

Augusta Country

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Waynesboro woman recalls grandmother's stories of slavery

By SUE SIMMONS

WAYNESBORO -- Lillie May Johnson remembers when her neighborhood a few blocks north of Waynesboro's Main Street was called the Smith-Harner Addition.

She is a lifelong member of Shiloh Baptist Church and serves as its historian.

That isn't her only connection to the past.

She remembers as a little girl sitting around a potbelly stove in her Shiloh Street home listening to her grandmother Ellen Thompson Darcus tell stories about her own days as a slave in Albemarle County.

"My grandmother never went to school yet she had the most beautiful penmanship you can imagine," Mrs. Johnson marveled.

"The family that owned her, the Sheltons who lived on the other side of Charlottesville, had a child who attended school. Everyday she would teach my grandmother what she learned."

That was one of the few good things that happened to Ellen.

"My grandmother remembered being sold to the Sheltons and that she had a brother who was sold the same time she was. But she didn't remember her mother or her father or any other family," Mrs. Johnson explained.

Nor did she know how she came to use the last name of Thompson.

"She really didn't know how old she was, but she figured she was about 13 or 14 when the war ended."

Ellen found out that freedom had come to her in a most unusual way.

"She told us the story that one day a spinster lady — a Miss Becky — who lived with the

Sheltons told her to do something. My grandmother must have given her some lip, and the woman threw a large door stop at her. She woke up in a hospital in Charlottesville. She didn't know how she got there, but a soldier told her the war was over and that she was free."

Ellen had no reason to return to the Sheltons, especially since she had no family ties there.

"She walked all over Charlottesville," Mrs. Johnson explained. "It was the first time she could be out and about. She was free."

One day Ellen met a Thomas Darcus, a man of color from Crimora. He had come to Charlottesville with a load of wood. Somehow the two met and Ellen told him that she was free to go where she wanted.

"He told her 'Why don't you come to Waynesboro with me?'" Mrs. Johnson chuckled.

A photograph of Ellen Thompson Darcus hangs in Mrs. Johnson's hall. It shows a proud handsome woman with more than a hint of mischief in her eyes. Looking at her picture, even from a distance of a hundred years, there is no doubt how the story ends.

"So she hopped on the wagon and he drove her over the mountain. Eventually they got married and had nine children." ---



Lillie May Johnson of Waynesboro looks at the book given to her by Professor Egbert Terry while she was a student at Rosenwald School in Waynesboro.

Photo by Sue Simmons

African-American family portrait

Pride is thread connecting heritage to future

By SUE SIMMONS

WAYNESBORO -- "I don't know what you could write about me," Lillie May Johnson proclaimed as she settled into her living room chair, silently watched over by photographs of her children, husband, parents, grandmother, great-grandmother-in-law, and the first African Americans elected to Congress during Reconstruction.

Lillie May Simms Johnson has lived in Waynesboro for most of her life. Her mother, Lillie, was

one of nine children born to Thomas and Ellen Thompson Darcus. Lillie married Albert Simms and they had seven children — one boy and six girls — one of whom is Lillie May Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson attended Rosenwald School, Waynesboro's "colored" school during the segregation era.

"Our principal was Professor Egbert Terry," she said. "He helped us so much. He knew we were getting a poor education, and it concerned him. He bought each student a book with his own money."

Mrs. Johnson proudly produces that book from a nearby bookshelf — The Story of the Negro Retold, by Carter G. Woodson, an eminent and early African American historian who had been a college classmate of Professor Terry.

"We students were just fascinated. We had no idea that African Americans had such a rich history," Mrs. Johnson said. "No one taught it to us in school. Our teachers even used this book as a textbook."

Despite Waynesboro's segregation, Mrs. Johnson recalls a happy

childhood.

"My mother worked as a domestic, and my father cooked for Fishburne Military Academy for 42 years. Compared to others, my father's job was secure, and the Depression did not affect my family too much," she said.

Still, concerns over education caused her parents to send her to New York City to live with her sister while she attended high school.

"I lived in Harlem at the corner of 116th Street and 7th Avenue," Mrs. Johnson laughed. "The city

See LILLIE MAY, page 4

Augusta Historical Society to hear of area's African American heritage

African-American history in Augusta County will be the focus of the Augusta County Historical Society's fall meeting to be held Nov. 19 at 3 p.m.

The meeting will be held in the historic Augusta Street United Methodist Church in Staunton. The church, one of the oldest African American churches in the area, was founded in 1866, almost immediately after the Civil War. Members of the historical society as well as the public are invited to attend the meeting.

Following a short business meeting and a brief history of the church, a program titled "Slavery in Augusta County, Virginia: The myths and realities," will be presented by Susanne Simmons. A social studies teacher at Fort Defiance and Wilson High Schools, Mrs. Simmons has been researching African-American history in the county for a number of years.

Ms. Simmons earned a master's degree in history at James Madison University where she wrote her thesis on Augusta County's African American history in the 18th and 19th centuries.

She was also the contract researcher for a Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy grant received at the Museum of American Frontier Culture. The focus of her research for this grant was African American social history in the Upper Valley during the first half of the 19th century.

For more information on the fall meeting or on becoming a member of the Augusta County Historical Society, write: ACHS, P.O. Box 686, Staunton, Va 24402. Or call, Ann McCleary, president, at 703-248-9568, or David McCaskey, vice-president and program chair at 540/885-3076. ---

AC staff writer published in Small Farmer's Journal

Nancy Sorrells, an *Augusta Country* staff writer, had two articles published in the Fall 1995 issue of *Small Farmer's Journal*.

Small Farmer is distributed nationwide and is published in Eugene, Ore. The articles which were published by the magazine appeared in the July 1995 edition of *Augusta Country*.

In that issue Nancy put together a package of stories about farming with draft horses. She traveled to North Garden for a draft horse demonstration by Rick Bell and

sponsored by the Virginia Association for Biological Farming. The other story came from an interview which Nancy had with Swoope farmer Bill Shuey.

In the Shuey article, "Horses are four-legged hot rods for Augusta farmer," Nancy told about the use of draft horses in the everyday operation of Shuey's farm. In the Bell article, "One-horse farm -- Rick Bell pulls from past to move forward," Nancy told about Bell's use of horses as opposed to tractors on

the farm where he raises asparagus, blueberries, and lettuce.

Small Farmer also published several photographs along with each story. The issue of *Small Farmer* which published the articles was devoted primarily to the use of horses in farming.

Congratulations to Nancy for her accomplishment in getting these articles published. Now even more folks know about some of the special people who have been featured in the pages of *Augusta Country*. —

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for sending the copies of your newspaper so promptly. The article on Jeanette Seitz (October 1995, "Paraplegic joins ranks of cyclists on her 'Freedom Rider'") was wonderfully written. We are forwarding a copy to her since you sent three.

Thanks very much for your help.

Pat Wolf
Harrisonburg-Rockingham
Chamber of Commerce

Thanks. We'll pass along the compliment to Nancy Sorrells who wrote the story about Mrs. Seitz. In addition to the October 1995 issue, there are a limited number of copies of back issues available. Anyone who would like a copy of a back issue should give us a call and we'll see if we can hunt one up.

I want you to know how much I enjoy your paper.

It brings back so many memories for me, of the people I've known and the places I've been.

I lived near Alfred Grove (Summer 1995, "Church honors 'Uncle Alfred' with 90th birthday party") and his family, on our family farm. We visited back and forth for many years. My brother still lives on our

family farm, but I had not asked about Alfred for years.

It was so nice to see his pictures, and know he celebrated his 90th birthday, and what he is doing with his life. Also about his family.

Love the humor in your articles also.

I have teen-age grandchildren in the schools and especially enjoy the high school news. The [local daily] paper really doesn't cover the school news, other than sports, and I enjoy more news, since I am retired from teaching.

My grandchildren are at Buffalo Gap and Fort Defiance. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Marie Shiflet
Swoope

We have to agree that we also enjoy the *Schoolhouse News* section of *Augusta Country*. We are particularly pleased that students at Riverheads High School write the majority of the articles for this section. *Augusta Country* welcomes news from all area schools. It only takes a phone call to let us know about something happening at your school.

Enclosed is a check for \$12 to renew my subscription to *Augusta Country*.

I enjoy this paper very much, but what happened to Hank & Irma? I miss them.

Hope I'm not too late. I think my subscription runs out in November. Keep up the good work.

Thanks,
Gladys P. Harris
Greenville

It's never too late to renew your subscription to *Augusta Country*, and thank you for doing this. We're not like some of those big city newspapers which cut you off the day your account runs dry. At AC our clocks run on country time which means that we are perhaps a bit slower to start dropping the ax on lapsed subscriptions. As for Hank & Irma, we miss them too. This very popular "farm couple" column appeared in the *Country Crossroads* section and was written by Lee Ann Heizer. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in education at Mary Baldwin College and has found herself stretched pretty thin between her course work and family commitments. Because of this, Lee Ann chose to put Hank & Irma on the shelf -- temporarily, we hope. We have received many comments about the absence of Hank & Irma from the October 1995 issue. Your compliment will be passed on to Lee Ann, and we wish her well in her studies. Like you, we hope we haven't heard the last from Hank & Irma. ---

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Local authors pen thrills, chills for young readers

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

Alice Leonhardt and Elizabeth Massie have a few things in common. Both are former teachers. Both have sons named Brian. Both live in Augusta County — Alice in Mt. Sidney and Elizabeth in Waynesboro. And both are published authors.

Alice and Elizabeth will be appearing together Nov. 4 from 1 to 3 p.m. at The Bookstack in Staunton for a book signing. The two authors are looking forward to meeting readers of their books. Alice pens the Riding Academy series published by Bullseye Books, a subsidiary of Random House, under the pen name Alison Hart. Elizabeth sticks with her real name to author a new series, American Chills, the first installment of which was published by Z*Fave Books, a subsidiary of Kensington Publishing Corp.

The two women write thrills and chills for a very specific audience — middle age elementary and young adult readers. And while the books they write are entertaining enough to hold the attention of young folks, Alice and Elizabeth incorporate an underlying tone of educational enlightenment in the literature which will please parents.

Alice's success with the Riding Academy series comes after traveling a long road of hard work and perseverance. Her first published work as a writer appeared in 1983 when Highlights magazine accepted one of her short stories. But four more years would pass before Alice would publish again. And it wasn't until spring of last year, when Bullseye debuted the Riding Academy series, that Alice would have work published which was solely hers. The former special education teacher says her dreams of being an author began when she was a child.



Alice Leonhardt, left, of Mt. Sidney, and Elizabeth Massie of Waynesboro, will be signing copies of their books at The Bookstack, Nov. 4 from 1 to 3 p.m. Alice is the author of the Riding Academy series, and Elizabeth pens the American Chills series.

Photo by Betty Jo Hamilton

"Like most writers I've always wanted to write," she says. "I've been writing ever since I was 6 and could pick up a pencil." With another youthful pursuit, horseback riding — which Alice says she's been doing since she was 5 — she combines her skills as a writer and a rider to produce books in the Riding Academy series. These books involve central characters who are roommates at a girls' boarding school which offers a horseback riding program. The plot of each book

in the series revolves around the trials and tribulations of the roommates with a strong tie in to horses. Alice's characters often find themselves in the midst of situations which, from a fish bowl perspective, build character and contribute to the development of

healthy interpersonal relationships. The author wastes no time in putting her characters into situations which are life-imitating.

In "Trouble at Foxhall," No. 10 in the Riding Academy series, the story opens with four roommates collaborating on the script of a play. Work is interrupted by a telephone call from a boy who talks to one of the roommates with the majority of his questions being about — not the girl with whom he is talking but one of her roommates. Tempers flare, one roommate takes her anger out on another, guilt floods in, and — once the girl has sorted things out with her conscience — an apology is made. Admittedly an oversimplified explanation of a Riding Academy subplot, it's easy to see how parents and young readers might appreciate Alice's carefully crafted storylines.

The Riding Academy books represent Alice's first literary efforts which are wholly hers. She spent a number of years "ghostwriting" books including those in the Linda Craig adventure series and the Nancy Drew mystery series. With the help of an editor with whom she had worked in previous efforts, Alice came up with the idea for the boarding school storyline — a setting which she says works

out perfectly.

"You get rid of the parents," she says. "Family is still important, but you don't have them hanging around all the time."

The number of installments in the Riding Academy series stands at 12 with a "super special," "Haunted Horseback Holiday," due out in February. A new book in the series is released every other month which keeps Alice writing constantly.

"Writing is not just being creative," she says. "It's a job. There's always a deadline, there are certain things you have to do."

Alice is a native of Maryland — which happens to be the setting for the boarding school in her Riding Academy books. Having taught for 15 years before she could call writing her sole employment, she says achieving success as a writer is a gradual process.

"I don't think anybody makes a clear transition," she says. "You're always looking for ways to improve and trying to figure out why you're not getting published."

As much as they have in common, however, the two women have traveled very different roads to publishing success. While Alice spent years submitting manuscripts only to have them rejected time and again, Elizabeth found success early in the publishing world. A writer of horror fiction for adults, Elizabeth attended a writers' convention in Boston then began submitting manuscripts to publishers.

"I sold my first story on the first try and my second story on the first try. I lucked out," she says.

Elizabeth taught for 19 years in the Augusta County school system before she ventured out as a writer. While her adult horror fiction is only for the very strong nerved — "You meet her, and you don't know where it comes from," Alice says of the seemingly mild mannered and meek Elizabeth — her writing in the new American Chills series is perfect for the imaginations of young adult readers.

"As a kid I always liked scary stuff," Elizabeth says. She too re-

calls trying her hand at writing at an early age. "Even as a kid I was making my own magazines," she says.

American Chills just debuted in September with the premiere installment "Maryland: Ghost Harbor." The next book in the series will be "Virginia: Valley of Vampires" and is set in the Shenandoah Valley near Elkton.

Despite any reservations parents might have about children reading horror stories, be assured that Elizabeth's books are fairly tame for the most part. It is a writing style which the author compares to the telling of ghost stories around a campfire. And there's even the opportunity for educating youngsters without them realizing it's happening. Elizabeth's "Ghost Harbor" includes a healthy dose of information about pre-Civil War slavery and the Underground Railroad. Even parents will have a hard time putting down this suspenseful tale of two girls who trade places in time.

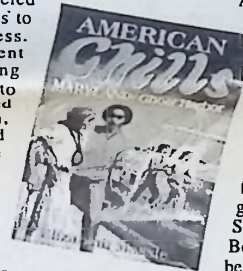
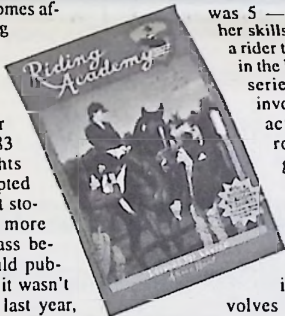
Alice and Elizabeth encourage youngsters to read the Riding Academy and American Chills books or, for that matter, any books — and to write. The two have worked together to sponsor a writing contest — "The Really Cool Short Story Contest" — for fourth through sixth-grade students in Staunton city schools. Both Alice and Elizabeth have been authors-in-residence at local

schools to help students with their writing. The authors' best advice to young writers: "Read, read, read, and write."

"The hardest thing about writing is that you're constantly getting rejected and critiqued," Alice says. "That's sometimes very difficult for youngsters to take, but that's part of the writing process. And never give up. They always say that someone who gives up wasn't really meant to be a writer."

Elizabeth echoes: "If someone can talk you out of it by critiquing you, you weren't meant to be a writer."

In addition to their sons named Brian — Alice's is 8, and Elizabeth's is 16 — each also has a daughter. Alice and her husband Bruce Thompson are the parents of Brian and Beth, 5. Elizabeth and her husband Roger Massie, are the parents of Brian and Erin, 18. Alice holds a bachelor's degree in special education from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in communicative disorders from Johns Hopkins. Elizabeth earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from James Madison University. —



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•Lillie May

Continued from page 1

was exciting. There was always somewhere to go and something to do."

The Apollo Theater was one of those places. Louis Armstrong, Chick Webb, Ella Fitzgerald are only a few of the musicians and singers Mrs. Johnson recalled seeing perform there.

"Thursday was the biggest day at the Apollo," Mrs. Johnson commented. "It was the day everyone who worked as a domestic had off. The Apollo put on their biggest show of the week on Thursday. And it only cost a quarter to get in. If it was Thursday and you hadn't gone to the Apollo, you hadn't done anything."

Mrs. Johnson returned home on holidays and for the summer, recalling that train fare was \$6 round trip.

Mrs. Johnson was not alone in New York City. Many of Waynesboro's black families had relatives there and sent their children north for an education. One was Dan Johnson, a Waynesboro friend, who was living in Brooklyn.

"My mother could have kicked me, but I quit school and got married," Mrs. Johnson chuckled.

