

Hanover Monthly

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Around the Home with *Kate* Preparing for a Possible “Historic” Winter

According to the NOAA, “During the October-December 2026 season, there is a 69% chance of a historic [El Niño] event that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events dating back to 1950.” I don’t know about you, but when I hear that, I think: It’s time to be proactive and get ahead of this potentially “historic” winter.

What are some concerns? And what can we do to mitigate the risk of dangerous or expensive outcomes?

The concern: Freezing Temperatures

- **HVAC.** You don’t want to discover a heating problem on the first really cold night of the season. Schedule routine HVAC maintenance and dryer vent cleaning now to help prevent winter breakdowns and improve efficiency.
- **Chimneys.** A pre-season cleaning will not only keep your family safe from dangerous air quality and fire hazards from buildup, but can also reduce your wood consumption and extend your chimney’s life.
- **Windows & Doors.** Fixing leaky windows and doors can lower your heating costs and the strain on your HVAC system.



- **Septic Systems & Wells.** Autumn is a good time for septic maintenance or inspections since the ground is still workable. If you have a private well, consider having your water quality checked and confirm pipes and other components are prepared for freezing temperatures. >>>



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◀◀ • **Trees.** Have dead, damaged, or potentially dangerous trees near your home, driveway, or walkways inspected and removed before winter storms arrive.



The concern: Mold & Moisture

- **Roof and Gutters.** Roofs can have years of buildup of algae, fungus, and moss, creating a warm home for mold. Clogged gutters encourage mold growth and can even cause leaks and foundation issues. Getting your roof and gutters cleaned, along with the installation of gutter guards, can deter mold growth in your home and prevent water damage.
- **Crawlspace or Basement.** Dark, damp areas beneath and inside our homes can become breeding grounds for mold. Proper sealing, drainage, and moisture control can help keep your home drier and more comfortable.

The concern: Leaving Home

- **Driveways.** Safe access into and out of your home is important for your family, guests, and emergency responders. Address potholes, drainage problems, uneven surfaces, and other hazards before they're covered by snow or ice.
- **Vehicles.** Winter weather can be tough on our vehicles. Tires with low tread significantly increase the risk of accidents. Regular maintenance and a seasonal tune-up can keep you and others on the road safe.



We certainly don't want to imagine the worst-case scenario, but being prepared doesn't mean expecting the worst. It simply means giving ourselves a better chance of handling whatever winter brings. A little preparation now may come with some upfront expense, but the peace of mind and the money saved by avoiding a major repair or emergency can make it well worth the effort.

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It's Taco Tuesday!

by Taylor Armstrong

Mark your calendars! Back in 2024, National Taco Day was permanently moved to the first Tuesday in October. This year it falls on October 6th and we are ready to celebrate. Be on the lookout for deals on this extra special Taco Tuesday. Whether you like your tacos inside flour or corn tortillas, with extra cilantro and onion, just meat and cheese, extra spicy, or something with a vegetarian option, there is a taco out there for everyone.

Casa Herradura - 428 England St., Ashland. They recently released their ice cream margaritas, and they are a delicious and refreshing treat. They also have a dog-friendly outdoor patio for those cozy autumn nights. They offer many taco options, including seafood tacos, alambre tacos (beef, bacon, and chorizo), and Tacos Tahona (chicken and steak topped with onions, cilantro, and guacamole).



Plaza Azteca - 8100 Creighton Pkwy, Mechanicsville; 10099 Brook Rd, Glen Allen; 6623 W Broad St., Richmond. All three locations are delicious and have their own special flair. "Your shortcut to Mexico" is known for their tableside guacamole (I like mine with a little heat and extra lime) and fresh salsa. Their seafood dishes, especially the chimichangas and enchiladas, are very popular. Popular tacos include tiger shrimp, rib-eye, and pork carnitas. Their birria tacos are also a huge hit. Keep an eye out for the automated robot food runner at select locations!

Los Panchos - 3532 Pump Rd., Henrico; 1517 N Parham Rd., Henrico; 1940-D Sandy Hook Rd., Goochland. There are three locations in the area and they are all known for their large portions and friendly staff. They have some delicious taco options, including ribeye, quesabirria, and tacos panchos (shrimp and tilapia), as well as more adventurous taco choices, like tripa (gut) and lengua (tongue).



