

YMCA Fundraising Committee

New Caroline Foundation

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Caroline County is the "last rural outpost" between Richmond and Washington and a foundation has formed to work for the success of the county as it grows.

The Caroline County Foundation for Education, Recreation and Wellness has an impressive list of goals so far: 1. Help pay down the debt on the new Caroline YMCA in Ladysmith, 2. Bring a Germanna Community College campus to the Route 207 corridor and 3. Give a boost to recreation in the county.

The foundation has already incorporated and is now working with a lawyer to comply with Section 501 (c) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code to be recognized as a nonprofit organization to get exemptions from federal income taxes for fund-raising purposes, said L.J. Moyer, vice president of the organization. Bowling Green Mayor David Storke is president of the foundation.

Part of the purpose of the foundation is to help improve the image of Caroline County, Moyer said. "Frankly, we get frustrated at times because Caroline is the redheaded stepchild, so to speak. Maybe it's because of the location with Fredericksburg being north of us and Richmond and Hanover County being south. We get left out of the loop."

TV stations tend to cover only the bad news in Caroline County, she noted.

"It's inevitable that something good will happen someday in Caroline," Moyer said. "The population is getting bigger. We're still the last rural outpost between Richmond and Washington, and we'll go through some growing pains. We at the foundation want to promote healthy lifestyles by supporting recreation and education and wellness.

"It just so happens that the YMCA and Germanna Community College will be at the front-running of things we do," said Moyer, a member of the Germanna board of trustees. "We want to see a Germanna campus in Caroline."

Representatives of the foundation and the college will have to go to the Virginia General Assembly to ask for state funds for a college in Caroline. "To have a campus, you have to show a need for that," Moyer said. "We have the land. Several people have expressed an interest in donating land for the campus. It would be in the Carmel Church area in a high traffic area and near the interstate and near the high school. It needs to be near the high school."

The foundation will also pay close attention to recreation parks in the county. "We'll do something for Little League—all kinds of things.

"Now the focus is on the YMCA and Germanna," she said. "One major thing we want to try to do is reduce the debt of the YMCA. Funding will be provided through major fund-raising."

The Caroline County Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 in 2011 to take out a loan of \$5 million to build the 41,000-square-foot facility. Due to open in February, the YMCA will have two pools, free weights, weight-lifting machines, cardiovascular machines, a gym with two basketball courts and studios for aerobics and other exercise classes. The loan has been a source of controversy in county. However, one of the pools is a competition pool and will allow Caroline High School to have a swim team for the first time.

Fredericksburg already has a similar community organization. "We came up with this foundation because of a group of business people in the area who have a great interest in the success and well-being of Caroline County," Moyer said. Those 11 business owners are now on the board of directors for the Caroline foundation.

The bylaws for the all-volunteer Caroline foundation call for 25 members on the board. Current board members are recruiting more board members. "We're trying to get people who can attract funds," Moyer said. "We're going out to get some heavy-hitters who can reach other folks to help Caroline. The people on this board are very committed and I respect each and everyone of them. They care about Caroline County."