She and her husband returned to

Waynesboro where he worked as a janitor at the Cavalier Theater downtown.

Asked if it was difficult returning to the segregated South after living in New York, Mrs. Johnson remarked, "I was in love with Dan Johnson, and anywhere he wanted to go was fine with me."

Mrs. Johnson does not recall living in pre-Civil Rights Waynesboro as being par-

See **SEGREGATION**, page 5



The photo at left was taken in 1936 when Lillie May Simms was 19. It was taken in Waynesboro on Port Republic Road.

Ellen Thompson Darcus, in photo at left, was a slave in Albemarle County before the Civil War. After the war's end in 1865, she came to Waynesboro. Her granddaughter, Lillie May Johnson of Waynesboro, recalls hearing Mrs. Darcus tell stories of her days as a slave. This photo was taken in New York in the early 1920s.

Photos courtesy Lillie May Johnson

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Augusta U.M. Church stands tall in the heart of Staunton

EDITOR'S NOTE: Augusta Street United Methodist Church will be the site of the Fall Meeting of the Augusta County Historical Society Nov. 19. The following synopsis of the church's history was taken from the history of the church compiled by A.R. Ware Jr. and Brenda Bolen on the occasion of the church's 125th anniversary in 1991.

The Methodist congregation at Augusta Street United Methodist Church has traveled a long and rocky road since it arose from the struggles of the Civil War to become a religious haven for Staunton's African American population.

The church's spiritual beginnings reach back to the years before the Civil War. Although the Black Codes of Virginia forbade slaves from holding religious services without the presence of a white person, the law could be circumvented by allowing blacks to worship in white churches. And so it was that Central Methodist Episcopal Church at Lewis and Beverley Streets had a membership of about 350, including 200 African-Americans.

The conclusion of the Civil War brought an end to slavery and the black codes associated with it. With their new-found freedom, many African Americans established new, independent churches. Many of the former members of Central Methodist began meeting in Hardy's Carriage Shop, located at New and Frederick Streets, and formed John Wesley Chapel.

Eager to buy land and form their own church, the worshippers were asked to contribute money to a building fund through offerings paid at weekly class meetings. This method of donation soon earned the congregation the nickname, "The Ten Cent Church."

It wasn't long before enough money had been accumulated, and a lot on the corner of Augusta and Prospect Streets was purchased from Miss Rachel Philips in September 1866. The church trustees were Aaron Shoveler, Frances Overton, Philip Rosell, William Denny, James Scott, Philip Ransom, and Addison King. A one-story board and batten church, often referred to as the "little brown

church," was built on the lot. The new John Wesley Church also had a brick basement which was used as a school room.

The thriving congregation soon outgrew the little brown church and to raise money for a larger church, half the lot and the church building were sold. The ground for the present church was broken in 1876. In 1895 a pipe organ was installed, and in 1911 the church was remodeled to the tune of \$7,000. The new facade with a steeple, extension of the building to the parsonage and sanctuary changes were designed by the architectural firm of T.J. Collins and Son.

The church has operated under a variety of names since its beginning in 1865. Unofficially the Ten Cent Church and the Little Brown Church, the first official name was the John Wesley Chapel. This was changed to the John Wesley Church upon completion of the first board and batten structure in 1869. Once the present building was erected on Augusta Street in the 1870s, the sanctuary took on a new nickname, Augusta Street Methodist Church. Eventually under the leadership of the Rev. E.M. Mitchell in 1918, that became the official name of the church.

The 20th century brought more growth to the church. The present pipe organ was installed in 1923. In 1936 a mortgage was placed on the church to make necessary repairs, but that note was burned in 1943

under the pastorate of the Rev. Julius S. Carrol. Interestingly, it was Miss Ella Frame who struck the match to burn the note. Miss Frame had been present during the 1876 groundbreaking ceremony for the present church.

The church's official name was changed again, this time in 1971, when the national United Methodist Church was formed. Today Augusta Street United Methodist Church stands tall in the heart of Staunton, a living reminder of that hardy group of worshippers who came together in the room of a carriage shop and pledged their hard-earned dimes so that they might have a church of their own. ---

This information was compiled by AC staff writer Nancy Sorrells.

Augusta Street United Methodist Church stands tall in the heart of Staunton, a living reminder of that hardy group of worshippers who came together in the room of a carriage shop and pledged their hard-earned dimes so that they might have a church of their own.

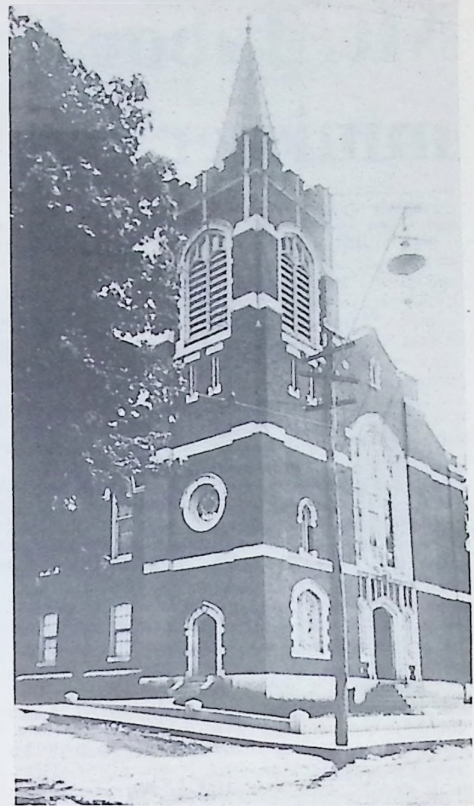


Photo from the early 1900s



Photo from the late 1800s

Photos courtesy Augusta Street U.M. Church

•Segregation

Continued from page 4

ticularly difficult.

"We got into the movies free because of my husband's job, but we had to use our own door," Mrs. Johnson related. "We couldn't eat in certain restaurants, but we could shop anywhere we wanted. Leggetts gave charge accounts to its black customers."

Mr. Johnson left his job as a janitor and went to work at General Electric, after the company located in Waynesboro. Mrs. Johnson worked occasionally as a domestic and as a school crossing guard. Mostly she stayed home to raise their two children, Douglas and Diane.

Like she and her husband, the Johnson children attended Rosenwald. Family members in New York begged the Johnsons to send the children north for an education.

"But I was crazy about my children, and I just couldn't let them go," Mrs. Johnson explained. "So I moved to New York and lived there during the school year while they went to school."

The three lived in Westchester County. Mrs. Johnson worked as a domestic while her two children attended Pelham School. "We would come home during holidays and the summer." Unlike their parents, however, the Johnson children did not return to Waynesboro permanently.

Douglas Johnson graduated from Charles E. Gorton High School in Yonkers and earned his undergraduate degree from Hartwick College. Today he lives in Hollywood, where he works as an actor. Diane graduated from Westchester's Pelham and attended business school in New York where today she works for P.C.P. Brokerage House.

Since her husband's death 10 years ago, Mrs. Johnson has remained active in community activities. She is a life-long member of Shiloh Baptist Church and serves as its historian. She is also a member of the League of Women Voters. She remains intensely interested in the history of African American people.

It's no accident that all those people whose portraits and photographs grace her wall look proud. ---

Mt. Tabor honors retiring minister Harold Fuller

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

MIDDLEBROOK — Using phrases such as "steadfast friend" and "pillar of support," Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church congregation said good bye to retiring pastor Harold Fuller at a retirement reception held Sept. 24 at the church.

"Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all you've done and all you've meant to this congregation," said Mt. Tabor member Tommy Hanger in honoring Rev. Fuller.

For two decades Rev. Fuller shepherded the Mt. Tabor congregation. He began his service at the church on Aug. 1, 1975. With a little prodding, Rev. Fuller recalled what he told the congregation on his first Sunday in the Mt. Tabor pulpit.

"I told them I would use the shotgun approach in my sermons until I got to know them," he recalled. "Once I learned to know them, I warned them I would zero in on them." Twenty years and 1,100 sermons later, Rev. Fuller remarked that retiring from the Tabor pastorate was a difficult decision.

"These folks have been wonderful to me. We've had our ups and downs like any congregation, but we've always gotten through," he

said. Rev. Fuller noted that it was the youth of the church which prompted him to choose retirement.

"I think more than anything that has kept me here has been the zeal of the young people. We've always had a very active youth group. Now there are a lot of children under the age of 6, and I felt it was time for a new pastor to start out with them," he said.

There is no disputing that Rev. Fuller's popularity at Mt. Tabor has bridged all age barriers — an obvious conclusion drawn by the congregation's outpouring of affection upon the minister's retirement. Members of the congregation honored Rev. Fuller on his retirement by presenting him with an Eli Terry clock made by Irvin Rosen of McKinley. Rev. Fuller and his wife Mary also were given a four-day Christmas holiday trip to Nashville and some spending money to take along. The church's youth group, the Luther League, presented Rev. Fuller with a watch.

A native of Rural Retreat in Virginia's Wythe County, Rev. Fuller earned his bachelor's degree in religious education at Lenoir Rhyne College in Hickory, N.C. He attended Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbia, S.C., from which he received his divinity degree in 1960.

Rev. Fuller's first call was to Gravel Springs Lutheran Parish which included five churches in Frederick County, Virginia. At this pastorate Rev. Fuller preached alternate Sundays conducting services at three churches one week and two churches the next. The Gravel Springs Parish dissolved when four of the churches combined into one church, and the fifth established a church on its own. Rev. Fuller was the last pastor to serve the Gravel Springs Parish.

In 1972 Rev. Fuller was called to Quicksburg Parish near New Market. When Mt. Tabor's pulpit committee went to New Market to hear a prospective minister preach, it was only by chance that committee members crossed paths with Rev. Fuller.

Having attended services at a Lutheran Church in New Market to hear its pastor, members of Mt. Tabor's pulpit committee stopped for lunch at "Chicken in the Rough," a popular New Market restaurant. As it happened Rev. Fuller and his family were also eating at the restaurant. A member of Tabor's pulpit committee ran into an old acquaintance at the restaurant and told the friend about the congregation's search for a pastor. "Well, there's one over there," the friend said and introduced the Fuller family to members of Tabor's pulpit committee. Committee members returned to Tabor and told their interim pas-

tor, Charles Spraker, of their chance encounter with Rev. Fuller. Coincidentally Rev. Spraker knew Rev. Fuller, the two having been classmates at seminary. Rev. Spraker endorsed his former seminary acquaintance and encouraged the committee to find out more about Rev. Fuller. Despite the "rough" early going in the pulpit search process, Mt. Tabor extended the call to Rev. Fuller. In 1975 he left the New Market pastorate and brought his family — wife Mary, and daughters, Sharon, Rebecca, and Sonya — to the Mt. Tabor parish. Rev. Fuller preached his last sermon Sept. 10, 1995 at Mt. Tabor. He said his departure sermon was a difficult one to preach.

"I told them services must go on, and therefore they must seek a new shepherd," he said. "It's very difficult to say good bye."

Rev. Fuller has served a total of 35 years in ministry for the Lutheran Church. But his days in the pulpit are far from over.

"There's no end to sermons," he



Rev. Harold Fuller

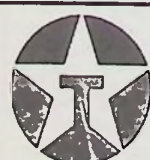
said and noted that he will be supplying in the pulpit at Faith Lutheran Church in Staunton. The Fullers have moved out of the Tabor parsonage on Middlebrook Road but have relocated just a short distance away in Raphine. After 20 years watching over the Mt. Tabor congregation, the shepherd will still remain in contact with his flock.

"Pastoring is one thing," Fuller said, "friendship never ends." —



Rev. Fuller with his wife Mary at the retirement reception held Sept. 24 at Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church near Middlebrook.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton



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Family maintains ties, cultures across years and continents

By NANCY SORRELLS

RAPHINE -- Fifty years ago the curtain came down on the close of a horrific world war. There was hardly a corner of the globe that was not touched in some way by World War II, but for those living in Europe, the realities of war touched the lives of the entire population -- civilian and military, young and old, men and women. Those who survived in a gutted homeland faced the task of literally starting life over with nothing.

But the indomitable nature of the human spirit is a powerful force exemplified by two sisters, Wanda and Margret Mattern, German civilians caught up in the war. The two have risen from Germany's ashes, each surviving in her own way while still maintaining the cultural ties to the heritage in which they were raised.

Today the sisters live half a world apart, Margret and her husband, Arthur, a retired Lutheran minister, reside near Raphine in southern Augusta County. Arthur is serving as the interim minister at Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church near Middlebrook. Wanda and her husband, Kurt, live in Espelkamp, Westphalia, Germany in the house they built from scratch a few years after the war's conclusion.

Although the war itself dragged on for years, the climax came within the space of a few hours for Wanda Kopelke and Margret Henne. Born and raised in Silesia, territory which is now part of Poland, the German residents of the countryside were only given a few hours to evacuate as the advancing Russian front moved across their homeland in February 1945.

"You have to understand that we had a few hours to pack a suitcase and leave. I have often regretted what was left behind. I have sometimes said that I would have given half my clothes for a family photo album," Margret said of those tense moments in the final winter

of the war.

"But it was February and cold," explained Wanda, a Red Cross nurse during the war. "There was no place to sleep and no way to get meals. The soldiers said to get out as quickly as we could."

When war's final curtain fell, the sisters emerged with their lives, but little else. "We lost our parents and youngest sister and three brothers who died in the war," Margret explained. In addition, they lost the house in which they grew up as the iron curtain closed off Silesia.

Kurt Kopelke, Wanda's husband, also grew up nearby in the region of Pomerania, where his father owned a sawmill and where he was trained in carpentry work. Trapped behind the iron curtain in the Russian-occupied zone of Europe, he turned to the skills of his hands to eke out a living.

"In the British and American areas it was completely different, but in our area you tried to earn just a little bit, enough for food. I started making wagons, and I left a few behind when I escaped at night two years later," Kurt explained.

In rebuilding their lives, each sister chose a different path. In 1954 Margret looked to the United States for a new chance. While in New York City, she met a Lutheran pastor named Arthur Henne. Appropriately enough, they met on the steps of a church while Henne was home on furlough during missionary service in British Guiana (now Guyana) in South America. They were married in Georgetown Guyana and Margret accompanied her husband on missionary work in Guyana and four years in Trinidad, before the pair returned to America to serve in a number of parishes.

The Hennes eventually came to settle in Augusta County in a brick two-story house with windows and a deck that look out upon the Blue Ridge Mountains. When they purchased the house, Margret was

immediately struck by the similarity between these Virginia mountains and those in Silesia near the present-day border with Czechoslovakia. The similarity between Silesia's Riesengebirge mountains of her youth and the Blue Ridge Mountains of her retirement have helped bridge the gap of time and distance she has traveled on her life's path.

Across the ocean, Wanda and Kurt met and married in 1951. Their path took them to a region in Westphalia which was being rebuilt by refugees. Today the town of Espelkamp, located 45 miles south of Bremen, is a showpiece reflecting the resiliency of the human spirit.

During the war, Espelkamp was a wooded region camouflaging German military buildings. After the war, the English occupied the area and gave permission to a Lutheran pastor to move in and organize the building of a community from the ground up.

"The place they live in was entirely built by refugees," marveled Arthur Henne of the town his in-laws helped build. "It's all new. It is a showpiece of how people who lost everything were able to rebuild."

Wanda and Kurt are less effusive about their accomplishments, explaining that they did what they had to do to survive. "We were very poor and had nothing. But we had a trade. We had learned how to work in life. If you are eager and know what you are doing, you can prosper," Kurt said.

The pair were married in September 1951, they explained, and by February 1952 they were hacking roots out of the ground as they hand dug a basement. As they saved money, they would add to the house, building everything by hand after they got off work. As houses went up all around the community, neighbors traded work back and forth. "It took two years. After a year and a quarter we moved in, but



Standing from left, Kurt and Wanda Kopelke, and seated from left, Margret and Arthur Henne, with the Hennes' German shepherd Canday. Wanda and Margret are sisters who left Germany at the end of World War II.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

all the work was done after quitting time," Kurt explained.

Even as the Kopelkes were putting the finishing touches on their house, Margret was moving to America. She did not, however, forget her German heritage. That is why her meeting and marrying Arthur seem inevitable. Arthur's paternal family came to America from Germany in the 19th century.

"Through Margret I was able to find and speak with relatives in Germany. I was able to set foot inside the house where my father's mother was born," explained Arthur of his rediscovered German heritage.

"I took him home so to speak," Margret added.

Family and culture have kept the Hennes and Kopelkes close during the years since the war. The Kopelkes resided in America for 10 years, from 1959 to 1969, and their daughter has grown up bilingual, a child of both cultures. Today they live in the house they built with their own hands, but re-

turn to America every few years for a visit.