Mi Jalisco - 1390 Broad St Rd., Oilville. They are applauded for their extensive menu and full bar. They have multiple delicious taco options, including chicken avocado, seafood tacos, and Freddie Tacos, which are filled with shrimp and bacon along with a mango chipotle sauce.

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From the Pantry

Cottage Cheese Chicken Enchiladas

Imagine the aroma of sizzling peppers and onions, the Mexican spices that flavor your favorite meat, or fresh cilantro and lime that pairs perfectly with a smooth or chunky guacamole. Don't let the name of this lighter take on an enchilada fool you. For many years it has been a popular family dish for my friend Valusia. It's cheesy and flavorful with just a little kick. So, if you can't make it to your favorite Mexican restaurant, hopefully this will tide you over.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 c. Shredded Chicken
- 1 tbsp. Olive Oil
- ½ c. Chopped Onion
- 1 (7 oz.) Can Chopped Green Chili Peppers
- 1 (1 oz.) Package Taco Seasoning Mix
- ½ c. Sour Cream
- 2 c. Cottage Cheese
- ½ tsp. Salt
- Pinch of Pepper
- 2 c. Shredded Monterey Jack and Colby Cheese Blend
- 1 (10 oz.) Can Red Enchilada Sauce
- 12 (6 inch) Corn Tortillas



DIRECTIONS:

Sauté onions and chili peppers in oil. Add chicken and prepare taco seasoning according to package directions and pour over chicken mixture. Simmer for a few minutes until water has evaporated and set aside. Mix sour cream with cottage cheese and season with salt and pepper. In each tortilla place a spoonful of meat mixture and a spoonful of cheese mixture with a bit of shredded cheese. Place each rolled tortilla in a greased 9x13 baking dish. Top with remaining meat and cheese mixture, enchilada sauce and remaining shredded cheese. Bake at 350 for 20-30 minutes until cheese is melted and bubbly.



Scan the QR code for more recipes online!

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FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9TH – 11TH

The **Historic Appomattox Railroad Festival**, a three-day long festival that celebrates the heritage and history of Appomattox County, will have live bands, a parade, arts and crafts, train exhibits, fireworks, and much more. (AppomattoxRRFest.org)



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH @ 12 PM – 6 PM

The **Off the Rails Craft Beer Festival** at the **Hanover Arts & Activities Center** is a family friendly event that showcases craft beers, wine, food, and also includes live music, a costume contest, and more. (HanoverArts.net)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH @ 10 AM – 4 PM

The **67th King George Fall Festival** at **King George High School** will include a parade, a fair that includes rides and a petting zoo, a craft show, a car show, pageants, and more. (KG-FallFestival.com)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH @ 7:30 PM

Celebrate six decades of music and storytelling with **Steve Bassett: 60 Years in Music** and the **Perkinson Center**. This live experience blends candid conversation, behind-the-scenes industry insight, and live musical performances. (PerkinsonCenter.org)



WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH – 17TH

Want a weekend getaway? The **OBX Bluegrass Festival at Roanoke Island Festival Park** is a four-day festival featuring the best names in Bluegrass, as well as food, drinks, and local vendors. (BluegrassIsland.com)

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17TH AND 18TH

The **Rassawek Autumn Festival** at **Rassawek Vineyard** will include live music, trade demonstrations, kids activities, a pro rodeo, market vendors, and more. (Rassawek.com)



FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16TH AND 17TH

The **56th Annual Richmond Oktoberfest**, the only authentic German Oktoberfest in Central Virginia, will be held at the **Richmond Raceway Complex**, featuring live music, traditional Bavarian folk dances, and of course, food and drink. (RichmondOktoberfestInc.com)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST

The **Whispers of Eden Farm Annual Pumpkin Recycling Drive** will start at the beginning of November and continue through Christmas. They accept all pumpkins/squash that do not have ink or decorations on them and are not moldy. You can drop off at the farm at any time if you have less than 30 items. If you or your neighbors have more than 30, you can call/email and arrange pick-up. (804-598-3163)



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