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Augusta Country

Augusta Country
welcomes four new writers
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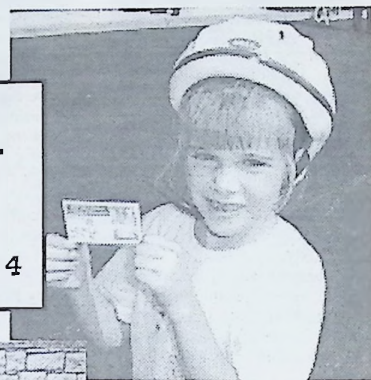
October 2000 Vol. 7, Issue 9

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dose of cycling safety
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2000



Augusta Country welcomes four new staff writers

The good news just got better at *Augusta Country* with the addition of a trio of award-winning writers to the AC pages. The three hail from near and far, but all share a love of writing and a knack for telling the story.

Jenifer Bradford now lives high atop a hill in Staunton, but she was born in Bridlington, Yorkshire, a small Victorian resort on the east coast of England. Jennifer's stories include travel writing, but her mainstay is a how-to gardening column. She comes to such "get your hands dirty" articles naturally as her father and grandfather were both florists and nurserymen.

When she was 21, Jenifer immigrated to the Washington, D.C. area where she worked as an editor and writer for such organizations as the World Bank and the National Academy of Sciences.

She also expanded her gardening skills when she and her husband, Alden, graduated from the Virginia Extension Services Master Gardener program. She has been active in a number of garden-

ing organizations and in the Virginia Native Plant Society.

Since moving to Staunton, she has been active in the Monterey Garden Club, the Shenandoah Chapter of the native plant society, is a past chair of the Staunton Landscaping Board, and has become well known as a gardening writer.

Jenifer is an award-winning photographer, loves to travel and read, and enjoys attending local drama, music and art events.

Mollie Cox Bryan is a fairly recent arrival to the Valley and lives in Waynesboro with her husband and young daughter. Mollie has garnered several awards during her more than 13 years of experience in professional writing, editing and desktop publishing.

Mollie is also a poet and was

selected for the prestigious Jenny McKean Moore Poetry Workshop at George Washington University. Her award-winning poetry has appeared in a number of journals. She is the editor/compiler of the book, "Unsilenced: The Spirit of Women" which was published in 1997.

In addition to writing for *Augusta Country*, she writes for Brain Child: The Magazine for Thinking Mothers, and does publicity for the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace.

A contributing writer who makes the step up to staff writer this month is Betty Gatewood. Betty has been contributing to *Augusta Country* on an occasional basis for sometime now. However this month she introduces her column "From the Teacher's Desk," which readers can look forward to on a regular basis.

Betty teaches science at Stewart Middle School. She and her husband Mark (who provides regular outdoor columns for *Augusta Country* but won't let us take his picture to run with his monthly column) enjoy the outdoors, particu-

larly birdwatching. Betty has been featured in *Augusta Country* for her bird banding project work used to determine migratory patterns of various bird species. If it cheeps or peeps and has feathers, Betty can tell you almost anything about it.

You'll often see Betty referred to in Mark's outdoor columns as "My Wife the Biology Teacher." Her science background has earned her the moniker "Bio Betty" among *Augusta Country* staff writers. Betty and "My Husband the Outdoor Columnist" live in Mt. Sidney.

The fourth writer is a native of Augusta County. Beth Huffer, 14, daughter of Steve and Donna Huffer, is a freshman at Buffalo Gap High School.

Although still in high school, Beth has already proven her writing ability with back-to-back wins in the VFW essay contest. She also won the Manor Award last year for being an outstanding, well-rounded student at Beverley Manor Middle School.

One of Beth's main interests is history. She is a member of the Children of the American Revolution and the Children of the Confederacy. She has served in state officer positions in both organizations. In fact, it would not be surprising to see Beth in a costume of either the Civil War or Revolutionary War period. While in costume she has helped conduct memorial services at local ceremonies.



BETH HUFFER

Dance and music, including nine years of piano lessons, are two of her other loves. Beth sends this message to *Augusta Country* readers: "I hope you enjoy my writing as much as I enjoy writing it!"

