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Lee High Class of '48 holds 50-year reunion
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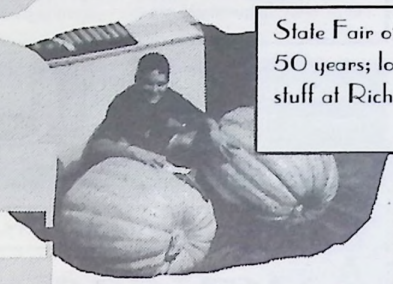

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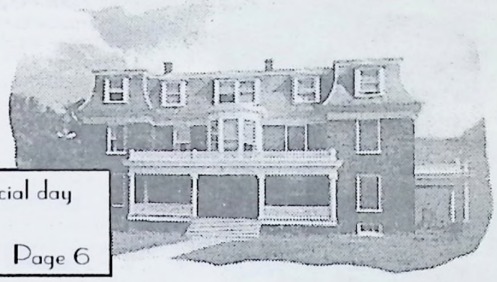

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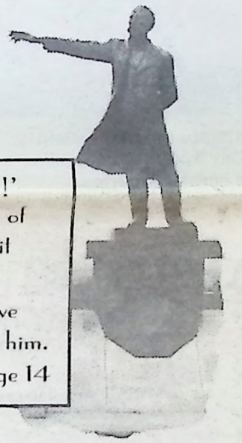

'Boys, be ambitious!' Dr. William Clark of Massachusetts said it and the people of Sappero, Japan have never forgotten it or him.
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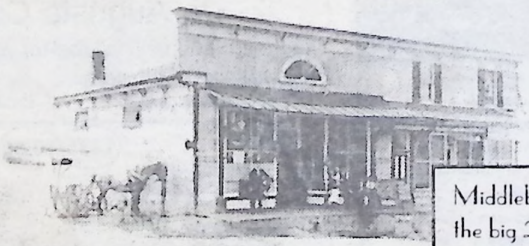

Middlebrook celebrates the big 2-0-0
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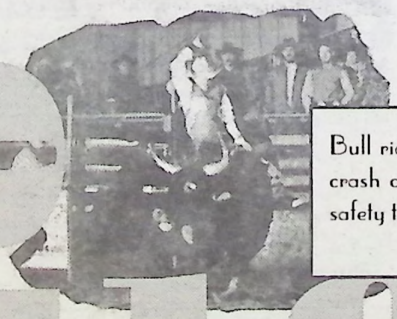

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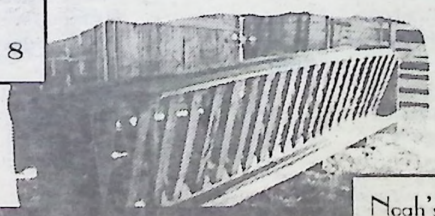

Exclusive photos never seen before!

Noah's ark found on farm near Middlebrook
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November 1998

Here, there, & everywhere

Postscript

Virginia woman completes 2,300-mile cross country hike

NEEDLES, Calif. -- Niki Krause of Springfield, Va., has completed her cross-country trek across America.

In the Summer 1998 issue of *Augusta Country*, staff writer Penny Plemmons presented what was then the beginning of Krause's hike across the continental United States of America.

The recent University of Virginia graduate began her journey in May in Charlottesville. According to an article published Oct. 1, 1998 in the *Washington Post*, Krause reached California at 4:15 p.m. Pacific Time Sept. 29. The 22-year-old from Fairfax County jogged across Veterans Memorial Bridge which spans the Colorado River on the border between Arizona and California to complete her 4 1/2-month walk across America.

Niki Krause of Springfield on Day 4 of her 2,300-mile hike across America.
AC file photo

Awaiting Krause on the California side of the river was the mayor of Needles, Calif., and a dozen other town notables. The Needles city manager presented Krause with a plaque congratulating her for her effort.

Krause set out on her journey loaded down with a 50-pound backpack. She planned to camp out along the way during her cross continent journey. Instead, as news of her journey spread, she was welcomed along the way by numerous individuals who assisted her and helped keep track of her travels. She estimates that she stayed with over 100 families in 11 states during the hike and hopes to write a book which she would like to title "A Nation of Friends" chronicling her journey and the people she met.

Krause acknowledged the journey was grueling at times and said she was physically exhausted upon termination of her walk. The young woman chose to end her walk in Needles rather than going on to her original goal destination of San Francisco which lies several hundred miles and a large desert beyond Needles.

"Mentally, I probably could go farther," she said. "But I don't want to test those limits. I really wanted this to be done."

Early the morning after her hike ended, Krause boarded a Greyhound bus for Las Vegas and then caught a flight to Florida where her boyfriend was waiting for her.

"Now he wants to hike and go camping," she said. "I just want a pedicure." ---

Information for this article was taken from the Washington Post.

Middlebrook bazaar, Nov. 7

MIDDLEBROOK—The annual Fall Community Bazaar will be held beginning at 8 a.m. Nov. 7 at the Middlebrook Community Center.

Various church and civic groups from the Middlebrook area will have baked goods, crafts, canned foods and a number of other home-made items for sale. The day also provides an opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbors as well as to takr some time to do a little early holiday shopping.

The Middlebrook Community Center is located in the village on Cherry Grove Road, adjacent to the ball field. —

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Lee High class gathers for 50th reunion

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — They were a generation apart from those who came before and after. The Robert E. Lee High School class of 1948 was a group between wars, heading off into an unknown future. They left a school on a hill that is no longer part of the public education system and they graduated during an era when segregation was, unfortunately, still the law of the land.

Many of their parents grew up in a world just adjusting to the idea of automobiles, but more than one member of the Class of '48 went off to technical industries that involved space travel. More of the class, however, wound up in the teaching profession, guiding the next generation of students in a world that would soon know satellites, television and computers.

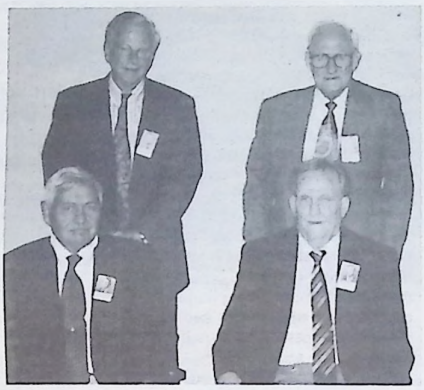
Fifty years later just a few more than 30 members from among the 72 graduates of Lee High's Class of '48 came back to remember and celebrate at their 50th reunion held recently at Staunton Country Club. Five decades ago, no one knew what the future would hold. Now the future is their past and returning class members were eagerly exchanging stories. Eighteen deceased members of the class were also remembered in a *special memorial message*.

In 1948, the world the graduates faced was an uncertain one. European recovery from World War II was beginning to take place under the Marshall Plan, but many still pondered the implications of the Atomic Bomb. On the homefront, Harry Truman was running for president against the strong challenge of Thomas E. Dewey. Most felt that Truman didn't stand a chance of getting elected.

Those times were just fading memories to Class of '48 members, their spouses and two former teachers who gathered for the 50th reunion. This time their challenges were of a different nature, like simply recognizing former classmates they had not seen in five decades. To aid in that problem, nametags also sported 1948 yearbook pictures. That small memory jog was all it took to get the conversation flowing and soon old stories and new stories were buzzing among the clumps of reacquainted friends.

"Remember when Mr. Smither (the principal) got his car stuck in the ice behind the school and got out to push and the car took off without him?" asked one.

"It just seems like last month that I was walking up that hill in the morning," said class president Ritchie Fishburne as he addressed the assembled group. Although Fishburne found it hard to believe that 50 years had elapsed since those memories, he added that it was "great that we have the name badges!" A remark that brought laughter and shouts of "Here, here!" from more than a few in the audience.



All of the surviving class officers from the Class of '48 arrived in Staunton for the 50th reunion of Robert E. Lee High School. They are Ritchie Fishburne, president; (standing left) Alfred Graham, assistant treasurer; (standing right) Earl Albert, vice-president; (seated left) and Glenn Shirkey, secretary.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

Fishburne, who lives in Greensboro, N.C., and just retired from Burlington Industries, visits the Staunton area often. "Staunton has changed a lot in that its area is bigger, but I still like that small town feeling I get when I come here," he said.

According to a program passed out at the reunion, the Class of '48 graduated on the afternoon of June 8. The ceremonies included a procession and recession to "Pomp and Circumstance." Fishburne was also called on to give some remarks that day. Although he allowed that it must have been "a wonderful speech," he admitted that he "couldn't remember a word of it."

Like the rest of the group, the class president was enjoying the reacquaintance of people he had not seen in 50 years. "I didn't recognize but a few, but they didn't recognize me either," he said.

Back for his first reunion was Raymond "Sonny" Anderson who won the prize for traveling the furthest — from California — to attend. Anderson earned a master's degree in metallurgical engineering and worked for McDonnell Douglas Aerospace before retirement.

"I haven't seen any of these folks in 50 years," he said with a smile. "I wouldn't trade this for anything in the world. I was out of the country during the last reunion (in 1990), but I am retired now and I wasn't going to let anything stand in my way this time."

Two teachers joined the festivities, Mrs. Charles (Jane) Hern who taught English, and the fabled Coach Thomas McSwain. McSwain, who came to Lee High in 1946, taught math and history and coached boys sports for six years. He then served as principal at each of the three Staunton elementary schools before becoming assistant superintendent under Lucius Shelburne and then superintendent for 17 years. McSwain Elementary School is named in his honor.

To the Class of '48, this 83-year-old educator, who stands just as tall and square-shouldered as he did 50 years ago, is simply Coach McSwain. "I have wonderful memories of Lee High. Some of the best teachers I've ever seen were there," he said. When asked which students stand out in his mind, he said: "All of them, but this was a good class. It always gives me a thrill to go back to the reunions because so many have become leaders in the community."

Glenn Shirkey, left, athletic star in the Class of '48, with his former coach Thomas McSwain. Photos to the left and right of the photo above are of Shirkey and McSwain and are taken from Lee High's 1948 yearbook, *The Record*.

One gentleman who looked up to "Coach" was Glenn "Nick" Shirkey, who arrived from Charlotte for his first reunion. Although he was "Mr. Everything" at Lee High in 1948, Shirkey downplays it all with a laugh. He was class secretary, ("I remember all the minutes that were never taken," he said) and was voted Most Popular, Best All Round, and Best Athlete by his classmates. ("I probably voted for myself," he added).

The Record (Lee High's yearbook) also had a lot to say about this athlete who played football, basketball and baseball. As captain of the football team, he accounted for 50 percent of the scoring from the back position. On the basketball court, he captained the team from the guard position. *The Record* noted that "He was a great team player and did a swell job of setting up plays."

After high school, Shirkey tried to make a go of professional baseball but, in his own words, "I went to spring training and was released and came home with my cardboard suitcase." After a stint with the Staunton Presidents baseball team, he joined the Air Force and then went on to college. He worked for an insurance company until he lost his sight a dozen years ago.

"I have very fond memories of Lee High," he said, obviously enjoying the chance to get reacquainted with everyone. "I haven't seen some of these people in 50 years. I was so glad that Coach McSwain came here tonight. He is a fine man. Yes, high school years are great years and this has been a wonderful reunion."

Who would have guessed the future of the Class of '48 on that June day 50 years ago? One, Sara (Brown) Anderson, became a mediator for the Supreme Court; another, Ned Clem, was a NASA space engineer; yet a third, Opal (Fauber) Homan, became an assistant to a state senator. Several became school teachers, others were active in church work and some worked for the state or federal governments. A number came to own their own businesses.

Most probably suspected that Fred Swann would do something with his musical talents because he was so active in music at Lee High. But who would have dreamed that he would become organist and music director at the Crystal Cathedral in California? Although semi-retired, Swann continues to give organ recitals all over the world.

The 1998 reunion was a time for rekindling old ties. Many who had been pals in 1948 went off on different paths and lost touch. Such is the case of Barbara (Harris) Barker and John Taylor.

Although the pair were high school sweethearts, they parted company and lost touch following the outbreak of the Korean War. Both went off to long and happy marriages that included a number of children and grandchildren. Then, several years ago, the death of each of their spouses caused them to get back in touch to offer condolences. Thus, for the second time, the two are a "steady couple" again; it's just that this "on-again, off-again" relationship was separated by five decades. Of course those attending their first reunion since graduation were not surprised to see the couple together because that is they way they had last seen them in 1948!

Fifty years later, the majority of the Class of '48 is retired or at least

See *REUNION*, page 5

Tiny hands gather acorns to grow mighty oaks

By NANCY SORRELLS

FISHERSVILLE — Even the mightiest oak trees come from single, tiny acorns. And if those oak trees are purchased from the Virginia Department of Forestry next year, chances are they also came courtesy of the tiny hands of 3- and 4-year-olds at Tinkling Spring Preschool located at Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church.

The Virginia Department of Forestry runs a thriving tree nursery program in Augusta County from which hundreds of thousands of year-old seedlings are shipped to the state's private landowners every year. The seeds for those baby trees are collected from healthy mature specimens of trees, and foresters are always on the lookout for "collection areas."

