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Augusta Country

May 1998
Vol. 5, Issue 5

CLOSE EN-GOW-NTERS
Down on the farm
Pages 12-13

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Why did the chicken cross the road?

Who knows?!? Augusta Country may not be able to provide the answer to this age-old question, but we can provide answers to lots of other questions.
Can you pass the Augusta Country test???

It may look like a barn, but to this Stuarts Draft family, it's a palace.
Find out why in the story on page 3.



Can you pick out Augusta County's Teacher of the Year in this photo?
Spend a day in her classroom in the story on page 18.



Do you recognize these newlyweds?
Find out how they met, fell in love, and who they took on their honeymoon in the story on page 6.

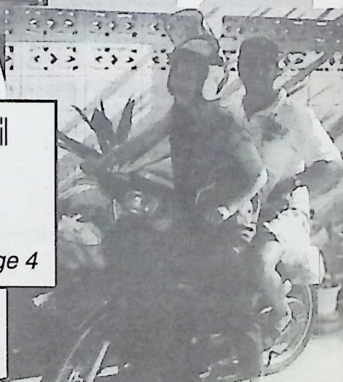


These little piggies are going to market.

You'll squeal with delight when you find out why in the story on page 11.

Which member of Staunton's City Council was recently seen scootering around the streets of Bangkok, Thailand?

The story begins on page 4



Do these faces look familiar?

Take a stroll down memory lane in the story on page 7.



The answers to these questions (AND MORE!) are just a page turn away!!



Augusta Forestry Tour to feature Deerfield's Marble Valley Farm

DEERFIELD — Marble Valley Tree Farm will be the site of the Augusta Forestry Tour to be held May 9 from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

This field trip will help participants learn how forest management can produce better trees, protect water quality and provide for wildlife and human needs. The tour features a day of hiking and forestry discussion on Bill Braunworth's award-winning Marble Valley Tree Farm and on adjoining National Forest.

Participants will visit a "weeded" forest, different age hardwood stands, clearcuts and "selective" harvests. The pros and cons of various forest management and timber harvest methods will be discussed by federal, state, and private foresters along with wildlife biologists and conservationists. The for-

mat will encourage interaction between guests and speakers.

Management styles and objectives differ between private landowners and the publicly owned National Forests. Participants will see what's "growing on" on the National Forests and learn how federal land managers are allowed to practice forestry. Other topics to be discussed will include "below-cost" timber sales and private landowner timber sales versus timber sales by the federal government.

Hosts for the field trip will be Mr. and Mrs. William Braunworth and the Deerfield Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service. The hike will be a moderately strenuous walk on Walker's Mountain. The meeting will begin at the Braunworth Farm

on Va. 600 in Marble Valley. Tour sign-in begins at 8:30 a.m. The tour will begin at 9 a.m. and end about 3:30 p.m. Participants should wear sturdy shoes, prepare for the weather, and bring their field guides.

Marble Valley Tree Farm is located near Deerfield, 3.7 miles east of the intersection of Va. 629 and Va. 600.

For information about the Augusta Forestry Tour, contact Harold Olinger of the Forest Landowners Association at 804/293-7341 or Mark Hollberg of the Virginia Department of Forestry at 540/332-7770.

There are a limited number of spaces available for the forestry tour. Registration during the week prior to May 9 is required by calling the Virginia Department of Forestry. Cost is \$15 which includes a box lunch on the mountain, refreshments and local transportation. —



AARP to meet

MT. CRAWFORD — Harrisonburg-Rockingham AARP Chapter 129 will hold its monthly luncheon meeting at noon, May 2 at Evers Family Restaurant.

The program will be presented by Ruth Harpine who will speak on changes in

Medicare, health maintenance organizations, home health care insurance, and Social Security.

All persons 50 or older are welcome. For information call 540/896-8239. —

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Ministry offers helping hand to those in need

By PENNY PLEMMONS

Kim Cash, gently spoons chunks of crushed iced into 90-year-old Ella DePriest's mouth. "Mmmm," Ella says. "Thank you, that is so good."

As part of the new Helping Hands Caring Hearts Ministries, Inc., Ms. Cash visits weekly with Ella and other residents at the Stuarts Draft Christian Home. Officially, on April 9, the doors of Helping Hands Caring Hearts (HHCH) located at 826 N. Augusta St. in Staunton, opened to do what its

name so aptly describes, "to help and to care."

The community, along with Staunton City Council member Rita Wilson, Staunton's Vice-Mayor Roy Stephenson, Community Resource Developer for Staunton/Augusta County Social Services Department Susan Weisgerber and other local officials attended the premiere opening.

"Helping Hands, Caring Hearts Ministries is a tool by which the faith community can join together in a common work," said Ministry Director Jeanne C.

Wilkers. "Without the networking of volunteers, the ministry's goals cannot be accomplished."

"This coordination of volunteer efforts will be a good thing for our area," Stephenson said.

HHCH seeks to establish a volunteer "bank" by recruiting individuals from area churches to serve within their own churches as Helping Hands Caring Hearts Volunteer congregation coordinators. These coordinators and the volunteers they enlist will be the backbone that moves the HHCH ministry to answer the unmet needs of individuals and families in the Staunton/Augusta area, according to Ms. Wilkers. HHCH seeks to match volunteers with people of all ages, religious affiliations and walks of life. Goals for the ministry include befriending the frail, the lonely, the chronically ill and elderly, encouraging individuals and families who are coping with disabilities and providing practical help for those struggling to im-



Helping Hands Caring Hearts Ministries volunteer Kim Cash reads from a magazine to 90-year-old Ella DePriest at Stuarts Draft Christian Home. Ms. Depriest has a sight impairment. Photo by Penny Plemmons

Helping Hands Caring Hearts Ministries, Inc.

What: Volunteer Training Sessions

When: 7-9 p.m., May 12 and May 19

Where: Verona United Methodist Church, on U.S. 11 in Verona, just south of Va. 612 traffic light

Topics: "Caring for the Elderly" on May 12, by Executive Director of Valley Programs for the Aging, Ann Bender. "Financial Planning & Management" on May 19, Speaker TBA

Cost: Free

RSVP: Jeanne C. Wilkers at 885-8442

Draft's Weaver turns barn into Cow Palace

By VERA HAILEY

STUARTSDRAFT—Ray Weaver of Stuarts Draft started out as a silo auctioneer. While growing up on a dairy farm in Ladd where his father was a sharecropper, Ray started out yelling while inside the silo pitch-

ing silage just to hear the echo.

"I filled the silo up so full one time that my father wondered how I was going to get out," Ray laughed. He would also put a feed bucket up to his mouth to hear the echo.

Maybe Ray's early urge to become an auctioneer had a genetic component.

"I heard that one of my grandfathers way back was a tobacco auctioneer, so maybe I got it from him... there is no sound I love to hear more than a tobacco auctioneer," he said. Ray travels to places like Danville and South Boston to hear the distinctive chant.

As a child, Ray recalls missing school to attend livestock auctions to hear recitations of pedigrees. It was inevitable that he would pursue a career as an auctioneer. When he graduated from the Missouri Auction School in Kansas City in 1961, a successful and fulfilling career was launched.

"I paid my own way and went there to learn and got a lot out of it... I love what I do," Ray said.

His dream of owning his own auction house began while working a 40-hour a week job.

"The idea came when I was working on public works. I knew I didn't want to stay there all of my life, and I starting thinking about converting a barn," Ray said.

Because of the demographic shift from rural living to subdivisions, it is no longer convenient to have auctions at some residences because of neighbor complaints. Through his years of experience in the business, Ray learned that the public prefers an inside auction location with convenient restroom and parking facilities.

After extensive remodeling, including closing in walls, pouring a cement floor, adding restrooms for "Bulls" and "Heifers," and making a table/platform for easy viewing,

the Cow Palace Auction Barn was born. The first auction held in the renovated barn on the Weaver family farm in the Rivermont area of Stuarts Draft was in January 1997. Ray retired from his full-time job this year to devote all of his time to the work.

One strength of Cow Palace is the family component. Ray's family and friends are actively involved in the business. Daughter Anita Weaver is a floater who helps in all aspects of the business.

Son Forest Weaver works on the platform and also acts as a floater. Daughter-in-law Angie Weaver is the full-time cashier. A neighbor of 24 years, Bob Kames, arranges the goods for sale and keeps the crowd entertained while working on the platform. Friend Louise Crummett serves as clerk.

Reynold and Pauline Grant, whom Ray describe as family, provide food from their concession van, including fried country ham sandwiches that attract people who aren't even interested in the auction.

Anita and Bob have also caught auctioneering fever. In April, they enrolled in Bernie Pleasant's School of Auctioneering in Mineral. Bob attributes an unfortunate situation

for sparking their interest.

"We were doing a sale in Staunton and Ray got so sick after he started that we almost had to quit," Bob said. It got so bad that Ray had to ask if there was an auctioneer in the audience. With no volunteers forthcoming, Ray said, "I spent the rest of the auction on the back of a truck and was so sick I had to keep stopping." The Weavers decided

See PALACE, page 16



Cow palace entrepreneurs, from left, Anita and Ray Weaver, Louise Crummett, and Forest and Angie Weaver stand outside Weaver's Stuarts Draft auction house. The facility is available to charities for benefit auctions.

Photo by Vera Halley

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Staunton's Rita Wilson finds Rotary exchange trip to Thailand rewarding

By NANCY SORRELLS

"Today we toured a mountain mobile dental clinic which to me was quite impressive. The mountain children came down from their homes to the school and had their teeth checked. I had gifts for everyone and they were so appreciative... What a rewarding experience."

The above journal entry describing an open-air dental clinic designed to reach Thailand's rural poor represents just a few sentences in a book full of memories for Staunton city councilwoman Rita Wilson. During the last of February and most of March, Rita was a team member on a Group Study Exchange to Thailand sponsored by Rotary International. Rita and four others from Rotary District 7570, an area that stretches from Winchester, through the Valley and over the border into Tennessee, traveled to "The Land of Smiles," as part of a cultural exchange of business and professional people.

Now, just back from Asia, Rita finds it hard to describe the experience because there is so much to tell: the people, the places, the new friends, the food, the culture. Each glance at a journal page or at one of her dozens of pictures stirs a flood of memories.

"The reception in Bangkok was worth the discomfort of the long plane ride. We were met with a VIP bus and whisked away in Mazdas, Mercedes and BMWs," wrote Rita upon arrival in the capital city of the country.

Not only did the people present the American team with beautiful flowers, but they made sure all their needs were attended.

"The first thing a guy did after we arrived and as we were whizzing through the streets of Bangkok was let me call home on his car phone to tell everyone that I arrived safely," she said as just one example of the hospitality of the Thai people. "The people are real gracious. They are wonderful. They won't let you lift anything," she added.

That arrival began an adventure that took them over much of the country. They visited hospitals, prisons, spice factories, rice factories, schools, clinic, temples, court-rooms and even attended a city council meeting.

"I guess I liked the schools better than anything. Some of those people live in utter poverty, but they have on snow white clothes when they come to school," said Rita.

The group visited a 900-student elementary school that she called "amazing." The children performed a program that included traditional music and dance. "Taking music and being in scouting is mandatory for them," she said.

The high school they visited had 3,000 students who traveled to

school on almost as many motor scooters. It was at the high school that the Americans witnessed an event that would be played out every day all over Thailand.

"At 8 o'clock every morning there and all over the land, everybody stands and the national anthem is played. Even the market stops," said Rita as she hummed the tune that had become familiar to her by the end of the trip.

There were many cultural surprises along the way, some quite unexpected.

"We found out that the women do wear pants and short skirts. They are as western as us in their dress, and maybe more so in some ways. But the women always had sleeves so that their arms were covered. Despite what we were told, the people do cross their legs, but one thing you never do is sit with your feet toward the Buddha. We saw lots of Buddhas. They took



Rita Wilson of Staunton models a silk dress from India and holds an elephant tea set which she bought on her trip to Thailand.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

us to a lot of temples and we had to learn how to show the proper re-

spect. We also learned to take our shoes off in people's houses -- I only forgot once -- and that it is not proper etiquette to point at people," she said.

One of the biggest adjustments for the Americans was food -- not just what they were eating, but when they were eating and in what quantity.

"The Thai people don't necessarily eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. They eat when they are hungry and they eat a lot. There was never one dish, always five or six or eight dishes," said Rita. "I think my favorite was chicken with cashews."

The food was incredibly varied from eggs, chicken and fish, to fruit and stir-fried vegetables.

"The fruit is delicious: bananas, oranges, something like a grapefruit, papayas, mangos, and rice at every meal. There was one very rich dish they would serve of sticky rice, mango and coconut milk," she explained.

Because Thai food tends to be very spicy, their hosts would often warn them of a hot dish or tell them that they had toned the comfort level of the spices down to suit the American palate. The group was also taken to a restaurant that was billed as an "American restaurant," where they were served steak and potatoes. "It didn't taste anything like in America," Rita said with a laugh. Rita added that she tried to taste and try everything. "Except

Thai facts

(from the web page <http://tourismthailand.org/>)

The Kingdom of Thailand covers 514,000 square kilometers in the heart of Southeast Asia. It is halfway between China and India. Border countries are Burma, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia.

There are 60 million people in Thailand.

Thailand means "Land of the Free" and throughout its 800-year history is the only country in Southeast Asia that was never colonized. The country used to be called Siam, but the name was changed to Thailand with the advent of a democratic government in 1939.

The present monarch is King Bhumibol Adulyadej. He is King Rama IX of the Chakri Dynasty.

The Thai currency is called the baht.

The majority of Thais practice Buddhism.

the pork blood that was served in a soup bowl!" she added.

Despite the hot, humid weather and the many types of food consumed, few Thai people have refrigerators in their homes. Instead, the women go to the morning market almost every day. "They eat day to day. One host family I went to the morning market every morning and I rode to the market with them on their motor

See *Thai*, page 5



Rita Wilson joins one of her Thai hosts on a scooter for a morning trip to market.

Photos courtesy Rita Wilson



The Rotary International Exchange group, with which Rita Wilson traveled, stands in front of a Thai government building.

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•Thai

Continued from page 4

scooter. The people eat out a lot in the evening and during the evenings the markets are packed," she said of the different pace of life in Thailand. The markets were fascinating places.

In Bangkok the canals were filled with the boats of vendors and their meats and fruits and vegetables crammed the streets. To buy a drink in the market was an experience. "There's not much cow's milk, but they have soy milk. It is served hot as are all the drinks. Milk and soda are poured into a bag and you are given a straw to drink the bag's contents. You would never take the soda bottle with you," Rita said.

Of her culinary experience, Rita noted that ice was the biggest thing

she missed. Ice is rarely served and when it is, it is suspect in a country that depends on bottled water for sanitation purposes. "People pay more for water than for petrol. Some gas stations would have specials like you would get two bottles of water for a fill-up," Rita explained.

Food was not the only adjustment for the visiting Americans. Language and social gestures were also new adventures. In Thailand, people do not greet each other by shaking hands. Instead, they press the palms of their hands together like they are praying and bow slightly. Rita quickly demonstrates the "wai," as the gesture (pronounced wai) is called, while saying "Sawasdee kaa (hello)."

"Whenever you see someone,

you put your hands together in the wai. The higher your hands, the higher the status of the person you are greeting," she said.

The subtle nuances of the wai were not the only difficulties experienced by the group. "The Thai language is tonal, so you can say the same word in different tones and it means different things. I was not able to learn much of the language," Rita said.

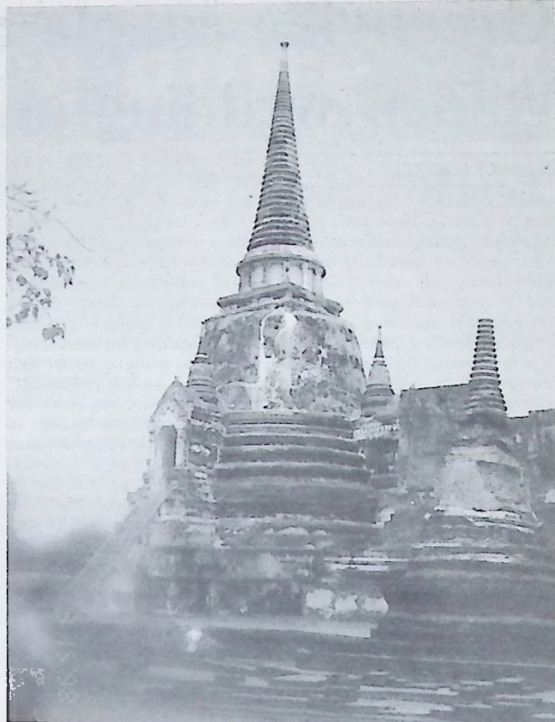
That does not mean, however, that Rita was not able to communicate. The common language that she found was music. "Singing is a big thing and they let me sing all over Thailand. One day our slide projector wouldn't work and so I sang 'Amazing Grace' and 'Oh beautiful for spacious skies' and they loved it," she said.