JENIFER BRADFORD



MOLLIE BRYAN



BETTY GATEWOOD

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New Hope U.M.C. celebrates 150 years 'on the hill'

By NANCY SORRELLS

NEW HOPE — A visitor who wandered naively into services at New Hope United Methodist Church on a recent August Sunday might have been taken aback at the congregational attire.

Two teenage boys in knickers, braces, and Irish caps lit the candles, while the minister and layreaders wore vests and hats from an era a century ago. There was a woman in a hoop skirt, others in Victorian wear, several flappers mingling in the crowd and a Civil War soldier was spotted. There was even a touch of the 1950s as one man's attire included a skinny tie, dark suit, and white socks. Out in the parking lot several early automobiles were parked under the shade of a tree.

This was not some time travel experiment gone amuck, but rather a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the building of the current church. Although the Jubilee Year will be celebrated for 12 months, Sunday was the occasion of the special history pageant about the church's century and a half of history.



Martha Fretwell ladles out a cold beverage at the New Hope United Methodist history service recently.

The presentation, "One hundred and fifty Years on the Hill," was presented during the regular church service in lieu of the sermon and under the direction of church member Helen Morse. The scene opened with life-long church mem-

"We need to remember that in our own actions today we are writing the history of tomorrow."

Rev. S. Wayne Rickman

ber Owen Harner reading from the ledger of his great-great-grandfather. Harner's ancestor, George Peters was a builder of the Methodist church. The frame building was to be 38 feet by 44 feet with eight large windows and two smaller windows. The interior was to have a gallery, and seats removed from out of the old church. It was to be completed in a "neat, workmanlike manner" for the grand sum of \$950. (About \$18,500 in today's money)

At the time of the contract, the Methodist congregation in New Hope was usually referred to as the Round Hill Methodist Church. By all accounts there had been Methodist meetings in the vicinity since about 1800, but the name change to New Hope was a gradual one that occurred in the 1860s and 1870s. At times the congregation has gone by the interchangeable names of New Hope, Round Hill, and even Providence.

Work on the church building commenced Jan. 14, 1850 and was completed the same year. Today that structure is the church's social hall. On this particular Sunday it was also the congregational museum with exhibits and artifacts from Round Hill's past.

The pageant continued with a discussion of one of the first organizations in the new church — the New Hope Total Abstinence Society. That group was quickly joined by the Sons of Temperance organization as the church established a reputation of taking a firm pro-temperance stand.



Owen and Dolly Harner look right at home next to their shiny black 1925 Model T Ford. Owen has attended New Hope United Methodist Church all his life and is in charge of

the Jubilee Year celebrations of the church during its 150th anniversary. Owen's great-great-grandfather, George Peters, built the oldest part of the present church.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

A Sabbath school was formed in 1855 and a teacher and students from that era entered the sanctuary and recited some of the Bible verses they had memorized. They were followed by a mid-19th century choir. The women of the chorus wore long dresses and the men had dress pants, vests and long-sleeved shirts.

One of the saddest periods of the church's history occurred on June 5, 1864 when the Civil War Battle of Piedmont raged all around. As wounded men found their way to the church, the house of God became a makeshift hospital. Two wounded and weary soldiers walked down the aisle to represent that period of history.

Growth and spiritual revival soon returned to the church on the hill. As the century closed, an 11-day camp meeting in the grove brought new members and a spiritual awakening. The 20th century brought world-wide mis-

sionary outreach. A young man and a young woman from the congregation told about the Epworth League's work. Today that organization is called the United Methodist Youth.

The youth weren't the only ones organizing at the church. The current presidents of the United Methodist Men and the United Methodist Women entered and read excerpts from their respective group's past activities.

As time has passed, the original church on the hill and the people who worshiped there have grown as well. Fifty-six ministers have served the congregation. Additional church school space and a new sanctuary (1976) have been added to the frame building constructed by George Peters in 1850. Missionaries have been sent out into the world, young people have learned about God through the vacation Bible school, and local outreach has grown steadily.

The special history day at the church reflected all of that. A time capsule to be opened in 25 years was created, and the history exhibit

in the social hall filled in many of the historical details. There were early pictures of the church and the doxal curtain which once hung behind the pulpit when the sanctuary was in what is now the social hall. There was also a light fixture, lock, nails, and wooden pegs from that building.