The four have promised to visit each other at least once every 10 years, which has worked out to a trip to one side of the Atlantic or the other every five years. This September the Kopelkes spent a month visiting much of the East Coast, including time in Raphine where they renewed ties with the Hennes.

The family reunions are events anticipated by all four of the in-laws. "It is a learning experience every time we go back and forth," Margret said of the tradition and ties they have established.

"It makes life a lot easier if you know each other," said Kurt, referring not just to his family, but to two countries which have grown much closer in the 50 years since they were foes in a world war.

But for Wanda, maintaining the family ties is the all-important evolution of the war's end and the years subsequent to it. "The family isn't so big anymore, so the few have to stay together," she said. --

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Deborah Sensabaugh:

Putting together people, horses and the great outdoors

By BETH GREENAWALT

BUENA VISTA — You might find Deborah Sensabaugh of Rockbridge County coaching young riding students. Or she could be hauling horses along country roads with her battered pickup and stock trailer. She may be setting up a wilderness camp, starting off on a 25-mile endurance ride, or leading a ride between local bed and breakfast inns.

Wherever she is, though, horses are sure to be nearby. As founder of Virginia Mountain Outfitters, Inc., Deborah's job is getting people and horses together in the great outdoors.

For the past seven years, Deborah has been leading groups into the Virginia wilderness on horseback. In recent years, she has also organized a popular five-day door-to-door ride between local bed and breakfast inns. Eventually, she hopes to market a similar ride internationally.

However, Deborah plans to continue to offer shorter family-oriented rides at affordable rates.

"Whenever people want to go riding, I try to fit them in and give them the type of ride they want," she says. "I want to make it fun for the people — and the horses, too. Of course, the well-being of the horses has to come first."

"Deborah will find a trail for everyone," comments Linda White of Raphine, who has ridden with Deborah a number of times. "Easy ones for beginners, challenging ones for the advanced. She really loves the outdoors, and she knows the trails in this area better than anyone I know — where all these trails are, how to access and connect them. She puts in 20 miles a day, day in and day out, on horseback."

"I remember one ride specifically in the St. Mary's Wilderness area. We went up and up for a long, long time. When we finally reached the top it was so high it was like being in an airplane. It was really awesome, it was so pretty."

In choosing animals for the trail, Deborah says she looks for horses that genuinely enjoy people and can adjust themselves to the needs of their riders. "I have good kind horses," she says. "I choose them for their personality, not their breed." However, she reports having the most success with half Arabians, mules, and American Bashkir Curly horses.

Deborah relies on training advice from Red Revelle in Orange County, Virginia. "His resistance-free techniques have helped our horses a lot," she noted.

"Her horses are quiet, they're used to their job, and they're reliable, so it makes for a very enjoyable ride," says White.

Clients of Virginia Mountain



On the trail again... Deborah Sensabaugh, center, on her Arabian-appaloosa Ben, leads trail rides for families and groups. With her on a recent outing was, from left, Jon Greenawalt, Sarah Owen and Rosemarie Greenawalt, and, far right, Joshua Stone of Lynchburg.

Photos by Beth Greenawalt

Outfitters range from advanced horsemen to raw beginners. "It doesn't matter, because I teach," Deborah says. "I've taken people who have never ridden before, and by the end of the second day they're cantering."

Deborah's daughter, Candy, now a senior at Old Dominion University, is a graduate in horsemanship from the Southern Virginia College for Women in Buena Vista. She helps extensively with the business which has been financing her college education.

"This is something we could do together," says Deborah, a single

mother. During school vacations, Candy gives lessons and trains horses while her mother handles the trail work.

"I wanted a job where I could be outdoors and have a lot of variety," Deborah recalls of her career preference. "But I just kind of fell into this."

Ever since the age of 13, Deborah has had horses. However, it wasn't until she and Candy began to ride in 4-H Pony Club together that they became actively involved in the horse industry.

First, people began asking Deborah for lessons. "I started

"I WANTED A JOB WHERE I COULD BE OUTDOORS AND HAVE A LOT OF VARIETY. BUT I JUST KIND OF FELL INTO THIS."

Deborah Sensabaugh
Virginia Mountain Outfitters

teaching again by request. That became popular and went very well," she says. Currently, Deborah teaches 30-40 young riders once or twice a week.

"She knows what she's doing," says Kathy Wyant of Rockbridge County, whose daughters ride with Deborah. "Nikki's learned more at Deborah's in the past year than in all her previous years of riding. I've been really pleased."

Using a direct, no nonsense approach, Deborah encourages her riders' independence and confidence. "At Deborah's you're free, and when you get there you can start doing things on your own instead of just waiting," says Holly Wyant, age 12. "We do jumping and go on trail rides. Earlier we went on a trip to Chincoteague, and we went to Coffeytown for an overnight trail ride. If everything's going bad for the day and you go riding, then everything seems to turn good."

The young riders appear to feel relaxed and enthusiastic. "They won't yell at you or nothing; if you do something wrong they'll just tell you how to figure it out," says Nicole Wyant, 10. "I'm learning and having fun too."

As Deborah's reputation as an equitation teacher developed, people began asking about going up into the mountains with her. "So I made a trial start," she remembers. "One fall I leased a pasture at the bottom of the mountain. Albert Nicely was wonderful in helping me get started."

Over time, Deborah's efforts evolved into her present business, which she has recently incorporated. "It's been something the Lord has blessed me with; I can't take the credit," she says. "It's been financially successful, but every cent has gone into Candy's college or into the horses," she adds somewhat ruefully.

Years of hitting the trail in good weather and bad could get old. However, Deborah says that her greatest joy is to be with her horse out in the mountains "in the open country" and to share that joy with other people.

"For me, being out in the mountains is an almost spiritual experience. This is the world God made, and I know my place in it," she says.

"Deborah has a unique attitude about her work — she considers it a service more than just a business," reflects White. "She is interested in helping people and enriching their lives. She has a way of putting people at ease. Especially on the longer rides, there seems to be a real camaraderie and friendship that develops; a bonding as they're sharing a challenging enjoyable experience. It was just remarkable to me how much they all seemed like a family."

So what kind of vacation does Deborah plan for herself when she has the chance to get away? "More horseback riding," she laughs. "I've made wonderful lasting friends and been invited to ride all over the country. I love it as much as anyone!" —

Riding the trails — family style

By BETH GREENAWALT

It started when I was horseback riding during Christmas vacation with some friends. Deborah Sensabaugh swung my young son up onto a gentle pack horse which she led behind her own mount as we rode through woods and pastures.

"When you've learned to ride by yourself, I'll take you out on a pack trip," she promised him.

Matthew didn't forget, even when we flew back overseas to continue mission work in Hungary. Over the next months, when-

ever he got the chance he diligently practiced reining, balancing, picking out hooves and saddling.

Now, a year and a half later, the dream was about to become reality... more or less.

Swayed by their eagerness and relying on Deborah's gentle horses, my husband Dave and I decided to take all the children: Matthew, now 7, Jon Marc, 5, and Rosemarie, 3. At the last minute our nephew Joshua Stone from Lynchburg, 9, came too. ("Oh, sure, bring him along," Deborah

said. "I'm used to lots more kids than that.") In addition, old friends Vickie Patterson of Sherando and Sarah Owen of Henry, joined us.

Experienced in the ways of children and camping trips with horses, Deborah first suggested that instead of an actual pack trip, we camp at one site and ride out from there. "You don't want to be way out somewhere in the middle of a long ride when one of the children gets too tired," she warned.

The day before the ride, Deborah called with further changes. "It's too hot for the

horses where we planned," she told me in a matter-of-fact voice. "Let's work out of my place, and that way if this hurricane hits we can make a run for the house."

As I listened to reports of Hurricane Felix' approach, accompanied by recaps of the damage Camille caused back in the 60s, I was getting less and less eager about a pack trip in the mountains with three little kids. However, it was now or maybe never; Dave was flying back to Hungary in a week, and Vickie and Sarah had planned

Continued on page 9



Matthew Greenawalt riding Blaze on a pack trip with Deborah Sensabaugh who made good on a promise to take the youngster along when he was big enough to ride by himself.

Continued from page 8
their vacations to coincide with the trip.

"Maybe we'll at least get a nice ride this evening before it hits," we finally decided, and loaded up our Arabian gelding, Lance, and our 36-inch tall miniature horse, Blaze, for the trip.

Once at the Virginia Mountain Outfitters, Inc., spread near Buena Vista (actually owned by

Deborah's parents, the Billers) Deborah led us back through the woods to a beautiful spot overlooking a wide rocky creek.

The children placed stepping stones across the creek to the spring that would provide our drinking water while I made a sandwich supper. Then Dave elected to set up tents while the rest of us went for an evening ride. ("Usually I would have already had all that done," Deborah said, "But with this hurricane coming I just didn't know.")

After a satisfying ride in the cool of the evening, we returned to a glowing lantern, a campfire and hot dogs. As we retired to our tents, we heard a rustle and then clattering hooves as a string of horses came down to the creek to drink. The stars shone overhead as Deborah went back to hear the latest weather reports... maybe we would get at least one night and a morning ride before the storm struck.

When we tuned in the radio in the morning, the announcer was predicting hot, humid weather to continue for the next few days; no precipitation expected.

"That must be from Canada," Vickie said, but the next moment the announcer was reciting Roanoke temperatures, with still no mention of the hurricane. In confused silence we contemplated the sudden gift of clear weather and days of riding ahead; it wasn't until later that we would hear of Felix' stall out in the Atlantic.

Deborah led the way on Ben, her beloved Arabian-Appaloosa cross. Following close behind was Jon on Rachel, a gentle pack mule. Then came Jenny Payette, 10, one of Deborah's 4-H students, on her own chestnut pony Chippy. Joshua followed on Fancy, a small palomino. Dave and I took turns on

Lance, with Matthew trotting behind on Blaze. Sarah was next on Chataisuba, while Vickie rode Patrick, a Curly Horse. We took turns riding with Rosemarie on Deborah's "bombproof" gelding. Skippy brought up the rear. Candy traveled up and down the line on a Gus the mule.

The first day we meandered down to the South River, the second we trailered to ride a mountain near Irish Creek. By then Joshua (who had only learned to rein by himself two weeks before) was cantering and jumping Fancy, while Matthew and Blaze were traveling the trail like old pros. Vickie (who hadn't ridden for over a year) and Dave (it had been nearly two years for him) had worked through their aches and pains and seemed to be enjoying themselves.

With Rosemarie nestling against me, we rode through shadow and sunlight, accompanied by the gurgling of Irish Creek. As I watched the riders strung out before me, a deep sense of peace and thankfulness settled into my soul.

Before long, Rosemarie fell asleep, her head pillowed against my arm.

As we neared journey's end I could hear Jon saying, "No one knows how much fun it is on a trail ride until they've been on one."

When asked how he liked the "pack trip," Matthew said, "I really liked it!" Then he wailed, "But does that mean it's over?!"

Rosemarie asked: "Are we going to go with Deborah again?"

For sure, we will. ---



Deborah, left, with Gus the Mule, and daughter Candy



Trailriders take a much deserved break from their journey.



A scenic stop along the trail... Rosemarie, Matthew, and Jon Marc Greenawalt, Joshua Stone, and Dave Greenawalt

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Studies in Bulgaria, Turkey provide MBC students personal look of countries' cultures

By SARAH FRANCISCO

During May I went to Bulgaria as part of Mary Baldwin College's May Term Abroad program, which sends students to several countries to take classes. Leading the trip was Dr. Vladimir Garkov, a Bulgarian native, and four other members of Mary Baldwin's faculty, including my mother, Dr. Virginia Francisco. There were 32 other students on the trip.

Our plane landed in Sofia, Bulgaria's capital, and we continued by bus to Plovdiv, the second-largest city. That afternoon we walked around the city, and several of us returned in the evening to wander. We were astonished by the cheapness of goods the many street vendors sold, the battered buildings, the general lack of color in the setting, and the appearance of the people on the streets. I think we saw only a few well-dressed, obviously prosperous people during the whole trip. On the whole, the people looked as though they exist on a shoestring budget — which they do. The average Bulgarian earns the equivalent \$2,000 per year, compared with an average of \$19,000 in the European Community.

Bulgaria has an unusual history. It became part of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1200s. Even after the Russo-Turkish War in

1876, which "liberated" Bulgaria, the country remained very much under the control of Russia. In WWI Bulgaria aligned with the Central Powers and experienced defeat again. It remained an independent country, but by 1948 Bulgaria allied with the Soviet Union, and became part of the Eastern Bloc. Bulgaria has been a communist/socialist country until only recently, when the country turned toward capitalism.

However, the country is still struggling. The adverse effects of capitalism have arrived rapidly, with the benefits still elusive. Bulgarians seem determined to make capitalism work, but they returned a communist government at the last election. Perhaps their history of subordination is one of the reasons for the dour mentality of the people. They seemed generally cheerless, and unpleasant.

One interesting experience was the driving habits. Much of Bulgaria is extremely mountainous, and the roads are certainly difficult to navigate in a bus. The "interstate highway" ends about 30 miles from Sofia. The rest of the roads are two-lane, winding, and narrow, with poor, cracked pavement—much worse than local secondary roads. Our driver was highly skilled, and generally gave us a comfortable trip, but Bulgarian passing procedure scared me anyway.

In Bulgaria, you can pass at any time, and it is quite customary to barely get around the car you are passing before darting back into the right-hand lane to avoid the oncoming car, the one that would have hit you. Our bus was equipped with a warning beep that sounded when we got too close to the oncoming car. Nothing is more startling than the repeated beeping, not just because of the sound, but because you know that you are barely escaping a head-on collision.

Looking back, I think that if I had to tie what we saw into one common theme, it would be the continuing bitterness against Turkey. Everywhere memorials, and especially churches, have been

erected to commemorate the Bulgarian citizens' freedom from the "Turkish yoke," and in gratitude to the Russians and their general Alexander Nevsky who were so instrumental in freeing Bulgaria from Turkish rule. We passed through the Shipka Pass, where the great deciding battle of the Russo-Turkish war was fought, with Russia and the Bulgarian people the victors. There is a lovely, new church with brilliant murals at the Pass, as well as a few smaller monuments along the roadway.

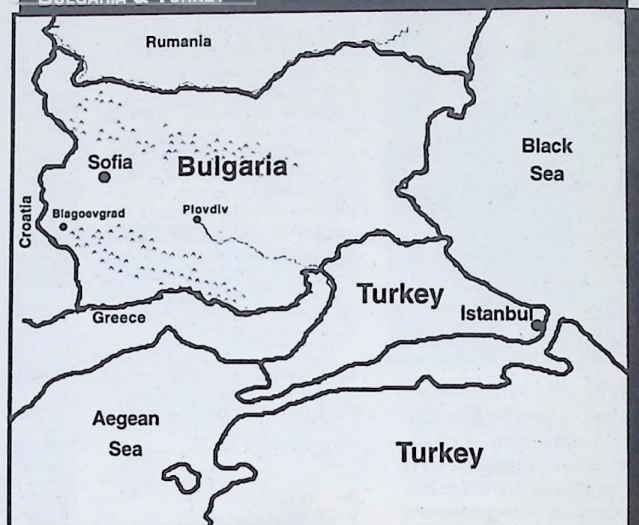
During the seven days that we toured Bulgaria we saw many commemorative and memorial churches, frequently with incredible murals covering the entire wall space inside and out. We saw, however, few very old churches. I would guess they were destroyed by the Turks or during the overthrow of communism. The lack of historical monuments in the country is disappointing. However, these structures simply do not exist.

The times of Turkish domination were culturally dead for the Bulgarian people, and so were the communist times. However, we did get to see a village that had been reconstructed around an old church that dated from Byzantine times. We also saw a few mosques in Turkey that had been churches before the Turks conquered the country, and in some areas the Christian murals had been uncovered and restored.

One church that we saw in Istanbul had been completely restored as the Christian church it had been before it was converted to a mosque. It was fairly small, and divided into several sections. There was an entry hall extending the width of the building, and then there were two rooms that divided the length of the church. The entry hall had a low ceiling, but the two rooms were vaulted, with murals covering every inch of space.

We had been "prepared" for our visit to Turkey by our professor, who gave us a negative impression of the country. "Don't act like a Turk," for example, is Bulgarian

BULGARIA & TURKEY



EASTERN EUROPE: AREA OF DETAIL



Cathedral spires rise high above the treetops in Sofia.

for "don't be domineering and cruel." However, we found that Turkey was quite the opposite.

We had been expecting a difficult time at the border, but the guards could not have been more courteous and polite. As soon as we crossed into the actual country from the no-man's land, the road widened into two lanes each way with a median.

However, as soon as we passed through a tollbooth on the main highway, probably about five minutes into the country, a Turkish police car motioned us over to the shoulder. The military policeman came onto our bus, demanding "passports, passports, passports." When he was told that we were American students, not Bulgarians as our bus must have indicated, he became all pleasantness, and left immediately. I, for one, was glad that America is on good footing with Turkey, and not an antagonist as Bulgaria is.