Cody Carson, a Tinkling **Spring Preschool student, drops a few acorns into a bowl.**

With that in mind, some forestry employees noticed the towering white and red oaks behind the Presbyterian church in Fishersville. The church was established on this tract of land more than 250 years ago, and forest employee Don Drake reckoned that these particular trees are well over 100 years old. An inquiry went out to the church to see if acorns could be collected from the church lot.

What better lesson about life and growth for these youngsters than to help with new trees, reasoned Donna Riley, director of the preschool. And, with that, the kids became "junior foresters" during a two-week span in late September.

To get a good crop of acorns, or mast, as they are also called, requires the meshing of several variables. Trees that grow out in the open rather than in a crowded forest are going to get bigger and produce a larger crop, explained Drake. But oaks also have to be of a certain age, at least 50 or so years and probably closer to 70 or 80, before they produce a really good crop. And then, some years are just better than others as trees cycle through boom and bust periods.

If the trees at Tinkling are any indication, this year is a record-setting mast crop. Acorns strewn on the ground of the children's playground area were as thick as sand on a beach, and the 50 or so youngsters slipped and scrambled on the ground picking up acorns beneath their feet.

"This is a really heavy crop. There should be a lot of trees here," noted Drake. He said that it didn't matter if some of the acorns were broken or rotten because the forestry employees in charge of the seeds had developed a process to easily cull the bad nuts from the good ones.

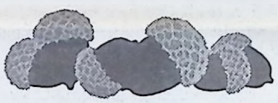
Once the acorns are planted they have a much higher success rate in the nursery than in the wild, he added. "We make sure all the conditions are right. They get minerals and water when they need them," he said.

Judging from the bowls brimming with acorns that the children were dumping in Drake's plastic bags, the state will be filled with new oak trees this time next year. "People right now want to plant more hardwoods. The white and red oaks are desired for their timber value. The white oaks live a long time and they provide good food for the wildlife," he said.

From left, John Hays, Mandy Tomlinson, Curtis Blair, Claire Dill, David Withers, and Brittany Martin hold acorns they gathered to help out with a Virginia Department of Forestry tree nursery project.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

The opportunity to take the classroom out under the trees has been wonderful according to Mrs. Riley. "We studied Johnny Appleseed last week and thought this would be a really good follow-up," she said. "We told the children what we were doing and explained that it was O.K. to take a few of the acorns from the squirrels."



The lesson will not be finished until early 1999 when the Virginia Department of Forestry officials return to the preschool with a foot-high oak seedling for the children to plant. "The children should remember this for a long time," Drake said of the experience. —

Craigsville to rededicate war memorial, adding vets' names

By PENNY PLEMMONS

CRAIGSVILLE — The Craigsville War Memorial 50th anniversary and dedication of veterans from the Korean, Vietnam and Desert Storm Wars will be held at 1 p.m., Nov. 7 at the Craig Street memorial site.

In the photo at left, Barbara Short, who is a member of the Craigsville War Memorial committee, stands at the entrance to the memorial. The arch and soldier silhouettes were made by Ferguson Metalcrafters of Staunton.

Photo by Penny Plemmons

Engraved plaques honoring over 300 living and deceased veterans from the areas of North Mountain, Augusta Springs, Bells Valley, Craigsville, Deerfield, and Estaline Valley will be unveiled and placed alongside the existing World War II markers.

Craigsville native and wrestling sports broadcaster Tony Schiavone will be the master of ceremonies for the event and will introduce guest speaker Virginia State Delegate Creigh Deeds. The tentative schedule for the day will begin with Colors presented by Mary Baldwin College's student color guard and the singing of the national anthem by Stauntonian Ernest Holley.

Craigsville War Memorial Rededication
Nov. 7, 1 p.m.
Craig Street memorial site

Troy Michael, the chaplain of Staunton VFW Post #2216 will give the invocation to be followed by a welcoming of guests by Jeff

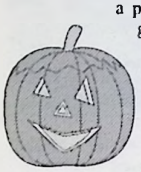
See *CEREMONY*, page 5

USPS accepts challenge of delivering 'unique' packages

By NANCY SORRELLS

Santa may rely on a sleigh and flying reindeer to deliver his seasonal goodies, but the Great Pumpkin must go no further than the local post office. Last year when some friends of mine, sort of a Renaissance couple from Franks Mill, told me that pumpkins could be mailed "as is," I was skeptical. "Yes you can," they insisted, explaining all that is necessary is a black magic marker in order to put the address on the shiny orange pumpkin shell.

Always one to test new-found knowledge, I went out and found a pumpkin with a good surface for addressing. I chose my 3-year-old nephew who lives in Manassas as a test case. Then with a properly addressed pumpkin in my arms, I joined the queue in the Staunton post office.



There were several people in the noontime line and I could feel their sidelong glances and outright stares as I advanced forward, all the while cradling my "package." Finally, at the window, I hesitantly addressed the postal worker: "I was told I could mail this pumpkin just like this," I said nervously as I lifted the orange "container" up on the counter. "That's right," said the postal worker with a smile. "Do you want to send that Priority Mail or regular?" I decided on Priority and sent the Halloween package off into the depths of the postal system.

A few days later a cheery mailman handed my nephew a package that he admitted was "one of the strangest I've ever delivered!"

The whole experience left me wondering. Just what would the post office deliver? I mean, could one address a watermelon? a squash? Were there some kind of regulations that said where to draw the line? Obviously, for instance, addressing and mailing a tomato would be against better judgment, but would it be against postal regulations as well?

I soon forgot about the questions, but they reared their heads again this spring when I was in Hawaii. It was there that I discovered pumpkins were not all that could be mailed. Coconuts, too, were okay according to the post office. Eager to try a new "produce package," I picked out a good nut from among those which had been inspected by the United States Agriculture Department. On one side I addressed the coconut to the couple who had launched the whole idea of mailing plant produce through the mail, and drew a cute picture on the other side.

Kay Lawrence, who works at the U.S. Post Office in Greenville, weighs a jack o'lantern for mailing.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

A few days later when the couple opened their rural Augusta County mailbox, they were startled by the coconut sitting on a stack of letters. So now we knew that a coconut, without benefit of extraneous packaging, can travel by air mail from Hawaii to Franks Mill.

This year I determined to step up the action and addressed three smallish pumpkins to all my nieces and nephews of an age to enjoy receiving the unique package. When I took the orange gourd trio into the Greenville post office, the crew there was slightly incredulous. Leafing through a book of postal regulations yielded no reason to prohibit the mailing, so they laughingly weighed each pumpkin, put postage on it and set it aside for mailing.

Still wanting to know what the rules on mailing produce "as is" were, I called Gary Powell who is supervisor of customer services at the Staunton post office. He confirmed that produce could indeed be mailed within its self-contained package, but said he did not know of any specific regulations of where to draw the line. "Each individual post office has some say in it," he said, adding that items such as pumpkins were never insured "because of the structure of them."

"I've seen all kinds of stuff come through here," he said of the odd parade of packages that has been mailed. "I've seen coconuts and pumpkins. We see pumpkins pretty often because of the Mary Baldwin students. Any post office where there is a college will see pumpkins pretty often," Powell said. Once, he added, he even saw a boat come through with an address attached.

As far as where to draw the line, though, he wasn't sure. Hazardous materials obviously cannot be mailed and are strictly regulated, but beyond that the postal worker at the window has to know when to send a package back for more work. The Greenville postal employees have aided in the mailing of a special tomato, they said, but, unlike my pumpkins and coconut, it was bubble-wrapped and boxed.

Less than a week later, the pumpkins had arrived safely at their destinations. "Only you are capable of such an incredible use of modern bureaucracy," one brother commented on receipt of his pumpkin.

In the end there were no hard and fast answers to my questions. However, I think I have established a new Halloween tradition in my family AND I can sleep at night knowing that even the government doesn't have the answer for everything. But then, that's no surprise, is it? —

◦Ceremony

Continued from page 4

Graham of Craigsville. Following a moment of silence in remembrance of local World War II veterans, Greg Arsenault, commander of Craigsville VFW Post #9480 and Ladies' Auxiliary president Betty Strickler will rededicate and pay tribute by the laying of a memorial wreath upon the WWII stone.

The unveiling of the newest commemorative plaques and roll call of the recent war veterans will be presented by Earl Harris, Staunton VFW; Glenn Rexrode, Staunton American Legion; and Robert Fowler, Craigsville VFW. A community reception at Daniel Motor Co. will follow the ceremony. To help offset the cost of the dedication and memorial site expansion, a pewter war memorial Christmas ornament designed by local artist Joe Sprouse will be available for $10. Afghans priced at $45 featuring Sprouse's art renditions of the Craigsville Elementary School, the War Memorial, the Bank of Craigsville, the Craigsville Drug Store, the Train Depot and the Craigsville Milling Company will also be available for purchase.

For more information and an updated itinerary, call Justine Tilghman at 997-9123. Donations for the veterans' memorial should be mailed to the War Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 400, Craigsville, Va. 24430. —

◦Reunion

Continued from page 3

trimming back on the work time. Much of their focus is on family. To that end, a few awards were given during the evening for longest marriage (to the same person), most children, and most grandchildren. Jim Ridenour, a Staunton businessman, collected two awards -- most children (four) and most grandchildren (nine). Loretta (Thomas) Clemmer and Betty (Brice) Len-dian, also tied with Ridenour with four children each. Dot (Stogdale) Bright won for longest marriage -- 48 years -- to Jim Bright.

In some ways to those at the gathering it must have seem like just yesterday when they left the safe halls of Lee High, but in other ways it probably seemed like another lifetime. And it was in that other lifetime, that the student body would stand and sing the alma mater:

High upon a hill in Staunton
Stands our dear Lee High,
With her colors proudly waving,
Floating to the sky.

Praise and glory, joy and honor
Dwell within her walls.
While her knowledge she imparts
Within her stately halls.

She will ever guide us onward
In the years to come,
Teaching us to do our best
For our dear school and home.

She is hallowed by a spirit
Sent from God above
Which will ever lead us on
to Truth and Joy and Love.
Chorus:
O hail to Lee, Our Alma Mater,
School we love so well!
We'll revere her and defend her
Till we say farewell! ---

Train wreck of 1890 spurred community to open hospital

By BETTY JO HAMILTON

Events on a Sunday evening in April of 1890 served as the catalyst to bring modern hospital care to Augusta County. Just a little more than five years later on Thanksgiving Day, residents of the area were giving thanks for a new hospital.

Thanksgiving Day 1895 was indeed a special day of thanks in Staunton. For on that day, King's Daughters' Hospital first opened its doors in a two-story frame dwelling on East Frederick Street. This opening was the culmination of eight years of dreams, plans, and hard work.

Back in 1888, Rebecca Ker, whose main interest was caring for the sick and shut-in of Staunton, had visited St. Luke's Hospital in Richmond. After seeing the work there, she returned to Staunton determined that her hometown should have a hospital. Mrs. Ker learned in the newspaper of the Order of the King's Daughters' in New York, whose main purpose was to care for the sick. She immediately recognized an appropriate vehicle for her plans. She and her sister-in-law, Sue Ker, organized a Silver Cross Circle of the King's Daughters in Staunton. This group of "young women and matrons" set about formulating plans for a hospital.

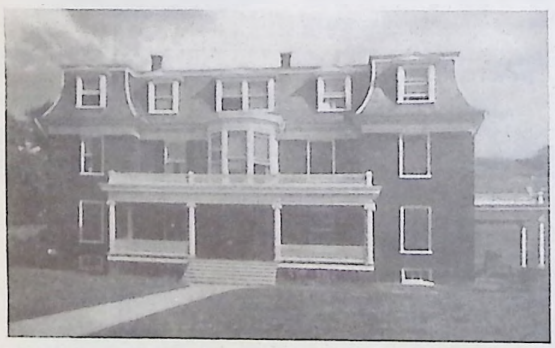
Events on the night of Sunday, April 28, 1890, demonstrated to the community its immediate need for a hospital. A few residents of the town were at the C& O Station that *night awaiting the arrival of the train from Cincinnati. As the train* approached the station, its brakes failed. The train gained momentum as it traveled down the incline toward the station and, unable to stop, came hurtling into the double-S curves just west of the station. Swaying from side to side, the cars tore off the station roof cornices. Then, in a whip-like motion, the last car, the sleeper containing the majority of the passengers — slammed into the platform.

"The Pearl of Peking" opera troupe was on the train and when word spread that there were "ladies among the wrecked, two ladies, heads of the Circles of the King's Daughters in this city, offered their services." Because there was no hospital in town, injured passengers were taken to drug stores, the Virginia Hotel, and to private residences. There was one fatality: a young actress, Myrtle Knox, was killed instantly in the crash. "Pinned to the dress of the girl's broken body was a small silver cross — the King's Daughters' emblem."

A few days after the wreck, two survivors of the crash, Augustus Fisch and her daughter, Bertha, who had been cared for at the Virginia Hotel by members of the King's Daughters, told a representative of the *Staunton Vindicator* that they wished to "convey to the people of Staunton their deep sense of gratitude at the attention they had received since the accident... and of the kindness of the King's Daughters."

Although inspired by happenings of that terrible spring night, members of the King's Daughters found themselves confronted with a difficult task in attempting to found a hospital. In 1891 there "wasn't a dollar in the treasury," according to a historian of the hospital. Yet on Oct. 19, 1892, a charter was granted to King's Daughters' Emmanuel Hospital. Fund-raising efforts included teas, fairs, benefits and entertainments of various kinds — "much begging, borrowing, and lending was done. Only stealing was ruled out."