There were 19th century ledgers and papers, some of the tools used by the original builder, minute books from the 1950s all the way up to missionary items from the year 2000.

Owen Harner, the man in charge of the Jubilee celebration for the church, holds a unique position in the history of New Hope United Methodist Church. It was his ancestor who built the church. Harner himself has been a member for about 65 years having joined the church as a child.

Perhaps the Rev. S. Wayne Rickman best summed up the meaning of the history celebration: "We need to remember that in our own actions today we are writing the history of tomorrow."

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VFW, businesses team up to teach bike safety

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — Thanks to several organizations and businesses, area youngsters now know that bicycling can be fun AND safe.

This year's area bike rodeo saw many of the perennial sponsors and one brand new one — Loyalton — join together for a fun-filled day of bicycling education. The newly-opened retirement home of Loyalton, located on the west end of the city, was the site of this year's program. State Farm Insurance, two area VFW posts, the city police and city fire departments were also on hand to run the show. Other sponsors or contributors included Kroger, Wal-Mart, Kitchen Cook'd, Hershey, McKee and Pepsi Cola.

The action was non-stop during the four-hour event held on a sunny Saturday. In addition to the 9-point bike safety check list that the children progressed through, the Staunton Police were fingerprinting the kids and the VFW was feeding them. All of the events took place in front of an appreciative audience of Loyalton residents.

Making sure she got a front-row viewing area was 102 1/2-year-old Molly Rogers. The centenarian remembered nostalgically that her husband had always been interested in involving youngsters in sports and he would have especially enjoyed the day's events.

Another resident, Edgar Bernard, busied himself tying

green Loyalton balloons on bike handlebars.

All of the kids also went home with American flags, flag pins, and a full stomach thanks to VFW Posts 2216 and 10826. Four children, two boys and two girls, also won a drawing for brand new bicycles and each of the kids went home with a protective helmet.

Safety was the main focus of the day's event and nobody knows how to teach that better than State Farm Insurance's Pat Stewart. He helped run his first bike rodeo a decade ago at Thomas Dixon Elementary and has been going strong ever since. For a few hours the Loyalton parking lot was transformed into a series of chalk lines and signs as kids went through the 9-point bike safety check list.

The participants had their bikes inspected, then learned proper mounting and dismounting techniques. From there they rode through the circling and direction change course, the straight line control course, the weaving/maneuvering course, the stopping ability area, the short radius turning and the slow speed section. The check list was completed after each child had watched a short bike safety video.

Every person who went through the course received a laminated "driver's license" with his or her picture.

One special guest for the day was Staunton police officer and bike patrol member James

Goodwin. He talked to the kids about riding techniques and showed them some of his advanced biking skills that included jumping and hopping the bicycle.

Goodwin, who is in his third year on the bike team, says he thinks the bike patrol has been a hit in the area. "It is a more open approach to people; it is quiet and you can get places that cars can't get to," he said.

"People enjoy seeing us and the kids love us," he said, adding that the 12-hour bicycle shifts certainly keep the mounted police in shape. He has ridden as many as 25 miles on one shift in the city. Even the hills of Staunton are not an obstacle to these police who have 24-speed bikes.

"There is not one hill in Staunton that I can't climb and believe me, I've climbed them all!" he said.

From start to finish, the area youngsters enjoyed the day and took home some safety tips and techniques as well. Seven-year-old Emily Morgan was attending along with her 8-year-old sister Holly and her 10-year-old sister Megan. Emily said she was there because her mom said it was going to be fun and she would get to ride a bike.

"I learned how to go in sharp turns and I learned to wear a helmet so I won't hit my head and crack it open," she said of her newfound safety awareness.

If every kid went home with those sentiments then the day was a rousing success. —



Emily Morgan shows off her biker's ID card which she earned during the bike safety day sponsored recently by VFW Posts 2216, 10826 and local businesses. Photos by Nancy Sorrells

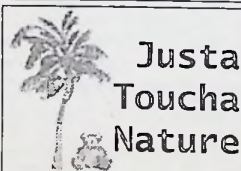


Edgar Bernard ties balloons on Megan Morgan's bicycle during the bike rodeo.