The two days that we spent in Istanbul were incredible. The city,

on one hand so teeming and busy with McDonalds and Seven-Elevens, also had old, nearly untouched areas in which the Grand Bazaar, St. Sofia, the great mosques, and Topkapi Palace are located. The mosques we visited took my breath away. Great, vaulted ceilings, stained glass, and soft rugs make them places of beauty and quiet, some of the only hushed places in the city!

We spent several hours in the Covered Bazaar, corridor after corridor housing vendors screaming into your ears about their wares and using elaborate persuasions! My favorite was one man who ran after us, calling to my mother, "Please, for the pleasure of your eyes, come into my rug store!" Of course, as soon as it became clear we were not going to stop, he ran up to another, and laid his line on her.

Another favorite was, "Come, look, I do not cheat so much as others!" I bought several souve-

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

nirs there, after bargaining extensively, which is half the fun! The vendors set their prices exorbitantly high, and you beat them down slowly—they expect it.

After Istanbul we drove through northern Greece, which was lovely, despite three 16-hour days of riding in a crowded bus. However, we did get to see a panorama of the countryside, which is similar to that of Bulgaria. The mountains are high, a little higher than ours here in the Valley. They are rocky and projecting, not smooth and rounded. In between the mountains are extremely flat plains which are used for agriculture, laid out mile after mile in neat, tidy squares. There are few great herds of livestock, mostly a few sheep and donkeys. I am not sure that I saw a single cow or ox during the entire trip.

We drove back through Bulgaria to Blagoevgrad, where the American University of Bulgaria (AUBG) is located. It's about 45 minutes from Sofia and is four years new, having just had the first American style commencement on the Balkans. The MBC faculty taught four classes, AUBG's only summer school, in return for our room and board. There were only about 80 AUBG students there for the summer school, out of a student population of about 600, about as many as in MBC's traditional program.

Our dormitory was the former communist hotel. A dance bar is still located on the ground floor, pumping dance music into the dorm's first floors until about 3 a.m. The dorm was about three blocks from AUBG's building—there was only one. This seven-story building housed the library on the bottom floor, the cafeteria on the top, and various classrooms, computer labs, and offices on the floors in between. The building, and others like it that are arranged around a central square, made up the former communist headquarters, which I find ironic—a center of learning in the communist headquarters.

The two weeks that we spent at AUBG I found perhaps the most interesting of our trip. The stu-



A dance troupe performs a traditional Bulgarian courting dance at a restaurant in Sofia.

dents were much nicer than we had been led to believe they would be—very verbal and talkative, eager to get involved in discussions with us. They had a very different attitude than our professor had generalized Bulgarians to have. They were more forward looking than previous generations, determined to make their country successful. They did not seem to harbor the grudges against communism and the Turkish empire that previous

generations had. They wanted to look forward into the future.

Also, they were closely aligned with American popular culture, although they seemed still to be caught up in the 60s and 70s, especially the music from that time. One guy was fascinated with the band, The Doors; he really hero-worshipped Jim Morrison. Also, as a nation, the Bulgarians are really into what they call disco music, basically techno-pop.



The ruins of an ancient Roman theater in Plovdiv, Bulgaria

The room I shared with another MBC student was an interesting experience. It was about 8 x 11 feet with bunk beds and two battered desks and chairs. There was a tiny closet in the entry that was too shallow to hang a clothes hanger in, and another metal locker in the corner at the foot of the bunks. The bathroom was about 4 x 3 feet and had a tiled floor and walls. There was a toilet that never flushed except under great duress, a sink, and a mirror. There was a spigot on the wall, and a shower attachment coming out the top of it. There was no tub, or even a lip, or a curtain; the drain was in the middle of the floor.

The one, and perhaps only, luxury at the university was E-mail and the Internet. This enabled my mother and me to keep in touch with the outside world, since it was useless to try to phone home. There are only 16 lines out of Bulgaria, which is about the size of Pennsylvania, and it can take hours to get a line out. We all quickly had a nearly personal relationship with the infamous "Sprint operator in New Jersey," since the only way to reach the USA is through that particular operator. No Sprint account? Too bad. Call collect or do without.

The students were interesting to have in class, because they were so much more vocal than many American students. They were eager to argue points and ask questions, and even state that the professor was "wrong, just wrong" and explain why they thought that way. I think they were definitely an asset to my class, American Drama. They always participated in discussions, and so we had true conversations about the plays, instead of forced question/answer sessions. We also had videos for each of the plays, which created even more discussion since the movies and scripts were often very different. The students seemed to like the videos a lot, probably because it made it easier to understand the material, and also because it gave a better perspective of the play to get to see it rather than just reading it.

After our session at AUBG we went to Sofia for two days. We went to a "concert" at the Sofia Palace of Culture, which is fully government supported. The concert celebrated the national holiday of Saints Methodius and Cyril and their gift of the alphabet to the Bulgarian people in the Middle Ages. The evening was a sampler of various Bulgarian artists: an orchestra, several male and female singers, a dance couple, what I think was a high school dance troupe, and a group of small children singing the national anthem. I enjoyed it very much, because it gave such a sampler of Bulgarian music. There was even a "pop" singer who elicited screams and shouts when he sang. I think he was the equivalent of, say, our Dave Mathews Band, although more like Elvis in his presentation.

We had one free day in Sofia, which was great. We got a chance to explore on our own, something that we had had little opportunity to do. Compact discs (contraband I'm sure) cost only about four or five dollars, and the choices were extensive, so I availed myself cheerfully of the music stores. Other students shopped for clothes and spent time with the AUBG students who rode to Sofia with us from the University.

I found Bulgaria an interesting, multifaceted country, one which is not only struggling in some areas to achieve a balanced capitalist society, but in others to simply survive. I had not seen before what life is like in a country dominated for so long by another great empire, or one so long devoted to Russia and communism, which is now trying to turn towards democracy and capitalism. ---

Sarah Francisco is a student at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton. She is the daughter of Bill and Virginia Francisco of Rt. 1, Staunton.



At a glance

Bulgaria

Bulgaria: slightly larger than Tennessee and bordered by Greece, Romania, Turkey and Croatia

Official Name: People's Republic of Bulgaria

Capital: Sofia

Official Language: Bulgarian

National Holiday: Anniversary of the Socialist Revolution in Bulgaria, Sept. 9, 1944

Dominant Religion: Bulgarian Orthodox

Currency: lev (plural—leva); 1 lev = 100 stotinki

Flag: three equal horizontal bands of white (top), green, and red with the national emblem on the hoist side of the white stripe; the emblem contains a rampant lion within a wreath of wheat ears below a red five-pointed star and above a ribbon bearing the dates 681 (first Bulgarian state established) and 1944 (liberation from Nazi control).

Turkey

Turkey: slightly larger than Texas and bordered by Bulgaria, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Syria and former Soviet Republics

Official Name: Republic of Turkey

Capital: Ankara

Official Language: Turkish

National Holiday: Anniversary of the Declaration of the Republic, Oct. 29, 1923

Dominant Religion: Islam

Currency: Turkish lira (plural—liras); 1 lira = 100 kurus

Flag: red with a vertical white crescent (the closed portion is toward the hoist side) and white five-pointed star centered on the hoist side



The Mary Baldwin group, enroute from Greece to Bulgaria, came across this fellow with his cart—a typical sight in rural areas of Bulgaria.

Virginia Tech Sheep School

The perfect remedy for a gloomy sheep doom

Down on the farm we're thinking about times when everything is normal if everything is all fouled up.

We went off to sheep school back in September. It seemed like a good idea, after all we never seem to be able to stay one step ahead of the sheep and all their many problems and ailments. So it was with some relief that I learned Virginia Tech was planning a two-day intensive sheep management school to help producers learn a little bit more about these curious ovine creatures. And since it happens that we have lambs due to start arriving the first of November, a September refresher course seemed like a good way to dust the cobwebs off of our sheep management skills.

The first notice of the sheep school which arrived in the mail caught my immediate interest.

"Great! A sheep school," I thought. "Send the sheep. I'll stay at home."

Realistically I knew it was not the sheep but I who needed the enlightenment of some intensive ovine study. And Tech's sheep school seemed like a good place to get it.

For the purposes of the school, Tech's sheep specialist was synchronizing 60 ewes to breed so they would be lambing on the two days of the seminar. This promised to afford an excellent opportunity to gain some valuable experience in the realm of delivering healthy, live lambs at the guidance of highly trained and skilled animal health care professionals. Enrollment in the school was to be limited to 25 participants so I sent my registration fee and form back post haste. Within a matter of days I was notified that I had been accepted into the program. I couldn't

Down on the farm

By Betty Jo Hamilton



have been more thrilled than if I had been notified that I had been granted admittance to The Citadel.

So it was off to sheep school. Finally I would get answers to all my questions about sheep production. Finally I would be able to steer our sheep operation into a more productive and less frustrating venture. After all, these folks

ever-vigilant shepherd is confronted with questions.

What's wrong with that sheep? Why did that sheep die? What happened to those lambs? Why did that sheep die? Why won't that ewe go ahead and have her lambs? Why did that sheep die? How long will she be in labor? Why did that sheep die? When is it too soon to help

**"Great! A sheep school.
Send the sheep. I'll stay at
home."**

at the university know what they're doing. They've got their sheep marching in perfect cadence — no slouching allowed.

For those who have experience in sheep production, it can best be described as puzzling. A neighbor offered once: "A sheep's greatest ambition in life is to die. When they're doing real good they're half-dead." And having spent a great deal of time in a life study of sheep, I have found these statements to be more truth than jest. I do not think there is an endeavor which is more frustrating, more aggravating, more stress-inducing, more guilt-ridden than shepherding. Almost daily the

and when is it too late?

I number the times I have found sheep dead — sheep which previously have seemed perfectly healthy; I number the times I have found ewes in labor with complications — ewes which have previously given birth to perfectly healthy lambs unassisted; I number these events, and it seems as I might as well be trying to number the stars. Yet I persevere.

Of course, along with all these mishaps comes the guilt. "I should have seen it coming," I say unexpectedly finding a dead ewe. "I should have been there to pull the lambs," I say arriving at the barn early in the morning to find dead lambs after having checked the ewes a few hours earlier. All the burdens of the problematic sheep, none of which can be held accountable for their shortcomings, rest solely with the shepherd. "It's all my fault," I say, hanging my head in despair. But finally, I was going off to school to learn answers which would help me do better by the sheep.

The morning I departed for sheep school I found in the pasture a ewe — you guessed it — near death. By the time I went to the house for medical supplies and returned, the grim sheep reaper had gathered yet another to the woolly fold. Disgusted and haunted by my miserable effort with the ewe, I traveled to Blacksburg under a mantle of gloomy sheep doom.

One of the great things about going up to Tech to see some of the research in progress is that everything is always perfect — or

as nearly perfect as you would want it to be. The facilities are perfect. The sheep are perfect. The people are perfect. The place is just crawling with veterinarians ready to prescribe exactly the perfect treatment for whatever is ailing. Everything works the way it should at the Sheep Center, or so I've always thought.

I arrived at Tech's Sheep Center on the first morning of the seminar with my sleeves rolled up ready to assist in delivery of lambs from the 60 synchronized ewes. Boy, was I excited. But excitement turned to anticlimax when we — me and my 25 or so seminar-mates — were told that only 16 out of 60 ewes had gotten bred in the synchronization effort. Enthusiasm flattened a bit more with the information that all but two of the bred ewes had already had their lambs. In fact, as recent as the night before we arrived there had been seven ewes remaining to lamb, five of which had delivered during the night.

Perfection began to crumble into the tarnished ordinary of everyday ovine life when I saw a dead lamb lying in a pen beside an obviously distressed (euphemism for practically dead) ewe. We were told the ewe had gone into labor sometime during the early morning hours (1-2 a.m.) and was still in labor when attendants arrived at the usual time (6:30). The lamb was pulled and was dead, and things didn't look too good for the ewe.

The two ewes remaining to lamb were like any number of ewes I had seen before — one looked as if she were about to explode, appearing that she should have had her lambs two weeks before. The other ewe looked as if she could go another two weeks or two months or two years before she might deliver a lamb. The most rotund ewe spent a great deal of time lying down, standing up, wandering around, lying down, standing up, puffing, and heaving. Some of my seminar mates — ones I suppose of less experience —



Steve Umberger shows the proper position in which to hold a sheep for shearing or treatment. Participants in the sheep school were urged to use care in catching and handling sheep.

kept alerting the Sheep Center staff that the ewe was in labor. I, on the other hand, could see this was a ewe that would take great pleasure in delaying the onset of her labor knowing that this is the kind of behavior that drives shepherds absolutely berserk. (It was in fact the ewe which appeared days from delivery which would deliver a single, healthy lamb that night. The nearly exploded ewe had yet to deliver when the seminar concluded.)

In yet another pen at the Sheep Center was ewe which was due to lamb but which had developed complications late in the term. A severe fluid retention problem had the ewe down, and a uterine prolapse had only complicated

Continued on page 13



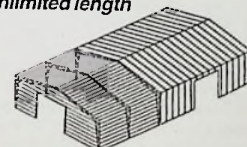
Virginia Tech sheep specialist Steve Umberger, left, watches as two participants in Virginia Tech's sheep school held in September administer an injection to a newborn lamb.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton



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— Continued from page 12 —

matters. Veterinary students swarmed around this creature trying to determine what the best course of treatment was — a task they had been working at for a number of days without seeing any real progress or recovery on the

ewe's part. So too were they concerned with the condition of the ewe which had labor difficulty the night before. Their efforts with this ewe appeared a bit more promising than with the other down ewe, which, as fate would have it, was euthanized later that day.

But there was plenty to be done despite the collapse of the best laid plans. Lambs which had arrived during the night needed to be tagged and weighed. Their navel cords were to be dipped in iodine to prevent infection. Selenium shots needed to be given. All of the above were demonstrated and then seminar participants were turned loose to get the very valuable hands-on experience which seminar organizers had promised.

The lambs with which we were working were those which had been born the night before. All the ewes had been held in the same pen overnight so when attendants had arrived that morning they found four ewes stumbling around in a state of confusion amid 11 lambs which were stumbling

around in a state of confusion amid four ewes stumbling around in a state of confusion amid 11 lambs... well, you get the idea.

Nobody knew who belonged to whom — a situation which is not untypical of lambing sheds at the peak of the lambing season. But, we had been told, lambs had been matched up with their respective ewes and placed in lambing pens or jugs, as they are often called. Early on in the process of tagging these lambs, seminar participants began to notice a chronic problem.

"She's rejecting that lamb," someone said. "That one over there is too. This lamb hasn't nursed." As with any shepherd faced with pairing up ewes and lambs following a night of multiple deliveries, attendants at the Sheep Center had likely found the task as daunting as it is for any sheep producer. It's mostly a matter of watching and waiting and moving and switching to see that the right lambs end up with the right ewes.

Later in the day we traveled to the animal and poultry science building where we were to see a research project in progress. As we walked across the parking lot toward the building, one of my seminar-mates asked our leader, "Did you see that dead sheep over there by the fence back at the center?" "Was there a dead sheep out there?" he asked back. "She sure looked dead. She was off by herself and she wasn't moving," the woman said. Although I didn't see the alleged dead sheep, the description sounded like many I have seen... many being the operative word because it occurs enough that it causes only a slight ripple of shock on any given occasion. One comes to expect, and therefore not be surprised by, the death of a sheep.

Dead sheep aside though, there was plenty to be learned about how to prevent losses among the sheep flock. Proper nutrition, mineral supplementation, vaccination, and general flock management were reviewed extensively and intensively. What vaccines to give, what antibiotics to use and why, how to prevent or treat milk fever, how to treat pregnancy toxemia, calcium



A trip to any land grant university guarantees you'll see something new. These days, it seems, pigs are getting around campus via student-propelled carts. It's hard to tell who's having more fun, the pigs or their chauffeurs. Enroute to view a research project in progress, sheep school attendees passed these fellows in the hall of Virginia Tech's animal and poultry science building.

just a few days before should have been

among this group. Evaluation of the other ewes in this group revealed problems which had gone unnoticed while they were wandering around on pasture. Little had I known that the sheep flock was on the precipice of disaster. I wasn't surprised by it, but here was yet another example of how the sheep were somehow working toward their great life's ambition... death.

After a few hours of flexing my newly toned sheep management muscles I felt I had the upperhand on the situation. I had stemmed the tide of the sheep's ambition that they should die with my ambition that they should live. Some of my new found knowledge from the sheep school had helped lift the gloomy sheep doom of a few days prior.