"Today we attended the ordination for a monk. We watched the monks pray and chant. The service took three hours and there were hundreds of people there."

As special guests of the Thai people, the exchange group was allowed into ceremonies that most tourists would never see. The ordination ceremony described in the above journal entry is just one example. As special guests of Thailand's Prime Minister, Chuan Leekpai, they were also guests at a cremation funeral ceremony. "The funeral was of a man who helped establish Rotary in Thailand. The flame for the cremation came from the King and the Prime Minister lit the flame," Rita explained.

That was not their only encounter with the Prime Minister. They visited him at his office and dined out with him. As are all Thais, Chuan Leekpai was a friendly, open individual, Rita said. Examples of gift giving and graciousness marked every day, she added.

"One man closed his whole restaurant to entertain us. Then we sat on pillows and ate the food Thai style with our hands. You had to be very careful because if you said you



A Thai temple

liked something, then they would give it to you. One day at dinner in a restaurant I admired the cup I was drinking from. My hostess got up, went back into the kitchen and brought it for me.

"You should have seen the party they gave for us one night. I have never had a party like that. Before the party they gave us all a massage, then we went to this beautiful party with a band and fireworks that spelled out our names. The children from the orphanage were there too," she said.

Rita remembers the day of the party for another reason as well. "That was the day a lizard ran up my

leg," she says.

"Today I just finished bathing and I counted five lizards that I could see when I was taking a bath."

The brown geckos with their "sharp eyes" were omnipresent in Thailand as the above excerpt from Rita's letter home indicates.

"The Thai people don't bother them because they eat the cockroaches and snakes, but I didn't care much for them. I was in bed one night and saw them and one day when I shook out my skirt before packing it, there was one."

There were also close encounters with ants. One night Rita took

See TRIP, page 21



Two women perform a traditional dance at the District Rotary Conference in Thailand.

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Appearing Nightly

Greenville couple celebrates golden wedding anniversary

By NANCY SORRELLS

GREENVILLE — A little more than 50 years ago there was a persistent young suitor in Greenville who wouldn't quit bugging a pretty young lady whom he fancied. But every time he would ask her out, she'd turn him down flat. Patience prevailed, however, and in a few weeks Bill and Alene Sorrells will be celebrating their golden wedding anniversary.

The celebration is something that neither would have imagined back in 1947 when Bill could not even win a date with his future wife.

"I was working at Du Pont," said Bill, who met Alene's brother and some other friends at the plant. He remembers that they were the ones

who "instigated the whole thing. They kept saying why don't you come on over to the house?"

Alene remembers the beginnings of their relationship a little differently. "Every time he was off (work) he was at the house (just outside of Greenville), but he kept sending word about wanting to go out. I turned him down for months saying if I was going to go out with him, he'd have to ask me himself!"

Finally Bill wore her down and their first date was to the old Stuarts Draft High School where he watched her play in a basketball game. "I agreed to let him go and see me play basketball; that was our first date. That is why when I retired from Du Pont I wanted to have my retirement din-

ner at the Old Schoolhouse Restaurant. I went to high school there, graduated from there, had my first date with Bill there and played basketball there," Alene said in explaining her special attachment to the old school.

Once Bill had broken down the barrier to Alene's heart, things moved rapidly. "We started going together in January and got married in May. After that first time, he wouldn't let go. He was very persistent once he got his foot in the door," Alene remembered.

Neither Bill nor Alene remembers the exact details of the marriage proposal although Alene said, "It wasn't on his bended knee, that's for sure!" She does remember that she was shocked by the proposal because she had already decided that she would never get married. "When he asked me, I thought 'You've got to be kidding!'"

Obviously he wasn't kidding. On May 19, 1948, 23-year-old Alene Thompson and 25-year-old Bill Sorrells exchanged wedding vows at the Staunton home of Dr. Herbert S. Turner, the local Presbyterian minister at Pines Chapel and Bethel. "There were very few church weddings at the time," Alene recalled. They got married on a Thursday afternoon and the only two witnesses were two of Alene's sisters-in-law.

It would be nice to say that the happy couple drove off into the sunset and lived happily ever after, but that was not the case. The newlyweds were headed off to Roanoke and from there to Nashville for their honeymoon. After the ceremony, Bill casually mentioned that he would like to stop and see his parents in Fairfield before they headed on to Roanoke for the night.

When the couple pulled up to the farmhouse, there was Bill's younger sister Pauline, suitcase in hand, ready to accompany the pair on their honeymoon! "I had been running my mouth and asked her to go," Bill recalled of the incident. "I didn't think she would really go,



Bill and Alene Sorrells of Greenville will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at a reception hosted by their four children.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

but it turned out she was sitting there waiting, suitcase packed. And so she went!"

Pauline was 21 or 22 at the time and had never been out of the Rockbridge area, so she jumped at the opportunity to see Nashville. Alene was not pleased with the potential chaperone on her honeymoon trip. "I thought, 'Oh boy, forget this, I'll just head on back home!'"

Pauline wound up going on the trip and the newlyweds had to fork out all her expenses — separate room, food, and tickets. Despite the extra person, the trip was enjoyable. They spent the night in Roanoke and then went on to Nashville to the Grand Ol' Opry.

Down the road Bill and Alene did not regret their generosity on that day because Pauline died a few years later. The honeymoon trip was the only adventure she ever had in her life.

After the honeymoon, the couple lived from May to September at the Thompson homeplace with the rest of the family. Then they rented an apartment in Greenville. "We were given a shower before we were married and got a lot of stuff. People gave us practical things like flour and cooking things," Alene recalled.

Still, the apartment in Greenville was no palace. They had to carry water from a spring and snow

would filter through the roof and walls and on top of the bed. They stayed there until they were expecting their first child, Sue.

Eventually there were three more children, Sherry, Randy and Sarah. After a series of moves that took them around the county, the couple wound up back in Greenville where they built a brick house a few yards from the Thompson homeplace.

Looking back on the past 50 years, Bill just shakes his head in wonder. "I was 25 then and now I'm 75. It's hard to believe!"

"We are grateful to the four children that God entrusted into our care. We haven't been perfect parents, but all-in-all we've done a good job," Alene said, looking back over the years. "And now we have four grandchildren and two great grandchildren."

What is the secret to 50 years of marriage? "It's a lot of give and take," said Bill. "And a lot of swallowing your pride and learning to keep your mouth shut," added Alene.

The couple's children will be hosting a golden anniversary celebration for their parents on May 17 from 2-4 p.m. at Greenville United Methodist Church. The "newlyweds" will renew their vows in a mock wedding ceremony featuring their grandchildren and great grandchildren as wedding attendants. —



Bill and Alene Sorrells on their honeymoon in May 1948.

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Yesterday once more



4-H experiences memorable for Centerville native

By HIRAM AREY

CENTERVILLE — Truly it has been a long time since my early days as a Centerville 4-H club member, but some of the experiences of those early years remain vividly in my mind, as I imagine some of every 4-H experience will stick with its members for a long time.

My first year Blue Ribbon from the state was a cherished possession. It was the year 1922 when I first experienced a 4-H Club Short Course in Blacksburg at then-called Virginia Polytechnic Institute, now called Virginia Tech.

A very small group, probably six or seven of us, got on the train in Staunton and after stops at Brands and Fishersville, reached Waynesboro where we changed trains to the Norfolk and Western and headed toward Roanoke. After a half-hour stop in Roanoke, we were on to Christiansburg where we changed to what was called the Huckleberry to cross the ridge to Blacksburg and V.P.I. We had heard this narrow-gauge, 10-mile line got its name from its custom to stop during huckleberry season to let people off to pick wild huckleberries.

One young fellow in our group actually had nerve enough to ask the conductor if this were true. For reply he got a very silent cold stare and nothing more. We arrived in the late afternoon.

I believe there was no county extension agent in Augusta County at that time, but I remember a Mr. Fix, a volunteer club leader for the southern end of the county. He seemed to be in charge and he told us, "This week after



Shown in this pre-1920 photo are members of the Centerville 4-H Club. The young fellow sitting cross legged second from the far right is Hiram Arey. He was the first Augusta County 4-Her tapped as a Virginia All Star.

three o'clock in the afternoon we are going to have a lot of fun." I did not know then what he meant but learned soon that mornings and early afternoons were planned classes and programs, but 3 to 6 p.m. was free for games and free fun periods. The group re-assembled for dinner times.

Outstanding in my mind was the Friday evening program when a cadre from the West Virginia All Star Group took charge to organize a Virginia All Star Group and induct the first eight members from Virginia. The group was weighted heavily with Extension Agents stationed in Blacksburg and included Dr. Burruss, head of the Agency, who unfortunately died the following year in a bus terminal accident.

The following year, 1923, I was not entirely a novice, but wholly unprepared for the dramatic events of that year's "short course." How

or why it was arranged, I do not know, but it was arranged that Boyd Glick, my best friend, and I were to drive an open Ford truck, which might now be called a pickup truck, to take the Augusta group to Blacksburg. The truck belonged to D.L. Evers, the North River District Supervisor, who was a leading spirit in life around Centerville.

Three short benches were provided in the back bed of the truck so everybody could face the front. Well, hard luck did not take long to be in evidence! We were hardly half way to Staunton when the engine began to sputter and finally stop. Why, no one knew.

Boyd remembered Mr. Evers had said that he had filled it with oil, so we would have no trouble — and in fact had filled above the full level. Not knowing any better when it stopped, we decided maybe it had

too much oil, so we let out a little in the road and got the engine started again. But after a few more miles we had the same trouble, so we applied the same false remedy. This time we reached Staunton and drove into an auto garage on North Central Avenue to have them look at it. Their diagnosis was not related to the oil at all, but trouble with the carburetor.

It was now nearing noon and we finally made contact with Ruth Jamison, the Augusta County Home Demonstration Agent. She was fraught with much anxiety as to why we had not appeared much sooner. I remember when I first saw her and she said, "Where are the others?" I had an unthoughtful answer. "I think they are shopping," I said. Finally we got the truck out of the garage and started out a bit after midday.

But bad luck had really just started. Somewhere in the vicinity of Lexington, we were faced with high waters when a heavy storm had washed out a bridge on Highway 11. We were told to take a detour of quite a distance to get over the stream.

After following the country road for a distance, we came to a creek, possibly the same one, which looked impossible to cross. In fact there were two men with a couple of horses on the other side who had just pulled out one stuck vehicle. They said that if we held to the upper left-hand side they believed we could make it across. I was driving at the time and I remember trying to hold to the upper side, but after crossing the middle, I felt the truck being drawn into the middle, deeper waters. Well, the horses pulled us out, but a lot of time and patience had been lost.

We finally got back to Route 11 and reached Roanoke after dark. How we found a garage I do not know, but only that it was after dark and we spent the night bedded down in the service area of a garage. I can remember that somehow or other two Centerville young men who were in Roanoke as students at Roanoke National Business College found us. One was Boyd's brother, Rudolph Glick, and the other one was our first cousin, Judson Cupp. They raised our morale a bit and gave us some needed information about the neighborhood.

The following morning we were off at a reasonable time and got on the V.P.I. campus late Tuesday morning in time for the noonday lunch. This began a busy and memorable week, of course, but I suppose the climax came late Friday evening when the All Star Ceremony was held. Everybody in attendance was seated on the ground in a big circle and the All Star scout would circle the inside

See CEREMONY, page 17



Included among Augusta County's earliest All Stars were Boyd Glick, left center, and Hiram Arey, shown in this layout from a 1920s 4-H yearbook. Arey was the first Augusta County 4-Her to be tapped into Virginia's All Star Chapter. Glick's honor came the year after Arey's was inducted.

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Draft native enjoys life 'down under'

By NANCY SORRELLS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Summer is winding down for Jill Rau, but that means she will be playing volleyball again soon, rooting for the All Blacks, studying hard at varsity, and planning trips along beautiful tracks for next summer.

A Stuarts Draft native, Jill has been living in Christchurch, on the South Island of New Zealand, since 1994. Although she sometimes misses the Shenandoah Valley, she has found plenty to love in this English-speaking country that is seven time zones from Virginia and 6,500 miles southwest of San Francisco.

Through the wonders of the Internet and its associated electronic mail, however, Jill can stay in touch with her family and friends from the Valley and even participate in a long-distance e-mail interview so that *Augusta Country* readers can also take a short trip to this country that is way down under.

Jill's odyssey actually began several years ago when she left Stuarts Draft High School after her junior year and attended Richmond College, the American University in London for a year in the British Isles. She then returned to the States, went to Duke University, and graduated in December 1993.

With a taste of international

living already in her blood, she applied for and received an Ambassadorial Scholarship sponsored by Rotary International. This program pays for a year of study abroad for students wishing to get their master's degrees. Choosing New Zealand as the country in which she wished to complete her studies was a process of elimination, she explained.

"I had to go to an English speaking country because I am not fluent in any other language and that is a requirement to go to a country on this scholarship. I had already lived in England and so wanted to do something different. I figured Canada was too much like the United States and I wanted something different. Essentially that left New Zealand, Australia and South Africa and South Africa was a bit too dangerous at the time. Of Australia and New Zealand I had heard better things about New Zealand and heard that it was absolutely beautiful... which of course is true. So I put New Zealand as my first choice," Jill explained of the reasoning that put her into Kiwiland.

Through her studies, she earned a master's in psychology and then got a job as a research assistant and temporary lecturer at the university where she earned her degree. From then, she has moved to her current job which is with Health Link South Ltd. at Princess Margaret

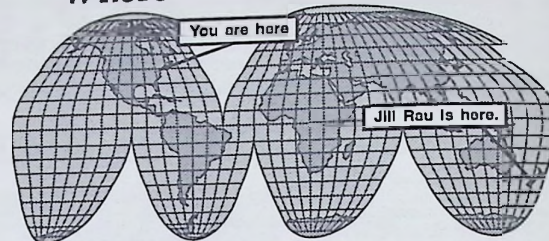
Hospital where she is a research officer. She helps to research eating disorders and also with Mothers and Babies, a program which supplies perinatal psychiatric services.

"In this job I maintain (and have redesigned) the databases that collect the material that we are researching," she explained. I do all the data collection, analysis and entry and help publish research papers and initiate new research. I keep service statistics, keep a database of relevant journal articles and try and keep the teams informed of the current research coming out. It's a pretty flexible job, and the people here are really nice. Not to mention that it feeds me, keeps me clothed and gets me to the occasional movie or wine tasting," she said.

Her time in NZ has certainly not been all work and no play. At Stuarts Draft High School, Jill was a standout athlete in basketball, volleyball and track and she continues to hone her skills in New Zealand. Volleyball has been her big love, on the beach in the summer, and in the gym in the winter. "The beach is only about a 15- to 20-minute drive for me. It's usually pretty windy there and in the summertime our fortnightly volleyball tournaments frequently get stopped in the afternoon because it's too windy to continue," she said of the outdoor volleyball tournaments in which she participates.

Indoors during this past year she was able to play in the New Zealand National Volleyball Tournament which was held in her home city of Christchurch. Her team came in third in the B tournament. The A grade is the top level and those players feed onto the national team. "That was

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a fantastic experience and I felt pretty good about coming in third in the nation, even if it is a small nation. It also helped to rationalize that the team that came in first (in B) play all season in the A grade league and then somehow managed to weasel their way into the B grade tournament!" she said with a touch of humor.

Two weeks after competing in the national tournament, however, Jill's athletic activities took a hiatus when she ruptured her ACL while playing basketball. Although she couldn't put any weight on the knee the next morning, it was initially diagnosed as a mild sprain. Finally, on Nov. 5 of last year, she had ACL reconstruction surgery, then was immobile for three weeks and on crutches after that — all in the middle of summer.

"I injured my knee within the first two weeks of August (1997) and won't be playing volleyball until June at the earliest, so I am extremely anxious and antsy. But I can finally go back to the gym and do a bit and it's nice just to be getting exercise again," she said in February.