After five years of "begging and borrowing," the King's Daughters managed to amass $1,950 which the hospital board used in 1895 as a down payment on the McGuffin house, that frame building on East Frederick Street which opened its doors Thanksgiving Day, 1895. On Feb. 11, 1896, King's Daughters' Hospital was incorporated under a charter approved by the Virginia General Assembly. The Order of the King's Daughters saw the realization of its dream in the incorporation of the hospital under an independent board of Staunton and Augusta County residents.



In the early 1900s, King's Daughters' Hospital was located at 219 E. Frederick St. This structure would be sold to Mary Baldwin College and become Bailey Dormitory. Even into the 1980s, the hospital of days gone by was recalled by MBC students who said their rooms were located in the "morgue."

This house at 215 E. Frederick St. in Staunton served as the original King's Daughters' Hospital. It was later the home of William Haines. The structure was torn down in the late 1950s to make way for construction on the Mary Baldwin College campus.

Photos courtesy Richard Hamrick

Rooms in the new 15-bed hospital were priced at $8-$15 per week. Operations performed there became community news. The *Augusta County Argus* reported in its Feb. 18, 1896 edition that "a lady from Raphine was treated at the new hospital... Drs. Henkel, Thomas, and Horsley performed an operation, chloroform being used." A later edition noted that a "Mrs. Somes had a tumor removed at King's Daughters' Hospital."

The hospital soon outgrew the frame McGuffin house. It was closed in July 1904 so that work could begin on a much-needed new facility on the site of the old hospital on East Frederick. Work on the new building was delayed by a hard winter, but the dedication service was held just one year later on July 1, 1905. At the end of the first fiscal year in the new building, the quantity of health care provided nearly matched that of the 10 previous years combined in the original hospital.

A nurses' training school had begun when the hospital opened in 1895, and graduated its first class in 1901. This program continued until 1932.

In these early decades of the 20th century, King's Daughters' Hospital continued to meet patients' needs as it planned for its own expansion. Active community support remained the hospital's greatest strength. *Mrs. R.R.* Heydenreich served as president of the hospital board from 1914-43. Her grandson, Robert Holsinger, recalled that "the hospital was her life." Under "Mrs. Heydenreich's regime," the hospital expanded from 25 beds to 73. *In 1916* "The Annex" was built behind the hospital as a nurses' home at a cost of $20,000. Hospital growth was so rapid that in 1919 "The Annex" was converted into much-needed patient space and a building adjoin-

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•KDH

Continued from page 6

ing the hospital was purchased for the nurses' home.

Financing did not keep pace with patient growth, so the hospital board faced a debt of $27,000 in 1927. Throughout these early years, KDH offered care to all persons regardless of ability to pay. This policy was partly responsible for the debt, yet was one which the board was reluctant to abandon.

"In 1928 there occurred an event which any hospital board... anywhere hopes to see happen at least once," according to hospital historian Mrs. W.J. Perry. When Louis Myerly died, he provided in his will that his estate make semi-annual payments to King's Daughters' Hospital for the benefit of the "sick poor." This generous act enabled KDH to continue the ideals of Rebecca Ker and to face the early depression years of the 1930s on sound financial footing.

The hospital met its greatest challenge during World War II. Due to the needs of the armed forces, there was suddenly a scarcity of trained nurses. However, in the face of this shortage, local Red Cross nurses' aides were able to maintain hospital services. Mrs. Frank Black, who had succeeded Mrs. Heydenreich as board president in 1943, paid tribute to these volunteers at the end of the war in 1945 when she noted that without their "33,000 hours of absolutely voluntary service the hospital perhaps would have been compelled to curtail use of its plant."

Ironic as it may seem, a new hospital to be located on North Augusta Street, was envisaged during these difficult times. Architects examined the Frederick Street facility and recommended that a new hospital be built.

The hospital board agreed to purchase property on North Augusta Street belonging to Mary Baldwin College and the college, in turn, agreed to purchase the hospital building and property on Frederick Street. On Nov. 20, 1946, the hospital corporators voted to initiate a $1.5 million campaign to obtain funds for the North Augusta site, and in February 1947, announced this undertaking to the public.

Brochures promoting the new hospital referred to the drive as "Valley Campaign... 1947" and compared it with Stonewall Jackson's "victorious Valley Campaign of fourscore years ago." An all-out community effort was made to secure funding for the new hospital, and the community responded. The earlier efforts of Mrs. Ker, Mrs. Heydenreich, Mrs. Black, and countless others were rewarded when the groundbreaking ceremony at the North Augusta Street location took place on Dec. 28, 1948. Within three years, the new 243-bed hospital was providing top quality health care to Stauntonians and Valley residents.

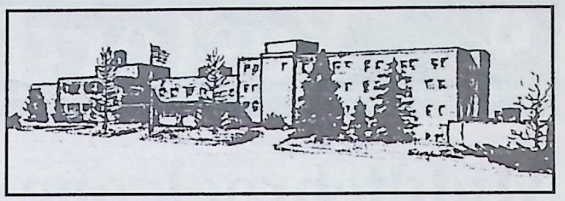
As Mrs. Perry noted, "the history of the King's Daughters' Hospital is the history of the faith and work of unnumbered individuals in the community." The opening of the modern hospital in 1951, like the Thanksgiving Day opening of the original hospital in 1895, was "an unbelievable climax to the story which began with a woman reading the morning paper and a tiny silver cross found pinned to the blouse of a little dead actress, so many years ago." —

The structure which housed KDH on North Augusta Street has been demolished and a new senior living facility, King's Daughters Community Health & Rehabilitation Center, is to be built at the site by a group of Roanoke developers. KDH merged with Waynesboro Community Hospital and in 1994 opened Augusta Medical Center in Fishersville.

This article was originally published in the November 1982 edition of Staunton's Valley Voice. *It was written when the author was public relations specialist at King's Daughters' Hospital in Staunton and is reprinted with permission.*

Sen. Lister Hill speaks at the April 15, 1951 dedication of the new King's Daughters' Hospital facility on North Augusta Street. The construction was paid for in part by Hill-Burton Funds, legislation which Sen. Hill co-sponsored in Congress to provide hospital facilities throughout the nation.

Photo courtesy Richard Hamrick, by Irvin Rosen



Waynesboro Community Hospital, late 1980s

Waynesboro hospital drew pride from community spirit

By VERA HAILEY

WAYNESBORO — A 1919 newspaper headline shouted, "We Need a Hospital!" The article stated, "This is one valuable and needed institution that Waynesboro ought to have and we do not know of any place, anywhere, that would be a more suitable and better location, in every respect. There is scarcely a week that someone is not carted off to a hospital, at a distance... If it's not practical and feasible, we can drop it, but if it is, let us get behind it."

The dream of a hospital in Waynesboro would not become a reality until 1934 when Drs. Weems and Watkins opened a small facility in a house on Wayne Avenue adjacent to St. John's Episcopal Church property. Before this time, anyone needing surgery had to be transported to Staunton or Charlottesville.

The second hospital was opened at 1701 West Main Street in 1937. The building now houses McDow Funeral Home. A fact book published in 1953 noted there were 14 doctors in the city and a 40-bed hospital. The article mentioned that "construction of a new $700,000 hospital is to start by Dec. 31, 1953."

The opening of the hospital was a joyous event for the city of Waynesboro. A newspaper article from June 4, 1955 reported: "The sun shone bright on Waynesboro today... especially in the Oak Avenue section bounded by Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets... as the dream of thousands came true when the million-dollar Waynesboro Community Hospital was dedicated this afternoon. No expenses had been spared in the construction of the institution which was financed by 4,000 contributors without state or federal aid or any indebtedness."

A large crowd gathered for the event and Dr. William T. Sanger, president of the Medical College of Virginia, delivered a speech during the ceremonies. Special recognition was given to Cornelia Warren Hopeman, B.C. Hopeman, and C.G. Quesenbery for their contributions to the project.

According to local historian Curtis Bowman, the funds for the hospital were raised in response to a challenge by E.C. Hopeman. Bowman wrote: "I recall the excellent community spirit during the fund-raising campaign. Later there was a feeling of pride when walking down the hospital corridors to read the small bronze plaques acknowledging gifts from donors like Du Pont Acetate Spinning and so many others from the community. I wonder if such a challenge would be met today."

Waynesboro Community Hospital was expanded five years after it opened and then again in 1967, 1970 and 1976. The facility was the first in the United States to incorporate a pre-engineered critical care facility. The new concept in hospital service attracted the attention of the U.S. Army Surgeon General's Office which sent inspectors to Waynesboro. WCH was touted as "a pacesetter in modern medical care and services." The hospital consolidated with King's Daughters' Hospital in Staunton and the two merged into a new 254-bed facility in Fishersville in 1994. The old Waynesboro hospital property was refurbished into Summit Square, a senior living facility operated by Sunnyside Presbyterian Retirement Center in Harrisonburg. —

Yesterday once more

Stage set for bicentennial celebration

Middlebrook one of Augusta's oldest villages

By ANN McCLEARY

Visitors to Middlebrook today will recognize the building seen in this turn-of-the-century photograph. The building with the crescent skylight was once a store. Later it was a cannery. It is now a private residence.

Photo courtesy the Rosen family

Tucked away in the southwest corner of Augusta County is one of the Shenandoah Valley's greatest gems — the old village of Middlebrook. Now a quiet village, in the previous century Middlebrook was one of the most prosperous towns in the county. The village is listed as a historic district on the Virginia Register and the National Register of Historic Places because of its significance in Augusta County history and its excellent surviving collection of vernacular buildings.

Historical records reveal that considerable town building activity occurred at Middlebrook soon after William and Nancy Scott sold 27 lots in April 1799. As Valley growth began to boom right after the Revolutionary War, several small towns like Middlebrook emerged, the other two oldest ones in Augusta County being Greenville and Waynesboro. These villages served as commercial centers for the surrounding farmland *and they were situated along major thoroughfares throughout the* Valley. The road through Middlebrook linked the growing towns of Staunton and Lexington, and Middlebrook became a stagecoach stop along the road.

Middlebrook had several large dwellings and "storehouses" by 1803, as suggested in the early Mutual Assurance Society fire insurance records. These structures ranged in value between $800 and $1,250. Some of these buildings served the needs of travelers along the main roads, such as the "storehouse" with an attached "lodging room."

The village continued to grow during its first decade. By the fall of 1805, William Scott had platted and sold the other back lots behind the street lots on the southwest and northeast sides of town. Sale records indicate that the early purchasers included English, Scots-Irish and German settlers, reflecting the diverse settlement of the surrounding countryside. Some bought lots for speculation, while others moved to this new village and established residences and businesses. There were already 66 residents by 1810.

The new town flourished. *Martin's Gazetteer* described Middlebrook as "thriving" in 1836, with 150 residents and 30 dwellings. The collection of buildings was both diverse and increasingly attractive, with "some of them handsome brick dwellings." The *Gazatteer* lists the commercial and public enterprises as follows: "One house of public worship free for all denominations, one common school, one tavern, three miscellaneous stores, one tanyard, two tailors, one cabinetmaker, one cooper, one house carpenter, one wheelwright, and two boot and shoe factories."

Like other small commercial centers evolving in the central Valley, Middlebrook serviced the needs of both the farmers in the surrounding region and travelers along the main road.

In 1851, the General Assembly approved the incorporation of the Middlebrook and Brownsburg Turnpike Company to improve this road from Middlebrook to Staunton. The new designation meant that the road would be improved, although it could cost no more than $400 for each mile. As with other turnpikes, expenses would be paid in part through the tolls collected from travelers. Turnpike provisions reveal that while people had to pay tolls, there would be no tolls charged for cattle traveling along the road.

The improvements to the road brought a flurry of improvements in Middlebrook. By 1855 the village had doubled in size to 60 dwellings. Besides having two of the largest mercantile stores in the county, Middlebrook had a number of small industries, producing furniture, hats, tanned leather, boots and shoes, and harnesses.

The town's boom continued well into the late 19th century. Local historian John Lewis Peyton claimed it was "one of the most prosperous and enterprising villages in the county" by 1882, while the *Staunton Spectator* two years later described the village as a "hive of industry." With the 274 inhabitants listed in Peyton's local history, Middlebrook boasted the highest population of any town in Augusta County, apart from Staunton or Waynesboro.

John S. McCorkle's successful mercantile business, established in 1879, drew many people to the village. Jedediah Hotchkiss wrote that McCorkle's business was one of the most "thrifty, enterprising, pleasant, and attractive establishments in the county." *An illustration* of McCorkle's store and house figures prominently in the *Hotchkiss Atlas of 1885.*

Middlebrook boasted other businesses and community programs as well. Then included among the town's industries were a sawmill, an undertaker, a tinner, at least two builders, and five furniture and cabinet makers. Like other small towns, Middlebrook had its own physicians. By 1884, the town had two white churches: Holy Trinity Church,

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•Village

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established in 1883, and Grace German Reformed Church, established 1879. Middlebrook had a baseball team and the Middlebrook String Band in the 1890s.

