



HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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City to unveil marker in recognition of Lucy Simms on Aug. 13

Harrisonburg Parks & Rec to place marker near Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The community will soon come together to honor one of The Friendly City’s most respected and impactful leaders.

Lucy Simms, who rose from a childhood born in enslavement in 1856 to become a college-educated teacher of African American students in the Shenandoah Valley, will be honored with an event on Friday, Aug. 13, at 11 a.m. outside the center named in recognition of her contributions to our community.

The Virginia Board of Historic Resources selected Simms this spring as the honoree of a historical marker. The Lucy F. Simms School is already listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, and on the National Register of Historic Places, but there is no marker recognizing such an important person in the community’s past.

So, Harrisonburg Parks & Rec staff set out to change that.

Simms Center Supervisor Stephanie Howard and the Parks & Rec team worked closely with Randall Jones of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to complete the application for a historic marker. A committee including Mayor Deanna Reed, Obie Hill and Sandra Bopp from the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Harrisonburg Deputy City Manager Ande Banks, and Northeast Neighborhood Association president Karen Thomas assisted in the process, and the marker was officially approved in March.

The marker will provide information about Simms’s life, her accomplishments, and the important role she played in shaping the future of Harrisonburg. Harrisonburg Public Works will assist Parks & Rec in the installation of the marker.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



(Above) The historic Lucy F. Simms School, now home to the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center. The marker will be installed nearby on Aug. 13.