There is a bright side to her

story, however, because the injury occurred in New Zealand. "You've got to give it to New Zealand for good treatment. I didn't have to pay a cent for the surgery or doctors' appointments, and the rehab is subsidized so that I pay less than \$7 (U.S.) for each appointment. And, I had it done in a private hospital, had a single room, and if I wanted, I could have ordered wine with my meal, free. How about that for nice?" she said.

Jill explained that not all medical service is free, but because her injury was an accident, it was covered by a NZ government body called the Accident Compensation Corporation. "Because of its existence, people here are not permitted to sue for personal liability. So if I am on your property and slip and break my ankle, ACC will pay for my injury and I can't sue you because you didn't put up a sign that says you are watering the grass and it might be slippery. It actually makes things and people a lot nicer sometimes," she explained.

Even without considering the See JILL, page 9



Stuarts Draft native Jill Rau lives in Christchurch, New Zealand. She works as a research officer with Health Link South Ltd. at Princess Margaret Hospital. The former Stuarts Draft High School volleyball standout now enjoys league play on the beaches of New Zealand.

Photo courtesy Paula Rau

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•Jill

Continued from page 8
ACC, however, the New Zealanders are still a wonderful people, according to Jill. "The people are very helpful and trusting. Maybe not as open as Americans, but much, much more laid back and trusting," she said. The country's population is only about 3.3 million and most of those live on the North Island. Jill lives on the South Island.

No matter how you look at it, New Zealand was settled very recently in the annals of human history. The first immigrants to the islands were Polynesians who arrived in 850 A.D. and then again in the 1300s. Today the Maori make up about 9 percent of the country's population. The British and European migrants did not arrive on the islands until the 1820s.

"I have learned heaps about NZ seeing as I knew next to nothing when I came here," Jill said. "I know a bit about its history and its culture, its politics and its people. It's a bit behind the U.S. in some things. In general there are less conveniences around, but it's plenty up on technology and so I can communicate easily with the rest of the world," she said of her adopted country.

"I have also learned how American I am and what parts of me I am proud of and what parts I like to tone down when overseas!" she noted.

For Jill, living on the South Island has opened up a world of outdoor recreational opportunities. In a country roughly the size of Colorado, there are rain forests, glaciers, volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, fjords, beaches and about 24 mountains that soar 10,000 feet or more. Many of the national parks are on the South Island.

"The best way to see New

Zealand is to do some of the hikes (they call them tramps here). I have done several medium long ones of a few days and lots of short day hikes. And I love it entirely. The mountains on the South Island make a spine down the center of the island and they are called the Southern Alps. The tallest ones are snowcapped year round. New Zealand is actually two tectonic plates. Under the South Island they rub one direction causing buckling and hence the ridge of mountains down the spine of SI. But under the North Island the mountains rub the other direction and this causes geothermal heating and so all the mountains on the North Island are from volcanoes," she explained.

Jill explained how she loves being just a few minutes drive from either the beach or the snow-capped mountains. "The mountains are phenomenal and it makes my day when I see the snowcaps in the morning. And yes, I can see the snowcaps from the city from about April to October (winter). I have seen glaciers and hiked on them. As a matter of fact, I have had to hike through a rainforest to get into the glaciers! Furthermore, because the population is so small, most everywhere is still clean and beautiful and there aren't huge tourist centers ruining the natural beauty."

Most of the tracks (trails) in New Zealand are maintained by the Department of Conservation and many of the tracks have huts which provide shelter, an outhouse and water. Her favorite tramp is the Routeburn in the southwest portion of South Island, a three-day, two-night trip through some magnificent scenery along a well-maintained track. "It starts and finishes in native beech forests, takes you up and over the mountain where you feel like you are on top (or

bottom as the case may be) of the world, past beautiful glacial lakes and back down into some of the most fantastic and majestic scenery on earth," she said of the Routeburn.

Jill and her mother, Paula, also participated in a tramping adventure on the Copeland Track. "It was posted as a 6-hour hike and it took us 10 1/2 hours. What we didn't know when we were going in was that there had been three slips (two unreported) on the track. A slip is like a landslide and so crossing them was slow and precarious over trees and rocks and mud and stuff. The whole tramp is uphill the first day and downhill back out the way you came the second day."

Because they thought the tramp would only take six hours, the mother and daughter team did a two-hour hike around Lake Matheson before they even set off on the Copeland trail. Lake Matheson, Jill explained, is the most-photographed lake in the world. "If you get there when it's not raining and the sun is not reflecting too much off the lake then you have a perfect mirror image of Mt. Cook and Mt. Tasman in the water. It's amazing."

So after the Lake Matheson detour, the pair set off about 11 a.m. on their planned tramp and immediately had to ford a river — wet boots from the start! "It started out fantastically with Mom pointing out every different type of fern (and me thinking, 'at this rate we are never going to get there'), but after about seven hours of grueling hiking Mom wasn't pointing out the subtle nuances of fern finery any longer!"

"To make a long story short, we got there (at a hut) about 10 minutes before nightfall and disclosed to one another that we both felt we weren't going to make it at times and were pleased that the other hadn't mentioned it on the trail." Although the pair was in no danger from bears, snakes and other creepy crawlies (they don't exist in New Zealand), a night in a sleeping bag on the hard ground would have been wet and uncomfortable. And because the forest is so thick, they would have been sleeping right ON the trail.

There was an added bonus to

Facts about New Zealand

The national bird is the flightless kiwi. It is also wingless, tailless and nocturnal. Kiwi is also a green fruit that is grown and exported.

Except for birds, New Zealand has no native animals.

New Zealand is more than 1,000 miles from Australia, separated by the Tasman Sea.

The native Polynesians are called the Maori. Today the Maori number about 300,000 out of a population of just over 3.3 million.

Wellington is New Zealand's capital and has a population of 360,000. It was chosen because of its central position on the southern tip of the North Island.

Auckland, also on the North Island, is the country's biggest city with about 860,000 people.

The first European settlers came to New Zealand about 1820. New Zealand became a part of the British Empire on Feb. 6, 1840. It is now an independent member of the British Commonwealth.

There are 64 million sheep in New Zealand. NZ is the world's biggest exporter of sheep.

The entire population of the South Island is less than a million people — about the same number as the inhabitants in Auckland, the country's biggest city.

Christchurch was founded in 1850. Often called "New Zealand's Most English City," Christchurch is NZ's third largest city (after Auckland and Wellington) with about 300,000 inhabitants and is the largest on South Island. The city has historically been the jumping off port for expeditions to Antarctica.

NZ's seasons are the reverse of ours. Summers are December to March, Winters are June to September. The average daily high temperature for Christchurch in April is 63 degrees F and in May is 56. The average daily high in December and January is 70.

New Zealand consists of two main islands: North Island (44,197 square miles), South Island (58,170 square miles) and one small island: Stewart (676 square miles). If the islands were laid across the United States' West Coast they would extend from Seattle to Los Angeles, but no point in the country is more than 70 miles from the sea.

making this particular hut before nightfall. "The hut that is at this point on the track is called the Welcome Springs Hut, and it is built a few hundred yards from natural hot springs. So you can sit in the hot mud and stare up at a starry sky with a clear moon and snow-capped mountains looking over you!"

The hike back down the next morning was spectacular, Jill continued. "The rivers are generated from glaciers and they have some mineral suspended in them that makes them this crystal mint blue color. Ahh, makes me want to tramp right now, but not for a few more months — the knee ya know!" she said.

In addition to tramping, there are other sports to be learned about by the NZ newcomer. "The really big sports here are rugby, league (a slightly different version of rugby) and cricket. Oh, and of course when the America's Cup is on, everyone loves sailing. There are only 3 million people here and so they generally all support their

national teams in the sport of the season and have local favorites as well. Basically I have learned the rules to all of these sports and probably like cricket the best. Maybe because it's a summertime sport or maybe because it's most like baseball. But I like rugger as well and I root for the All Blacks (the New Zealand national team)," she explained.

New Zealand has been an experience that Jill will never forget. She furthered her education, regained a confidence in the academic world, learned a new culture, visited some of the most magnificent scenery on earth, and... has a significant other named Nathan. This past Christmas she brought Nathan to the U.S. for his first visit to the States and his first-ever winter Christmas.

The couple is now back in New Zealand watching summertime wind down. Jill, whose father was a doctor, has decided that she might try to pursue medical school and so is busy studying at varsity (NZ's word for university) for medical exams.

In many ways, she says when she looks out her windows at the mountains and travels around the rural countryside, she is reminded of the Shenandoah Valley. She does miss Mexican food and central heat, but mostly she misses her family and friends.

All-in-all though, it has been an experience she wouldn't trade. She summed it up very succinctly: "I love it here (in NZ) and I love it at home (Virginia). I think it's great that I have had both." —

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53rd Market Animal Show slated for May 6 and 7



STAUNTON — The 53rd annual 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show will be held May 6 and 7 at Staunton Union Stockyard on New Hope Road.

4-Hers and FFA members from across Augusta County will be exhibiting lambs, hogs and steers during the event which is sponsored each year by Augusta County Ruritan clubs and the Staunton-Augusta Chamber of Commerce.

Wednesday's events open with the show dedication at 3:30 p.m. Each year the show is dedicated to an individual who has been a long-time supporter of the event. The lamb show will begin immediately following the dedication. Single lambs will be exhibited first, followed by the pairs competition.

Thursday's events will begin with the market hog show at 8 a.m. Hogs will be shown as singles and pairs. Following the conclusion of

the hog show, the steer show will begin at approximately 9:30.

Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion will be selected from the single lambs, pairs of lambs, single hogs, pairs of hogs, and the steers. Exhibitors will also compete for \$100 U.S. Savings Bonds for the top junior and senior showmanship effort in each specie. Showmanship Savings Bonds are sponsored by *Augusta Country*.

The Market Animal Show culminates Thursday evening with the Parade of Champions beginning at 6:45 p.m. Sale of livestock will follow at 7 p.m. Area businesses and individuals support 4-H and FFA members by bidding on animals for sale. For information about participating as a buyer at this year's Market Animal Show, call the Augusta County Extension office at 245-5750. —



Aaron Shiflett of Piedmont will exhibit two steers in the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show to be held May 6 and 7 at Staunton Union Stockyard on New Hope Road.



Ashley and Evan Shiflett of Piedmont, members of the Willing Workers 4-H Club, have four lambs which they are preparing to exhibit in the 53rd annual Market Animal Show.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton

Shifletts of Piedmont learn basics of farming through market animal projects

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

PIEDMONT — Take two Shiflett brothers and their sister. Add two steers, four lambs and six hogs. Shake well. And what is the resulting mixture?

You can find out yourself by attending the 53rd annual 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show to be held

May 6 and 7 at Staunton Union Stockyard on New Hope Road.

The three Shifletts — Aaron, Ashley, and Evan — will be making their appearances at the show with their steers — Bear and Ray — hogs — Babe, Otis, White, Snow, Lois and Clark — and their as-yet-unnamed lambs when youths from across the

county convene at the stockyard for another installment of the popular livestock show.

This will be the second year of competition for each of the Shiflett siblings who exhibited lambs in 1997. The three decided to branch out this year with Aaron choosing two steers for his project work and

See *SHOW*, page 11

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4-H hog showman isn't messing with success



Jake Leonard of Haytie, a member of the Middlebrook Livestock 4-H Club, will exhibit hogs in the upcoming Market Animal Show. Jake exhibited the Grand Champion single hog and was the Champion junior swine showman at the 1997 show.

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

HAYTIE — You don't mess with success. After being one of three Middlebrook-area youths to win top awards in the 1997 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show, Jake Leonard didn't attempt to reinvent the wheel in preparation for this year's show.

"I had the Grand Champion single hog, Garrett Johnston had the Reserve Grand Champion single, and Jeff Buchanan had the Grand Champion pair of hogs," Jake said, recalling the success of his fellow Middlebrook Livestock 4-H Club members last year. All of the winning entries mentioned had been bought from the same Pennsylvania swine producer and were brought to farms in Middlebrook on the same trailer. It didn't take much convincing for other youths from the club to put

their names in the pot when the pig expedition set out this year.

Four parents caravaned to Pennsylvania in early February and brought back 25 pigs which exhibitors will show in this year's Augusta County show. Jake's three hogs were among those 25 and he will spend about 75 days getting them ready for the show.

The Pennsylvania swine producer from whom club members buy their hogs is into the business in a big way. He raises about 20,000 hogs each year, some of which he finishes out himself and others which he contracts to finish. The hogs Jake will exhibit are Yorkshire-Duroc crosses and will weigh about 250 pounds at show time on May 7.

Another part of the formula for success for Jake is the economics of the equation. Rather than paying premium prices for "show" animals, Jake and his compatriots paid the market price — \$70 a head — for the 100-pound porkers bought

in Pennsylvania. Having not over-spent on the front end of the project, Jake and his fellow club members should come out better at the end of their projects. And that's part of what it's all about.

"Go ahead and say it," encourages Jake's parents, Sam and Luann Leonard.

"Money," Jake admits shyly when asked why he pursues his project work of raising steers, lambs and hogs for the Market Animal Show. While he admits that he enjoys caring for the animals, working with them, learning about them, and getting out of school for two days to exhibit in the show, Jake finally admits that the monetary gain from his livestock projects is an attractive part of the package.

Jake is 12 years old and has been a 4-H club member for three years. He has exhibited at the Market Animal Show each of those years. In 1997 he exhibited the Reserve

See **PROJECTS**, page 15

Hintons of Greenville buckle down to prepare for show

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

GREENVILLE — There's homework. Then there's home work. Brother and sister Jack and Angela Hinton have a lot of both kinds of home-work.

There's the kind to do to keep up with assignments their teachers make everyday at Riverheads High School and Beverley Manor Middle School. Then there's the kind the two Hintons have chosen to pursue on their own. This is the work associ-

ated with preparing four lambs and three steers for the upcoming 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show.

The Hintons began their 4-H careers in the R.L. Coffey Community Club. Since then, 16-year-old Jack has joined the Middlebrook Livestock 4-H Club and is a member of the FFA chapter at Riverheads. Angela, 13, is no longer in 4-H but is a member of the BMMS FFA chapter. This year's show will mark Jack's sixth appearance in the event and Angela's third. Jack is a sophomore

at Riverheads and Angela is an eighth grader at BMMS. They are the son and daughter of Otis and Joyce Hinton of Rt. 2, Staunton.

In addition to their livestock projects and academic endeavors, each of the Hintons has even more on his or her plate. Jack works two part-time jobs and Angela stays busy with practices for basketball, volleyball, and softball. Time is a precious commodity in the Hinton household.

"I practice until 6 (o'clock) then come home and work with the animals," Angela says.

"I get off work about 5:30 or 6 then come back here to work with

See **HINTONS**, page 15



Jack and Angela Hinton of Rt. 2, Staunton, will be exhibiting these lambs in the Market Animal Show. Jack is a member of the Middlebrook Livestock 4-H Club and Riverheads FFA. Angela is an FFA member at Beverley Manor Middle School.

•Show

Continued from page 10

Ashley and Evan caring for two lambs and three hogs each.

Aaron's work started in November when he weighed in his 645- and 560-pound steers to begin his project. The Angus-cross and purebred Angus steers underwent a rigorous breaking-in period as Aaron trained them to lead by halters. The youth spent many days working with his steers which has paid off in the long run. The now 1,160- and 975-pound steers are gentle and respond easily to Aaron's directions.

"I let them know who's boss," the 12-year-old says.

Likewise, Ashley and Evan have been spending some quality time with their lambs and hogs. In February they started with 50-pound hogs and in March they started with 90-pound lambs. The sister and brother use halters to lead their lambs. And the hogs? Well, hogs mostly have minds of their own,

but they will take some direction when prodded with a cane. Since this will be their first experience with hogs, there are still a few details to be worked out.

"I guess we have to bathe the hogs," says 9-year-old Evan. "How do you give a pig a bath?"

But that's all part of the Market Animal Show experience. The Shiflett children are learning, just as many other exhibitors have, exactly what it takes to pursue market animal projects. First animals have to be selected. Then, finances have to be arranged. Then the animals have to be cared for and trained. Eventually comes the final preparations for the show. The Shifletts have been learning as they go.

Show lambs are hard to come by in this area with few sheep producers raising fall-born lambs. The Shifletts' Dorset-Suffolk cross lambs were purchased in Ohio and brought to the family's Piedmont farm. The hogs, whose exact origins and breeding are unknown, were bought from

some Augusta County neighbors.