A significant new addition to the village after the Civil War was the black community that evolved at the south end of the village. With emancipation, many small towns throughout the county found a growing number of blacks moving to the village and creating their own communities. Beulah Heizer and Mrs. Rusmisel wrote in their "Notes on the History of Middlebrook" that several families of former slaves moved to Middlebrook, including "Aunt" Susan Black, a midwife, and Samuel Blackburn, who "bought his wife after he was free." Shadrack Brown, a former slave, made wagons in Middlebrook after the war. *The Hotchkiss Atlas* shows the Mt. Edward Colored Baptist Church and the Middlebrook School House No. 22 as the focus of this new black community, along with 10 homes clustered around these sites.

A stalwart group of Middlebrook's residents gathered on the porch of Rusmisel's Store for this turn-of-the-century photo.

The heyday of the community occurred in these last two decades of the 19th century. By the early 20th century, Middlebrook found its growth eclipsed by neighboring Greenville, which had the new railroad line and the more popular Valley Turnpike, which became the major route from Staunton to Lexington. Little major domestic construction occurred in the village after 1900, although stores and small businesses continued to operate.

A testament to the community's continued spirit of pride is the complex of educational structures built here in the first decades of the 20th century. Both the elementary school and the high school are excellent examples of the rural school improvement programs conducted by the state board of education. Middlebrook was so enamored with its first two-story brick school building that the community held numerous fund-raisers to help build a very modern high school building in 1923, complete with a library, vocational arts classrooms, a cafeteria, community meeting room, and a gymnasium.

The town's well preserved buildings still speak to its early history. Most of the early 19th century dwellings were ordinary log houses or more pretentious brick I-houses — two-story symmetrical houses with a central passage — both with Federal woodwork. By the late 19th century, the I-house had become the

See *HOUSES*, page 12

Middlebrook hosting ACHS fall meeting

The Augusta County Historical Society is helping the village of Middlebrook, in southern Augusta County, kick off its 200th birthday celebration by holding its semiannual meeting in the village at 3 p.m. on Nov. 1.

The history of Middlebrook will be highlighted in a slide presentation given by Carole Nash, a Shenandoah Valley archaeologist, who researched and wrote much of the text for the Valley Conservation Council's Middlebrook-Brownsburg Corridor project. Dr. Nash's talk will focus on the history of Middlebrook, one of the region's oldest and best preserved rural villages. The entire village has been on the National Historic Register since 1980.

In addition to Nash's program, a VCC representative will be on hand to explain the purpose of the corridor project which looked at the cultural and natural resources of the land along what is now Va. 252. This road, which runs through the center of Middlebrook, served as an important transportation link between Staunton and Lexington for almost 200 years. The study looks at the villages and communities that grew up along this route in southern Augusta and northern Rockbridge counties in hopes of raising awareness about the uniqueness of the landscape that has been preserved here.

Key in the study is Middlebrook which is situated on the headwaters of Back Creek. The land that became the village was acquired by William and Nancy Scott in 1798. The Scotts created a town plat and sold the first lots in the spring of 1799.

The town flourished and by 1836 was described as "thriving" with 30 dwellings, a church, a school, a tavern, three stores, a tanyard, two tailors, a cabinetmaker, a cooper, a carpenter, a wheelwright and two boot and shoe factories. In the 1880s the village was described as one of the most "enterprising and prosperous villages in the county."

The meeting is open to the public and those attending need not be members of the society.

In addition to the program, a brief historical society business meeting will take place. The historical society is devoted to learning more about the history and culture of Augusta County, Staunton and Waynesboro. Two newsletters and two journals are published and distributed to members each year. Among the numerous society projects and committees are those focusing on oral history, landmarks, cemeteries and publications. Members are invited to two semiannual meetings as well as an annual banquet. For more information about membership or about the upcoming meeting, contact ACHS president Katharine Brown at 886-5979 or vice-president Nancy Sorrells at 377-6390. —

Beverley Manor DAR observes 200th anniversary of constitution's adoption

STAUNTON — The Beverley Manor chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated the 200th anniversary of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution by conducting a game of *Jeopardy*.

Game contestants were asked three categories of questions focusing on the events leading up to and during the Continental Congress. Dorothy Revercomb, Elizabeth Webb, and Harriet Baldwin were the contestants.

Eloise Lennox conducted the questioning. Contestants were required to give short answers which were timed by Judy Campbell. Jen Fuller kept score. The one question which remained unanswered by contestants was, "What was the name of the plan that James Madison took to the Continental Congress in 1788?" Mrs. Lennox supplied the answer — The Virginia Plan.

Caroline Bell, chairman of the National Defense Committee, reported on the death of Carl Gorman, 90, who, in World War II, served in the elite group of 40 Navajo Indians who were known as the "Code Talkers." This group of Native Americans was recruited by the U.S. Marine Corps and was responsible for developing a form of code using their native language. The Japanese never were able to break this code which served to augment Marine effectiveness and saved many lives.

The meeting was conducted by Jacqueline Cahoon, regent. The chapter's October meeting will be held at the Nazarene Church on West Beverley Street in Staunton. —

Just a little in-between time

DOWN ON THE FARM

BY

BETTY JO HAMILTON

Down on the farm we're thinking about the time that is in-between. That is, the time that is in-between, and is neither part of the time that came before or the time that is ahead. It's just the in-between time. More on this in a few moments.

I've just finished reading an article in *sheep!* magazine which is published by Duck Creek Publications in Lake Mills, Wisc. The magazine features articles covering many facets of the sheep industry and focuses primarily on sheep production in midwestern and western states. One could easily say that the difference between farming in the west and farming in the east is nearly equivalent to what it might be if the earth were two planets instead of one. Suffice it to say that midwestern and western farmers are in a whole other world compared to eastern farming concerns.

The article I read about Lost River Livestock's sheep operation in Idaho brought this suddenly into focus for me. This production operation boasts 5,800 commercial Rambouillet ewes crossed with purebred Suffolk rams. Beginning in mid-February, Lost River lambs out 4,000 ewes in the span of three weeks' time. I'm still reeling from *that little statement — 4,000 ewes lambing in three weeks* — oiy vey!! I can't even imagine what that must be like. That breaks down to 190 ewes lambing every 24 hours or 1 ewe lambing every 7.5 minutes. And as best as I can tell, there are three (yes, just three) people tending to this feat. A photo which accompanies the article shows some 3,000 head of ewes being herded along a snow-covered road en route to their home range. The line of ewes snakes into the distance as far as the eye can see and appears not unlike a scene from Cecil B. de Mille's "The Ten Commandments."

With the flock of 5,800 ewes, the operation aims for a 160 percent lamb crop which works out to a few head shy of 9,300 lambs. A little more math brings the total flock after lambing to just a few more than 15,000 head of sheep which are taken in groups of 1,000 to federal lands to graze until the lambs are ready for market. Ewes are kept out to graze "until the feed is gone, the snow is too deep or it's the first of February," according to the article. One of the proprietors of the operation is quoted as saying: "I've never had a job to support my sheep so they've got to make me money every year one way or the other." Well, I guess so.

Now travel with me across the galaxy to the little planet near Middlebrook which is Down on the Farm's home base. We've just started lambing. In four days' time, 12 ewes have delivered 21 lambs. I barely know whether I'm coming or going. And reading about lambing out 4,000 ewes in three weeks' time completely blows my mind. As a matter of fact, it gives me a stomach ache. Ah well, I'm not too concerned about what goes on across the galaxy with my western neighbors. I wouldn't trade my 170-ewe flock for 10,000 of the wooly critters from out west.

Now, back to the time that is in-between.

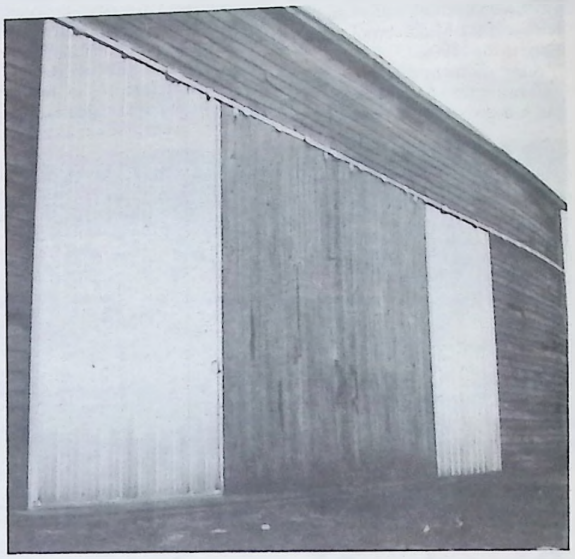
As I said, we're thinking about the in-between time — neither before nor after, but in-between. I've mentioned previously that we rarely have time to get anything done down on the farm. Oh yes, we get all the crops planted and harvested in the spring, summer and fall. We get all the animals fed in the winter. But there's very little time left over for those other odds-and-ends chores which need attention down on the farm. These are chores that are left for the in-between time. And it seems of late, we've actually managed to get some long postponed chores accomplished during the in-between times.

The in-between times are usually brief and sometimes non-existent. The in-between times are sometimes few and far between. Let's take a few minutes to review the annual farming calendar. We'll work on a calendar year to simplify things since it's hard to identify when a year begins and ends down on the farm.

January and February are pretty much taken up with feeding the animals. That's about all we get done during those months. Sometimes we're lucky to get that done. The weather is not usually conducive to any outdoor projects and if there is any extra time in January and February, it is spent in the house bent over a year's worth of bank statements, receipts and invoices preparing the records for tax time.

Toward the end of February and in early March, lambs and calves begin arriving. We're still feeding on a daily basis, so keeping up with new arrivals — tagging, vaccinating, banding, and the like — takes a considerable chunk of time. Near the end of March, it's time to start gathering up weaned calves, treating them and moving them to summer pasture. Longer days give a little extra time to start spreading fertilizer on hay fields, and maybe plant a stand of oats.

By mid-April, if the weather cooperates, the daily feeding routine begins to wind down. Here's when we take a couple days to get the sheep sheared and start getting the fall lambers ready for breeding. Then it's time to start thinking about planting corn which gets under way by early May and is over and done with quickly since we start cutting hay near the end of May. If things go well, first cutting of hay is completed by the Fourth of July and just in time since combining of small grains begins in the middle of July. But usually we wedge in the second cutting of alfalfa before harvesting wheat and oats.



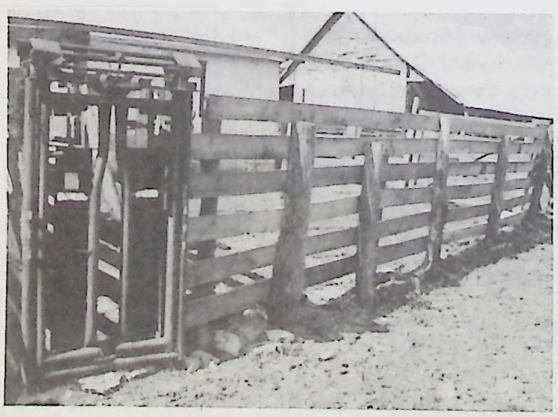
It was necessary to call in a professional carpenter to replace a couple barn doors. The new ones are dandy and open and close with ease. And how about the old ones? Better eat your Wheaties before tackling those.

Once the straw has been baled, it's only a matter of time before the third cutting of alfalfa comes along and we work back toward a second cutting on some fields of clover. If things go well, we'll have this done by the time early September rolls around when it's time to start chopping corn. Of course, just about the time we start into corn, the fall calves begin arriving and we want to keep up with them — tagging, vaccinating, banding and the like. And toward the end of September or early October we're ready to get the fall and spring born calves from the previous year in for vaccinations and deworming.

Just about the time we get that taken care of, the fall lambs start arriving and we begin getting the spring lambing ewes ready to breed. There's field work to be done in October too, working up corn ground either to plant rye or winter wheat for next season.

Of course, this year we had to start feeding the cattle in late Au-

See *WORK*, page 11



It takes a lot of in-between time to get any real work done down on the farm, including a project to reset the cattle catch chute and replace working pen fences.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton

•Work

Continued from page 10

gust, a chore which doesn't usually start until early December. But with the dry conditions since July — we had rain on the Fourth of July, then not again until the second week in August, then not again until the first week in September, then not again until the first week in October — there was no pasture by mid-September so we had no choice but to start feeding, much to our chagrin.

Now we're back into the lambs and calves arriving and feeding cycle, which doesn't leave much time for anything else. Once December gets here, and probably sooner if the rain doesn't cooperate, feeding will be full scale and, again, this will take up the majority of our time.

So you see, there's not much in-between time to get things done other than mandatory farm chores. But this year, we've managed to wedge a few long-overdue projects in-between some of the routine chores down on the farm.

As I noted, January through March and even some of April, the weather isn't often pleasant enough or predictable enough to begin any outdoor projects. But we found some happily warm days in mid-May — the corn was in the ground and there was a little time before hay cutting was to begin — to attempt a project for which I had lobbied for some time. This was to rehabilitate the cattle working pens and catch chute. Not that there was too much terribly wrong with what we had except a strong wind would have blown down the panel fence and the head catch chute was leaning about 120 degrees north.