I had left for sheep school carrying the excess bulk of sloppy, slack jawed sheep management practices and returned lean and mean, ready to run the gauntlet of another lambing season.

For me, Tech's Sheep School (the first of its kind we were told) was a great success. First of all it shattered the illusion of perfection — that somewhere on the planet (over the rainbow) there are sheep which are trouble-free. Second of all it showed me that our sheep operation is probably typical of most, and our success rate perhaps is a bit better than average. Facing the facts that sheep will die, that lambs will be born dead, that ewes will go down without explanation regardless of how astute or how learned or how well-trained or how skilled their caretakers are was a great lesson for me.

Yessiree, as far as sheep go, everything is perfectly normal when everything is all fouled up. Down on the farm, we're finally content to know that chaos is normal and for this, we have the sheep to prove it —

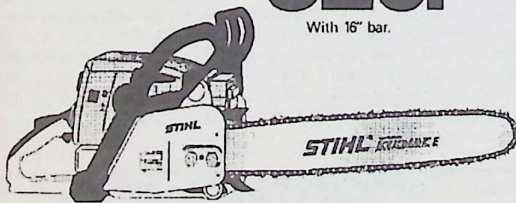
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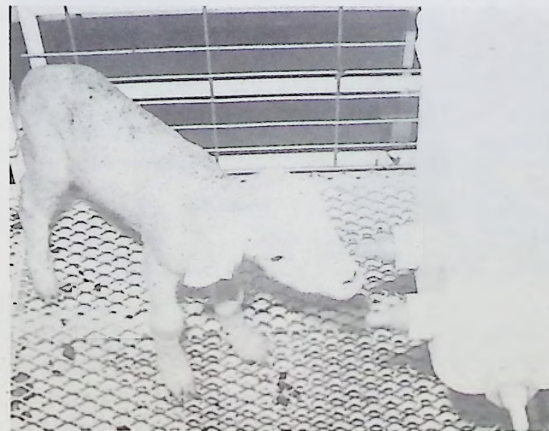


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Research in progress at Virginia Tech involves a study of hand-rearing lambs. The study is being conducted to determine the most efficient means of raising orphan lambs.

FB demo promotes good farm safety practices

AC staff report

MIDDLEBROOK — The Augusta County Farm Bureau Federation held a farm safety demonstration and simulated emergency silo extrication Oct. 1 at Brookside Farm near Middlebrook.

"This event gives us the opportunity to remind our neighbors about the importance of practicing safety on the farm," said Harold Armstrong, president of ACFB. The demonstration had originally been scheduled during National Farm Safety and Health Week observed Sept. 17-23 but was postponed and rescheduled due to rain. Regardless of the event's timing, organizers said any time is the right time to promote good farm safety practices.

Joining the Farm Bureau at the event were members of the Augusta County Fire Department who carried out a simulated emergency extrication from the top of a 60-foot silo. The department used its new \$515,000 100-foot aerial ladder truck in the procedure. The simulation was the first opportunity the department had to practice such a rescue.

"We want farmers to work safely," Armstrong said. "However, sometimes even when we're being careful, accidents can happen. It's good to know we have capable individuals like members of the local fire and rescue departments to help us when we need them. This drill gives them the chance to practice some of their skills."

Also on hand at the event were members of the Middlebrook Volunteer Fire Department who practiced rescue techniques along with county firefighters. County Fire Chief Ron Garber said he was pleased for his firefighters to have the chance to practice their rescue techniques.

Armstrong said the presence of emergency responders at the scene of the demonstration underlined the need to practice safety.

"We want people to realize and remember how dangerous working around silos can be," he said. "Sometimes we get busy and in a hurry, and we forget, especially this time of year when everybody's chopping corn. Showing a rescue from a silo will help folks remember that they need to be careful."

According to National Safety Council statistics, farming ranked as the second most dangerous occupation in 1994 with 26 deaths per 100,000 workers. Mining and quarrying was first with 27 deaths per 100,000 workers. In 1993, the occupational death rate for persons in agriculture was 35 deaths per 100,000 workers making agriculture the most dangerous occupation in that year. Farming consistently ranks as one of the three most hazardous industries in the United States along with construction and mining.

Organizers of the Augusta Farm Bureau safety demonstration emphasized the need for good safety practices particularly relating to silage handling. A primary danger in this work is the presence in silos of nitrogen dioxide which is produced during the fermentation process of all chopped green crops. This poisonous reddish-brown gas has a strong pungent odor and forms rapidly in the first one to three days of silage storage. It may be present in the silo and silo chute for as many as four weeks after the silo has been filled.

Farmers were cautioned to use care when entering a silo. Blowers should be operated for at least 15 minutes before entering a silo which has been recently filled to clear out the poisonous gas. It was noted that no immediate reaction

may be noticed upon breathing nitrogen dioxide; however, the gas changes to nitric acid once inside the lungs and can cause death or permanent pulmonary damage.

Farmers were urged to use caution when climbing up and down silo ladders. Silo chutes should not be used for access when a silo is being filled as poisonous gases may accumulate in the chute. These gases will not be dispersed by operating the silage blower.

Organizers demonstrated the use of silage wagons and blowers and showed why this equipment is dangerous. Blowers and wagons are run by a tractor's power take off. Rotating augers, beaters, and power take off shafts will crush body parts and tear off arms and legs, organizers said. Farmers were urged to wear appropriate clothing when operating machinery and particularly not to wear clothing which is baggy or torn. Loose clothing may become entangled in equipment causing body parts to be pulled into machinery.

Good safety practices include the proper placement of all safety shields on equipment. Safety mechanisms which will automatically shut the equipment down should someone accidentally fall in it should be operational. Silage wagons should never be entered during unloading. All equipment should be turned off before any repairs are attempted.

Caution was also urged for farmers operating machinery on public highways. It was noted that slow moving vehicles often interrupt normal traffic flow. State laws requires that farm machinery be equipped with orange triangular slow moving vehicle signs. Farm Bureau offers an additional sign which cautions drivers to be prepared for unexpected left turns to prevent passing hazards. —



The Augusta County Fire Department cooperated with the Augusta Farm Bureau Federation to present a silo safety demonstration Oct. 1. The event was held at Brookside Farm near Middlebrook. AC staff photo

Hay needed for Madison farms

The Augusta County Farm Bureau is mounting an effort to send hay to farmers in Madison County who lost their winter feed stores in June flooding.

Farmland in the county was devastated by the flood which is being called the worst in Madison's history. Many farmers lost crops as well as some which had already been harvested.

The Augusta effort is being coordinated through the Madison County Extension office. Farmers in need of feed for the winter are matched with available hay. Local companies have volunteered trucks and trailers to help move the donated hay and feed to Madison.

In August, 500 square bales and 43 round bales were donated by farmers in Middlebrook and Arbor Hill to be sent to Madison. Edwards Trucking in Verona and Guy C. Eavers Excavating moved the feed to three different farms in Madison. A trailer loaded with 23 bales of fodder was hauled from Parnassus in mid-October by Valley Crane and Rigging in Fishersville to another Madison farm.

ACFB is in the process of arranging for two more trailer loads of hay to be sent to Madison. Anyone with hay to donate or who has trucks and trailers to haul hay should call 885-0266 or the ACFB office at 886-2353.---



Bob Rawley of Parnassus, on tractor, loads bales of fodder onto a trailer as G.J. Balsley, Augusta County Farm Bureau Federation board member, on top of load, gives instructions to maneuver the bale into place. Valley Crane and Rigging of Fishersville donated

the tractor and trailer for use in the project which involves transporting feed to farmers in Madison County who lost their winter feed stores in June flooding. The fodder was donated by Bob and his father, Robert Rawley. AC staff photo

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Augusta Farm Bureau honors young people

AC staff report

BUFFALO GAP — Five area young people were honored when 275 Augusta County Farm Bureau Federation members came together for their annual meeting Oct. 2 at Buffalo Gap High School.

Virginia Farm Bureau President Wayne Ashworth was on hand to deliver the keynote address to the group. He commended Augusta Farm Bureau for its interest and support of the area's young people.

"It's important that we be concerned and involved with young people and keep them interested in farming," he said.

Amy Trout, a senior at Buffalo Gap High School, was crowned Miss Augusta County Farm Bureau by Women's Chairman Sharon Phillips. Miss Trout is the daughter of James and Susan Trout of Swoope and is active in school both academically and extracurricularly. She maintains a 3.2 grade-point average and is president of the student government association. She is an active member of the FFA chapter at Gap and has participated in parliamentary procedure contests, livestock judging, and public speaking. Miss Trout has exhibited livestock at the Market Animal Show, and she

manages a 40-ewe sheep breeding operation. She plans to pursue a degree in veterinary medicine.

The Farm Bureau Youth Leadership award was presented to Jason Shiflett, son of David and Kitra Shiflett of New Hope. Shiflett has been active in 4-H and FFA, having served as officers for community and school clubs. He has been honored as the county's junior and senior outstanding 4-H member and is an active member of several sheep breeders' associations. In partnership with his brother he owns a 120-ewe purebred sheep breeding operation. Shiflett is a senior at Fort Defiance High School and a part time student at Blue Ridge Community College. He plans to continue his education at Virginia Tech.

The Farm Bureau essay contest was won by Josh Burner of Mt. Solon. Burner is active in school and community events. He has exhibited livestock at the Market Animal Show and has participated on livestock judging teams in 4-H and FFA. He also has been a delegate to state and national FFA conventions. He is the son of Scott and Patti Burner.

Ian Heatwole, Augusta Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers chairman, made the presentations for Young Agriculturist and Citizenship.

Chris Curry of Mt. Solon, son of Charles and Betsy Curry, was named Augusta Farm Bureau's Young Agriculturist. A senior at Buffalo Gap High School, Curry



Wayne Ashworth, far left, president of Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, congratulates Josh Burner, Amy Trout, Scott Buchanan, Jason Shiflett, and Chris Curry for awards

they received at the Augusta Farm Bureau Federation's annual meeting held Oct. 2 at Buffalo Gap High School.

AC staff photo

maintains a 3.4 grade-point average. He is president of the school's FFA chapter and his community 4-H club. Curry has participated in livestock judging and has exhibited hogs, cattle, and sheep at the Market Animal Show.

The Mary Frances Houff Good Citizenship Award was presented to Scott Buchanan. A senior at Riverheads High School, Buchanan is an active member of its FFA chapter. He was a member of the chapter's state winning agriculture mechanics team and was high individual in the state. He is the son of Eddie and Kathleen Buchanan of Rockbridge Baths.

In his keynote address, Ashworth noted that Augusta County's 2,266 Farm Bureau members are part of a group which numbers 4 million nationwide. He emphasized the importance of Farm Bureau's role as a lobby to promote agriculture interests, particularly in the realm of politics.

"We really can make a difference," he said. Ashworth noted there are 117,000 Farm Bureau members in Virginia. "If just 10

percent of these members get in touch with legislators, imagine what we can do," he said.

At the state level Ashworth said it is important for Farm Bureau to keep pressure on legislators regarding farm issues. The upcoming session of the General Assembly will be working on items of importance to farmers including funding cuts in the state's Extension service, Ashworth said. Farm Bureau supports strengthening the numbers of agriculture agents in the field, he explained, and wants to promote Extension's "original mission" of 4-H and agriculture.

"This probably will be one of the big issues in the Assembly this year," he said.

Ashworth encouraged Farm Bureau members to "stay in touch with elected representatives."

"Make sure you find out how they stand on the issues," he said. "There's been a change in the mood of the folks in Washington. They're taking more notice of the grassroots efforts."

A key national issue which concerns Farm Bureau is private property rights, according to Ashworth.

"In this day and time we have more and more infringement on private properties," he said. Concerns about the environment — wetlands and endangered species

— are those issues over which Farm Bureau often confronts problems of private property rights, according to Ashworth. He urged legislators to "use common sense whatever you do."

Ashworth noted that farmers are as concerned about the environment as anyone.

"We have the safest food and cheapest food of any nation in the world," he said. "That's something we're proud of as farmers."

Augusta Farm Bureau President Harold Armstrong recognized outgoing board members Sharon Phillips, Ray Holden, and Tracy Aitcheson. Executive officers elected at the meeting included Armstrong, president; Rick Shiflett, vice president; and Maxine Arey, women's chairman. Board members elected to represent magisterial districts were Donna Riley, Beverley Manor; Lowell Heatwole, Middle River; Carl Arey, North River; Betty Jo Hamilton, Riverheads; G.J. Balsley, South River; and Bruce Bowman, Wayne. At-large directors elected included Andre Viette, Robert Christian, and Todd Beck.

In other business, Farm Bureau members approved state and national resolutions to be sent on for action at the upcoming state Farm Bureau convention to be held in November. —

Va. Cattle Health Conference set for November 1

A statewide beef cattle health conference will be held Nov. 1 at Ingleside in Staunton. The conference is designed to address the health concerns of both the cow-calf and stocker cattle operator.

Concurrent sessions will be conducted to allow cow-calf and stocker cattle operators to focus on their specific health issues. Speakers will include veterinarians from the Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, specialists from the Virginia Tech Animal & Poultry Science Department and private veterinarians.

Speakers and topics include "Open Cows," Dr. Tom Bailey; "Yearling Pasture Gains," Dr. Mark Wahlberg and Bill McKinnon; and "Calving Problems," Dr. Bob Franck.

Registration fee for the conference is \$20. Pre-registration is required, but the fee may be paid at the door. For information or to pre-register call the Augusta County Extension Office at 245-5750. —

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WHOLESALE BUSINESS WELCOMED

Augusta Fall Farm Tour reveals county's agricultural diversity

By JEFF ISHEE

Sandra Stanwitz stood with a smile on her face and welcomed every person with a handshake as they boarded the tour bus for what would be a gorgeous Shenandoah Valley autumn afternoon.

As executive director of the Staunton/Augusta County Chamber of Commerce, it was clearly evident that Sandra had prepared for the 1995 Fall Farm Tour thoroughly. Robbie Brown, local farmer, photographer, and historian, was there to give fascinating details about the countryside, its

for a field trip of sorts. Sen. Frank Nolen, D-New Hope, got a window seat, Tommy Stephenson, Staunton city councilman, brought colorful insight into the journey, and media reps from TV and various newspapers were in attendance also.

The first stop on the tour was Cros-B-Crest Farm, operated by husband and wife team Harry and Beverly Crosby. Their immense greenhouse business is just southwest of Staunton and is a perfect example of horticultural efficiency.

The 185-acre farm has been in the family for four generations, and is representative of how farm-

ness is between April and June, with Easter and Mothers Day being really big weeks. We wholesale about 70 percent of our greenhouse production, while 30 percent is sold retail to our local customers."

Harry then explained their propagation practices by saying: "We transplant heavy in the spring, with vegetables being the only plant propagated from seed. The remaining plants are from cuttings. You can see," as he pointed to the thousands of hanging baskets, "we have drip tubes for each plant. This saves our workers a huge amount of time in watering. Our well pumps 15-20 gallons per minute, and runs virtually all the time."

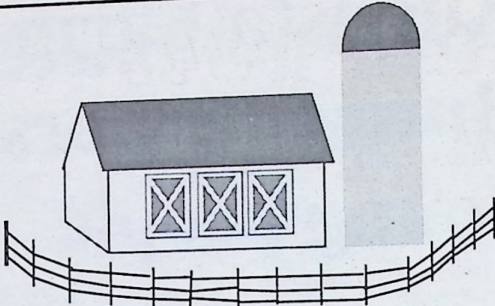
Harry and Beverly went on to describe additional farm operations, including a joint venture with Rocco raising thousands of turkeys for a steadily expanding market.

Fairview Farms, operated by Bob Riley and his son Robbie, was the next stop on the tour. The Swoope farm has been in the family since 1910, when the Rileys owned 80 acres valued at \$7,000. The farm has grown substantially since then, and Bob Riley reports that "last year it was appraised at over \$350,000."

As the group of visitors gathered in Riley's tool shed, the senior Riley was handed a microphone and bullhorn, which he clearly didn't need in the confines of the shed. Bob looked at the fancy electronic gadget for a moment, and said "Hand that thing to Frank (Sen. Nolen). I'm no politician!" The group chuckled at the good humor of this engaging farmer, and Bob went on to show photographs of the family farm at different stages, showing its growth over the years.

"We've had a dairy operation here on the farm since 1948, when we had 50 or so cows. Now we have about 150 in the herd, with around 130 producing milk at any one time. In the late 40s, we were getting \$5.75 per hundred pounds of milk, and here we are in 1995 and only getting about \$14 per hundred. I ask you, What is wrong with that picture?"

Robbie Riley noted that the price of their milk has nothing to do with the farm, or how efficiently they operate it. "The price is set by the government up in Washington. Not too long ago,



- The average age of an Augusta County farmer is 56.
- This "average" farmer feeds 129 people; — 97 in the U.S., and 32 abroad.
- There are 1,514 farms in the county. Average size is 190 acres.
- One of every three acres in the county is farmed.
- Over 2,500 acres of Augusta County farmland is being lost to development each year.