One of Aaron's steers was purchased from an Augusta County Angus breeder. The other was purchased from a neighbor, although it is of Shiflett breeding.

Aaron's father owns a 500-head stock cow herd. But when it came time to select a steer for the show, Aaron visited a neighbor's 20-cow herd to choose the steer he'll show in May. The neighbor has been breeding cattle courtesy a loaner bull from the Shiflett family for many years. So, although the steer didn't come from the Shiflett herd, it came by way of the Shiflett herd genetics.

To handle the financial end of the animal projects, the Shiflett siblings — like almost any farmer does — solicited a loan to purchase their animals. But since their loan officer is also their grandmother, the three report no undue burden from interest accruing and there have been no high pressure tactics for a speedy payoff.

"We sell the animals then we pay

See **LOAN**, page 15

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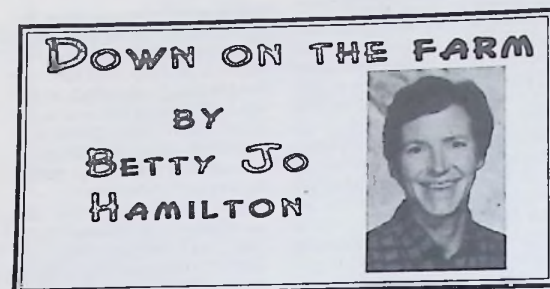
Close en-cow-nters of the worst kind

Down on the farm we're thinking about close encounters. Strike that. Make that close en-cow-nters. We're also thinking about close calls. You know, those times when you find yourself saying, "Gee, that was close." Meaning gee-that-was-close-one-more-coat-of-paint-and-the-car-that-just-passed-you-would-have-collided-with-you kind of close.

Close en-cow-nters can be close calls too, especially when they're close en-cow-nters of the worst kind. Try as we might to avoid them, we have our share of close calls and close en-cow-nters down on the farm. A couple incidents of late have been indicative of this tendency.

First, a little bit about a close call. It happened one day when we were enroute to market with some lambs to sell. The practically simultaneous celebrations of Christian Easter, Greek Orthodox Easter, Jewish Passover and Muslim al-Adha in early April sent us off across the state to deliver market lambs to a special sale.

There's nothing particularly extraordinary about this. In the changing agriculture marketplace, we've grown accustomed to sending livestock to markets beyond this immediate area. With the lamb



market set to peak the first week in April, this meant consigning lambs to a special state-graded sale being organized which would cater to buyers for the upcoming religious holidays.

So, we set off — me, my father, and 60 lambs traveling in two trucks pulling two trailers. Although the trip to distant markets has become commonplace, there's nothing ordinary about travel to these places, especially in trucks pulling trailers.

The first thing you need to understand is that traveling in a truck is just plain uncomfortable. Trucks are best made for driving out across a pasture or pulling hay wagons from the field. They really aren't meant for long, leisurely drives. At least, not trucks with enough axle weight and

power to pull loaded trailers.

There's lots of bumping and jostling around. They're noisy. Ventilation — too much in winter, not enough in summer — leaves a lot to be desired. And when pulling a load, trucks are just plain slow. So long trips with trucks and trailers can be extremely tiring. And that's even if everything goes smoothly. But such was not to be the case of our recent trip hauling lambs to market.

We'd set our sights on leaving the farm by 8:30 that morning, which we managed to accomplish. An on-time, seemingly hitchless start seemed to promote the prospect of a timely trip to market. I set out in the lead with our truck and trailer and was followed by my father driving the neighbor's truck and trailer. The only instruction given me by my traveling compan-

ion was to maintain a speed of 60 miles per hour on the interstate.

"Sixty miles an hour, that's fast enough," my father said flatly. Actually, he should have said, "Sixty miles an hour, that's as fast as the truck will go when pulling a load, so don't expect more."

Once on the interstate and slogging along at 60 miles an hour, traffic spilled past us at an alarming rate. Our 60 miles per hour seemed like skipping against the sprint of the other cars, trucks and tractor trailers traveling the interstate that day. Twenty miles down the interstate I already felt as if we'd been on the road two hours. The sense that this would be a long and tedious trip was settling in. And then it happened.

A tremendous blast ripped the air. The truck I was driving suddenly convulsed and pitched out of control. I looked in my mirror to see that a huge cloud of thick, black smoke obliterated everything behind me from view. With reverberations approaching the scope of an air-to-ground missile strike — (Which is what I thought must have struck the truck, but then I should have known better because nobody yelled, "INCOMING!!!!!!!" to warn me. In the movies, somebody always yells, "INCOMING!!!!!!!" just before the missile hits.)

Anyway, there's this huge explosion, the truck is out of control, I'm holding on for dear life and trying to steer toward the emergency lane, black smoke is billowing from behind me, for a split second I'm sure all is lost, including me. The next split second, I begin to hear horns blaring and brakes squealing and tires screeching. Then I'm really sure I've had it.

I look in the rearview mirror again, and this time the smoke has cleared enough for me to see midsize and subcompact cars careening in every direction possible to avoid hitting my truck and trailer and each other.

Just as I'm sure the next sound I will hear will be the sickening crunch of shredding metal and the next sight I will see will be the spectacle of a car flipping into the me-

dian, I have managed to maneuver my truck off the road and come to a stop in the interstate's emergency lane.

And I just sit there — clutching the steering wheel, feet pressing brake and clutch pedals through the floorboard, tasting my heart in my throat, trying to remember how to breathe — I just sit there as cars and tractor trailers blast past, each a metallic blur to eyes which refused to focus.

Then the door on my truck's passenger side was opening and my father was standing there. He had been following a safe distance behind me just moments prior to the explosion. He later told me that for a matter of three or four seconds my truck and trailer simply disappeared from his view, hidden by the huge cloud of black smoke which had erupted from behind me.

"What was that?" I said through clinched teeth, barely parting lips.

"Tire blew out," he said.

"Where?" I asked.

"I think it's on the truck, isn't it?" he replied.

I was still operating on the air-to-ground missile theory, so information about a tire blowing out was news to me.

At any rate, my breath was beginning to return to me and I managed to inhale enough oxygen to foster the grim reality of a close call.

Now at this point — sitting in the truck, frozen in fear, hands clutched to the steering wheel — I really wanted to cry. No, no, I don't mean I wanted to cry like you cry at the end of a tear-jerker movie. I REALLY wanted to cry, REALLY. I wanted to REALLY cry. It was just one of those close calls that make you want to cry, REALLY, REALLY cry — be you man or woman or child, just cry to release the emotions of fear and shock and fear and — did I mention fear? Oh yeah, I did. But I took a couple of deep, deep, deep breaths, and as I began to sense the feeling returning to my legs, I fought the urge to cry — REALLY cry — and pulled myself together.

Convinced my noodle legs See **BLOWOUT**, page 13



Damage resulting from a virtual tire time bomb is evident in this photo after a close call traveling on interstate

when a rear tire on this pickup blew out.
Photo by Betty Jo Hamilton

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•Blowout

Continued from page 12

would work well enough to support my weight, I got out of the truck only to be shaken by the force of passing traffic which created so much wind suction, I had to hold onto the truck lest I be blown away. The blowout — and let me assure you that the word "blowout" is an absolute understatement — was on the rear left wheel of the truck. Blowout is just not enough to describe the experience. It should be called tire explosion or tire time bomb or something. Anyway, the tire was absolutely destroyed.

And in the process of being destroyed, the tire ripped into pieces and beat the fender on the truck miserably, tearing off the mud flap in the process as well as the little piece of chrome around the wheel well. The flapping tire hit the gas tank inflow, bent it and popped the tank cover right out the side of the pickup. And all this to my father's like-new, not a scratch on it, fire-engine red — the color he'd always wanted — used truck. Oh the pain of it. Now I really wanted to cry. (really.)

But, there's no using crying over torn sheet metal. The tire had to be changed in order for us to continue on our journey.

And so we set about changing the tire. This was made difficult first because the blowout occurred along a section of interstate where the emergency lane is bordered by guardrail which meant I could only get the truck off the road so far. Had the guardrail not been there, I could have pulled the truck and trailer out into the grass giving us some additional room to work while changing the tire.

As it was, changing the tire on the traffic side of the truck was harrowing, to say the least. Cars screamed past us. Tractor trailers were no less than sonic booms, each breaking the sound barrier as

it sped past. I think the space shuttle might have gone by a couple times. The reverberation of passing traffic was a savage assault on the nerves and the auditory senses. We had to change the tire while keeping in mind we were only two steps from cream of people soup. Sorry to be so graphic, but there's no avoiding the obvious. One misstep backwards and we're talking grease spot city here.

Once the tire was changed, we set out on our way again. I clutched the steering wheel so firmly through the remainder of the two-hour drive that I had blisters on my palms by the time we reached our destination. The return trip was pleasantly uneventful. But the blowout was enough to make me really appreciate a

to restrain it for the necessary shots.

We had herded the calf and its cow into a pen. Nothing out of the ordinary. Nothing unusual about either the calf's or the cow's behaviors. I mean, it's not that they just normally comply and go along with this process willingly. Sure, they'll do what they can to get away or avoid being caught. But usually cattle are civil enough about this kind of handling.

The cow and calf had been herded into a pen about eight feet wide and 12 feet long — enough room for them to move around, but not so much room that my brother-in-law and I couldn't accomplish our task. Just as we were moving the calf into position to catch it, the cow moved past me in a not too hurried nor harried fashion and — WHAMMO — kicked the ab-

the close en-cow-nter and we got the calf vaccinated as we had been attempting to do. After we'd finished, my brother-in-law gave me the best advice I've been given in a very long time.

"You shouldn't have been standing there," he said, POST-close en-cow-nter of the worst kind.

"I'll remember that next time," I said. "But next time, could you please tell me before I stand where I shouldn't stand where I shouldn't be standing?"

We had some other odds and ends to tend to after vaccinating the calf. About an hour passed when I noticed my leg was beginning to feel quite strange. The cow's kick had caught me just below the right knee and just left of center and smack on the bone. There's little here in the way of flesh to cushion the bone from impact. Upon examination I found I had sprouted a second knee in this location which featured an absolutely brilliant raspberry hoof-shaped bruise at its center.

Still feeling queasy from the close en-cow-nter, I determined medical attention might be necessary for any number of reasons. Broken bones is one that comes to mind. Blood clot is another. You let a 900-pound cow kick the daylight out of you and you'll understand how many different medical complications might arise.

Fortunately, x-rays revealed that my bones of steel had withstood the impact. No fractures or breaks were noted. Ice packs were used for the first 48 hours and elevation was suggested. Crutches were suggested and used. After a day on them I pulled a muscle so badly in my left leg while trying to avoid using my right leg that I abandoned the crutches and just wobbled back and forth from one stiff leg to the other. Granted, it was slow progress from a mobility standpoint. But I figured if I used the crutches much longer, I would likely fall and break an arm. Crutches can be very dangerous, you know.

Having rationalized my abandonment of the crutches — O.K., O.K., and the knee immobilizer too (wearing it made the swelling worse, really it did), I followed the ice pack treatments with heat and

continued elevating the limb. Walking didn't cause too much pain since the injury wasn't at a joint. I'm not saying there wasn't quite a bit of (still is some) stiffness. Just as long as nothing came in contact with the injured area — this would include a light breeze — it didn't (doesn't) hurt too much.

A virtual rainbow of spring colors burst forth on my leg in the days after the close en-cow-nter. Shades of violet, deep purple, raspberry, blue and pink wrapped around my leg into the calf and ran the length of the leg to my ankle. Later, there were lovely greens, browns, and yellows as the bruising began to heal. There's quite a bit of healing yet to come before my third knee will disappear. If it doesn't, I suppose there may be a future for me in a circus sideshow. ("Step right up!!! See the three-kneed lady!!!! You count 'em folks. Not one — not two — but three knees, yes sirreeeee, three knees. Step right up!!!")

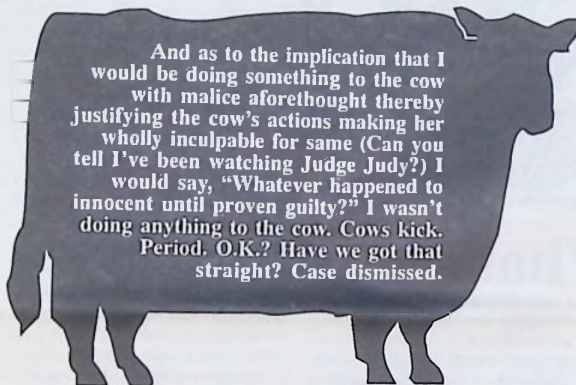
Oddly enough, to me at least, the most-asked question I have fielded since the cow kicked me has been: "What were you doing to the cow?"

Let's get something straight folks. Cows do not need a reason to kick. Cows kick. Period. Provocation or not. Cows kick. Period.

And as to the implication that I would be doing something to the cow with malice aforethought thereby justifying the cow's actions making her wholly inculpable for same (Can you tell I've been watching Judge Judy?) I would say, "Whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty?" I wasn't doing anything to the cow. Cows kick. Period. O.K.? Have we got that straight? Case dismissed.

So what is to be learned from close calls and close en-cow-nters of the worst kind? Well, first, I recommend avoiding them if at all possible. Both have a tendency to shave years off one's life. And if you ever happen to be around any cows, just stand somewhere where you won't get kicked. Because, as we've found down on the farm, it's those close en-cow-nters of the worst kind that make us understand how important "personal space" is, even to a cow. —

And as to the implication that I would be doing something to the cow with malice aforethought thereby justifying the cow's actions making her wholly inculpable for same (Can you tell I've been watching Judge Judy?) I would say, "Whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty?" I wasn't doing anything to the cow. Cows kick. Period. O.K.? Have we got that straight? Case dismissed.



close call, and be relieved that it was no more than a close call.

And then there are those pesky close calls of the close en-cow-nter variety. And yes, I had one of those recently too. Barely a week beyond the close call tire blowout, I was preparing to vaccinate a calf. My brother-in-law was assisting in the process and we were attempting to catch the calf behind a gate in order

absolute living daylight out of me. Man, did she ever kick me hard. So hard, in fact, I immediately felt sick. So hard, in fact, that I feel sick right now just thinking about it.

She kicked me so hard that I was left gasping for breath. My brother-in-law had to yell at me to bring me to my senses and make me realize that if it happened once, it could just as easily happen again.

We got the cow out of the pen without a repeat performance of

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The lusty month of May... maybe

By MARK GATEWOOD

May has to be the best month of the year. The weather is warm but not hot, the breezes gentle. Flowers are still in bloom. And the singing birds sound so, well, happy. It's hard to think that spring birdsong, the epitome of cheer to humans, has nothing to do with happiness and everything to do with daylight and hormones.

Everybody knows that wild birds sing, mate, nest and raise young in the spring and summer. There are good, if rather obvious, reasons why this is a good time to reproduce: the weather is warm, there are lots of insects to feed the young and long days in which to catch them, and trees and shrubs are fully leafed out to shelter nests.

A less obvious advantage to seasonal breeding is this: birds gotta fly and the less weight they carry, the easier it is to fly. So reduce breeding to a few short months of the year and let those big heavy reproductive organs wither away to reduce weight during migration and wintering.

Now, the question is, what starts the breeding season? How do birds "know" when it's time to start singing, defending territories and nesting? The answer is daylight and hormones.

Back in the 1920s and 1930s, experiments were done with captive juncos, our familiar backyard winter bird, subjecting them to artificially created periods of "day" and "night." When the "days" were increased in length, regardless of the calendar, the birds began to show physiological and behavioral changes preparing them to breed.

More recently, they have determined ("they" being graduate students: all this stuff is done by graduate students) the bizarre path by which this occurs.

Daylight acts on the bird's brain, either entering through the eye or through the skull (remember, everything in a bird is designed to

be light in weight, so skin and skull are thin), stimulating a gland called the hypothalamus, which in turn stimulates the pituitary to produce reproductive hormones and bingo, you've got developing ovaries or testes, territorial behavior and singing.

This is simplified, of course, but this is the basic path. It can all be produced or suppressed under laboratory conditions. Weather can speed up or slow down the process, but the basic controls lie in the increasing day length.

Day length is not the only light factor which influences breeding bird behavior. Light intensity also plays a role. There are some fun facts about light intensity. Kids, you can do this experiment at home. Tell your mom and dad to get up before dawn (they probably do anyway, so no problem, right?) for four or five days in May, go outside and listen for the first birds to begin singing. Half an hour each morning should do it. Write down the species in order that they begin singing and see if a pattern emerges.