Megan Morgan maneuvers her bike safely through the riding course during the bike rodeo held recently at Loyalton of Staunton.

The back-to-school event was held to emphasize safe biking practices for local youngsters.



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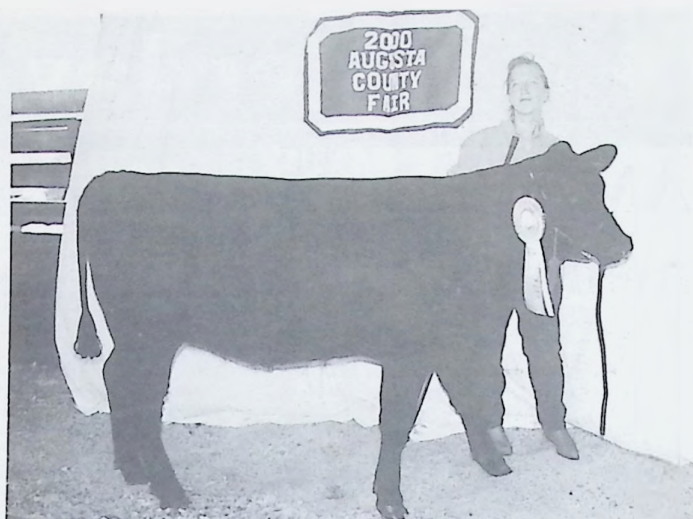
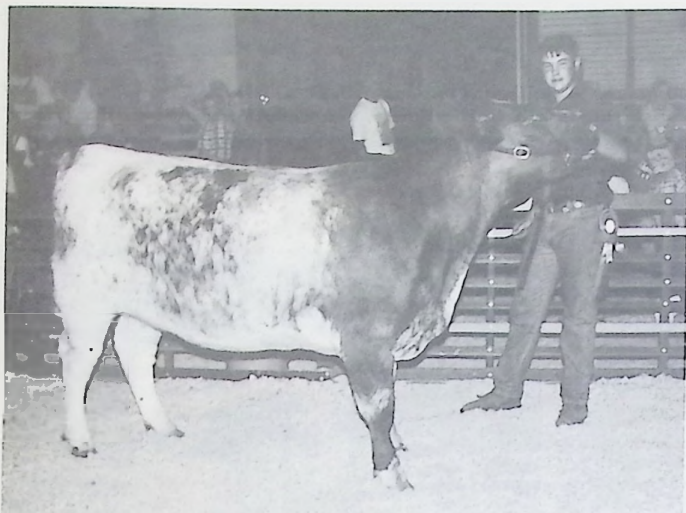
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There was a whole lot of squealin' goin' on when contestants and pigs converged in the ring during the greased pig contest held at the Augusta County Fair. Classes were held for all age groups including -- believe it or not -- adults. Just to keep the odds evened out a bit, the size of the pig being caught was about equivalent to the size of the individual doing the catching. No offense intended to the pigs or their pursuers.

More Augusta County Fair photos, page 20.



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Yesterday once more

AMA museum preserves memories for former cadet

By JOHN TAYLOR

If you, like many others in this area, ever had any connections with Augusta Military Academy in Fort Defiance, you are in for a big treat. The new AMA Museum in the beautifully restored Roller Home on the grounds of the old military school is a fascinating step into the past and especially so for anyone who ever attended the facility.

The school, which operated continuously for over a 100 years, closed its doors in the mid-1980s along with other such schools including Staunton Military Academy which were up against a long period of anti-military sentiment during and after the Vietnam War era.

Despite the fact that AMA has been out of existence for so many years, the alumni association has over 2,200 names on its mailing list. This would seem to indicate just how many former students are

still around and interested in the old school. In my particular case, I attended the Junior School of AMA during the year 1941-42 when I was 11. I had recently been saddened by the loss of my father to cancer and my mother felt that such a school would be a good experience for me.

It was the year that World War II began for Americans with the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. I remember the day as though it were yesterday. Guards were posted in front of the barracks and I seem to remember that the ROTC program, even for Juniors, was suddenly beefed up. The uncertainty and excitement among the cadet corps reflected the military focus. Many of the older cadets, whom I idolized, were anxious to leave school and join the fighting forces. This feeling of excitement continued through the spring and I often wondered over the years what became of many of those boys.