Of course, what one would have liked to have done would have been to simply tear out everything that was practically falling down then build it back. But realistically, it was prudent to take baby steps, tear out small portions of the broken down pens, then build them back, since we knew there wouldn't be enough in-between time to get the whole project done. We did manage to pull the catch gate out and reset it to its proper position with concrete anchoring the posts. In so doing we hope to avoid the northward movement of the catch gate as the cattle hit it each time they enter.

And always, it seems, when we're attempting these projects, there is time taken to remember those who have gone before us, as was the occasion when we were pulling out the catch gate, redigging the post holes, and resetting the contraption. My father paused to recall the fellow who, many years earlier, had dug the original post holes — by hand, mind you — and set the posts firmly in the ground for the catch chute. Dead now many years, the fellow was recalled as one always diligent to the task at hand, a willing and ready worker, for whom no task was too great. As my brother-in-law was cleaning out the new post holes which we had dug mechanically and while my father was reflecting on the work ethic of the long-dead farm hand, my brother-in-law made the observation of the chap: "Well, I wish he hadn't died. He was a mighty good fellow."

It was not until late August before there was any more in-between time. On this occasion we acknowledged the lack of skill on our part to accomplish the task before us and called in a professional carpenter to complete some repairs on the barns. As it happens, carpenters also have in-between times when they take on small jobs after finishing up big jobs and before moving on to other big jobs. So we had a number of projects lined up for the carpenter when his in-between time opened up.

It seems someone had knocked the back wall out of the shed on the end of the barn. I don't know how it happened. I just went to the barn one day and the wall had been knocked out. So that had to be fixed. And then there were a couple of barn doors which needed to be replaced. There are four barn doors. But, of course, we couldn't replace

See *DOORS*, page 12

Another job taken care of during some in-between time was repairing a manger under the barn.

'You want a latch for what kind of door?'

"I need a latch for the cutting room door," my mother told the hardware salesman.

He didn't understand. Oh, he understood the latch part and the door part, but he didn't understand what a cutting room is.

"What's a cutting room?" he said in reply to her request.

My mother went about trying to explain to the hardware salesman about the door to the room on the ground floor of the barn that runs through the middle of the barn. "It's under the barn," she said, "where you drop the hay from the hay mow."

Her explanation was inadequate to help the salesman assist her in acquiring the aforementioned latch. Additional expertise was required. Another salesman, one with farm background, was called in.

"Tell him what I want," my mother said to the new arrival in the latch negotiation and again put in her request for the cutting room door latch.

"You want a what?" the salesman asked.

My mother again went through the description of the area of the barn found on its ground floor.

"Oh, you mean you want a latch for the feed room door," the salesman with greater expertise said. "I've never heard it called a cutting room," he said. My mother assured him that was all she had ever heard it called.

A few moments later a farm neighbor walked in on the door latch negotiation and was solicited for his terminology on the subject. "It's the cutting room," he said.

Why all the confusion? Which is it — *cutting room (more* precisely, cut'n room) or feed room?

Well, in the first place, it's not a room at all. It's more of an access area on the ground floor of the barn. From this area a farmer can give feed — hence the name feed room — to animals which are kept in stalls on either side of the area through the middle of the underneath part of the barn. It is into this area which hay or feed can be dropped from the barn's upper floor storage areas.

In days gone by, the feed which was given to horses or mules and perhaps cattle kept in stalls on a barn's ground floor was cut up — hence the name cut'n room — in this area under a barn. This was when corn was harvested whole — ear, stalk and all — and brought to the barn for feed. One could not give animals whole stalks of corn. It was required that it be cut up before being put out for feed.

Over a period of years, mechanization eventually led to methods of harvesting crops which prepared them in such a manner that they could be fed directly to animals without the necessity of additional cutting or chopping. But these feed stuffs were still given to the animals from this same area beneath the barn. Therefore, what was once known as the cut'n room then became the feed room. There then evolved a generation of farmers who had no knowledge of what it meant to cut feed before giving it to the animals, therefore the term cut'n room became outdated and was lost from familiar usage.

So this was the explanation that was required in order to obtain a latch for the cut'n room of the barn. Nailing the door shut and finding another way in and out of the barn's ground floor might have been easier. —

Augusta Farm Bureau honors local youths

AC staff report

SANGERVILLE — Six Augusta County youths were honored by the Augusta Farm Bureau Federation at the group's annual meeting held recently.

Kara Michael, Rosalea Riley, Beth Blackwell, Emily Curry, Jimmy Crosby, and Ashley Gutshall were recognized by AFBF as winners of contests held each year by Farm Bureau.

Miss Michael, 18, daughter of Dennis and Gail Michael of Verona was chosen Miss Augusta County Farm Bureau. She is a graduate of Fort Defiance High School and is employed by the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau.

Miss Blackwell, of Rt. 3, Staunton, was named the federation's Outstanding Young Agriculturist. She also placed as a finalist for the Farm Youth Leadership Award. Miss Blackwell is a student at Fort Defiance High School and a member of its FFA chapter. She holds a 3.75 grade-point average and is active in a number of church, civic, and sports organizations. She also is active in showing horses and trail riding. Miss Blackwell is a former Augusta County Fair queen and is the daughter of Fred Blackwell and Judy Farrar.

Augusta Farm Bureau Federation award winners, from left, Kara Michael, Rosalea Riley, Beth Blackwell, Emily Curry, Ashley Gutshall, and Jimmy Crosby are congratulated by AFBF president Rick Shiflet at the AFBF annual meeting held recently. AC staff photo

Also chosen as a Farm Youth Leadership Award finalist was Miss Riley. The 16-year-old Buffalo Gap High School junior is the daughter of Doug and Donna Riley of Rt.1, Staunton. Miss Riley maintains a 4.0 grade-point average and is active in livestock judging and exhibiting livestock. She is a member of the Buffalo Gap FFA chapter and Bethany Presbyterian Church.

The AFBF Farm Youth Leadership Award winner, chosen to represent the federation in the state contest at the Virginia Farm Bureau annual convention in December, is Miss Blackwell. She was selected following a speak-off at the federation's October board meeting.

The Mary Frances Houff Outstanding Citizenship Award was presented to Miss Curry. The 16-year-old is the daughter of Charles and Betsy Curry of Mt. Solon. She is active in sports at Buffalo Gap and is a member of the school's FFA chapter. She is also a member of the Mt. Solon 4-H club and the Augusta County 4-H Livestock Judging Team.

Miss Gutshall was named the winner of the Rural Health Career Award. She is the 17-year-old daughter of Andrew and Norma Gutshall of Rt. 1, Verona. Miss Gutshall plans to pursue a career in home health care nursing following high school graduation. She is a senior at Fort Defiance High School and is president of its FFA chapter and vice president of the Augusta FFA Federation. She shows horses and has worked as a lifeguard at the Staunton and Waynesboro YMCAs.

Winner of the AFBF essay contest was Crosby. He is the 13-year-old son of Harry and Beverley Crosby of Rt. 6, Staunton and is a student at Beverley Manor Middle School. Crosby is enrolled in the school's agriscience technology classes.

Augusta Farm Bureau members considered legislative resolutions on a variety of subjects. Resolutions included some which support dairy and meat product inspections as well as those which support development of the state's aquaculture industry. The group also endorsed a resolution requiring that buyers of real estate in agricultural areas be notified of farming activities which occur in those areas. AFBF approved a resolution opposing development of the Berry Farm near Verona. The farm is owned by Augusta County and has the natural resources to provide up to a million gallons of water a day for county residents. Resolutions approved will be forwarded to the state resolution committee for action at the convention to be held in Roanoke in December.

In other business, executive officers and directors were elected. Officers elected by Farm Bureau members included Rick Shiflet, president; Charles Wonderley, vice president; and Katy Roudabush, women's chairman. Elected to a three-year board term was William Bashaw, Pastures. At-large directors elected to three-year terms were Dennis Hewitt and incumbent Willard Cline.

Outgoing directors honored included Bryan Plemmons and Forrest Ashby. —

◦Houses

Continued from page 9

most popular plan, whether of log or frame construction. The weatherboarded walls, large exterior chimneys, and decorative front porches facing the old turnpike create a sense of continuity throughout this small settlement. The two rows of closely spaced dwellings and commercial buildings still line the main road, reflecting the village at the height of its prosperity in the late 19th century. —

Ann McCleary is a former president of the Augusta County Historical Society. She researched the village of Middlebrook during the application process for the National Register of Historic Places. Dr. McCleary is now a member of the faculty at the State University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Ga.

◦Doors

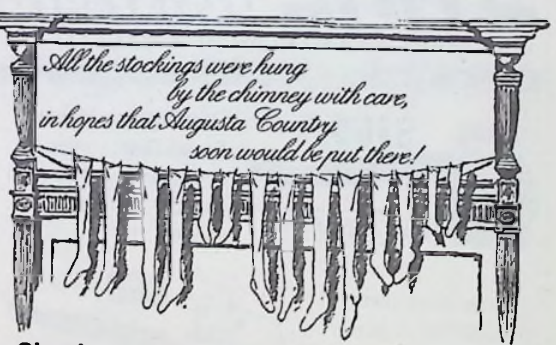
Continued from page 11

all four barn doors at one time -- not while there's still some good left in the old ones. So the two barn doors which were in the worst shape — one which someone had backed into with the bale carrier on the back of the tractor leaving two large holes in the door, and another which someone had run through with the bale spear on the front of the tractor — were replaced. I'm not saying who did any of this barn door piercing. I'm not mentioning any names. I didn't see it done, so I can't place blame because I have no proof and bale carriers leave no DNA behind to trace. But the holes were punched in the doors just the same.

And then there was a barn bridge which had collapsed and had to be fixed. No one was really responsible for this breaking. It's just one of those things that has to be fixed from time to time. So the carpenter had his hands full with the wall repair, door replacing, and the bridge building in his in-between time.

With lambing time approaching, there were a few projects which needed to be accomplished and which had been put off and put off, until they could be put off no more. One of these was repairing a manger along the feed room underneath the barn. Over a period of

See *BARN*, page 13



Bryan Plemmons, fish king of Goshen's Casta Line Trout Farm, swept the trout competition at the State Fair of Virginia. Casta Line's co-managers are Junior Campbell, Rodney Campbell, and Wayne Daniel. Placing second in the rainbow trout division was Diana Pavlik of New Castle.

Beryl Herzog, director of the Atlantic Rural Exposition, presents a ribbon to Rhonda Howdyshell of the Museum of American Frontier Culture. The museum's carding and wool spinning exhibit won the Virginia Regional Showcase Outstanding Exhibit of the Day.

AC staff photos

Wesley Kirtz, 12, son of Lisa and Jeff Kirtz of Staunton, poses with prize winning pumpkins at the State Fair of Virginia. Wesley is a sixth-grade student at Grace Christian School in Staunton.

State Fair of Virginia celebrates 50 years

AC staff report

RICHMOND — For the 50th year, the achievements of citizens, communities, agriculture, businesses and industry were celebrated at the State Fair of Virginia. Held on Strawberry Hill in Richmond Sept. 24 - Oct. 4, the fair dished out ample servings of Virginia history, arts, crafts, technology exhibits, livestock and agricultural attractions and a whole lot more.

Boasting the largest outdoor classroom in the state, the fairgrounds is permanent home to the 11-acre Heritage village. The exhibit meets criteria found in the state's new Standards of Learning for grades K-12 by depicting a living history of early settlers and Native Americans.

Around the bend from the village is a walk down main street in a Western style town. Everything from spinning wheels, to turn-of-the-century telephones and typewriters are on display. Fairgoers are brought right up to date in the Better Living Building which showcases goods from statewide artists and crafters, including the amazing life size sand art sculpture in process.

A peek into the future in the Commonwealth building reveals the latest technological advances in industry. Back over in the barn, Virginia's diversified livestock paraded around in equestrian rings under the scrutinizing eyes of judges. The finest agricultural products showed up in canning jars, vases, hives, planters, and fresh off the vine vying for blue, red and white ribbons. Promises of viewing the birth of a calf or lamb drew folks of all ages to Young MacDonald's Farm. Any disappointment in missing the big event was removed by the sights and sounds of goats, ducklings, piglets, kittens and puppies found in the petting zoo. The pig races and live shark show provided fun entertainment plus a chance to escape the heat, rear back and rest the legs awhile.

Over 80 rides and games sprawled across the midway. And if that wasn't enough to tempt the "kid in you," then the sticky cotton candy, candied apples and sugar dusted elephants ears surely would. Nightly concerts brought big name entertainment, such as the Ohio Players, Jerry Clower, and John Michael Montgomery, to the grounds. This 50th state fair trumpeted Virginia's best and finest. It is definitely a blue-ribbon event for the state.

To find out more about the fair and competition winners, check the website at *http://www.statefair.com/* —

◦Barn

Continued from page 12

time, the sheep had managed to dismantle the manger, jump into it, then into the feed room which runs through the center of the barn's ground floor. Having sheep in and out of the feed room at their whim is more aggravating than underwear with bad elastic.

So my father used some in-between time to begin the process of putting the manger back as it should be. And it was not a simple project. A front end loader and jacks were required to raise the manger back to its proper height. A considerable amount of drilling was necessary to make it possible to drive nails into rock-hard wood. But after a few days' work during a little in-between time after the corn was chopped, the manger was put back into fine shape. Now if we can just get a latch on the feed room door, we should be able to keep those pesky ewes in their proper places. (See related article on page 11.)