What you will find is an order, starting with cardinals and robins and song sparrows. House wrens, chickadees and titmice will come later in the morning. One researcher used a light meter to determine the actual light

intensities at which singing commenced. For the robin it was .022 foot candle, for the cardinal .022 and for the song sparrow .015. As a point of reference, civil twilight, approximately one-half hour before sunrise, when the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon, is .04 foot candle.

These intensity readings were taken on clear mornings in April and environmental factors can have some influence. Things will start later on a cloudy morning and we've probably all heard mockingbirds and others singing on a full moon night, but light intensity has the final say on who starts singing when.

It's hard to believe that the birdsong that's so uplifting to the human spirit is just biological determinism and parental duty. The local robin must feel some joy as he cranks up his song on a May morning, but it's probably on a level that our science will never measure or understand. Get outside and listen and enjoy it while you can because in August, when the days start getting shorter, things are going to get quiet again. —



Jeepers, creepers! What's up with those peepers?

By MARK GATEWOOD

We were at the Forest Service wetland at Augusta Springs on a soft April evening at dusk. The spring peepers were in full chorus



along the marshy edge of the pond.

We walked along the dam into the epicenter of the din, just to see how much we could stand. Our presence didn't diminish the singing a bit; it was so close and so loud that it seemed to be coming from within our heads. We shouted. We waved our arms. Nothing could stop them. The noise became a pressure on the eardrums — uncomfortable, claustrophobic. We retreated, put to flight by a bunch of inch-long frogs.

For many people, the first peeper chorus of spring is one of the milestones in the progress of the season. It was once thought that the peeper chorus began when the air temperature reached 50 degrees. Now it appears that an accumulation of mild days is required, as insurance against being fooled by one mild day and then zapped by a freeze.

The spring peeper is not the first frog to sing and breed in the spring. That honor goes to the wood frog, a larger frog with a dark mask across its eyes. The wood frog breeds in

February and March in temporary pools of water left from snowmelt and winter rains. Its call is a clucking, clacking quack, like a faraway duck. It doesn't attract much attention, because wood frogs don't occur in the large numbers that the peepers do and there aren't that many people out at that time of the year to hear them.

Reproduction among frogs and their near relatives the salamanders is a cold, clammy affair. "Froggie went a-courtin', he did ride," may be about as much as we want to know about it. To show you how bad it can get, I've seen salamanders mating — very slowly — beneath the ice in a frozen pond. Images from TITANIC to the contrary, it's hard for us humans to feel very romantic about water that's only a few degrees above freezing.

Why endure such harsh conditions at mating time? There are lots of things out there that would like to eat frog eggs and frogs. An early start and a huge

output of eggs give the frogs a headstart on their predators and assure next year's chorus.

The peeper chorus is a featureless mass of noise to us, but to the peepers at water level it is structured and organized. Male peepers, like breeding birds, sing to defend a territory — in this case only a square foot or so. Female peepers can detect individual singers and select those which are calling faster, as these are the larger, older males and the best husband material.

There are also so-called satellite males, which defend no territory, but wander about as opportunistic interlopers. If you listen long enough to the chorus, you may hear above the normal "Preeeeep!" call a more click-like call, like running your thumb-

nail over the teeth of a comb; this is the call of a territorial male whose territory is being crowded by either a satellite male or another territorial male.

The chorus also serves a safety function. Standing in a peeper marsh, you're surrounded by thousands of frogs, but try to pick one out. The noise is so disorienting that it's very hard for you — or a predator — to select one. The chorus allows this mass breeding to take place in relative safety for the individuals.

And in a week or two, it'll all be over for another year. The peepers will retire into quiet obscurity in the marsh and most of us won't see or think of them again until next spring, when we'll expect them to be there one more time, ringing in the spring. —

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Loan

Continued from page 11

Me-maw," Evan explained. A wink from the children's mother indicates there may even be some leniency in the final payback process.

But it takes more than money to see the task through to completion. The nutritional needs of each animal must be determined and a feed

ration selected. The Shifletts mix their own feeds for their steers, hogs, and lambs. For the steers, Aaron has chosen a feed ration that is 14 percent protein and consists mostly of corn and soybean meal. They receive a handful of hay and 21 pounds of grain twice daily.

"They're big eaters," Aaron says.

For the hogs, Ashley and Evan also are using a 14 percent blend

from corn and soybean meal. Fourteen pounds of feed per day makes up the hogs' diets. The lambs are on 16 percent feed blended from corn, oats, and soybean meal. They also are provided hay.

Each of the Shifletts can name different reasons for being involved in the Market Animal Show with their livestock projects.

"It's fun," Aaron says. "I like working with the animals. It's good to have some responsibility."

Evan agreed with his brother but noted it's difficult to part with the animals when sale time comes.

"You get attached to 'em. You take care of them, then they're gone," Evan said. "That's hard, but I like the money."

"But you have to do something first before you make the money," says 10-year-old Ashley.

Aaron is a seventh-grade student at Stewart Middle School. Ashley and Evan are in the fifth and fourth grade, respectively, at Clymore Elementary School. They are members of the Willing Workers Junior 4-H Club. Aaron has been in 4-H for five years, Ashley for three and Evan for two. Ashley and Evan also

spent two years each as Cloverbuds. The three are the children of Larry and Susie Shiflett of Piedmont.

It's easy to see that these farm family youngsters are learning important lessons about what it takes to be successful in agriculture. Although they have years ahead of them to learn how to operate a farm, they're just beginning to understand some of the essentials — attention to detail, hard work, knowing where to get money to finance the operation. And, when the mixture is just right, how to make the whole arrangement pay off in the end. —

Projects

Continued from page 11

Grand Champion steer in addition to his Grand Champion hog. He also was named the top junior hog showman, an honor which netted him yet more financial gain in the form of a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond.

This will be Jake's second year exhibiting all three species at the show. He says he prefers exhibiting lambs and hogs over steers and gives hogs the ultimate nod as his favorite.

"I kind of like the hogs best. It's the easiest," Jake says. "All you've got to do is play with 'em."

Jake's mom agrees.

"You scrub 'em and that's about it," she said.

While on feed, Jake's hogs have free-choice access to 16 percent pig grower pellets in an automatic feeder. In early April the hogs weighed in at 200 and 190 pounds putting them right on target for their eventual market weight of 250-260 pounds. This represents one of the rule changes for this year's

show. The top weight on hogs will be allowed up to 260 pounds which is in line with current market trends on finished hogs.

Until show time, Jake will have his hands full exercising his three hogs, two steers, and three lambs for the show. In addition to his parents' help, 7-year-old sister Katie lends a hand too. She says she's learning how to show animals so she'll be ready when she's old enough to exhibit in the 1999 show. Even then she'll be no amateur, having already gotten some experience in the showing at last year's Augusta County Fair.

As for brother Jake's winning ways, it will be up to the judge to determine if the youngster will repeat his Grand Champion performance from 1997. And with 24 other swine of similar type and style competing for the same award, the judge may think he's seeing double, triple, or even quadruple when the Pennsylvania-bred, Middlebrook raised pigs start rooting their way around the showing at this year's Market Animal Show. —

Hintons

Continued from page 11

the animals," Jack says. Homework of the teacher-assigned variety is completed, Jack says, "when all this (work) is taken care of."

"It's a struggle sometimes with all this homework," the Hintons' father says.

Participation in the Market Animal Show has evolved into more than just a club project, particularly for Jack. Angela says she enjoys showing the animals and working with them, however that's enough to satisfy her interest in livestock. Jack, on the other hand, has turned his interest in exhibiting market lambs into a purebred and commercial ewe operation.

The Hinton family lives near Riverheads in what has become a suburbanized U.S. 11 corridor between Staunton and Greenville. Eight years ago, the family purchased 26 acres of land which is situated behind the Hinton house which faces U.S. 11. The acreage has permitted the family to expand its interest in sheep production. Jack now owns 20 purebred Dorset ewes and 10 Dorset-Suffolk cross ewes. In addition to showing market lambs at the annual 4-H and FFA event, he shows purebred sheep in a number of county and state fairs during the summer months.

Although he continues to buy market lambs to exhibit in May, one of his goals is to breed some of his ewes to lamb in the fall to supply stock for exhibition in the spring show. In the meantime, however,

the Hintons must look elsewhere for market lambs. Last year, Jack was successful in finding a Dorset-Suffolk cross market lamb in Pennsylvania which won Reserve Grand Champion single honors in the Market Animal Show. He returned to Pennsylvania this year to buy lambs again, but this time patronized a different producer buying Suffolk-Hampshire cross lambs.

Like many participants in the show who assist fellow exhibitors in finding animals for exhibition, Jack was part of a group which brought a trailerload of 36 lambs back to Augusta County as a result of the foray to Pennsylvania. The lambs weighed about 65 pounds each when club members began working with them in mid-February.

Having started their Market Animal Show careers as lamb exhibitors, Jack and Angela have branched out to the steer show as well. Each exhibited steers last year and are preparing two Maine-Anjou cross steers and a Maine-Anjou/Angus/Simmental cross steer for this year's show. The steers ranged in weight from 625 pounds to 755 pounds at the November weigh-in. In early April the steers ranged from 950 to 1,150 pounds.

The financial end of agriculture is always a puzzler. Every farmer knows that in order to make a profit, livestock must return more money than is invested in it. Jack and Angela have learned it's difficult to realize a monetary surplus when paying \$200/head for market lambs and \$1.10/pound for steers to exhibit. The Hintons agree that they enjoy participating in the Market

Animal Show and working with their livestock project. But — and this is a big "but" — as their father pointed out, "You thought you were going to make some money."

While it may be difficult to realize a profit on the Market Animal Show project, the Hintons have made progress. Jack has used some of his project proceeds to purchase sheep for his production flock. He also has purchased two Simmental heifers which he has used to exhibit in purebred shows. One of the heifers is due to calve in May. While they may not be setting the agricultural world on fire, the Hintons do have something to show for their work. And they've learned a lot about setting goals, working toward them, and accomplishing them.

"I want to continue to improve my Dorset flock and get started in beef cattle," Jack explains.

With two family members who have so many school and extracurricular activities to pursue, it's not easy to schedule time for a vacation. It's just as well though, since the family can't agree on a vacation destination. One Hinton wants to go to Texas, the other has chosen Florida. It's probably not too hard to decide who wants to go where.

The choice of vacation is a moot point anyway. Jack and Angela have their hands full with work and ball practice and homework, not to mention getting their animals ready for the Market Animal Show. But as they have demonstrated in the past, come May 6 and 7, the Hintons and their animals will be ready when the ringmaster calls the first class to the Staunton Union Stockyard showing. —

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Valley provides Civil War backdrop for Don McCaig's *Jacob's Ladder*

By CLAUDE R. SIMMONS III

Two men -- young cadet Duncan Gatewood and old slaver Edmund Ruffin -- stood on the gallows' trapdoor on the eve of John Brown's hanging. "What do you fear?" the old man asked the young one who shot back his answer, "The loss of honor!" Ruffin then countered with, "The loss of honor is a young man's fear. We old men fear falling on the mercy of others."

Author Donald McCaig weighs the loss of honor against the fear of subjugation in his new book, *Jacob's Ladder*.

Just as Jacob dealt with issues of honor in the Old Testament, so too did mid-nineteenth century Virginians drawn into terrible, bloody civil war. Men and women, black and white seeking love, power and freedom played their

parts in our country's defining moment.

Set in the antebellum mountain plantation of Stratford near SunRise Chapel close to Hidden Valley north of the rail station at Milboro, Jacob's Ladder tells about proprietors Samuel and Abigail Gatewood and their kith and kin. The Gatewoods and Stratford enjoy times of plenty followed by deprivation and social upheaval that ultimately yield blessings among the tragedies.

While the Gatewoods worked hard, they also enjoyed wealth, comfort and status for which their slave "servants" could have no hope. African Americans wanted comfort, wealth and status commensurate with their ability and effort but institutionalized slavery denied that possibility in antebellum Christian America.

McCaig paints a complete picture of the Valley as a slave-holding region which popu-

lar myth often conveniently denies. Free or chattel, educated or ignorant, wise or fool, black or white, his men and women are flesh and blood with whom the reader can identify.

It's important not to compare *Jacob's Ladder* to other popular Civil War fiction. McCaig's three dimensional characters weave a complex story. Civilians caught in war's tumult and soldiers on the firing line all have their tale. None is as compelling as Duncan's and Marguerite's, also known as Midge or Maddie, a Gatewood slave.

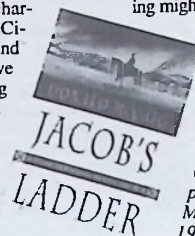
Marguerite Omohundru tells her story to a WPA worker from the parlor of her Richmond home. Beginning with her own racially

mixed parentage, Marguerite poses, "I suppose it is more agreeable to make love with creatures that closely resemble oneself. Narcissism is one of the South's notable frailties." Adolescent love Marguerite shared in the barn with young master Duncan Gatewood sets in motion relationships snaring a variety of characters in a sticky web.

For a good, fun read or a deeper consideration of history's bigger issues, *Jacob's Ladder* is highly recommended. "Valley" folks will enjoy finding familiar names, places and communities described with details about clothing, food, customs and agricultural practices. McCaig's writing might well transcend anything you've ever

read about ordinary people during the extraordinary days of Confederate Virginia. It's a fresh, full look at those days of yesteryear whose contemporary implication might be greater than we think. —

A book signing of *Jacob's Ladder* by the author will be held at 4 p.m. May 30 at Wills in the Staunton Mall. Call the bookstore at 886-1919 for information.



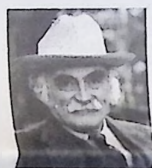
Research proves key to author's literary success

By CLAUDE R. SIMMONS III

Don McCaig is a Montana native and a New York expatriot who has made his home in Highland County for the last 25 years. His previous books include *The American Homeplace*, *Nop's Hope*, and the bestseller *Nop's Trials*.

So, just how did Don McCaig, former ad man, sheepdog expert, and not-quite a Virginian

come to tell the story of Virginia and the Valley during the American Civil War?



McCAIG

An excursion to the Bath County courthouse where he ran across a court case involving a

runaway slave planted the idea.

Listeners of National Public Radio also may well recall his radio commentary one day several years ago when he talked about helping his neighbor burn down the old Stuart House built by slaves. Our too-often-ignored legacy birthed *Jacob's Ladder*.

McCaig meticulously researched this book, personally visiting every site described, attend-

ing scholarly conferences, and talking to various experts. The reader will notice two *Augusta Country* staff writers whose name appear in the book's acknowledgments — Nancy Sorrells and Sue Simmons. Invited to McCaig's farm one spring afternoon, the three had a riveting conversation about slavery and slave hiring in the Shenandoah Valley over tea and scones and homemade jam.

With his handlebar mustaches and the shock of white hair under a Stetson, McCaig may strike people as being something he's not. But don't be fooled. He is the real McCoy and when he's talking about Virginia's blacks and whites during the Civil War, he's talking about Americans and the issues with which they once and still grapple. —

•Palace

Continued from page 3

that it might be a good idea to have more than one auctioneer among them.

A spirit of giving back to the community is evident at Cow Palace. Ray has hosted auctions for organizations such as the Kindred Spirits spay/neuter group.

"The barn is available for any non-profit group who wants to use it at no charge, and my services are also available at no charge," he offers.

The Weaver family auction team's notoriety has spread by word of mouth. Ray is a respected long-time member of the community, and his customers seem to feel confident leaving their sales in his hands.

"I go to a lot of auctions, but like coming here. Ray has a rhythm you can tap your foot to... he is honest and runs a good sale," a customer commented.

Not everyone has such kind words to say about a member of the auctioneering profes-

sion. While dating the woman who would eventually become his wife, she introduced him to a man in her hometown as an auctioneer. "He said 'Well, another one of those crooked auctioneers!'" Ray recalls.

Ray offers some advice for novice auction-goers. "Be attentive until you know how a sale is conducted," he said. Also pay attention to who you are bidding against. Many times when he is on the platform, he notices two people from the same immediate family bidding on the same object. "I feel for these people and tell them that I already have a bid from one family member and ask them if they want to bid," he said.

