Lacrosse

**20** Appalachian Express - The Colonial Theatre South Hill

For MORE of what's happening across the region, visit [vagrowth.com/community/calendar](http://vagrowth.com/community/calendar)



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