And yet, there was still another project related to the sheep which required some attention before lambs were to arrive. A number of years ago my father constructed a large manger and feed trough combination to be used in the lambing shed. I assisted him in the original construction of this... this... well, it's hard to put into words exactly what it is. It's just a large manger-feed trough combination and it's supposed to be movable. And we have moved it in and out of the shed every year in order to clean bedding out of the shed after lambing is over. Every time we've moved the manger, it's gotten broken up a little worse. To be fair, the sheep have done their share of the damage — knocking off some of the manger slats then getting up into the manger, not doing it much good in the long run.

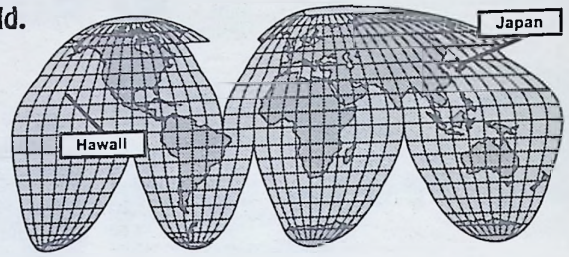
The manger was moved outside in the spring, then moved back inside in late summer, the last move coming close to practically demolishing the thing which then required some serious repairs to make it ready for the next lambing season.

When my father constructed the manger a number of years ago, he began the building project right outside the shop. It was a good place to work on the manger. Since most of the tools and supplies we needed were kept in the shop, we saved some legwork and running to and fro fetching tools to construct the manger. As my father began the project, I could not tell what his eventual product was to be. After some time working — and since I could not tell what his

See *TROUGH*, page 18

Notes from the road

Recent travels have taken *Augusta Country* staff writer Nancy Sorrells to Japan and Hawaii. In this issue she reflects on the agriculture practices and production found in these climatically diverse regions of the world.



Farming drives global economy

Diversity of island climates provide conditions for variety of ag practices

By NANCY SORRELLS

Although you might not remember it when standing in the middle of a new housing community or watching a row of fast food restaurants spring up overnight, Augusta County is still an agricultural area. Farmers and the farms they work are vital to everybody, not just for the food they give us, but for the landscape they preserve around us.

Perhaps it is because of this heritage that, whenever I travel, I tend to look at the farms and agriculture around me, while my friends aim *first for the big cities and cultural* centers. No matter where one goes in the world, there are farmers quietly going about their jobs of putting food into the mouths of the rest of the world.

Recently I had the opportunity to spend five weeks on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, the least populated and last settled of Japan's four main islands. Agriculture remains a very strong part of Hokkaido's economy.

When I left Japan, instead of hopping a plane and flying 18 hours straight back to Virginia, I transitioned myself with a 10-day visit to Hawaii. There, too, I observed some interesting farming practices.

In many ways the agriculture of Hokkaido resembles the Shenandoah Valley. Corn and potatoes are specialties that are roasted and sold at exorbitant prices on the streets of the island's biggest city, Sapporo. Tourists and residents of the 1.8-million people city pay almost $3 an ear for roasted corn!

A statue of Dr. William Clark gestures toward Sapporo, Japan which can be seen at a distance in the photo's background. Clark, who hailed from Massachusetts, founded an agriculture college in Sapporo.

The dairy industry, too, is an important part of Hokkaido. Milk is more prevalent on the tables here than in the rest of the country, and a delicious island specialty is "soft cream" — what we would called frozen custard. Usually it is offered only in vanilla, but occasionally melon-flavored soft cream is served.

Interestingly enough, the agriculture in Hokkaido bears a heavy mark of New England. The island is the Japanese frontier, having been colonized by the Japanese for only 150 years or so. In 1869 the Meiji government of Japan established the Colonial Department to carry out the development of Hokkaido. The Colonial Department looked to the United States for help, particularly in agriculture, and so crops, tools and techniques were imported. Several New Englanders arrived as well.

One, William Clark, president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, has been immortalized. He came, established Sapporo Agricultural College (now Hokkaido University) and left all within a year. His parting words to his followers were, "Boys, Be Ambitious." To this day that phrase is repeated and known by anyone even slightly familiar with the region's history. Dr. Clark's likeness is found in the form of statues all over the city.

During this period, the colonial government encouraged the settlement of farmers to the region, but few Japanese from the mainland accepted the offer. Hokkaido's climate was much, much colder than the other islands and often 9 feet of snow would fall in the winter. The farmers that did come were often former samurai whose feudal lifestyle had been eliminated by the Meiji Restoration. Most early farmers were actually "farmer-soldiers" who farmed the raw land and stood always ready to fight invading Russians who might covet Hokkaido as their own. These farmer-soldiers had uniforms and

See *HOKKAIDO*, page 15

A farmer near Sapporo, Japan smooths out fields where young rice plants will be set out. Photos by Nancy Sorrells

The first colonists of Japan were farmers who lived in straw huts like this one at the Historical Village of Hokkaido.

The Ogawa family's dairy barn was the first western style barn built in Hokkaido using blueprints ordered from the United States. The barn was constructed in 1877.

•Hokkaido

Continued from page 14

participated in military drills in addition to their farming duties.

In addition to growing western agricultural products, these Japanese pioneers experimented with growing rice, the dietary staple of all Japanese. Rice grows best in hot, humid climates, but in 1873 Kyuzo Nakayama discovered a red beard variety of rice which is cold-resistant. Rice has been grown in Hokkaido ever since.

In many ways the landscape of Hokkaido is reminiscent of the Shenandoah Valley, but the rectangular terraced fields filled with water provide quite a contrast to Virginia's fields of wheat and corn. No doubt about it — rice is the dominant crop. In May farmers flood their fields in preparation for the tiny bright green rice sprouts. Sitting astride tractors with wide cleated metal wheels, farmers drive round and round each field, through the mud and water, making it as smooth as possible for the plants. Then the sprouts, which have been started in greenhouses, are planted by means of mechanized equipment. In earlier years the young plants were slid through the hollow metal arms of a human-powered drill. Because of its many arms, the drill was nicknamed an octopus.

Rice is not a water plant; the plants are grown in water as protection from weeds. When the plants are ready for harvest, the water is drained.

Although rice fields are seen all over the countryside, the region around Fukagawa is particularly well known for its agricultural production. It sits on an alluvial plain created because of two major rivers, the Ishikari and the Uryu. Nearly 25 percent of Fukagawa's land remains as farmland, both rice fields and upland tracts of land. Fukagawa is best known as the producer of Kirara 397, the most popular and best-tasting rice in Japan.

Fukagawa is also known for spinach, onions, potatoes, melons, cherries and roses. Orchards and dairy farms dot the countryside as well. Our Virginia team visited the mayor of Fukagawa and he gave us presents representative of the agriculture of the region. I received a beautiful pin shaped like a bunch of grapes.

With the exception of the rice cultivation, the agriculture of Hokkaido is much like that of the Shenandoah Valley. This came as no surprise because of the similarities of climate and landscape. Tropical Hawaii, however, was an entirely different ball of wax. Here in the volcanic soils of the Pacific, pineapples, coffee and sugar cane reign supreme.

A drive around any of the islands brings one up close and personal with the big three of farming, but an aerial view, like the one we witnessed from a helicopter flying over Kauai really hammers home the amount of land dedicated to these crops.

Of the three, sugar cane has historically been the biggest money maker but is losing ground to the newer crop of coffee. Hawaii is no longer America's top sugar producer, but it is the only state in the U.S. that produces coffee. As we dipped and whirled over fields of sugar cane planted in the red dirt of Kauai, our helicopter pilot explained to us the harsh environmental realities of sugar production.

Kalo, or taro, is grown in terraced water beds on Hawaii's island of Kauai.

In this aerial view of Hawaii's coastline, the region's fields of coffee can be seen. Hawaii is the only state in the U.S. that grows coffee.

The sugarcane is planted by laying pieces of the stalk in furrows. A network of irrigation ditches then connects the furrows. The water needs for these plants is incredible — it takes a ton of water to make one pound of processed sugar. When the plants are mature, in about two years, the fields are sprayed with a chemical and set afire. Then the burned stalks are bulldozed into a giant pile and removed to a processing plant where the stalks are crushed to extract the sweet juice. Back in the fields, the roots will sprout again and several crops can be harvested from the same fields before the plants play out and have to be replanted.

In Hawaii, many farmers are turning toward coffee instead of sugarcane. From the air it is easy to pick out the dark green fields of coffee which provide a contrast against the lighter green fields of cane. Coffee trees are actually shrubs that can grow to 10 or 15 feet but are often kept pruned to 6-7 feet. The trees bear fruit when they are 3-5 years old and can live 20-30 years. Although coffee is a newer venture for Hawaiian farmers, Kona Coffee has already proven quite successful on the world market.

Pineapples, too, are a big product on the islands. Almost anybody could tell you that the headquarters of Dole Pineapples is in this state. Fields under pineapple cultivation have rows of black plastic in them. Pineapples are rooted by taking a piece of the fruit, like the top knot of leaves and a chunk of the fruit and sticking it in a hole in the plastic. In 18 months or so there will be a new pineapple plant with harvestable fruit.

The final agricultural product I saw in Hawaii is not a competitor on the world market or even the local market, but it is a traditional crop for the native Hawaiians. The crop is called taro, or kalo in Hawaiian, and is used to make poi, a purple goo that resembles thin mashed potatoes.

Kalo is a water plant brought to the islands by the Polynesians hundreds of years ago. We visited some 700-year-old archaeological ruins that were the remains of stone terraces developed by the Hawaiians to grow kalo. They diverted water from a nearby stream by canals and brought it into their "fields."

Kalo was to the Hawaiians what rice is to the Japanese. Every part of the plant is edible. The underground stems are mashed to make poi, which is rich in carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins A and B. (and, to this Virginian, tastes really awful!) The leaves tastes like spinach and contain vitamins A, B and C. Over the centuries, the Hawaiians developed over 300 varieties of kalo and many of their traditions and cultures centered around this plant.

Although kalo was a plant introduction by the Polynesians, it has been around so long that many of the island's habitats are intertwined with its cultivation. Many of Hawaii's birds, for instance, feed on invertebrates and other aquatic plants in the kalo patches. Modern farming methods with an emphasis on high yields through the

See *YIELDS*, page 18

The Hitching Post

Careers in horsemanship

Equine insurance is highly specialized field

By I.B. HOOFINIT

I have a friend who is very valuable to his owner. He's a race horse, serious about his profession, and very good at what he does. When we talked the other day he told me he was insured for a half a million dollars. I thought 'Wow!' I wonder how much I could be insured for. So I called Pat Mullins of the Markel Insurance Company. We talked equine insurance and I realized that he had a very unusual career in horsemanship.

Equine insurance is very specialized within the insurance business. Patrick Mullins started off in the insurance business in 1961. During the late 1970s he became involved in the equine industry through an organization called the Horseman's Benevolent Protective Association (HBPA).

This organization was looking for a medical program for over 60,000 thoroughbred race horse owners and trainers. One thing led to another and Pat found himself looking at other policies for the association. They asked him for a policy that would cover every race horse in the United States against stable fires and vanning (transportation) accidents common to race tracks.

"I told them, 'I don't write insurance on horses.' I put together a policy for them, but I was not familiar with horse claims," Pat said.

Then in 1979 there was a claim for 40 dead horses from a stable fire at Suffold Downs in Boston, Mass. Pat and another agent from Cincinnati went to Boston and spent 18 hours nonstop estimating values, proof of loss, and other important information for the claims.

"The owners had their claim checks within 30 days," Pat said.

The industry had never seen such prompt service and Mullins started getting calls from the American Horse Show Association, the American Harness Association and other equine organizations. "The next thing I knew I was the equine insurance agent of the United States!" he recalled.

Pat is the first to admit that he is not a knowledgeable horse person, but he does know his insurance business. In 1978-79 he started writing equine insurance. In a half dozen years he had so much business that he merged with Markel Insurance Co. Markel is among the top three equine insurance agencies in the United States. Pat enjoys traveling a great deal, meeting people, and giving speeches concerning insurance in the equine industry.

Anyone interested in this field has a great opportunity for success. There are millions of horse owners in the United States today. Estimates claim only 25 percent insure their horses for liability. Pat explains that a loose horse can cause as much damage as a car. We insure our cars, but often not our horses!

Only an estimated 10 to 15 percent of horse owners insure for mortality. This means there is a need for more education concerning liability in the horse industry. Many farms have homeowner policies that do not include business pursuits. "One blue ribbon at a horse show can cause horses to be a business pursuit," Pat said.

One success story Pat likes to talk about is the insurance policy he developed for NARHA, (North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc.). The problem with most policies concerning these children is the clause for pre-existing illnesses. Most of the children in the therapeutic riding programs already have serious illnesses. Even minor injuries could result in lawsuits due to the medical problems associated with children's disabilities. "I developed a policy that would pay the medical bills on any children injured. This would prevent the parents from being forced to sue," he said.

Pat's advice to anyone interested in this career in horsemanship is to obtain a college degree.

"You will be dealing with college degree people and you must be able to relate on the same educational and social level," he said. "College will help you with the skills, social graces, and knowledge for this type of business. Learn basic insurance and be familiar with what's available. Take the exam and get your license. Start making contacts in the horse world. Go to shows, see what farms are out there, and meet people. Making contacts is essential to your success."