I left AMA in June 1942, returned to public schools, and never went back to the AMA campus until my recent visit to the museum. It was like stepping back 60 years into another life that I had forgotten all about. My brother, George, accompanied me and he later remarked that he really enjoyed watching me "go back in time." I also depended on George to take pictures as we moved around the old campus and through the museum.

Duke Fancher, AMA class of 1958, gave us an excellent tour of the museum, pointing out interesting features and injecting many delightful anecdotes that added to our visit. The flag, which flew over the barracks on Pearl Harbor Day in 1941, commands an imposing position of respect on one of the walls of the museum. In the impressive memorial hall, there are plaques listing the names of former cadets who were killed in



Eleven-year-old John Taylor as a cadet at Augusta Military Academy in 1941.



The United Pentecostal Church International owns the Augusta Military Academy property in Fort Defiance. Plans call for the

AMA barracks to be restored for use as a motel for guests at church functions.

Photo by John Taylor

America's wars. I came across the name of one of the company commanders whom I remembered when I attended the school. He was killed on D-Day, June 6, 1944, two years almost to the day after he had graduated from AMA.

An exact replica of a cadet room is presented in part of the museum. It brought back many memories. Each room in the barracks housed two cadets and every cadet had an equal amount of space. The model room was exactly like the one that I remember, including double bunk beds, metal study desk with an unshaded light hanging at the end of a long cord from the ceiling, open

closet with a full set of uniforms, and a space with a Springfield rifle like the one that was issued to me.

Another section of the museum represents a typical classroom. Photographs throughout the museum will stir the memories of all former cadets.

After touring the museum, I took the opportunity to walk around the

See AMA, page 7

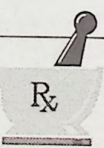
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page 2
for
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•AMA

Continued from page 6

outside of the deteriorating barracks and peered through the window into my former room. It was an eerie feeling looking into the past. I could get a glimpse of the old guardhouse in the center of the quadrangle where the Officer of the Day would often shout announcements. I felt that I could almost hear the bugler playing "Taps" from the main archway. I remember how proud Major Roller was of "his barracks." The building, which was designed by well-known Staunton architect T.J. Collins, is similar in appearance to the barracks at VMI where Major Roller had gone to school. I was told that the Pentecostal Church, which now owns much of the campus, plans to restore the barracks in the near future and use it as a motel to house guests attending camp meetings.

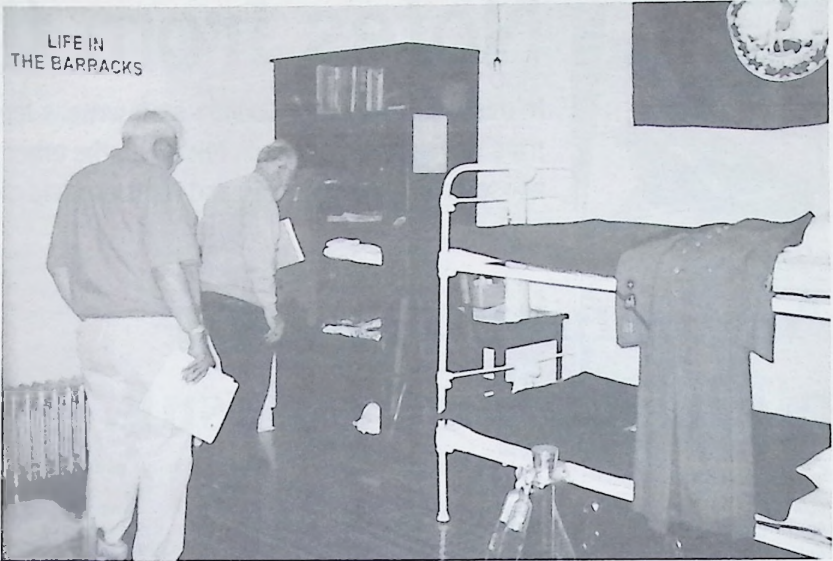
The academic and athletic buildings are in better condition than the barracks and are currently being used for church activities. Unfortunately, the old mess hall had declined to such poor condition that it had to be demolished. The old wooden classroom building is in very bad condition and faces an uncertain future. It was in that mess hall that I ate many a square meal. That term had nothing to do with the nutritious value of the food, but rather meant that the cadets had to

eat with eyes straight forward. There was no looking down at the plate while the eating utensils picked up the food, came straight up, made a 90 degree turn and came straight into the mouth.