The team also enjoys holding on-site auctions for those who would rather not move their items to the barn. Watch the newspaper for upcoming sales, which are held most Saturdays and some Wednesdays. Cow Palace is a great place for a family to enjoy an auction. —

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Augusta 4-Hers compete in county contests

VERONA — Augusta County 4-Hers competed recently in their annual Share the Fun Talent Show, Fashion Revue, Presentations, and Public Speaking contests. Participants and the results include the following.

Public Speaking

Seniors — Daniel Salatin, blue; Paul Jaussen, blue; Olivia Shiflett, red. Daniel Salatin advanced to district competition.

Share the Fun

Juniors

Vocal — Cindy Massie, red; Instrumental — Sarah George, blue; Valerie Burton, red; Carolyn Lam, blue; Olivia Williams, red.

Dance — Jason Stratton, blue.

Combination — Christina Cason, Grace Gutshall and Jillian Begoon, blue.

Drama — Evan Shiflett, red; Ashley Shiflett and Michelle Skeen, blue.

Juniors advancing to district competition were Cindy Massie, Sarah George, Carolyn Lam, Jason Stratton, Christina Cason, Grace Gutshall, Jillian Begoon, Evan Shiflett, Ashley Shiflett and Michelle Skeen.

Intermediates

Instrumental — Abe Jaussen, blue; Meggie Lam, blue.



PEACH Cloverbuds perform the opening act at the 1998 Augusta County 4-H Share the Fun Talent Show held recently at

Clymore Elementary School. They sang a medley of railroad songs.

Photo courtesy Augusta County Extension

Vocal — John Stratton, blue.
Variety — Bretagne Byrd, blue.
All intermediate participants advanced to the district contest.

Seniors

Instrumental — Josie and Mollie Williams, blue.

Variety — Robby Widener, Lisa Showalter and Dana Noel, blue.

Combination — Paul, Caleb and Abe Jaussen, red.

Dance — Ellen Murray, blue.
Drama — Kate Lam, blue.

All senior participants advanced to the district contest.

Fashion Revue

Juniors — Michelle Skeen, red; Ashley Shiflett, blue; Natasha James, red; Melanie James, red; Jessica Rohrbach, blue; and Christi Wonderley, blue.

Seniors — Ellen Murray, blue; Erin Murray, blue. Both advanced to district competition.

Juniors advancing to district

Fashion Revue were Jessica Rohrbach and Christi Wonderley.

Presentations

Juniors — Jessica Rohrbach, blue; Mary Winegard, red; Ashley Shiflett, blue; Evan Shiflett, blue.

Seniors — Erin Murray, blue; Ellen Murray, blue; Daniel Salatin, blue; Elizabeth Cupp, red.

All presentation participants advanced to the district contest. —

4-Hers win at district contests

FORT DEFIANCE — Northwest District 4-H Contests were held April 4 at Clymore Elementary and Stewart Middle Schools. Augusta County 4-H members competing in the event included the following. Individuals earning purple ribbons indicate best in category for their age group.

Elizabeth Cupp, senior, breads and cereals presentation, red; Heather Rockwell, senior, career development presentation, purple; Evan Shiflett, junior, dairy presentation, purple; Mary Winegard, intermediate, dog care and training presentation, red; Jessica Rohrbach, junior, Fashion Revue II, red; Christi Wonderley, junior, Fashion Revue II, blue.

Ashley Shiflett, junior, horse presentation, red; Ellen Murray, senior, horse presentation, red; Erin Murray, senior, horse presentation, blue; Jessica Rohrbach, junior, livestock presentation, purple; Daniel Salatin, senior, marketing presentation, purple; Daniel Salatin, senior, public speaking, purple.

Christina Cason, Grace Gutshall, Jillian Begoon, juniors, Share the Fun combination, red; Jason Stratton, junior, STF dance, blue; Ellen Murray, senior, STF dance, blue; Ashley Shiflett and Michelle Skeen, juniors, STF dance, purple; Evan Shiflett, junior, STF drama, red; Kate Lam, senior, STF drama, purple; Abe Jaussen, intermediate, STF instrumental, white.

Meggie Lam, intermediate, STF instrumental, purple; Josie and Mollie Williams, seniors, STF instrumental, blue; Sarah George, junior, STF instrumental, red; Carolyn Lam, junior, STF instrumental, blue; Robby Widener, Lisa Showalter and Dana Noel, seniors, STF variety, blue; Cindy Massie, junior, STF vocal, white; John Stratton, intermediate, STF vocal, purple. —

Ceremony

Continued from page 7 and select persons one by one for presentation.

About the middle of the ceremony, she went around the circle but selected no one. Then she made a second trip around and as she passed, she called out what sounded like "Hallam Mary." It was indistinct, but someone sitting near asked her if the correct pronunciation was "Hiram Arey." She said

"Yes, that is it." My die was cast!

After the ceremony concluded, the All Stars were invited to a social meeting which lasted quite a while so there was no way to get a good night sleep that night.

The next morning we were off after breakfast and in comparison to the trip down, we had a rather uneventful trip home. One incident remains in my mind however. We had stopped along the road beside a small stream to rest a few

minutes. When we started again, I got into the back on a bench and Mrs. Jamison got on and sat beside me. Her first words were "Well, now that we have an All Star in the County, what are we going to do about it?" I guess I had never thought about it in that light, so had nothing to say.

It was a very tiresome, long journey home and we must attribute the heavenly angels for bringing us safely home late that night. Even so, it took three more days to rest and get back to normal.

Another highlight memory brings up the fact that it was at this same ceremony that Lyle Armentrout of Rockingham County was also inducted into the All Stars. There began a life-long acquaintance which became closer the following

June we each received notice we were to board the train at Harrisonburg for Jacksons Mill just outside Weslons, W.Va., to represent our state at the West Virginia All-Star Conference. It was a delightful weekend held at the mill site where Stonewall Jackson was born and raised. As a memento of that visit, we were each presented with a chip about the size of a tennis ball, except not round, broken from the burr of the Jackson Mill. The following year, 1924, everyone went to the short course by car and with no such strange adventure. Outstanding in my mind for that year was the All-Star induction of another Centerville 4-Her, Boyd Glick, thus tapping the first two Augusta All Stars, both members of the Centerville Club. ---

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Schoolhouse News

BME's Sadonis named Teacher of the Year

By NANCY SORRELLS

CEDAR GREEN — Communication. It's the goal of all teachers. But in Cindy Sadonis' Beverley Manor Elementary School classroom, it's Communication with a capital "C."

Sadonis, who was recently honored as Augusta County's Teacher of the Year, teaches hearing impaired children from kindergarten through fifth grade. Her program is the centrally-located resource for the entire county and features flexibility and individuality along with the all-important goal of communication. "It is a self-contained class for some of the kids and a resource for some of the others, depending on the child's needs. The children go out (to the regular classroom) according to grade level for certain things with some kids going out more than others," she said of her program.

It is a program that has drawn praise from parents, students, fellow teachers and administrators.

"Cindy does an excellent job. Her students are mainstreamed quite a bit and to do that you have to coordinate with teachers and tell them how to work with each child. She is not only their teacher but the coordinator of their education programs," explained Beverley Manor Elementary principal Al Costa.

"The kids love her dearly and the parents are very comfortable with her. I receive letters from parents praising Cindy and her program. What she has done has been on her own and it takes a lot of time and effort. She is one of the first teachers here in the morning and

last to leave in the evening. She comes in the summer. Time is not a problem to her. She will do what's necessary to get the job done. She is here every day," he explained.

Clearly Sadonis has a rapport with the children and a closeness that comes from working with some of the students for five or six years.

"In some ways we are like family," she said of her students. "In the regular classroom they get to have a new teacher every year. I'm sure that some of mine come back at the beginning of each year and say, 'Oh no, we have her again!'" she said with a laugh. "So I try to do things that will hold their interest. I want school to be fun."

Watching a master teacher at work is exciting. The creativity and innovation shine through in the first few minutes. Take a basic vocabulary game. Rather than simply flipping through the cards, she challenges each student to correctly identify a certain number of words. When a mistake is made, they are always told that it was a good try. When the goal has been achieved the student gets to maneuver an obstacle course around the classroom. The course is nothing more than chairs, string and cardboard rolls, and the kids love the opportunity to jump and run and release some energy for just a moment.

This year Sadonis has nine students who range in age from 5 to 10 and who have different levels of hearing impairment. Nine students can go in nine different directions, and that's where her skills and experience come into play.

"Cindy is innovative and creative. She can get the children to stay on task and is able to channel their energies," explained the BME principal.

Costa noted, however, that his award-winning teacher has done much more than insure that her students stay on task. She has made the entire school her self-contained classroom.

"My goal is to get these kids to communicate to the best of their ability," she explained.

She works with the children, their parents, the general education teachers and the general education students to achieve this.

"I combine sign language, finger spelling, speaking, and or Cued Speech," she said in listing the ways in which her students learn to communicate. The proportions of the various communication channels each child receives depend on the individual education plan worked out between Sadonis, the parents and the general education teachers.

In order to make the communi-



Cindy Sadonis, far right, works with students, from left, Petya, Spencer, and Kala in a class at Beverley Manor Elementary School. Sadonis was recently selected Au-

gusta County's Teacher of the Year. (Students are identified by first name only at the request of BME school administration.)

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

gation complete, Sadonis teaches sign language to the hearing teachers and students at BME.

"Three days a week I teach sign language to the children's classes so that when they are mainstreamed into those classes they can talk with their peers. I want to make the kids as much a part of their peers as possible. This has been really successful," she said.

She also has stayed after school to conduct workshops for the schools' regular teachers.

"Almost everyone here (at BME) knows how to do some signing," Costa explained. "Even the kindergarten students can tell you the ABCs. It's amazing how the kids like to learn the signs. It all comes from Cindy's willingness to teach. We learn from her and from her kids. The general education kids enjoying working with and communicating with her kids," he added.

Sadonis, however, turns aside praises that single her out, pointing instead to her three interpreter/assistants Mary Wilhelm, Shanyin Trantham and Teresa Young and the rest of the school's population of teachers and students.

"I couldn't do it without my assistants," she said of the three who accompany the hearing impaired

students into the regular classroom and interpret for them. "But the program succeeds here because of the attitudes of the general education teachers at BME. They influence the students in their classes which in turn affects the students in my class. They are positive and welcome and make my kids feel a part. The teachers take the time to communicate directly with my students," she said.

"Although I am proud of the

honor (of Teacher of the Year), I am more proud because I know that it was because of the teachers at BME that the program has been successful. I know what a great staff it is and how dedicated the teachers are," she continued.

Although Sadonis has been at BME for a dozen years and has been teaching in the county for 14 years, she came to her profession late in her educational path. She

See **TEACHER**, page 19



Augusta County's Teacher of the Year Cindy Sadonis is surrounded by some of her students, clockwise from top left, Petya, Lindsey, Kala, Ben, Kyle, and Spencer.



1-800-978-2794

Gap FFA takes Food for America message to Churchville Elementary

By PENNY PLEMMONS

CHURCHVILLE — Buffalo Gap High School's "Future Farmers of America" held their annual "Food For America Day" at Churchville Elementary School April 23. FFA organizers simulated farm life with myriad farm animals, equipment, homegrown plants and food products.

Each year the hands-on event is specifically designed to promote agriculture in the community and purposefully aims at teaching the farm-to-market concept to elementary school children.

"It is important for today's children to know what's on the farm," commented Whit Sours, Buffalo Gap FFA chapter president. Sours said he also hopes that those who attended the agriculture affair will be inspired to become involved in FFA.

"Remember coming to events like these when I was in the second and third grades and getting to sit on the tractors. Those early farm expe-

riences influenced me to like agriculture," the Gap senior said.

FFA students provided a variety of opportunities to enable visitors to acquaint themselves with farm life. Children hoisted themselves onto modern-day tractors as well as those of yesteryear. They waited in long lines to get a chance to use pedal power to drive a child-sized tractor. There were horses, pigs, cows, ducks, chickens, lambs, fish and more to pet or observe.

FFA members manned the exhibits and answered questions. Despite bouts of rain throughout the day, about 1,500 children attended the exhibition. The event drew the attention of Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Carlton Courter who also was in attendance. He commended the high school FFA for putting a spotlight on agriculture.

"This is a great effort," Courter said. "All of agriculture should be challenged to do more of these types of things."

Courter spoke with school FFA teacher advisors Shirley Kaufman and Barry Gray about taking the expo beyond the rural community and into the surrounding cities.

"We need to think outside the box (referring to the agricultural community) and encourage the outside community to understand that farmers are not just raping the land and polluting the environment, but that we are real people who are practicing responsible farming."

Courter said he senses that the American public has become so far removed from the source of its food supply that people don't understand agriculture anymore. Sours agreed and hoped that by having an annual "Food for America Day" children would grow up recognizing the importance of the farmer contribution.

"Only three percent of the American



Buffalo Gap FFA member Brian Vess holds a two-week-old Dorset lamb for students of Sandy Thompson's third grade class from Churchville Elementary School to pet.

Photo by Penny Plemmons

workforce are farmers," Sours pointed out. "But, that three percent provides food for the entire nation."

Reality of Virginia's SOLs dawning at RHS

By RUTH JONES

GREENVILLE — New requirements are beginning for students this school year, due to the new Standards of Learning (SOL).

Student assessments will begin this spring. High school students have been tested in four major areas — mathematics, lab science, English and history. These

requirements were developed in the fall of 1997 and are statewide.

At Riverheads High School, students, teachers and parents are very affected by these changes.

Students will have to take more courses to pass with the diploma they want. Freshmen and incoming freshmen will be most affected by the SOLs. Course requirements will begin with the Class of 2002 who are eighth graders this year. The test given this spring will include the entire school.

While some students think SOLs will make things worse, others think they will be beneficial.

"It's harder, but it will help you learn more," said sophomore Holly Harding.

Obviously this is a very controversial issue, but whether we want them or not, SOLs seem to be coming anyway.

Cheerleaders compete in regionals

RHS staff report

GREENVILLE — Riverheads High School's cheerleading squad took 10 girls to the Region B cheerleading competition held at Page County on March 5.

The girls practiced a routine everyday to make it as perfect as possible. Practices were long and

strenuous not to mention stressing, but it all paid off in the end.

"We all had a blast," said junior cheerleader Felicia Gutshall. "It was an experience I will hold dear forever."

"We are not here to win, we are here for the experience and to have fun," said Julie Grimm, junior cheerleader. The squad did exactly that.

Felicia Gutshall and Misty Reed

were chosen to represent the Skyline District on the second team all-region cheerleading squad.

Wendy Potter was named an all-region honorable mention. This year's squad marks the first time RHS has competed in cheerleading. The team worked hard together which made the competition a success.

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Teacher

Continued from pgae 18
earned her undergraduate degree in speech and hearing from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Her graduate work in hearing disorders was at James Madison University.

"It was while I was in graduate school at JMU that I knew I wanted to teach and have the interaction with the kids," she said.

It is a decision she has never regretted.

"The first children I started with

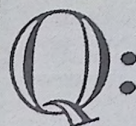
will graduate next year and I am really proud of them. I know that I have provided them with a means to be able to communicate. I have given them the skills to do whatever direction they take in life," she said.

"Cindy is a fine person, very professional and dedicated to the school and her kids. The program flourishes because of her," Costa said. "If she would ever leave, she would be a hard act to follow. If there is a master teacher, Cindy is a prime example."

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The Hitching Post

Keep horse's condition in mind when re-schooling



Q: I have a mare which has been field kept for so long that she does not want to be ridden anymore. How can I train her to riding again?
Sis

First of all, I would like to explain two different terms that are important in your situation. They are "training" and "schooling." Training is when a horse that has NEVER been ridden before is taught everything it needs to know. Schooling is when a horse has been trained, or taught, and needs to have the training disciplined or the skills sharpened.

This is important for you to remember because your mare already "knows" and you do not have to "teach" her anything new. Horses are creatures of habit. Think of it this way, whatever habit you allow us to have on a daily basis is what

we become very comfortable with. We do not like change, and we do not always like surprises.


Start with ground work. If your mare leads well and is well mannered on the ground, then move to tacking her. Make sure she is comfortable with tacking and un-tacking. Ground work includes voice commands. Don't forget to take the opportunity to teach her simple commands like "whoa, stand, easy, and walk on." Horses that do well with voice commands on the ground will also do well with them while being ridden.

If your mare is edgy or nervous about being mounted, then TAKE

YOUR TIME. Rushing her can make matters worse. Keeping her calm and relaxed will help you make the process more enjoyable for her and for you. Depending upon how much time you wish to spend with your mare, whether it is all day or an hour a day over a couple weeks, never go on to the next step if she is not comfortable with where you are at. When your horse is comfortable with each step — tacking, mounting, walking, halting, being ridden quietly, unmounting, then untacked and turned out — then you will both enjoy your riding time and each other.