This business is much more specialized than most insurance careers. Typical insurance classes spend hours on homeowners policies, workmen's comp, liability insurance, etc. The horse industry had no real "source" to go to for equine policies. There are no real text books to determine values like there are for houses and cars.

"I look at show records for worth, claiming races for values," explained Pat. "I got my training from people within the associations. They tell me what their need is, then I develop the program."

If you like horses, and enjoy a strong interest in insurance, then you might consider this career in horsemanship. Insuring horses, lesson programs, and stables protects the owners against possible loss. And as for me? Speaking 'from the horse's mouth,' my worth is as good as my word. —

Make sure reasons are right before purchasing a horse

Q: I am trying to decide whether to buy a horse or to take riding lessons instead. Friends of mine are selling their horse, but I do not feel I know enough about horses to own one and think lessons might be better. Is it possible to "learn as you go" through ownership?

Signed,
"To buy or not to buy"

My philosophy is summed up in three words — "education before ownership." This is the basic rule of good horsemanship.

Many people want to "own" a horse for various reasons. One reason is the "may I" approach. Owners do not have to ask permission to have access to their horse.

Another reason is the "anything goes" thinking which means the owner has total decision control over the horse's welfare and work.

The "security" minded owner looks at ownership as a form of permanence. No one can take the horse away from them. All of these reasons can lead to problems later. The best reason to own a horse is because you are prepared to accept the responsibility involved with horse care, enjoy working with one horse rather than many, and you are willing to accept certain limitations which will be part of ownership. You will lose some of your freedom to explore if all your responsibilities are in your own "back yard."

If you are a beginner, I strongly suggest lessons. This is because beginners have a limited knowledge of riding and horse care. This means their choice of horse will be limited to "beginner" type horses. It is possible to "learn as you go," which to me means making lots of mistakes and learning from them. I can tell you from experience that horses are VERY forgiving animals. However, a little education can go a long way in keeping mistakes to a minimum. Having access to an instructor who is knowledgeable can help you through some tough times.

If you have experience with horses and feel you are an intermediate rider then your choice of horses is a wider selection. There will be problems that are common with horses that you will feel capable of handling. Your "learn-as-you-go" philosophy will have less stress on the horse because you will have a better understanding of behavior and training psychology as well as some education in health and nutrition.

My suggestion to you is to look at your own experience and education. Knowing the horse you are interested in buying is a plus. Take my "education before ownership" philosophy and apply it. If there is no hurry to buy a horse then take some time to learn more about horse care and even about the horse itself. There may be some hidden problems there that you did not suspect. Problems that rear their ugly heads later can ruin a good relationship between horse and rider. I have known many frustrated horses AND owners who uncovered serious problems they did not expect.

Also, look at your motives for ownership. Upon reflection, you may determine that perhaps your reasons for ownership might not be to benefit the horse as much as to benefit yourself which can lead to disappointments later. Ownership can mean a loss of freedom, responsibility for the animal's health and welfare, and a certain amount of discipline. Horse care is a daily responsibility.

Lessons can give you a broad base of experience and exposure to many different types of horses. I encourage lessons because as a lesson horse I teach. And as a horse I am OWNED. My owner has accepted the responsibility of ME. And coming from the "Horse's Mouth," I have to say that ownership is the way to go if it's for all the right reasons. —

I.B. HOOFINIT From the Horse's Mouth

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 provided 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.

Bull riders emphasize safety first

By CHRIS MARRS

FISHERSVILLE -- "Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be cowboys..."

The words from this song have a special meaning for Sharon Hoy of Staunton and Gary Hoy of Fishersville. Their son, Will, let them know two years ago that he was determined to be a bull rider.

Sharon knew the danger involved in this rodeo sport.

"I felt my job as a parent was to make it as safe as possible," she said.

Safety became the number one priority on everyone's mind as the Christian's Creek Arena was built at the home of Sharon Hoy. Will and several of his friends began pursuing their rodeo sport in earnest.

First came professional instruction at clinics in Lynchburg. Then they traveled to Archdale, N.C., for a three-day weekend clinic with Jerome Davis, a National Bull Rider. Will is also a member of the National High School Rodeo Association and the Virginia High School Rodeo Association.

Sharon explains that the "schooling area" at Christians Creek Arena has only been in operation for about two months. In spite of a great deal of opposition based on the danger associated with the sport, the Hoys have managed to build a reputation for safety.

I spoke to seven bull riders who participate at the Christian Creek Arena in training for competitions. When asked what advice they had for promoting and encouraging safety in this sport, they all stressed different areas of concern.

"It's all about not getting above your head too quick," explains Clay Ogden. "Start out in the right place and get on bulls that are easier to learn on." Knowing your limits is an important part of safety.

Tim Sturdivant, another rider, talks about safety in the chute. Most accidents happen in the chute before the bull is actually released. He says there are things you can do in the chute to remain safe.

"If you get a nasty bull in the chute, have spots (people who can pick you up and pull you out). Keep the bull quiet, and don't use spurs on him while in the chute," Sturdivant said. "Keep your toes turned in. I put my knees on him first rather than just drop down. I try not to surprise the bull."

Will Hoy, Sharon's son, considers safety equipment to be important to bull riding. "I wear a helmet and a protective vest," he said.

Another situation that needs attention is the "get off." When the rider has finished his eight seconds he must dismount the bull. One hand is tied down and the rider has to untie himself, jump off, and get out of the arena without injury. J. R. Stanley says "When you hit the ground, get up running. You have to put your trust in the bull fighter. His job is to distract the bull." The bull fighter is the man often dressed as a clown who tries to keep the bull's attention on himself so that the rider gets out of the arena safely.

Jason Robertson explains that it is O.K. to protect yourself. "New riders should always wear helmets and vests, especially on certain bulls. And if you feel uneasy about getting on, don't," he said.

Wearing a protective vest for safety, Will Hoy of Fishersville takes a ride on "Wasp" at a bull riding competition in Boonesboro, Va. Photo courtesy Sharon Hoy

This is not a sport to just try. Riders must be trained properly before the first time on a bull. Training starts with the proper equipment, riding barrels, and even bareback horses. Professional trainers help instruct students through many hazards.

Attitude is another part of bull riding. Josh Cash encourages respect for the sport.

"The worst thing to do is to not be scared," Cash said. "If you become fearless, then don't ride because you'll get hurt."

Another rider who encourages a proper attitude is Wes Hevener.

"Be smart with what you ride," Hevener said. "If you draw a bull that you can't ride — WITHDRAW (from the contest). The Professional Bull Riders Association have the best bulls (also the most difficult to ride). On the 'get off' pick your spot, jump into your hand. BE SMART, you gotta think." Wes also recommends students learn from professionals and know their chute procedures.

The four elements of safety for this sport stressed at Christian's Creek Arena include the proper safety equipment, knowing and recognizing rider limits and capabilities, parental participation, and providing the knowledge and training necessary. The actual ride on a bull is eight seconds. Sharon Hoy explains that those eight seconds test the riders' balance, timing, coordination, strength, and mental attitude. The bull's job is to get the rider off. The rider's job is to stay on. Competition between the rider and the bull may only last eight seconds, but for the professional bull rider it represents months of training and preparation. —

Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin

October 1998

Dear Maude,

When I see the leaves start turning, it makes me so homesick! How I would like to see those beautiful reds and yellows, even if they aren't as bright as some years. Here, everything is a rather subdued shade of brown, except for the occasional rebellious tree or shrub that is determined to do something different. The most striking example of rebellion I have seen was a group of early blooming ornamental pears trees that burst into white bloom in the median strip of the beltway. But almost everything else is about the same color as the mood of most of the people who live and work here.

Earlier this month, there was a very noticeable mood of anger among the area citizens. Over lunch one day, one of my friends got a real look of annoyance on her face and said to me, "I am so sick of the whole mess. If I hear that woman's name (you know whom she meant) one more time I'm going to scream. I can't stand her, I can't stand him, and I don't like a one of those characters on the Hill either! I hope they are all defeated!" Frankly, I was astonished because I never heard her make such a statement. She is usually very subdued and takes what Washington has to offer with a shrug of her shoulders. Not this time! And, she is not the only person I know who has been expressing, in strong terms, how they feel about the whole impeachment scandal. One coworker, while pouring his first cup of coffee for the morning, gave an impromptu speech on the upcoming elections and his voting choices. "I don't even want to vote," he growled. But, at last, most of those reports and testimonies and the like are released and read and there is not much left to say. *And I must admit that I am happy that finally we have a little something different to talk about.*

The something different, however, is the same old thing as every other year this time — the members of Congress are trying their best to cram two years of work into two or three weeks. It makes things more crazy than usual for most of us, but at least it's a change. Our bosses are running around like a bird caught inside the house, dashing from one place to another, pacing back and forth, and worrying about first one sentence in a bill and then about another. What if that little loophole they worked on so hard for their well-paying clients should fall by the wayside? They rehearse what they will say to the client if it does, and then quietly calculate, with a slight smile creeping across their faces, just how much in retainer they can charge during the next Congress getting that little loophole back on some appropriations bill or another. Oh, life is so hard in the fast lane!

And as the bosses pace about in various moods, they can make our lives miserable. "Call the committee. Find out what they're doing."

You know that since it is just past lunch time, the committee has not even met since the last time, two hours ago, that you called and found out that they were not doing anything they were willing to tell you about. If you try to explain that, you make get a sharp reprimand and additional instructions, about finding out what they are doing. Such hectic nonsense in the office can be abided if one can go out at lunchtime and compare notes with friends who are going through the same thing. But, with all the activity, everyone's friends are so busy that no one can even get away for lunch. As I said earlier, "Life is hard..."

For the first days of this month we kept hoping that Congress will adjourn within a day or two. Then the days turned into weeks. All that anger from "The Scandal" did not go away but simply transferred itself into annoyance that the politicians were still here. There were some mighty unpleasant faces seen around town. The members who are running this year were probably hoping more than anyone else that they could go home and get busy with their final campaigning. Yet, there they sat arguing over the way our tax dollars are to be spent, and who will get the credit, or blame, for it.

I know that every couple of years I go into this tirade when congress starts working late into the night and weekends too, doing stuff that should have been taken care of months ago. You would think that I would eventually get used to it, but one forgets how bad it is until it happens again!

But now they are on their way home to bother all of you. That woman's name will surely become a subject of conversation again. How could a politician possibly refrain from using such a juicy subject in speeches? For the past many months, all that we have had in Washington has been news, and more news, and too much news devoted to the subject of our leader's private life. Now, the elected officials will leave town and take the subject to the people around the country. We will get a little reprieve here and after all these months, it only seems fair.

I would love to come home for a visit, but I think I will stay here where things are finally a little quieter. I might go out to lunch. I might do some shopping. One thing is certain, there will be many little smiles on the faces of the average Washington citizen, as we hopefully will not be so bombarded with details we don't need to know. Coming home would only put me where I might run into some politician making speeches, and repeating what I have heard at least 30 times by now. The newspapers will be full of "Vote For Me!" advertising. It's your turn to hear and read about it down there. I'm going to go sit in the sun in the park and think about pleasant things.

Say hello to everyone for me. After election day, I'll start making my plans to come home.

Love, LuLu

Yields

Continued from page 15

use of heavy equipment breaks the symbiotic relationship between the kalo patches and the wildlife. On the island of Kauai, many taro farms are carrying out practices which respect both the farm product and natural environment. Farmers space out plants so that birds can easily move between them, unharvested buffer zones remain around nests, and patches remain fallow for a month after harvest which allows the birds time to eat the invertebrates in the dying vegetation.

The results are promising. On many of today's kalo farms, birds called stilts even follow the tractors, gobbling insects turned up by the plows. Coots and moorhens build floating nests in the patches, using kalo stems as anchors, and stilts and koloa nest nearby and lead their young into patches to feed.

Trips to almost anywhere in the world, like these to Japan and Hawaii, will turn up farmers. Agriculture is universal, but the products gleaned from the fields and barns may be quite different from those in our own backyard. —

Trough

Continued from page 13

end product would be — I asked my father if he had a blueprint for this manger contraption he was in the process of building. My trepidation over the project was not alleviated when, after I asked about a blueprint, my father simply tapped his finger on his head at his temple meaning the blueprint was in his head. This confirmed my worst fears.

We worked most of that day building the original manger which measured 16 feet in length. It had to be 16 feet you see, because the boards we were using to build it were cut 16 feet at the lumber mill and to have cut them down to say, 10 feet, or even to build two, 8-foot mangers would have been sacrilege. Because you see two 8-foot mangers would have required building two additional ends which would have used more materials — outright sacrilege. And building it at say 10 feet, would have wasted some of the ever precious lumber — again, outright sacrilege. So 16 feet it was to be.

And the panels we were using were oak, so the manger was certainly guaranteed to be sturdy, at the very least. After some hours of work, the manger built from the mental blueprint was finally complete. And what a fine specimen of human ingenuity it was too — a large spacious manger for hay down the middle with feed troughs along the sides — a sort of dual purpose feeder.

The ark/manger restored to its original splendor. Noah would be so proud.