Source: Augusta County Extension Office

they dropped the price by \$3 per hundred, and it almost killed us," he said. It was apparent that even though the Rileys love their farm and enjoy the dairy business, government involvement has interfered with many facets of the operation. "We are getting by, though," Robbie said. "We get about 1,600 gallons of milk every other day, which is currently being sent to North Carolina via Cooperative Milk Producers. We grow all of our own feed, and the silos are full."

More than any other stop on the tour, the Rileys demonstrated that, although the average Augusta County family farm is surviving, it is subject to burdensome governmental directives on an increasing basis.

After a fabulous drive through the George Washington National Forest and the Estaline Valley, the tour bus arrived at Castaline Trout Farm, between Craigsville and Goshen. Here, Bryan Plemmons' family operates a spectacular farm, one that involves no fences, no barns, and no silos.

"Virginia produces a little over one million pounds of trout per year," reported Bryan, "and 15 percent of the state total is produced here."

The aquaculture farm is a series of downhill raceways, each containing an area holding thousands of rainbow, golden, or brook trout. Bryan said that "about 50 percent of our fish end up in the Washington, D.C. market for the white tablecloth trade. Another 40 percent goes to fee fishing operations, and the remainder are sold for private stocking. The two most critical factors in our operation are that the water must be kept

under 70 degrees, and there must be adequate aeration for the fish to breathe. This is accomplished by using fresh spring water for our raceway, which flows at close to 600 gallons per minute. Our other operation near Middlebrook has a spring that flows at over 2,000 gallons per minute; however, we can raise more fish here because of the slope of the land. We have to feed the fish every hour, so management is very important to our operation."

Fortunately, predators are not a problem that affect Castaline Trout Farm significantly, as Bryan related by saying "Our main predators are people and an occasional blue heron. We have had one bear, but he knocked over a feed barrel and was after the feed and not the fish."

Although it takes a full year to raise a fingerling size fish to its 12-inch market size, Bryan conveyed that Castaline Trout Farm is a very enjoyable and lucrative agricultural enterprise.

"The aquaculture business has been helped dramatically by human health research, which indicates it is healthy to eat fish at least twice a week," remarked Bryan. News like that is always welcome at the Plemmons home.

The Fall Farm Tour ended with a relaxed and enjoyable trout/chicken dinner in a nearby Craigsville restaurant. Small talk around the tables revealed that the outing had enlightened all of its participants as to the diverse nature of Augusta County's agricultural base. The group was also encouraged by Sandra Stanwitz' comments that the Farm Tour was certainly on the agenda for next year, and may even be expanded in its magnitude. —



Dana Noel, an Augusta County homeschooled student, feeds a raceway of rainbow trout at Castaline Trout Farm south of Craigsville. Dana was among those who toured three Augusta County farms during an annual farm tour sponsored by the Augusta County Leadership Council.

Photos by Jeff Ishee

farms and farmers. David Fiske, Extension agent for Augusta County, was onboard to address any questions about the region's agricultural practices. David, who departed from the Augusta Extension Office at the end of September, received well earned recognition from the Chamber of Commerce for his significant contributions to Augusta County agriculture. Ruth Beam was also there representing the Augusta Extension Leadership Council and was to be a fountain of farm knowledge throughout the day.

Over 40 guests signed up for this year's Fall Farm Tour, and it turned out to be a marvelous experience. Several couples occupied seats on the bus, as well as a small group of homeschoolers out

ers can adapt to the market. What started out as a hobby in the family, with friends taking part occasionally, has become a dynamic year-round business. The quaint original hobby greenhouse still stands behind the family home on Buttermilk Spring Road; however, just 100 yards away is a landmark for the local population. The massive greenhouse structure contains thousands and thousands of plants, lined up like soldiers marching in a victory parade. Poinsettias are flourishing, as if in rehearsal for the upcoming holiday season. Pansies, ornamental kale, and cabbage make up only a small portion of the plants the Crosbys currently grow.

Beverly noted the Farm Tour guests "Eighty percent of our busi-

Healthy cows crucial to herd's profitability

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

STEELES TAVERN — Cattle producers faced with decreasing income from a collapsing market must pay close attention to economics of their cow herds, according to Virginia Tech animal specialists.

About 50 participants in a cow culling seminar held Oct. 11 at Steeles Tavern Research and Experiment Station learned how they should be evaluating the profitability of each cow in the herd.

"Keep track of the cows," urged Extension animal scientist Bill McKinnon. "Make them justify their existence."

McKinnon noted that there are a number of factors which should be considered when deciding whether to keep or cull cows. These include performance, unsoundness, age, eye problems, disposition, and reproductive status.

A cow's calf is its best indicator of performance, McKinnon said. By knowing a calf's weaning weight and frame grade, producers can tell if a cow is performing well. Cows which are producing low weaning weight calves and calves which grade S or L&M-2

may be candidates for culling. The weaning weight of young cows' calves should be adjusted to compensate for maturity when comparing them to older cows in the herd.

"How much of a break do you give young cows?" McKinnon asked. He proceeded to say that first-calf heifers' calves should be allowed 15 percent less weight than a calf raised by a mature cow. In the same vein, second-calf cows are given a 10 percent adjustment, and third-calf cows are allowed 5 percent.

Of particular concern should be the calf's grade at sale time. "Cows with S or L&M-2 calves are the ones to go on the block," McKinnon said.

A cow's overall health should also be considered when deciding to keep or cull. McKinnon explained that the udder is the "link" between a cow and its calf. "If we've got a breakdown there then obviously we've got a problem," he said. Cows should be checked to see that their udders, feet, and legs are physically sound. Teeth should be studied to determine a cow's age. Cows which are "gummers" or which have worn down their teeth will have difficulty maintaining proper nutrition.

"Keep track of the cows. Make them justify their existence."

Bill McKinnon
Animal scientist

If the cow is not properly nourished, neither is the calf.

Cows should be observed for eye problems. Bovine ocular neoplasia or cancer eye is not an uncommon ailment among cows. Growths which appear around a cow's eyes should be checked by a veterinarian, McKinnon said. The earlier these growths are treated, the better the chance of saving the cow's eye.

McKinnon also noted that a cow's disposition should be considered when deciding whether to keep or cull. Cows which are difficult to manage may be candidates for sale. A cow which creates problems when handling cattle — problems which McKinnon linked to "attitude" — may best be "moved down the road."

Ultimately a cow should be pregnancy tested to determine if it is bred. The reproductive status of a cow should be known, according to McKinnon. There are a variety of reasons which may prevent a cow from getting bred back. A veterinarian should be able to determine if a cow has not gotten bred due to a fertility disorder.

Once it has been determined that a cow should be culled from the herd, McKinnon noted that producers need to consider the economic value of the cow. Cows which are thin might be fed to add weight thereby increasing their value at sale time. He encouraged producers to watch for "seasonal price trends" when preparing to send cull cows to market. —

Va. Cow-Calf Conference is Dec. 4 at Ingleside

The 1995 Virginia Beef Cow-Calf Conference will be held Dec. 4 at Ingleside in Staunton.

This one-day educational program is designed for commercial cow-calf producers, purebred breeders and backgrounders, as well as professional workers and industry support people. The theme will be "Surviving Lower Prices by Lowering Unit Production Cost."

The program will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. Nationally recognized speakers will be on hand to make presentations at the event. Speakers and topics include Harlan Ritchie, Michigan State University animal scientist, "Understanding Breed and Type Differences and their Economic Impact;" John Johns, Extension animal scientist, University of Kentucky, "Tried and True Ways to Cut Cost Through Better Forage Utilization;" Wayne Purcell, Virginia Tech economist, "The Outlook — How Bad and What's Ahead;" Bill Beal, Virginia Tech animal scientist, "The Big Eco-

nommic Impact of Reproductive Rate;" and Bill McKinnon, Virginia Tech animal scientist, "What Makes a Low Cost Producer?"

In addition to these speakers, a panel of Virginia cow-calf producers will share their insights on the following topics: Richard Ruff of Bedford County, low cost forage programs; Turner Gilmer, Russell County, cow-calf producer and backgrounder, "Figuring the Cost and Using the Figures;" and Don Benner, Augusta County, commercial and purebred breeder, "The Bottom Line — Seeing the Big Picture."

The cow/calf conference will also feature a trade show.

Registration is \$20 and is due by Nov. 20. Programs will be available Nov. 1. For information call 540/231-9163 or write A.L. Eller, Extension Animal Scientist, Dept. of Animal & Poultry Science, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. 24061-0306. Information may also be obtained by call the Augusta County Extension Office at 245-5750. —

Va.-N.C. Shepherds' meeting Dec. 1-2

BLACKSBURG — The Virginia-North Carolina Shepherds' Symposium will be held Dec. 1-2 at Virginia Tech's Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

The two-day educational program will focus on the future direction of the sheep industry in Virginia. Special classes for novice and advanced sheep producers will be included in the

event as well as special one-on-one question and answer sessions with sheep specialists.

The Augusta County Sheep and Wool Producers Association will pay the registration fee for all Augusta County sheep producers who attend the symposium.

For information call the Augusta County Extension Office at 245-5750. —

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PERSONALS

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Wishing a speedy recovery to Floyd Aheart of McKinley from all your Middlebrook and McKinley friends and neighbors.

Happy Anniversary Mama and Daddy, Nov. 1. XXX. 000. Love, Sarah and Andrew

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Schoolhouse News

\$8 million construction project under way at RHS

By CHRISTINE MANLEY

GREENVILLE -- The 1995-96 school year at Riverheads High School began with the return of students and teachers from summer vacations. Also arriving for the new school year were construction crews from Nielsen Contracting Co. to begin an \$8 million renovation and construction project.

Changes to the school will include a new heating system, the installation of air conditioning, and new energy-efficient windows. Three new classrooms and a bathroom will be added; one of the new classrooms includes a new art room. An area will be enclosed near the agriculture and technology classrooms to create a tractor repair center and drafting room.

An outside eating area will be created by partially enclosing and putting down a patio between the cafeteria and girls' locker room. A new student parking lot was created and is already in use. A new gymnasium seating a possible 1,200 spectators will be constructed. A weight room, a wrestling room, and a girls' team room, will also be added.

Most of the construction is to

be done after school hours, but sometimes students have to endure the rumble of machinery.

"You get used to the noise," said senior Tom Taetzsch with a shrug. Dynamite will be used later on in the project. The acrid smell of asphalt penetrated classrooms during the surfacing of the parking lot.

"It's noisy and smelly, but it will be worth it in the end," said a smiling Kristine Buss.

The Class of 1996 is eager to see the finished improvements, but disappointed they will not get to enjoy them. "I want to enjoy the new improvements," said Elizabeth Napier.

Everyone seems pleased with the idea of construction and some hope to see further improvements in the future.

"I think more money should be appropriated for a new stage and sound system," stated new yearbook editor-in-chief, Danielle Richardson, a member of the Drama Club and National Thespian Society.

On being asked his opinion of the construction, Principal Gregory McGee replied, "It will enhance the facility and make it a showcase for the community."

Similar construction projects are in progress at Fort Defiance and Buffalo Gap high schools. The project at Fort has been under way for about a year and is scheduled for completion in 1996. Gap's construction was started about the same time as the RHS project. ---

RHS senior chosen to head Augusta FFA

By KAREN JONES

GREENVILLE -- Scott Buchanan, a senior at RHS, has been elected FFA President of the Augusta County Federation. Scott has been a very active member of FFA making him qualified to hold this office. Interviews were held Sept. 18 at Wilson Memorial High School. Scott sent in an application in order to be present at the interview. A panel asked Scott a series of questions ranging from the history of the organization to his own leadership qualities.

Buchanan will be in charge of promoting National FFA Week and National Vocational Education Month which will be in February. His advisors are Eugene McIlwee and Deborah Strole. ---



Excavation crews work on the construction project under way at Riverheads High School. The school will be expanded to in-

clude a new gymnasium, and the existing building is to be upgraded to include central air conditioning.

AC staff photo



A construction project similar to the one at RHS is also in process at Buffalo Gap High School.

AC staff photo

RHS students earn Boy Scout honors

By ELIJAH WARD

GREENVILLE -- Boy Scouts are known for offering young people a good start in life. At Riverheads several students, one of whom is Ian Dubinski, are active Boy Scout members. In fact, Ian was selected for the highest honor the scouts provide, the Eagle Scout. Ian also won the Mason's Certificate of Region.

Ian earned his Eagle Scout by winning 21 merit badges and completing a project. Ian's project involved digging and filling a gravel pit on the site of the children's playground at Bethel Presbyterian Church. Ian enlisted the help of his father, John Dubinski, and John Bush, Joe Williams, and other

scouts of Troop 13. He sought the donation of the gravel from Robert Eavers.

Ian said he enjoyed Boy Scouting. On being an Eagle Scout he says, "I learned to deal with leadership and responsibility." Ian has held to high standards as an Eagle Scout. He plays soccer and attends the governor's school. Next year he plans on attending William and Mary. Ian's parents are John and Lynne Dubinski of Greenville.

The Boy Scouts are as American as mom and apple pie. Many graduates from RHS have been of Boy Scout distinction. Now another one of our own has achieved the highest scouting honor obtainable.

Dan McLaughlin was awarded

an Eagle Scout badge. Dan had his 21 merits and his project. He sealed the basement walls at Calvary United Methodist Church. As part of the project he was assisted by Troop 13, the Calvary UMC youth group, and his parents.

In an interview on his scouting accomplishments Dan said, "I enjoy getting out on my own and doing stuff for myself. Scouting has taught me respect for people, survival skills, and brought me closer to my family." Dan said he enjoys biking, camping, and helping his fellow scouts. He is the son of David and Caroline McLaughlin of Spottwood and is a junior at RHS. He enjoys playing basketball for the Gladiators and running track. ---

FHA students attend national conference

By KRISTINE BUSS

GREENVILLE -- This past summer, two Riverheads High School students attended the National Conference of Future Homemakers of America in Washington, D.C.

Sophomores Stacy Atkins and Amy Badgley along with their advisor Kathleen Buchanan spent a week in the nation's capital. Their main reason for attending was to represent the state of Virginia in the Skills for Life Jr. category. The ladies worked hard and were successful in bringing home gold medals.

"I enjoyed getting a first place medal and attending informative workshops," said Stacy. Amy remembered: "I met lots of new people from all over the United States of America, and I'll always remember the trip."

While they were at the confer-



BADGLEY

ATKINS

ence, they also participated in informative workshops, saw many exhibits from other members across the state, and heard motivational speakers. The group was privileged to hear the U.S. Secretary of Transportation deliver a speech on safe driving and seat-belt safety. To end the conference the group formed a human seat-belt on the Capitol grounds. ---

Fort students, faculty try block scheduling

AC staff report

FORT DEFIANCE -- Fort Defiance High School students returned this year to a renovated school and restructured schedule.

Block scheduling is a new trend in education. Used increasingly throughout the nation as an alternative to the 45 minute-seven period day, "The Block" as it is called takes many forms.

After extensive study by a faculty committee and administration, it was recommended that Fort Defiance adopt the "four-by-four" model. Fort's students attend four classes a day for one semester. Each class lasts 94 minutes. At the end of the semester, the students

get a new schedule and begin an entirely new set of classes with new teachers.

The advantages of block scheduling are numerous. Teachers have more time to complete lessons; students have a somewhat lighter work load; and students can graduate with more credits than earned in traditional class scheduling.

Block scheduling does have some disadvantages. One day's absence is equal to two academic days. Teachers express some concern about content while students express anxiety over sitting for 90 minutes in one class. However the opportunity to start anew in January appeals to both faculty and the student body. ---



Troy Rexrode, left, principal of Clymore Elementary School in Fort Defiance, accepts a flag from Mildred Hendricks of Staunton Court 401 Woodmen of the World. The Woodmen donated seven classroom size and two standard size U.S. flags and two Virginia flags to the school which opened its doors to students for the first time this fall.

AC staff photo

Classmates of old Draft school gather at annual reunion

By VERA HAILEY

STUARTS DRAFT -- Former students, teachers and administrators of the old Stuarts Draft High School on Main Street held their 13th annual reunion Oct. 7 at their alma mater. The gathering was primarily for graduates of SDHS between 1922 and 1947, but some of the 108 attendees had been students at the elementary school that was located in the same building.

The original building, which now houses a restaurant and the community's volunteer fire company, was completed in 1921. The high school and elementary school both occupied the building until 1947 when the upper grades moved to the new Wilson Memorial High School in Fishersville. The elementary school closed in the late 1970s.