This brings me to a common mistake of many riders who want to get back into the saddle again. It concerns conditioning. When I have been field kept for awhile, I will often be in poor physical shape. This is why I recommend taking things slow as you bring your mare back to saddle. So many times riders try to do too much too fast and the horse gets "sore." This can

I.B. HOOFINIT
From the
Horse's Mouth



cause behavior problems that can be avoided if you plan your schooling or training over longer periods of time. Just because we are big and strong to you does not mean we are always in great shape.

Think of your training process in terms of "schooling." Your mare already knows her stuff, you just need to get her used to the idea of riding again. Be consistent, patient, and, most of all, committed.

Remember to keep in mind her condition and build her up over time. If you cannot ride her on a regular basis, consider finding someone interested in schooling her for you so she will be "sharp" when you want to ride. As a creature of habit, we can get used to being ridden every day, just as easily as we can get used to standing in a field. Good luck. —

I.B. Hoofinit is a fictitious horse character developed by Chris Marrs as a service to teach horse care. Questions to I.B. Hoofinit may be submitted to P.O. Box 2955, Staunton, Va. 24402. Questions become the property of Chris Marrs, and answers are subject to editor approval. Information pro-

vided in this column is meant to be taken as general advice. Each horse, rider, owner, and situation reflects different problems. I.B.'s answers are meant to be informative and enjoyable, but not binding. Common sense in any situation is a must.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fourth in a series of articles about equine-related careers.

By L.B. HOOFINT

HARRISONBURG—I wanted something to remember me by so I decided a portrait was just the thing. And I found just the person to do the job.

Judy I. Roberts is an illustrator and an equine artist who lives in Harrisonburg. Judy has some good advice for anyone interested in a career in the horse industry as an artist.

There are two main points that Judy stresses in this profession.

First, artists should learn to see the shadows and how the light shines on the subject. Second, learn the anatomy and structure of the animals. Learn how things look. For example, horses' eyes do not look like human eyes. Study these things, especially the structure.

Judy grew up very interested in horses.

"I couldn't have one, so I always drew them," she says.

When she was eight years old, she knew she did not want to be a vet.

"I was always drawing horses and mostly noticed illustrations in the books," she said.

Judy explains that at a young age she knew who Sam Savitt and Wesley Dennis were. These horse book illustrators convinced her the ideal life would be to be a trainer and an artist. In the summer she could ride horses in the cool of the morning and paint indoors in the hot afternoons. Now she focuses more on her art.

Judy markets her work and seeks commissions for portraits at horse shows such as the Rolex International, the Washington International, the Key Bank Classic, and the Gladstone Driving Shows. These shows take her from Lexington, Ky., to the USET headquar-

ters in New Jersey.

Judy does most of her drawing from photographs given to her from clients. Another important part of Judy's work is making sure the "personality" of the horse is part of the picture.

"I have learned how to work personality traits into the portrait. If the horse is mischievous, I make sure they have a mischievous eye," she said. Judy also works a great deal of detail so clients can see it is "their" horse.

There are opportunities for commercial artists. Judy says that she is asked to illustrate books and logos for stables and farms. When

asked what she enjoys best about being an equine artist, Judy admits it is not having to be at an office at 8 o'clock in the morning. She sets her own schedule and commissions her own work. Christmas time is her busiest season for commissions and she recommends that people interested in portraits should catch her now between horse shows.

If you like horses and like to draw or paint, then consider this career option a possibility. Let your creative talents work for you by putting two talents into a winning combination as an equine artist. —

Horse Forum speaker stresses barn safety

By CHRIS MARRS

HARRISONBURG — FIRE! That is a word we DO NOT want to hear around any stable. Barn fires are capable of wiping out an entire structure in 20 minutes or less, leaving very little time to evacuate horses.

The National Equine Safety Association is an organization that helps stable owners prevent, prepare, and become more educated about stable fires.

Robert Barnard, NESA director, spoke recently at the Rockingham County 4-H Open Horse Forum. The workshop included tips for prevention, discussions of hay storage, and the importance of horses that are "trained" to an

evacuation plan.

Prevention of a fire starts with recognizing potential hazards in the stable. Electric cords that are temporarily strung are dangerous. Barnard recommends that all electrical wires be run through metal conduit pipe into proper electric boxes with covers. This prevents mice from chewing through wires and causing sparks.

Cobwebs, which create dust, are another hazard. Because dust is flammable, cleaning cobwebs cuts down on the amount of dust.

Oil cloths? After cleaning tack or grooming, make sure those oily cloths are put somewhere safe.

Another hazard is box fans. Keeping the motors clean by using a canned dust remover, which can be bought at any electronics equipment store, will help prevent the spark which is created when motors wind down after they are turned off. Stables should be cleaned at least four times a year.

When it comes to hay storage, there are some preventive practices that can help stable owners promote safety. Barnard suggests salting hay as it is put into the loft. The saline environment helps prevent fire. Also, store hay dry. Keeping hay dry with air flow is important as damp musty smelling hay

is in the first stage of combustion. Check your loft for water stains and keep hay away from moist areas.

Also discussed was the importance of training horses to an actual evacuation plan if a fire should ignite. Time is critical and the plan should include a place to put the horses that is a safe distance from the stable, strong enough to hold them in panic, and which has gates that are easy to manipulate.

Most fires occur at night. Barnard recommends a "rescue pack" which includes everything necessary for an evacuation. This includes orange hoods for horses

to wear. Train horses to be led blindfolded to the containment area. Another rescue item would be a flashlight that can be worn around the head or neck. Since both hands are needed in removing horses from the stable during an emergency, having a flashlight to hang around the neck might come in very handy. Barnard reminded participants to train their horses to accept the flashlight too.

NESA has literature and booklets to help prepare for emergency situations. For information, call 1-800-643-3760. —

• Trip

Continued from page 5

a piece of fruit to her bedroom and it attracted a horde of ants. When Rita told her host about the invasion, he was nonplused.

"My host told me that if I'd get the food out of my room then the ants would go home!"

In order to combat the ants in food areas, kitchen cabinets are usually free-standing pieces of furniture and each leg is placed in a bowl of water. The ants cannot cross the water to march up the cabinet leg and into the food stores.

There was yet a third encounter with the native wildlife. One city they visited had monkeys which had been allowed to roam the streets unharmed for thousands of years. "You had to hold onto your pocketbook because they would run up and take it and then take your compact out and put on the make-up," she explained.

As she traveled around the country, Rita learned about the look of the land, and the likes and dislikes of

the people. The Thai houses are open and airy because there is no need for central heat. The houses are often up on stilts and have an outside kitchen. Many people live in the same building as their business.

Whether they are at work or at home, they carry their cellular phones with them everywhere, Rita said. "Phones are big. They walk in and lay their phone on the dinner table. Some people had two phones. They talk on the phones right through meetings."

Even more popular than telephones, however, is the Royal Family. In a country with an often unsettled government situation, the Royal Family has become the glue which holds the people together.

"Everywhere we went they gave us jewelry and coins with the King's and Queen's pictures," she said while spreading out half a dozen likenesses of the Royal couple on her own table. In addition to the royal memorabilia, she also brought home some silk clothing, a beautiful tea set, and a drum. When the group's stay in Thailand

was complete, they took a sidetrip on their own time to India for three days. There they bought silk hand-woven rugs, rode in a rickshaw, saw the Taj Mahal and ate their first fast food since their arrival in Asia.

"Everywhere in Thailand we saw McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut and 7-Eleven, but we didn't eat there. In India, though, we went to McDonalds. Because they don't eat beef, the menu offered mutton burgers, filet of fish, and veggie burgers. I had fish and French fries and it tasted exactly like it does in this country," Rita said.

Finally at the end of March the group boarded a plane and came home to Virginia, tired but filled with the whole experience. "I never really got homesick, but I think I used every emotion there is to use while I was there: frustration, culture shock, gratitude, humility, happiness and sadness," she said.

Many of the people she met will remain close friends, like Poo a schoolteacher who served as a host and guide, and the member of parliament and his family who

opened their home to her for several days.

The cultural exchange was the key to the whole trip. "The very idea for people to have that kind of exchange is important. You can read about a place all you want, but until you go into the classroom and sing the ABCs with the children you can't really understand," Rita explained.

"One day this older lady kept looking at me," Rita said. "So I asked our guide why. The guide said, 'She thinks you are pretty and would like to touch you,' so I went over and hugged the lady." And with that hug, two cultures halfway around the globe from each other became closer.

The cultural exchange Rita experienced during her weeks in Thailand was by no means a one-way street. As they visited drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers around the country, Rita talked to groups about the DARE and PULSAR programs with which she has been involved here in Virginia.



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Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin
April 1998



Dear Maude,
Heavens! All this rain is enough to drive one to total distraction. I became so depressed one day that I simply had to go out and buy a new raincoat. I could no longer stand to wear my other one another day!
Too quickly the Congressional Easter recess came and went. It seemed like such a short time — we hardly had time to miss them properly. But things are wandering along here as usual. Proposed legislation on all sorts of matters keeps coming up and then disappearing into one committee or another. I so often wonder how so much can seemingly be done with very little result. Debates, committee hearings, meetings, drafting sessions — all sorts of hustle and bustle — are never ending. Final bills to be signed by the President are sometimes, but not too often, presented.

We have become so settled into this strange routine of controlled excitement about what might happen and are so accustomed to the many journeys any proposed legislation may take, that sometimes it seems as if we spend our days doing all this "important" stuff without even realizing exactly what it is we are doing. Just such a day occurred a few weeks ago.

Sara called that morning and said her boss had come *dashing through the office on his way to an early morning meeting on the Hill with some clients*, and asked them to see what they could find out about the 24-hour Rule.

Now there are, as all of us know, enough Congressional Rules to fill many a room at the Library of Congress, and that did not seem like such an odd request. And a rule with a time limit to it is certainly no stranger here. There are rules that limit the time the House or Senate can debate a bill, or an item in a bill; there are rules limiting how long each member may speak on a subject; there are rules about how long they can put things off before a vote. The list of time-related rules is certainly not a short one, but what is the "24-hour Rule?" I could not imagine that Sara would not know, for she is always the one I call when something comes up with which I need help.

Well, I'm not exactly shy when it comes to this sort of thing, so I began asking around the office. No one seemed to know. We even asked our final source, a rather stern woman who has worked in Washington long enough to know everything and often informs us that we too will one day know more than we want to. Even she could not figure it out. One of the staff suggested that I ask a former co-worker who is now with a law firm down the street. I readily agreed, since it was almost lunch time, and went off on my little errand. (I could, of course, have telephoned, but on the way into work I had seen a sign that read "Sale" in the little shop next to the lawyer's office building, and it seemed so much more pleasant to take a little two-block walk and check out more than just the "24-hour rule.") Well, our friend there did not turn up anything either.

My final resort was Dylan. I had hesitated to call him about it, because there had been a great party on the hill the day before to which he did not take me, and, needless to say, I was just a little annoyed with him about that. But there was nothing else to do.

The "24-hour Rule?" he chuckled. Who in the world is asking that question? I explained that a friend had asked us what it was and we were trying to find out. (It did not seem like it made any sense to mention Sara's name, for he often says that she thinks she knows everything.) All I got on the other end of the line was another chuckle.

"Just what is so funny?" I asked with an annoyed tone. So he began to explain. It seems that at that party the day before (the one which he did NOT take me to!), one

Superman to the rescue

Have you ever noticed that just at the moment when everything seems to be running smoothly something happens to disorder the universe?

It might be something simple like a light bulb burning out, necessitating a minor expenditure of energy to set things right, or it could be that a household appliance mysteriously gives up and more drastic measures must be taken to restore order. It seems to be a universal truth that order breaks down into disorganization which gives way to chaos which leads to pandemonium. The balance of order is so precarious it seems that on any given day a seemingly small fly in the ointment can start one hurtling down the spiral toward complete and utter pandemonium.

Irma has long thought that if just the right person could be found to fix the flat tires, leaking pipes, stalled engines, and broken washing machines of life that all would be well. The centrifugal pull of pandemonium would not draw her household into its tornado-like cloud. Indeed, finding the right person to fit the job has become a mission for Irma which she has pursued to generally frustrating ends.

Working with the materials she had at hand — Hank — Irma, for many years, sought to apply him to chaotic situations.

"Do you think you could find out why the pipes under the kitchen sink are leaking, dear?" Irma asked.

"Sure," responded Hank willingly. "Just let me get some tools and I'll give 'er a go."

Feeling that she had placed the job in the hands of a certain candidate for success, Irma paid little attention to the groans and wriggles under the kitchen sink. She did notice that Hank came and went several times returning on each successive occasion with a larger wrench. Moments after disappearing beneath the sink with a wrench which would be at home on the Alaska pipeline, Irma heard a loud crunching crack and a small whispered, "Uh-oh." Obviously Irma had not found the right person to fit the job and an inconvenient drip had turned into a plumbing catastrophe. Irma had failed to consider Hank's amazing muscles when she assigned him to the job.

Undeterred by a watery setback, Irma next decided to apply Hank's hand to pruning fruit trees.

"It's the perfect job for you," Irma declared. "You love to work outdoors. You love apples and peaches. You'll do a great job," Irma predicted as she handed him her handy-dandy pruning shears still glistening in their unused mint condition.

"Gee, I can't wait for a slice of your apple pie, honey," remarked Hank as he marched off, mouth watering in contemplation of the fruits of his labor.

Returning to the house sometime later Hank described the pruning process and the bushels of apples he was bound to harvest in the Fall. As he laid the pruning shears on the kitchen table Irma gave a little yelp of alarm.

"What did you do to my shears?" she squealed noting that the blades were bent out of shape and mangled almost beyond recognition.

"Some of those branches were pretty thick, and I really had to put some muscle behind them," grinned Hank. "I just

member of Congress was standing around talking with staff and friends and said that it seemed that they would never get out from under the "24-hour Rule." (Evidently Sara's boss did not stick around long enough for the whole story.) When asked about the rule, the Congressman only smiled and said, "Why, it's one of my own. I call it that, because since October I have not had to be in Washington for longer than 24 hours at a time." Everyone looked at him in surprise and had a good laugh.

"The other political party figures that if they don't keep us here any longer than that at any one time, we can't pass any legislation that they don't like!" he continued. "It seems to be working." More laughter, and then as the party progressed, there were heard snatches of conversation, "Well, if we ever get out from under this 24-hour ruling..." and "Thank goodness for the 24-hour Rule. I have a golf engagement at home on Thursday." (Maybe

From the AC archives

Hank
and
Irma

By
Lee Ann Heizer



kept thinking about apple pie and it seemed to give me the strength to do the job!"

"You'll be lucky if you ever see an apple pie again," Irma snorted, once more defeated by Hank's super strength in fitting him to a job.

"It can't be done," warned a neighbor. "You'll have to rent a trolley and get six men to help you."

"Put it on rugs and slide it," advised her mother.

"Casters," said an aunt. "If you put special casters on the bottom you may be able to roll it."

Irma has deemed it necessary to move a massive upright piano through four rooms around a hairpin bend down a long narrow hallway to its new location. A seal inside the lid of the century-old piece indicates that it was designed and built in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus' landing in the new world. Clearly, the piano-maker intended to recreate the bulk of the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria in one piece as the piano would seem to come close in weight. Maybe she could float it to the other room.

Seldom has Irma approached Hank with such trepidation in assigning a job. In a teeny, tiny voice Irma says, "Hank, do you think we could get some help and maybe move the piano, someday? Just think about it—any time that suits you is fine. It doesn't have to be this week or this month, but I would like to maybe think about getting it done this year."

"Sure!" is Hank's immediate, undaunted response. "Let's do it tonight!"

"It's late," replies a shocked Irma. "We can't get anybody to help us on such short notice!"

"We don't need any help," is Hank's certain claim. Irma's apprehensive concerns about casters, trolleys, and a football defensive line go unheeded as Hank assesses the situation.

Before Irma can say, "C-sharp" or "B-flat," Hank has literally moved the piano by himself. Indeed, the vessel does almost seem to float under Hank's strong masterful guidance.

The house is still standing, her hair has not turned white, and the Christopher Columbus upright is moored in its new harbor.