As I mentioned, we began the manger building project outside of the shop which is some distance from the lambing shed where the manger was to be used. Once the manger was completed, my father began to eye the manger, then looked the distance to the lambing shed, then back at the manger which was substantial in both its expanse and weight. After some moments of regarding the manger and the distance which it needed to be moved, my father broached the subject of same.

"Now, how are we going to move it to the shed?" he asked.

"I don't know," I replied. "I guess you should have thought about that before you built it, Noah."

And it took no less than an effort of biblical proportions to get the manger moved to the lambing shed than if it had been the ark, an effort which has been duplicated each time the ark/manger has been moved since it was constructed. (And did I mention that the lambing shed has a 12-foot doorway? Remember the manger was 16-feet? 'Nuff said.)

It took a couple days of in-between time in late September to restore the ark/manger to its original splendor. It was an impressive rebuilding job, and the original design of the ark/manger was preserved during the process. In the same vein, moving the contraption from one place to another — and getting it through the lambing shed doorway — has not gotten any easier.

Now we're facing the approach of winter. I'm still hoping for a little more in-between time to get back to the project of rehabilitating the cattle working pens. For all the work we do on a routine basis, we don't often have much to show for our time and effort. But occasionally we amaze ourselves with how much we do manage to accomplish down on the farm in just a little in-between time. —

Your soil can get acid stomach also

The Garden Path

By Jeff Ishee

Nothing much happened in Middlebrook this week, except the heady scent of woodsmoke permeated the crisp autumn air. Pickup trucks loaded to the rail with chunks of hickory and oak were carefully backed into leaf-strewn yards and briskly unloaded by men and boys wearing flannel shirts. Security is a big pile of wood.

Security is also knowing that your garden has been well cared for during the last few weeks as the season comes to a close. Winter is near-at-hand, and it is important that you do one more thing in the garden before the ground freezes: measure your soil pH.

I suspect that if you asked 10 gardeners what their soil pH should be, probably six out of the ten would be aware that the level should be in the 6.5 to 7.0 range. But I doubt that even one out of 10 could accurately define what pH really means to your garden.

First of all, pH stands for "potential hydrogen," and it indicates the breakdown of water into the hydrogen ion and an oxygen-hydrogen ion. Since water is a very stable compound, only a very little of this ionization takes place. Nevertheless, soil acidity or alkalinity is determined by this breakdown. Simply put, the minerals and organic elements in the soil affect the potential hydrogen.

All plants have a certain pH at which they can best use fertilizer. When your garden soil becomes too acid (sour) or too alkaline (sweet) for the plants, the fertilizer nutrients remain locked in the soil and the plant can't get at them. It is kind of like a hungry man at Thanksgiving dinner who has his hands tied to the chair! Knowing your soil pH is like knowing what kind of rope is tying the man's hands.

A pH of 7.0 is neutral. Every unit of difference in pH represents 10 times more acidity or alkalinity. Read that last sentence again. For example, a soil with a pH of 5.5 is 10 times more acid than a soil with pH of 6.5, while a soil with 6.4 would only be twice as acid. The scale is not arithmetic, but logarithmic. A pH of 4.5 is 100 times more acid than a pH of 6.5!

The most important things to know about your garden soils pH are:

- Very few crops can tolerate a wide range of soil pH. Most vegetables, fruits and herbs do best in the 6.5 to 7.0 realm. There are some exceptions, of course, like potatoes and blueberries, which prefer an acid soil.

- Soil that is either very acidic (below 5.0) or very alkaline (above 7.8) locks up nutrients that the plants need to grow or releases nutrients in amounts that can be overwhelming and toxic to the plant.

- Acid soils need lime. Alkaline soils need sulfur or aluminum sulfate.

- Soil pH is rarely adjusted overnight. It takes months for the lime or sulfur to break down and affect your garden soil. The time to perform soil tests and add corrective amendments is November, not April.

Soil tests can be done by either lab analysis or with homestyle kits. I recently purchased a handy soil pH meter that gives a dial readout of the pH instantly. It costs less than 20 bucks and I'll report on its effectiveness in a future column. —

Changing your soil pH

— To combat alkaline soil, add pine needles, cottonseed meal, peat moss, leaf mold, sawdust, or wood chips.

— To modify acidic soil, add agricultural limestone, bone meal, ground eggshells, oyster shells, or wood ashes.

— For a small garden, work in a pound of material at a time, test the soil pH in four months, and keep adding material as needed until you've arrived at the desired range.

— Test your soil annually, since pH problems are never permanently alleviated. —

Schoolhouse News

RHS ready for silent auction

By JULIE GRIMM and JENNIFER ISHEE

GREENVILLE — The Riverheads High School yearbook staff is proud to announce that its seventh annual silent auction is coming soon.

Plans for this year's silent auction, to be held Nov. 24 and 25 in Room B110 at RHS, are well under way.

"Just what exactly is a silent auction?" you ask. To explain fast and simply, it is a collection of items that have been donated by local businesses and people in the community. These items are placed on tables with bid sheets in front of them. To bid on an item, potential buyers write down their names and bids. This way there is no confusion with all that mumbling, tongue-twisting, mumbo-jumbo which most of us normally associate with auctions. The "silent" way is fun, easy, and cheap too.

It's hard to realize, but it's about that time of year again — YES, Christmas. The Silent Auction is a perfect time to do some Christmas shopping, or should we say "bidding."

Many of the teachers and staff at RHS look forward to this special event, each year. Many of the students also take part, knowing that all of the money made will be put toward covering yearbook expenses.

The yearbook staff has done incredibly well in the past years, but this year we hope to be able to surpass the previous years' performance. This year we hope to have participation from not only the RHS staff and students but also parents and other community persons. So show your support and come to the silent auction.

Among items up for auction are artwork by both Mary Ann Vessey and Demetra Turner. This year is the first year that Mrs. Turner has donated, but her work is well known. She specializes in detailed gourd painting which include limited edition ornaments of some of the local churches. She is a graduate of Riverheads High, Class of '76, and started painting professionally in 1991. Mrs. Vessey also is a well known local artist and has been painting for quite a few years.

Come join the fun at Riverheads' silent auction. We hope to see you there! —

Among items on sale at the Riverheads High School silent auction to be held Nov. 24 and 25 at the school will be artwork by local artists Mary Ann Vessey and Demetra Turner. Pictured in the photo at left above is Ms. Vessey, center, with RHS students Cheri McAllister, left, and Carla McAllister. In the photo at left is Ms. Turner, right, and Jennifer Ishee, an RHS student.

RHS staff photos

FFA chapter at RHS excels in competition

By JULIE GRIMM

GREENVILLE — FFA members at Riverheads High School began the new year with many successes in agriculture contests.

Leading the way for the chapter was sophomore member Amanda Hemp who won top honors at the Virginia State Fair by exhibiting the Grand Champion market lamb. She also took top honors in the chapter's annual crop and vegetable show.

The RHS FFA chapter was well represented at the state fair, held Sept. 23-Oct. 4 in Richmond. As a chapter, 19 projects were entered. Of these projects, the chapter received 10 first place ribbons and nine second place ribbons. The chapter also won the outstanding chapter exhibit and the outstanding metal project.

In addition to Amanda, other RHS FFA members exhibiting livestock on an individual basis included Carrie Heizer, Jack Hinton, and Doug Grimm.

The chapter's annual crop and vegetable show took place Sept. 10 at RHS. There were 1,150 entries exhibited with Amanda Hemp winning the top award with a total of 89 entries. Neil Buchanan came in close behind with 75 entries.

There were three judges who judged the crop and vegetable exhibits. This year's judges were Cecil Laymen, former RHS principal; Mac McCray, RHS physics teacher; and Pam Unger, Augusta County's superintendent for instruction.

The crops and vegetables were judged primarily on quality, but also on how well exhibitors followed instructions and if entries were exhibited in the proper category. In all there were 100-150 categories.

Five RHS chapter members will be going to the National FFA Convention Nov. 9-13 in Kansas City. These members are Carrie Heizer, Colby Irvin, Neil Buchanan, Amanda Hemp, and Jack Hinton. Jack will be taking part in the National Dairy Showmanship contest. Greg Buchanan and Scott Buchanan, RHS FFA chapter alumni, will be receiving American FFA degrees at the National Convention. These gentlemen graduated in 1996 and are now enrolled at Virginia Tech. The American degree is the highest degree awarded in FFA. FFA fruit sales are under way. Chapter members started taking orders Oct. 1 and will continue through Nov. 2. The delivery date for fruit is set for Dec. 2. To place a fruit order contact an RHS FFA member. —

Let *Mrs. Brown* chase the chill from November

A movie review by Hannah's mom, Sue Simmons

The movies showing at the local Bijou have been a disappointment of late. Eagerly anticipated new releases have not made their debut, leaving Hannah's mom with one of two choices: make the long trip to a neighboring burg or steer readers toward a very good movie that may be perfect for a cold November weekend.

Since there was no time for a trip, I instead chose the latter option and can now recommend for your viewing pleasure *Mrs. Brown*, an enjoyable, fascinating film that never made it to the local Bijou.

Mrs. Brown tells the true story of Queen Victoria of England and her very close relationship with her servant John Brown, a friendship that ultimately frightened the royal family, upset Parliament and scandalized the nation.

Queen Victoria entered a deep state of mourning following the death of her husband, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg in 1861. Theirs was one of the happiest royal marriages in British history and after his death from typhoid, Queen Victoria was inconsolable. She disappeared from public view for years. Remaining at Osborne House far from London, she made her family and household virtual prisoners of her grief, as well. Just how does one tell the Queen, the one person who takes orders from no one, that what she is doing is bad for her?

Enter John Brown, a Scotsman and devoted outdoor servant of Prince Albert. Sent for by Sir Henry, the Queen's private secretary, it is hoped Brown will appeal to the Queen's view that "all Highlanders are good for the health" and that she will return to a normal emotional state and eventually to public duty.

Stubborn, outspoken, and persistent, John Brown sets everyone on their ears. Breaching protocol, challenging everyone from the chambermaid to the Queen herself, he succeeds in ending the Queen's grief. The two establish a close friendship, not one between a Queen and her servant, rather a relationship between a man and woman. Brown even takes to addressing Victoria as "woman," just as a crusty Scotsman might a wife.

Eventually, a happier Queen comes to depend on Brown in much the same way she depended on her husband. This, of course, elevates Brown to a position of power. He begins "calling the shots," superseding the wishes of all, even the Prince of Wales. As Victoria grows closer to John Brown, she continues to resist returning to public life, a decision that Brown now seems to encourage.

The Queen's absence, stretching into nearly seven years, creates a constitutional crisis. Not only is all of London wagging about "Mrs. Brown," as many have taken to calling the Queen, but the opposition Whigs gather force to disestablish the monarchy. Tory Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, trying to head off a crisis, must himself confront the Queen and Brown.

Jeremy Brock's screenplay and John Madden's direction turn a historical footnote into an intellectual yet entertaining drama.

Actors Judi Dench (*Golden Eye, Tomorrow Never Dies*, and numerous BBC productions) and Billy Connolly (*Indecent Proposal*) turn in superb performances as Queen Victoria and John Brown. Dench is at once imperious and human, breathing life into a character who most of us think of as a stuffy old woman always dressed in black. Her portrayal of the Queen earned her a best actress Oscar nomination in 1997.

As John Brown, Connolly paints a portrait of a man too complex to simply love. He ultimately leaves the viewer feeling as uneasy as the prime minister must have felt.

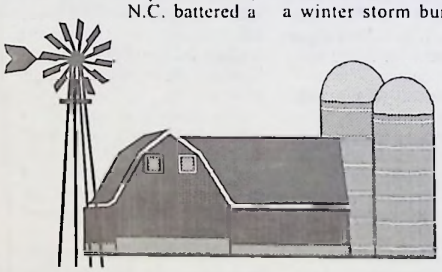
Geoffrey Palmer as Sir Henry and Anthony Sher as Disraeli deserve mention for their effortless portrayals of powerful men who operate within the rarefied royal sphere.

Hannah's mom gives *Mrs. Brown* four bananas. The movie is rated PG. It is riddled with superb acting, scenery, music, and more than the occasional intellectual thought. —

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.

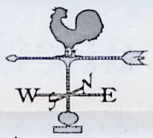
Nov. 1, 1861 — A hurricane near Cape Hatteras, N.C. battered a Union fleet of ships attacking Carolina ports, and produced high tides and high winds in New York State and New England.



Nov. 8, 1870 — The first storm warning was issued by the U.S. Signal Corps Weather Service.

Nov. 12, 1959 — Between noon on the 11th and noon on the 12th, a winter storm buried Helena, Mont., under 21.5 inches of snow, which surpassed the previous 24 hour record by seven inches.

Nov. 16, 1958 — More than six inches of snow fell at Tucson, Ariz.



Nov. 20, 1869 — A second great windstorm in three days struck Vermont and New York blowing railroad trains off their tracks.

Nov. 25, 1983 — The "Great Thanksgiving Weekend Blizzard" hit Denver, Colo. The storm produced 21.5 inches of snow in 37 hours, closing Stapleton Airport for 24 hours. The snow and wind closed interstate highways around Denver. Visibility at Limon, Colo. was zero for 24 hours.

Nov. 30, 1967 — A record November snowstorm struck the Washington, D.C. area. It produced up to a foot of snow in a 12-hour period. —

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