The idea behind this gathering of old friends came from Earl and Betty Yowell Kindig and Betty Eavers Ballew and the late James Ballew, who had all attended the school. These four spearheaded a local effort to publicize the event,

first held in 1983, and located enough former graduates to fill the old gymnasium. Each year the group has voted to continue the annual meeting.

After seeking out old friends to reminisce about school days gone by, the classmates sat down to lunch. Following the meal the program was called to order by the ringing of the class bell by Gordon Houff. A special welcome and congratulations were given to the 16 present members and spouses of the Class of 1945 which was celebrating its 50th reunion at a special reserved table. Henry Moffet gave the invocation, followed by a roll call of classes. The oldest classes represented were the Class of 1927, Hazel Rader VanLear, and the Class of 1928, Virginia Thacker Davis. Four former teachers, Kindig Appl, Eve Stump, Brooks Booker, and Leona Whitesell were also present for the festivities.

Next on the agenda, Mr. Booker went to the head of the "classroom" to present "Show and Tell."

The audience radiated admiration and respect for the sharp-witted gentleman as he reflected on memories of his career and the special significance of 1995 as the 60th year since he started teaching. He retired 19 years ago after 41 years in the Augusta County school system.

Mr. Booker remembered that in 1935, when his teaching career began, there was a shortage of funds at the Augusta County School Board. Lab supplies were few and chemicals were almost nonexistent. Having no dictionary in his classroom at

the high school posed a problem, he said. The one dictionary in the library served as the resource for the entire school, and a student had

to be sent to the library to look up a word.

When the student did not return, it was necessary to send another student to check on the first. Many times the original scholar could not be found, having been distracted from the primary purpose of the trip. Because Mr. Booker preferred that his students remain in the classroom during school, he purchased a Webster's Dictionary for his room in 1935. He brought this same book to the reunion as a souvenir of his first year of teaching to show his former students. The worn dictionary had not aged as gracefully as the educator.

Mr. Booker also brought a copy of the first yearbook, "Chatters," published by the school in 1922. He leafed through it and read some names of early students such as Guy Stump who later returned to serve as the school's principal. Of special interest were the clubs, such as the "Room Improvement Club" and the "Pig Club." It was noted that girls were allowed to join the latter group if they could fry ham.

Mrs. Ballew presented a silver dollar and a golden candy bar to each member of the Class of 1945 in honor of its 50th reunion. Door prizes donated by individuals and businesses were distributed. These included homemade bread, apple butter, cheese, mums, and hand-crafted items.

Musical entertainment was provided by the Monticello Chorus of Sweet Adelines International from Charlottesville.

The 1996 reunion is scheduled for Oct. 5. For information or to be added to the mailing list, contact Mrs. Kindig at 943-8406 or Mrs. Ballew at 337-1821. ---

Vera Hailey is an antique dealer and owns Vintage Decor in Stuarts Draft.



BETTY
KINDIG



Betty Ballew presents Jack Crummet, Stuarts Draft High School Class of 1945, with a gold candy bar. Photo by Vera Hailey

**Augusta County
School schedule
November 6-10**

**American Education Week
November 22**

**End of second grading period
November 22-24**

Thanksgiving holiday

Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin
October 1995

Dear Maude,
Would you believe, I wore a beautiful, brand new suit and shoes this morning, and coming to the office I got caught in a storm. Now I sit here as I write to you, with shoes wet, hair hanging, and water splashed all over this expensive new suit. It simply is not fair — thunderstorms in October!!!

But I'll tell you... October has been quite a month here in Washington. As soon as a Congress returned from their Labor Day recess it was more of everything that has been happening all year. With members on the House side not able to come to any kind of agreement on the farm bill, the Agriculture Committee turned the legislation over to the Republican leadership where it will be handled by the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee has an incredible amount of work yet to do with staffers who are all overworked and testy. The staff did cheer up a bit, however, when they realized that the Congressional Accountability Act which passed months ago, contained language which would mean a bit of a pay hike for them. During times when legislation is being written, the staffers work into the night for as long as their bosses require them to be there. Working 60 hours in a week is almost normal. Now, under the new rules, they will have to be paid overtime when this occurs. Visions of fancy vacations and fine restaurants and new designer fashions dance in their heads. The only problem is that with all those working hours, there is no time to spend that extra money. I'll bet I could find a way!!

Most of the spending bills have not been approved by either the House or Senate, and even Medicare and Medicaid are awaiting floor action as the debate goes on and on. With the welfare bill now in conference, a large number of women members of Congress have been vocal about their concerns for women and children who had benefited by the previous programs. The tax cut legislation has been approved by the House, but the Senate is still working on their version.

There seem to be more retiring Democrats than Republicans, but both parties are losing many of their more powerful members. Sen. Sam Nunn announced that he was retiring, and the word is that both Sen. Nancy Kassebaum and Sen. Mark Hatfield are considering not running. There are many members on the House side who have already stated their intentions of leaving. Some go to the private sector, some just want to get out, and the reason for a lot of this is the right-wing political fervor so prevalent in this Congress. But by losing so many senior members from both Houses, the Committees now will be run by the newer members who don't have experience, and I suspect after the next election, it will take even longer to produce a final piece of legislation.

And, of course, right in the middle of the month we had the Million Man March, which turned out to be considerably less than a million. First estimates were 600,000, then the Park Police announced that the number was closer to 400,000, and then the organizers contested the figure saying that the actual number was 870,000. And there was no actual march, but a gathering instead, which made obtaining an accurate number even more difficult. And finally, it was not all men or even all black, for there were a few women as well as a few white men there. According to all reports, the group was very orderly. The majority of the crowd consisted of professional black men, middle aged -- many of them with their sons.



An end to racial discord? Meet Sammy Potter

I've been thinking about a boy named Sammy Potter. I say "boy" because the last time I saw Sammy he was a boy and I was too. Back then we were close friends under unusual circumstances.

When the "colored school" in the poorest section of our town closed, Sammy and his classmates were bused over to my school. I remember the morning when the Negro kids stepped off the bus at Jinks Junior High School. (Back then Negro was a polite term; that morning I heard terms that were not so polite.)

Until then I had never been in a classroom with a black person; never shared a locker room; never shared a conversation much less a meal in the school cafeteria. The only time I'd seen a black person in worship was when my father was in the military, and he took the family to the Protestant Chapel on base. The military had long been integrated, but the only two black families in the chapel that morning sat in a pew by themselves.

When the bus door swung open, my friends and I standing underneath the flagpole stared at the kids coming off the bus. We had no idea what to think — although we had been told plenty — we only knew that things would never be the same at Jinks Junior High. If adolescence is a time of pulling away from parents to begin the long process of forming your own judgments about things, then this was our time to form opinions based on experiences with these black kids walking into our white world.

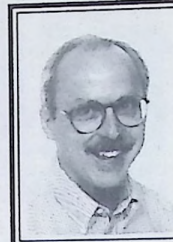
Some of us accepted the challenge walking toward us, even if we didn't know what was happening. Others retreated into the ugly, mean-spirited world created for them as it had been created for their parents and their parent's parents. They had no inclination to form new opinions; their judgments had already been decided for them. This, of course, relieved them of the burden of thinking new thoughts based upon new experiences. The presence of these black students simply confirmed what they had been told.

Regardless of how we thought about it, all of us standing under the flagpole were afraid. But I don't think any of us realized how afraid the black students were of this new social world coming into being. No one who stands on the threshold of monumental change is fearless. No doubt they preferred the safety of their own school, as much as we preferred our own. The old, safe, segregated world was not to be for any of us that morning; at least not at school.

The bell rang, and we all walked into the building. The

Expecting massive traffic problems, and with the possibility of trouble with a crowd that large, many offices downtown closed for the day. In our office only one person came in to take care of the telephones. But all of those traffic problems never came about. Everyone I talked to who did go to work said that the commute was easier than if it had been a holiday. True, the streets around the Mall were closed off, but all the others were as quiet as could be. Outside of crowded subways and commuter trains, one would hardly have known that such a large group was in town.

While I have been running back and forth between the office and the Hill all month trying to keep up with what is going on for the boss, Dylan, back in town at last, has been making the rounds again, looking for a job. Recently, his mother managed to drag him off to a lawyers' convention somewhere, but he was able to escape before she signed him up with some fancy firm. He has applied for a couple of positions which were listed by the Senate Placement Office. Just last week three different senators were looking



Saying grace

By
Roy Howard

white students went first in a big clump; a handful of black students came behind. Then I met Sammy Potter. He and I were in the same English, civics and physical education classes. By some odd alphabetical coincidence, he sat on the next row directly across from me in both classes. He liked sports as much as I did, so P.E. was a blast. Later we played together in the backfield for the Jinks Hornets. We had a mutual penchant for fooling around in class, and by the time seventh grade reached the half way point, Sammy and I were close buddies. One afternoon we became even closer.

On that afternoon I came around the corner of the school building and walked right into the midst of three black kids looking for trouble. They had bought into the same ugly, divided world as their white counterparts. All the anger, violence and cruelty that had been directed toward them was now about to receive a response. It was my unlucky turn to experience the terrible wounds of racism.

I wasn't prepared for the first fist against my face; I was for the second and the third. One against three is not a pretty picture; but we fought on violently. Then I heard Sammy screaming; I felt his body against my chest, his hands covering my bloody face, his back taking blows meant for me. They kicked him a few more times, then walked away leaving us in a pile on the sidewalk.

Fighting is not unusual for teenage boys. What made this unusual was Sammy's intervention. For all I know, Sammy Potter saved my life that afternoon.

He and I never discussed it. We simply experienced the deepest bonds of teenage friendship. Nothing could separate us, except the separate worlds in which we lived after school. Sammy went to colored town and I went the other direction. He went to the army; I went to college. Both of us have been given ample reasons to fear each other.

We have had equal opportunities to believe the old world that judges solely on the basis of skin color. No doubt our souls have been crippled by this. I have not forgotten the terror of racial violence that one afternoon. Nor am I immune to the distrust and fear that divides us along racial lines.

Neither have I forgotten one black boy, now a black man, who may have saved my life. I cling to this memory of Sammy, because it represents my hope for the new world aching to come into being. God, let it be so and quickly. ---

for legislative assistants. Dylan seemed to think that he would be offered something by more than one of them, and his spirits are soaring. He also found out about an opening in one of the local law firms for a government relations person, and his experience on the hill would certainly qualify him there. We are going to go out for dinner and celebrate his new improved mood tonight!

I sent Mama a picture of my new Mary Jane shoes with the big chunky heels and one of the short dresses, but her reaction was certainly strange. She said that those shoes were the ugliest things she had ever seen. Can you imagine! I told her, of course they are ugly, but they are IN STYLE. I can't imagine what has gotten into her. Guess that is one pair I don't need to bring home for her, for it does not sound like she would wear them.

I have put in a request for time off at the holidays and, unless things go more crazy up here and Congress refuses to recess, it looks as if I will be coming home for a visit. It has been a long time and I miss everyone.

Love, LuLu

Looking over my shoulder at the 1995 garden year

By JEFF ISHEE

Nothing much happened in Middlebrook this week, except that a fellow named Rush Limbaugh announced over national radio -- world-wide radio in fact -- "our next call is from 'Sandy' in Middlebrook, Va." Whoa!

At that particular moment, I was out moving our portable pig pen in the field behind the house, and had parked the truck nearby with the window down and the radio booming in order to maintain at least some mental activity while I performed this laborious field chore. Well, when that announcement was made on the radio, not only did I turn around and look at the 75-pound porkers in the pen, but (and I swear this) they looked at me with the expression, "Hey! Did he say Middlebrook, Va.?"

It was a moment to remember, as the pigs and I both sat down and listened to a phone call from right down the road, (Yes! From our village of 175 souls), being broadcast around the world, across the high seas, and even to our neighbors in North Carolina. Whoa! What a moment of fame!

So, you ask, what did the phone call from "Sandy" in Middlebrook to Rush Limbaugh concern? Well, I'm not exactly sure about the details of this, but they were talking about some kind of court case way out in California and what the verdict might be. Didn't sound too important. All I know is that when the phone call from Middlebrook was over, all three little pigs walked back under the shade, laid down, and promptly fell asleep. Wishing I could do the same, I nevertheless got back to my chores, turned off the radio and started reflecting on really important issues, like the successes and failures of the garden year past.

This was the first Virginia garden for the Ishee family. Having just arrived on the farmstead a few months ago, it was an interesting year on which to reflect. Indeed, I had been planning this garden for two full years, from the ship that I used to live on while serving in the Navy. We might be in San Juan, and I'd be sitting underneath the walls of an ancient Spanish fort reading about carrot productivity; or, we might be steaming off the coast of the former Yugoslavia, and I'd be over in the corner studying intensive vegetable gardening and the benefits of crop rotation.

Finally, the spring of '95 arrived, and I got my walking papers from Uncle Sam. I drove the 650 miles to my new home in the Valley, and we broke ground in the gardens within 48 hours.

I had a weekly gardening calendar made up with planting times, cultivating dates, anticipated harvest periods, etc. Then, as time went along, I kept a separate diary of what actually occurred on each day of the gardening year. Some of the highlights of what we learned follow.

The first vegetables we direct seeded into the garden beds were spinach (tyee variety) and mache (vit variety). The mache (or "corn salad", as it is sometimes called) turned



out to be a dismal failure, and hopefully, some of you will write to me care of the newspaper and tell me how you plant and care for it. The tiny seeds just never germinated; however, the spinach took off like a bull bursting out of the chute. Our market customers at the Wharf parking lot on Saturdays loved it, and the tyee variety turned out to be a slow-bolting spinach that lasted well into the summer months.

We tried a new variety of okra this year that we had never seen before. It is called "Annie Oakley." This variety started off slowly, but as the heat of summer intensified, the okra proved to be a very hardy and productive variety. My daughter Jennifer just loves this southern specialty vegetable, and it was her responsibility to tend the okra patch. Her past record with the variety "Clemson Spineless" taught her well. She planted just enough for family use this year, but next year we just might offer okra to our customers at the market and see how it goes over.

Here at Bittersweet Farmstead, we tried four different varieties of tomatoes this year. The Amish heirloom variety "Brandywine" has nice big fruit, but the shape was sometimes a little peculiar. Nevertheless its taste was the best of all the varieties we tried; a sweet and rich tasting tomato perfect for a BLT. "Celebrity" is a variety that turned out to be very tolerant of the drought, and did not suffer at all from the intense heat of August. This commercial variety is also fine for home garden use, and is superb for fresh eating.

"Oxheart" is a variety that we got from our friend Farmer Brown at the market. The transplants were placed in a bed with black plastic mulch and were allowed to sprawl instead of being staked. They did very well after an initial case of blossom end rot. One foliar spraying with a calcium solution solved the problem, and the oxheart tomatoes turned out to be extremely prolific. The last variety we tried is a paste tomato named "Roma." My wife Sheila

can hardly say enough about the gorgeous little fruits that are very meaty and perfect for canning. This tomato is normally shaped like an egg, and when kept well watered, is usually blemish free and disease resistant.

Our early sweet corn did wonderfully this year. The yellow hybrid "Sugar Buns" filled out well and held its sweet taste for quite awhile. "Silver Queen" also grew favorably in the early months, but the drought of August took its toll on the later plantings.

Thankfully, the successes of our '95 garden year were plentiful, while the disappointments were few.

One thing that I would like to establish in this column is a "round table" conversation of sorts with the readers of *Augusta Country*. Instead of the reader asking a question with the columnist answering, I've decided to do the opposite. I will pose a gardening question or dilemma, and I'd like for you to write in with your answer or solution. The address is listed below.

This month's question is: "What hints do you have for growing the best sweet corn?" Tell me, and your fellow readers, what varieties and methods seem to work best for you here in the Valley. In a future issue, we'll share those hints.

The '95 garden year has officially ended for those of us without greenhouses. The winter squash is in storage, the grape juice is made, the apple pies are rolling in regularly, the blackberry wine is fermenting, the pantry is full, the freezer is packed, and the last of the potatoes are out of the ground. Now, maybe it's time to relax a little, sit outside on a cool autumn evening, and listen to the chickens cluck, the geese honk, the pigs snort, and the radio chatter on and on (just in case). —

Send responses to Jeff Ishee, HCR 32, Box 109, Staunton, Va. 24401 or call 886-8477.



Caleb Ishee takes a break from chores at the portable pig pen.

Made from scratch

With bushels of apples sitting around, there's plenty of baking to be done. What better way to enjoy the fruits of Johnny Appleseed's labors than with a slice of fresh apple cake. The following recipe is taken from the Centenary Cookbook from Centenary Methodist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. And, as it happens, it is a recipe submitted to the cookbook by Mrs. Herbert G. Eidson Jr. or "Cousin Minnie Lynch" to some of us here at *Augusta Country*.