In a twinkling it dawns on her. She has finally found a job to fit Hank. Superhuman strength can be channeled. Order can grow out of chaos.

"Superman Hank," purrs Irma, "You're my hero!" ---

Sara's boss walked by one of these conversations?)

I called Sara and told her what I found out. She was just a little angry when she heard it was all a joke. She was even more angry when she told her boss who only grinned, (the scoundrel already knew the answer!) and said, "Just my little contribution to relieve the boredom of a typical Washington day."

Then, we all looked back and began to laugh at ourselves. It certainly had relieved the boredom. Perhaps we need more Congressmen with that sense of humor!

The trees must be all clothed in their beautiful greens and pinks and whites at home now, and I miss not being there to see them. The best I can do is go out on the sidewalk and check out the little area plantings. (Might see something fun and pretty in one of the dress shops while I'm at it, too.) Tell everyone I send hugs and kisses.

Love, LuLu

Ashes to ashes, dust to... rich soil

Using wood ashes in the garden

Nothing much happened in Middlebrook this week, except someone ran over a skunk down on Rt. 252. There was something rather unique about this particular skunk incident, however. There was no odor. The skunk actually didn't stink. Go figure. I was so shocked that I actually rolled my window down as I passed this particular spot on Rt. 252 the next several days and inhaled with a really deeeeeeep sniff. Hm... Someone must have hit that dude just right in order not to release the powerful aroma that can saturate an area a mile square for days on end. I figure the odds of this happening are at least a zillion to one. Who knows when the Shenandoah Valley will ever witness such an occasion again. A skunk in the road that doesn't smell! Imagine that.

Which reminds me of another thing that I can't quite imagine. The other day a friend of mine said he had to make a run to the dump and take a barrel of wood ashes left over from this past winter's accumulation from his woodstove. Astounded I asked him, "You're taking wood ashes to the dump?" He casually

replied, "Yeah." Man, oh man. And this friend is a fine gardener! Imagine that.

What can you do with all the ash from burning wood in your fireplace or wood stove this past winter? Wood ash can be an awesome soil amendment in home gardens, in your compost pile or even as a pest repellent.

After doing a little research, I discovered that wood ash has long been recognized as a valuable, even precious substance. Dozens of centuries ago, ancient Roman scientists and scholars documented the value of returning ash to the land. In the 18th century, the benefits of ash-derived potash, or potassium carbonate, became widely recognized. North American trees were felled, burned and the resulting ash was actually exported to Great Britain by the shipload as "potash fever" hit the European agricultural community. In 1790, the newly-independent United States of America's very first patented process was a method for making fertilizer from wood ash (U.S. patent number 1: "An improved method of making pot and pearl ash").

For the home gardener, however, wood ash can be a valuable source of lime, potassium and trace elements. Since wood ash is derived from plant material, it contains most of the 13 essential nutrients the soil must supply for plant growth. Wood ash actually sweetens the soil, so if your garden soil is already on the alkaline side, it would not be advisable to add wood ash. Application should be made ONLY if the soil pH (acidity factor) is less than 7.0, based on a soil test. Suggested rates are 10-20 pounds of wood ashes per 1,000 square feet per year. A 10 quart pail, filled to within 2 inches of the top, will contain about 5 pounds of

wood ashes, so 2 to 4 pails may be used per 1,000 square feet.

Where soils are acid and low in potassium, wood ash is beneficial to most garden plants except acid-loving plants such as blueberries, rhododendrons and azaleas.

The fertilizer value of wood ash depends



*The
Garden
Path*

By
Jeff Ishee

Need a scientific explanation?

Oregon State University reports that when wood burns, nitrogen and sulfur are lost as gases, and calcium, potassium, magnesium and trace element compounds remain. The carbonates and oxides remaining after wood burning are valuable liming agents, raising pH, thereby helping to neutralize acid soils.

Ashes make a great pest repellent

Wood ash can also be used to discourage pests in the garden, especially slugs and snails. Just sprinkle a ring around the plant you want to protect. As the slug or snail crosses the wood ash, it dehydrates them. You'll need to reapply the ash each time it rains.

on the type of wood you burn. As a general rule, hardwoods such as oak weigh more per cord and yield more ash per pound of wood burned. Ash from a cord of oak meets the potassium needs of a garden 60 by 70 feet.

You can also apply one-half to one pound of wood ash per year for each shrub and rose bush on your property. Spread ash evenly on the soil and rake the ash into the soil lightly. Never leave ash in lumps or piles, because if it is concentrated in one place, excessive salt from the ash will leach into the soil, creating a deadly environment for plants.

In compost piles, wood ash can be used to help maintain a neutral condition, the best environment to help microorganisms break down organic materials. Keep a covered five-gallon bucket of wood ashes next to your compost pile at all times. All you have to do is sprinkle ash on each layer of compost as the pile is built up. Ash also adds micro nutrients to compost.

Here are six tips for using wood ashes in the garden: 1. Do not use ash from burning trash, cardboard, coal or pressure-treated, painted or stained wood. These substances may contain elements which are harmful to many plants.

2. Do not use ash on alkaline soils or on acid-loving plants.

3. Do not apply wood ash to a potato patch as wood ashes may favor the development of potato scab.

4. Do not apply ash to newly germinated seeds, as ash contains too many salts for seedlings.

5. Do not add ash with nitrogen fertilizers such as ammonium sulfate, urea or ammonium nitrate. These fertilizers produce ammonia gas when placed in contact with high pH materials such as wood ash.

6. Feel free to sprinkle wood ash around the base of your fruit trees. The Old Farmers' Almanac reports that this enhances the sweetness of the fruit due to the potash. —

Farmers' Market season opener smashes records

AC staff report

STAUNTON — Opening Day of the 1998 Staunton/Augusta Farmers' Market season was a record breaker according to farmers' market committee chairperson Betty Hawpe.

"It looks like we are off to a great start for 1998. It was certainly one of the biggest crowds we have ever seen at the Wharf Parking Lot on a Saturday morning," Hawpe said.

The Staunton/Augusta Farmers' Market is a fresh air, producers only, public market conducted every Saturday morning from mid-April through October at the downtown Wharf Parking Lot. The market attracts farmers, market gardeners, greenhouse growers and bakers from over a dozen communities around the Shenandoah Valley.

"Opening Day festivities really brought out the customers this year," said Jeff Ishee, farmers' market representative. "We also had a record number of vendors for opening

day, and they all had plenty of locally produced farm products to sell. Collectively, our farmers had a record opening day in sales volume generating more than \$600 per hour. What pleases me is the fact that this revenue is going directly back into our local farm economy. Several of our vendors told me that by mid-morning they had surpassed previous opening day sales records."

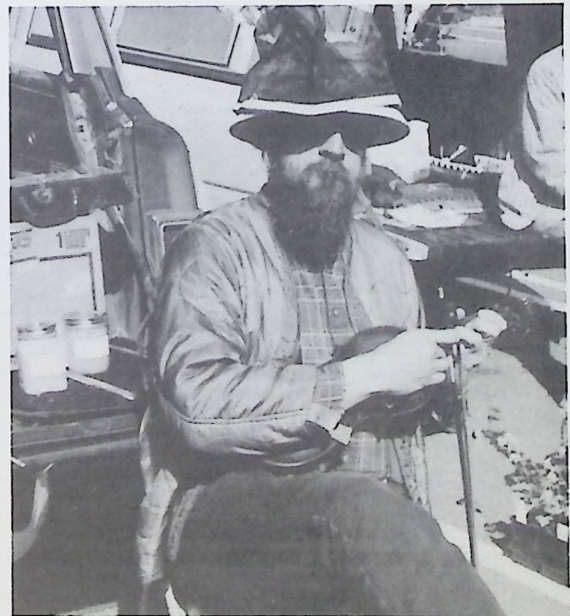
Opening day festivities which helped bring out the crowds included a full-fledged country breakfast hosted by the Augusta County Farm Bureau Women's Committee. At a very brisk pace, the ladies served ham biscuits, sausage biscuits and sausage gravy on biscuits alongside steaming cups of coffee. By 7:30 A.M., they had sold out of all the sausage they had brought and were obliged to locate a farmers' market vendor who kept the food booth supplied with locally produced sausage the

rest of the morning. The breakfast generated funding to support AG in the Classroom, an educational project to inform schoolchildren of the importance of agriculture.

Another popular activity was the Easter Bunny Hayride. Hundreds of children enjoyed free hayrides around the wharf parking lot. Swoope farmer Joel Salatin donated his time and the use of his tractor while Middlebrook farmer Tom Womack donated the use of his wagon.

Children also enjoyed free face painting by the Riverheads High School Future Homemakers of America. Carrie Heizer, Jennifer Seaman and Jennifer Ishee collected more than \$60 in donations while face painting to benefit the March of Dimes.

The Staunton/Augusta Farmers' Market is open every Saturday morning until the end of October at the Wharf Parking Lot in downtown Staunton. The market is conducted rain or shine from 7 A.M. until noon. —



David McCaskey, wearing his beekeeper's bonnet, takes a break from marketing honey at the Staunton-Augusta Farmers' Market on opening day to tune up his fiddle.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Film takes viewers on breathtaking journey to heights of Mt. Everest

Quite frankly not much is playing at the Bijou these days. Film buffs are caught in that awkward time between post-Oscar mania and summer blockbuster releases. So Hannah's mom decided to take in Everest, an IMAX® film produced by David Breashears now showing at Richmond's Science Museum of Virginia. The first IMAX® film ever made on Mt. Everest's summit follows three climbers on their quest to summit the world's highest mountain. Each brings to the adventure dreams, goals, and fears.

Ed Viesturs, the expedition's leader and America's foremost Himalayan mountaineer, has summited Everest five times, a record he shares with only one other person. On this particular expedition, he challenges Everest without supplemental oxygen.

Accompanying Viesturs is Aracel Segarra and Janling

Tenzing. Segarra wants to become the first woman to ascend Everest and Tenzing, seeks to fulfill a life-long dream to follow, literally, in his father's footsteps — his father Tenzing Norgay made the historic ascent with Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953.

The unseen member of the party is Emmy-award-winning filmmaker and mountaineer David Breashears. Carrying a 30-pound IMAX® camera — specially constructed to reduce it from its original 80-pound weight — on this his third ascent of the 29,028-foot peak, he films some of the most breathtaking scenery ever captured on film. Interestingly the film was made during the tragic events that claimed the lives of several climbers on May 10, 1996. Indeed the Everest film team assisted in the rescue effort. Aracel Segarra thought to make giant Kool Aid Xs to guide the rescue helicopter that saved

the lives of two climbers. The viewer learns that helicopters don't fly easily to Everest's summit, or indeed anywhere near it; the lack of oxygen in the air prevents the helicopter from gaining the necessary lift from its whirling propeller. To its credit, the movie doesn't focus on the gory details of the tragedy.

For those who have never seen an IMAX® movie, you are in for a treat. This superlarge film is shown in a movie theater that resembles a teacup laid on its side. Seats are perched cliff-like on the open-end of the teacup. When the movie starts the viewer has the sensation of being swallowed by the movie — images whirl and twirl above, below and to each side. The sensation is so great that you find yourself hanging on to your seats or getting motion sickness (all you have to do is shut your eyes and it goes away).

Now if you're like me, you will probably never get to Katmandu much less the summit of Everest. Everest, the movie, is a marvel. It not only thrills, it educates. Base camp, the Hillary Steps, Camp IV and the Summit come alive through the miracle of IMAX®.

At \$4 a ticket, it is a lot cheaper than the \$65,000 the trip actually cost. And Richmond is lot closer. Bundle up the kids or grandkids and head for Richmond. Catch an early show and spend the rest of the day exploring the Science Museum. The kids can even try their skill climbing a 20-foot wall set up outside the museum.

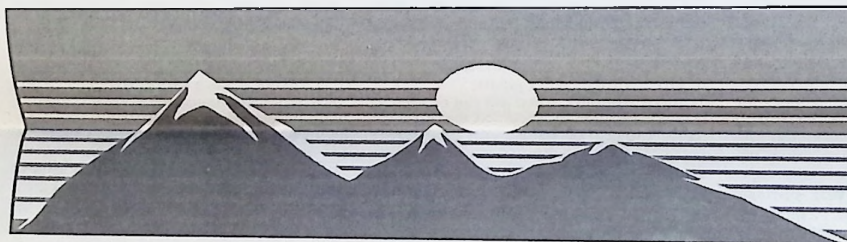
FLICK



A movie review by
Hannah's mom, Sue Simmons

It's time and money well-spent. And don't be surprised if David Breashears wins an Oscar next year.

Hannah's mom gives Everest four bananas. The film is rated G for general audiences. Call the Science Museum at 1-800-659-1727 for show times and admission prices. The museum is located at 2500 West Broad Street in Richmond. —



Yesterday's weather

Most newspapers include a weather forecast in each edition. But we try to be a little different at Augusta Country. We may not know what the weather will be like tomorrow, but we sure know what it was like yesterday.

May 1, 1935 — Snow, ice and sleet brought winter back to parts of southeast Minnesota. Minneapolis received three inches of snow to tie their May record which was established in 1892.

May 7, 1989 — Thirty-two cities in the central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, and 24-hour snowfall totals of 7.2 inches at Buffalo, N.Y., and 10.7 inches at Rochester, N.Y., were records for the

month of May. While northerly winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the eastern U.S., temperatures warmed rapidly in the Great Plains Region, reaching the 90s in Kansas. The temperature at Manhattan, Kans., soared from a low of 30 degrees to a high of 88 degrees.

May 12, 1971 — Duststorms suddenly reduced visibilities to near zero on Interstate Highway 10 near Casa Grande, Ariz. Chain reaction accidents involving cars and trucks resulted, killing seven persons.

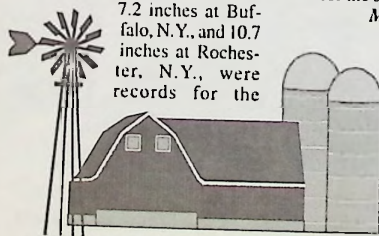
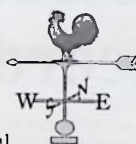
May 17, 1979 — A reading of 12 degrees at Mauna Kea Observatory established an all-time record low for the state of Hawaii.

May 23, 1882 — An unusual late season snow blanketed eastern Iowa, with four to six inches reported around Washington.

May 24, 1990 — Severe thunderstorms spawned two dozen tornadoes from Mon-

tana to Oklahoma. Four tornadoes carved a 109-mile path across central Kansas. The third of the four tornadoes blew 88 cars of an 125-car train off the track, stacking them three to four cars high in some cases, and the fourth tornado caused \$3.9 million damage. The third tornado injured six persons who were trying to escape in vehicles. A woman was "sucked out" of a truck and said that at one time she was "airborne, trying to run but my feet wouldn't touch the ground". She also saw a live deer "flying through the air."

May 30, 1987 — Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the eastern U.S. Eighteen cities, from Virginia to Ohio and Michigan, reported record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 97 degrees at Baltimore, Md., and Washington, D.C., and 98 degrees at Newark, N.J., were records for the date. —



Information for this report was taken from the World Wide Web homepage of the U.S. Storm Data Center.

• HHCH

Continued from page 3

representing Baptist, Catholic, Latter Day Saints, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches. According to Ms. Wilkers, the board intends to grow by recruiting other faith denominations to become active participants.

HHCH works with referrals enrolled in the Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program sponsored by the Augusta County Social Services Department. Ms. Wilkers meets twice a month with VIEW clients and tells them about services available through the Helping Hands Caring Hearts Ministries.

"Sometimes a person can't help the predicament that they are in," Ms. Wilkers said. "For example, a person looking for a job but doesn't have a car, needs transportation assistance. Often times they need help with resumes, filling out applications, as well as knowing how to dress for a

job interview. HHCH is a type of mentor to these individuals."

Helping Hands Caring Hearts is hoping to expand its volunteer and financial base beyond churches by reaching out to the business sector and then to the community at large. A \$25,000 start-up grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a private charity dedicated to funding groups directed at improving health-care, helped subsidize their 18-month operating budget requirement of \$42,640. Ms. Wilkers provides regular free volunteer training classes and claims that the only requirement for being a part of HHCH is to "have an honest desire to serve others by giving a hand up, not a hand out."

If you are interested in aiding this ministry financially or by volunteering, or know of someone whose needs their services, call Ms. Wilkers at 540/885-8442 or write to Helping Hands Caring Hearts Ministries, Inc., P.O. Box 2465, Staunton, Va. 24402-2465. —

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