Fresh Apple Cake

Beat together 3 eggs, 1 1/2 cups vegetable oil, and 2 cups sugar. Sift together 3 cups flour (all-purpose or cake), 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon baking soda, and 1 teaspoon cinnamon and add to egg mixture. Combine 2 teaspoons vanilla, 3 cups chopped raw apples, 1 cup chopped pecans, and 1 cup flaked

coconut. Stir into egg and flour mixture. Pour into a 10-inch tube pan which has been greased and floured. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until cake tests done with a straw. After cake is done, remove from oven and let set for 10 minutes before removing from pan to wire rack. When cake has cooled, place on a plate and drizzle with glaze made by using the following recipe.

Brown Sugar Glaze

In a heavy 1-quart saucepan over medium heat, combine 1/3 cup butter, 1/3 cup light brown sugar and 1 tablespoon milk. Bring to a rolling boil, cut burner off, let glaze set for 2 minutes, and then pour over cake. (Minnie Lynch's recipe called for a larger quantity of glaze to be used. We've taken the liberty of cutting back the original recipe by 2/3s.)



Danny Hostetter, II, Kim, Richard Bisette, and Gordon Goines, members of the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Student Council Group, prepare to distribute bags of birdseed Oct. 21 sold through the Augusta Bird Club. A total of 32,000 pounds

of seed was sold in this year's eighth annual sale, the proceeds of which are used as scholarships for children to attend nature camp and to support local, state, and national conservation efforts.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Here, there, everywhere

Home cooking:

Tasty and profitable

By SHEILA ISHEE

STAUNTON — On a recent autumn weekday, over 30 kitchen entrepreneurs assembled at Ingleside Resort and Conference Center. They were there for the Home-Based Food Service and Products Business Conference presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension Offices in Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge and Rockingham Counties.

The first speaker was Kathy Parrot, who addressed the topic "Can You Live Where You Work, and Work Where You Live?" This was an interesting question posed to the audience, and they were very receptive to the points that Dr. Parrot made. She emphasized that in a home-based business, there is a need to design separate spaces in the home as either business or family oriented; or, if space is a concern, to arrange a time schedule to indicate to the family members when a particular area of the home is used for business and when it is used for the family.

"Adaptations within the family are critical," said Dr. Parrot. "If there is adequate separate space in your residence for your home-

based food business, you are fortunate. But space organization still has to be addressed. Every plan should include storage space, production area, space for tools and equipment, an area to meet with clients, office space, an area convenient for deliveries and pickups, and also adequate room for proper lighting, heating, and cooling facilities. The biggest problem area is usually storage. Lack of storage is the greatest dissatisfaction of home-based businesses. Perception of clutter magnifies storage needs."

Connie Kratzer then dealt with a subject that many home-based food professionals neglect, which is insurance. Her first comment was on whether or not insurance is really need for a home-based food business. Dr. Kratzer said individuals have to look at their operations from a variety of perspectives.

"It's not a business if you are not making money. It's a hobby. If you make enough for your family to count on, then you have to think about insuring yourself. Not only should you insure your car on the business policy (if making deliveries for your business), but you

should insure your health and your life," Dr. Kratzer said. "Liability insurance is a part of risk-management for your home-based operation, and should protect you against financial losses suffered by others for which you are responsible. You have to ask yourself 'What are the risks?' and 'What is the likelihood of a loss?'"

She went on to remark that Virginia is lower than the national average concerning liability law suits, but that each person has to make his or her own professional judgment when it comes to risk management.

"You may have to accept risk; however, a car load of jam could be a sticky situation if you have a wreck on the way to market," Dr. Kratzer pointed out.

Dinah Gottschalk gave important tips on record keeping and taxes for the audience by addressing such topics as income statements, profit margins, taxable income, social security, how to price the product, maintaining a separate bank account for the home-based business, and selecting software packages for the home computer which can greatly assist in the record keeping process.

After a lunch break, the group got back down to business when Karen Campbell and Bill Day spoke on "Health Regulations When Selling and Serving Foods From the Home." They stressed that in Virginia, the law requires that a catering business has to have its food operation area separate from the kitchen facility of your home. The Health Department must inspect the area that you intend to use for food operations before you are issued a license to cater, and equipment and food-contact surfaces must meet regulations of the Virginia Board of Health. Possible home-based operations that fall under Health Department regulations include bed and breakfasts, caterers, mobile food units, and pushcarts.

Coming under a different jurisdiction area, however, are home-based bakeries. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has the authority to see that clean and wholesome bakery products such as cakes, breads, and cookies are prepared under proper conditions. Although a license is not required for a home-based bakery, VDACS must

Home-based businesses provide tasty alternative

- 78 percent of home-based business owners state that they have more control over their lives than in previous occupations, and 90 percent say that they would go into business again.

- In 1994 there were 24 million home-based businesses in

the U.S., generating approximately 383 billion dollars in sales.

- Almost 10 million home-based business are owned by women, and women are starting businesses at more than twice the rate of men.

Source: Ann Lastovica, Ph.D., C.H.E., Virginia Cooperative Extension

inspect the facility intended to be used. A separate kitchen is not required, but the products and ingredients must be kept separate from those used by the family. "If the bakery products will be sold to retail outlets, they must be labeled, and the label must include the name of the product, the net weight of the product, the name and address of the manufacturer, and a list of ingredients in descending order by weight," Ms. Campbell told the assembly.

Home-based commerce that falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture includes farmer's markets, home bakeries, meat cutting and processors, community canneries, and home industries that manufacture jams, jellies, acidified products such as pickles, and candy.

The final item on the conference agenda was a discussion with a panel of established home-based food service and product vendors. Matt Cauley, a market farmer from Bath County in business since 1989, said, "Our 700-acre farm has been in the family for around 200 years. We've tried cattle and sheep, but we settled with vegetables. Four years ago, we couldn't give an eggplant away. Now we can't grow enough. Our Singing River Farm grosses as much off four acres of vegetables as the rest does with cattle." When asked about marketing, Matt responded "If you have a good product, it will sell itself."

Matt and his wife Linda helped write some of the new regulations for organic farming; however, now he sometimes finds it hard to live by those regulations. The most

important thing for a market farmer, Matt stressed, is to "take care of your soil, even at the expense of other things. The soil will then take care of you."

Fellow panel member Jim Bowman shared his expertise with the audience by relating past experiences at his pick-your-own strawberry operation near Weyers Cave.

"Sometimes you've just got to go by the seat of your pants," said Jim. "Trial and error is the way we have learned our home-based business. We have cantaloupe and asparagus crops, but we live or die by the strawberry. By becoming 'The Strawberry Man' and producing a 'Strawberry Report' on the radio, we have increased our business."

Then Jim shared the pros and cons of a home-based food business which include "the fact that you can't get away from it, and sometimes there is a real challenge to make ends meet. The advantages include the facts that I am my own boss, my wife and I share equally in child care, we are responsible for the business, and it does make money! I'd recommend it to anyone."

Matt Cauley spoke to all home-based food business owners and prospective owners when he said "You have to do something you like. Do something you understand. On our family farm, I am doing something that I like to do. There is no greater satisfaction than working hard and seeing it be successful."

Sheila Ishee operates a catering business out of her home at Bittersweet Farmstead near Middlebrook.



Mailbox of the month

Home is where the heart is... and it's also where the mail is at the W.L. Deane residence south of Waynesboro. The mailbox, which Deane made himself, is a replica of the family's two-story frame house.

AC staff photo

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Opry raises funds for children's Christmas project

By TERRY TERRELL

WAYNESBORO — The Augusta County Country Music Opry celebrates its 15th annual fund raising drive in November. The format for the benefit is a clone of Nashville's Grand Ol' Opry. One or two local bands with a wide array of singers will perform. The difference between Augusta's Opry and the original is that the local Opry features participants who are all volunteers.

Tim Spears, founder of the Opry, began the project in 1980 to raise money so local needy children in Augusta County could go Christmas shopping. Kids are chosen through organizations such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, The Salvation Army, churches and other local organizations.

Around mid-December the kids are taken to the local K-Mart to spend the money. K-Mart, a par-

ticipant in the project since its inception, opens its doors early and gives discounts to the kids. Tim commented that K-Mart has always been helpful in its efforts to support the Opry project.

What Tim finds so rewarding about the Opry is that the money raised in the community goes back to the community. All the funds are raised locally, go directly to help local children, and are then returned to the local economy. Last year the Opry raised \$16,000 which was enough money to give 320 kids \$50 a piece.

Tim began the Opry because he saw that there were so many needy children out there. He said, "The community and the good Lord have been so good to me that I feel like I need to give back. An adult can always help themselves out in some shape or form, but a child can't. Whatever the environment

is, they are stuck there." Tim incorporated the Opry last year to keep the project going and in hopes of seeing it go nationwide.

Just like the Nashville Opry, bands will be showing up to perform at the Augusta County Opry. Although the specific bands which will be appearing are not always known in advance, the evening promises to be one filled with music and entertainment for all ages.

This year's Augusta Opry events will be held Nov. 5 at Wilson Memorial High School and Nov. 12 in Rockingham County at Spotswood High School. Shows begin at 6 p.m. and doors open at 5 p.m. for both dates. Advanced tickets for the shows are \$6. Tickets at the door are \$7. Advanced tickets can be purchased at Music City in Waynesboro or from B93 radio in Staunton.

For additional information about

The Augusta County Country Music Opry, call Tim at 540/949-7034. He invites any interested individual

to start a fund-raising Opry in their area. Contact Tim for information regarding this. —



Tim Spears at his store, Music City, in Waynesboro. Spears is the organizer of the Country Music Opry, a benefit concert which raises funds to purchase Christmas gifts for children.

Photo by Terry Terrell

DOLLARS AND SENSE

Lack of estate plan opens door for 'Uncle Sam' to inherit property

AC staff report

WAYNESBORO — "Uncle Sam," everyone's greediest relative, is ready to step in as the primary heir when there is no will or estate plan for property or funds.

The Staunton-Waynesboro-Augusta County Legal Secretaries hosted an estate planning seminar Oct. 3 at the Waynesboro Public Library to inform people how they can avoid costly, and sometimes catastrophic, inheritance taxes. Scott McDevitt, a Waynesboro investment counselor with Edward D. Jones Co., and Jeff Ward, a Waynesboro attorney, outlined some of the steps to be taken to avoid a tax-after-death experience with "Uncle Sam."

"A lot of folks don't have a will,"

Ward said. "Legal folks don't let it be known how easy it is to have a will. It's not tough or expensive to take care of the paperwork for your legal situation."

"It's a shame if you do not take steps to make sure property goes to the right people," Ward explained. "You don't want it to go to the government."

Ward noted that estates valued at less than \$600,000 are exempt from inheritance taxes.

"Over \$600,000 and you've got estate tax problems," he said.

Although \$600,000 might sound like a lofty figure, Ward noted that it is not uncommon for married couples to have combined estates valued in excess of this amount. Estate value may include a house, property, life insurance

and retirement payments, the combination of which may easily exceed \$600,000.

"After \$600,000 the tax rate is absolutely brutal," Ward said. Estates valued in excess of \$600,000 are taxed at 37 percent. At \$1.4 million, the rate jumps to 55 percent.

To illustrate his point, Ward showed two scenarios of an estate valued at \$1.2 million. One example in which there was no will or estate plan, the tax would be \$235,000 with an additional \$36,000 probate fee. The second example in which a revocable living trust had been established showed no estate tax and no probate fee.

"It's just smart to have a will," Ward said. "A will done correctly can save a tremendous amount in taxes."

The need for estate planning is especially critical for farmers, according to Ward.

"Farmers have a lot of land but no money," he said. "If a farmer dies there's a big catastrophe because there's no money to pay taxes. The heirs are put in a position where they have to sell."

Ward said farms can be set up in family partnerships which can "effectively transfer property over to children." In a family partnership, the farm is set up as an entity with shares issued to the partners, in most cases, parents and their children. Over a period of years the shares may be transferred to the children without changes in property deeds. Two surviving parents may give each child up to \$20,000 annually, or an equivalent

amount in shares of a family partnership, tax free. This mechanism provides a legal means for the estate to be managed so that excessive inheritance taxes can be avoided.

Ward cautioned that "survivorship" clauses do not protect estates from inheritance taxes.

Wills also enable people to make special bequests of property, set up trust funds for grandchildren, or specify guardians for minor children. Problems arise when people die without a will, he said.

"You lose control over where property will go," Ward said. "If there is no will the Commonwealth of Virginia will tell the heirs where the estate will go."

In setting up trust funds, Ward cautioned that care should be taken in selecting administrators for these funds. He said that some banks charge a minimum of \$4,000 annually to manage a trust.

Ward said having a will is as simple as writing your wishes down on paper. He suggested that the services of an attorney to oversee the process will help alleviate any potential problem areas. He noted that attorney's fees for a husband and wife to set up a will could be as little as \$200. He advised that there are two primary roads to take concerning estate planning.

"Die broke," he said. "Spend all of it, have a party, enjoy it. Then there are no taxes, no fees, and no attorneys."

However, for people who anticipate having property that they want to pass on to the next generation, he suggested estate planning is the best route to take.

"You've paid taxes on it in your lifetime," he said. "If you don't have a will, now you're going to pay again. You want to see people you love get what you worked for." —

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World Community Day

The Bethany Council of Church Women United will observe World Community Day Nov. 3 with a program at Jollivue United Methodist Church. The service will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will focus on children as one of God's gifts and the responsibility of the community to nurture children.

A representative of Alternatives for Abused Adults will be the guest speaker. Call 886-8174 for information about this interdenominational worship and fellowship. ---

Harvest Festival

Bethel Presbyterian Church is hosting a Harvest Festival Oct. 29 from 5-8 p.m.

Entertainment for the evening is being provided by "Holy Smoke" from James Madison University. Games for all ages will be included in the event, and people wishing to come in costume may do so.

The evening will begin with a covered dish supper to which guests are asked to bring food. Guests should also bring a flashlight, a bag of candy to share, and a carved pumpkin to be judged. The event is being sponsored by the church's Strengthening Committee.

Bethel Church is located on Va. 701 (Howardsville Road) 1 1/2 miles east of Va. 252 (Middlebrook Road) and 2 1/3 miles west of U.S. 11. ---

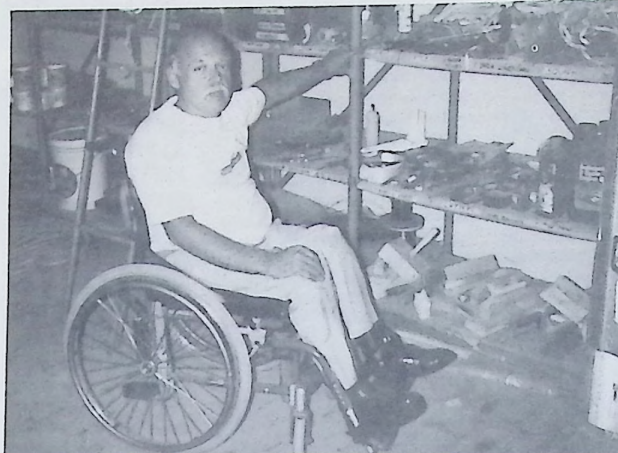
Springhill program

The Springhill 4-H Club and the Pleasantview-Springhill Ruritan Club will hold their annual community education program 7 p.m. Nov. 16 at Springhill Presbyterian Church.

Veterinarians Bruce Bowman of Waynesboro and June Cohron of Stuarts Draft will speak at the event.

For information call 350-2938 (evenings) or 885-3323 (evenings). ---

POSTSCRIPT



Charlie Downs of Waynesboro on duty as a tool and supply room clerk on a project at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

In its May 1995 issue, *Augusta Country* profiled Waynesboro resident Charlie Downs. In that article, *Augusta Country* reported that Charlie had spent several weeks working as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer in Brazil. He has been a habitat volunteer with First Baptist Church of Waynesboro since 1989, and that was his first time working as a volunteer internationally. At least for the time being.

By the end of August, however, Charlie found himself working at another site in Prague in the Czech Republic where he kept track of inventory in the supply and tool room. Along with 15 other Virginia volunteers, the mission group helped in the unskilled sector to restore a cluster of 15th century Baroque style buildings for the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS). The original seminary had been in Ruschlikon, Switzerland for 46 years before relocating to Prague.

Charlie said it was rumored that the buildings once were used by Soviet Intelligence officers and that Napoleon had also used the facilities during the Napoleonic War. Charlie added: "Sites that had been used for destruction are now being used for building lives and a faith."

Although details were sketchy at press time, AC has learned that Charlie will be making another trip out of the country in the near future. We understand congratulations are in order as Charlie soon will be honeymooning with his new bride somewhere south of the border in Mexico. ---

Back issues available

If you missed an issue of *Augusta Country* or if you'd just like to catch up with what's been going on, back issues of *Augusta Country* are available.

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