The church has maintained the grounds in beautiful condition and the westward view from U.S. 11 across the football field toward the barracks is the same as it was throughout much of the 20th Century.

As I walked around, I recalled the many Sunday Dress Parades that I marched in and how proud my mother was of her cadet son. I also recalled the penalty laps around the perimeter of the field that I worked off for unshined shoes and other minor infractions. These were all-important events in molding my life at AMA as a very young boy and, although I didn't realize it at the time, those things made favorable impressions which carried over into my adult life.

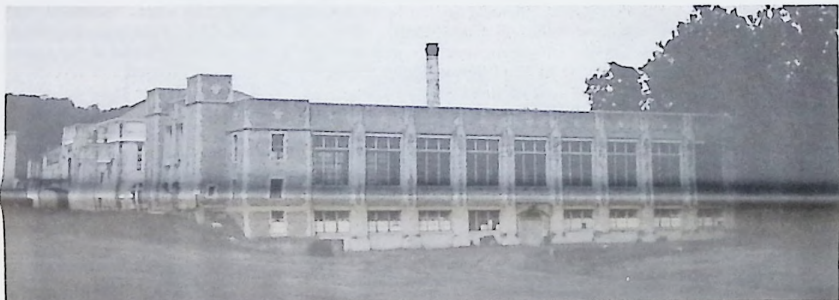
As Duke skillfully guided us through the last room of the museum, our tour concluded at the bookshelf that contained all of the yearbooks "Recalls." I reached up and pulled out the 1941-42 volume. I found my picture and my name in the directory where I was identified as "Johnny" First Year: Private Co. "D." On the dedication page appears the following inscription: "We entered in time of Peace, We leave in time of War... We will always Remember Pearl Harbor." —



Visitors touring the Augusta Military Academy museum can see what life was like in the barracks at AMA. The school operated

from 1874 to 1984 educating some 7,000 cadets from the United States and abroad.

Photo by George Taylor



The AMA gymnasium is shown in the photo above. To the rear and left of the gym is the academic building. The frame classroom

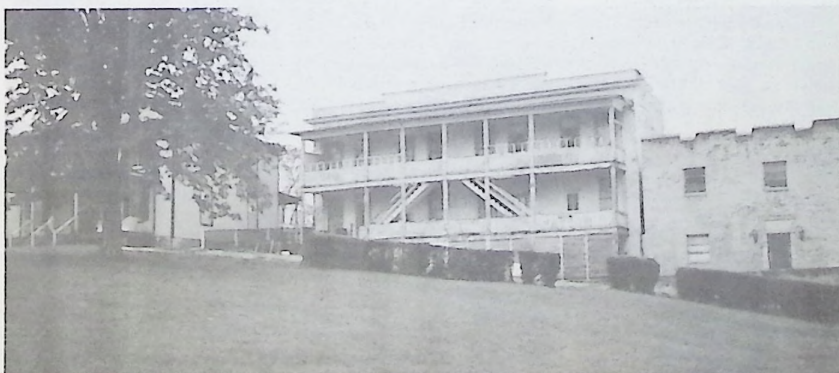
building and, to its left, the Roller-Robinson House are shown in the photo below.

Photos by John Taylor



Former AMA cadet John Taylor stands in front of the AMA Museum which recently opened in the Roller-Robinson House on the AMA campus.

Photo by George Taylor



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Notes from the road

In this issue, *Augusta Country* staff writers Jenifer Bradford and Nancy Sorrells take us on trips to peninsulas — one in Michigan, the other in Virginia. Jenifer takes us on a tour of lighthouses on Michigan's U.P. and Nancy coasts along the coast of Virginia's Eastern Shore.

Lighthouses of Michigan

An illuminating tour of the Upper Peninsula

By JENIFER BRADFORD

UPPER PENINSULA, Mich. -- My interest was peaked the other year after viewing the PBS (WVPT) six-part series on lighthouses in the United States. I had not realized that the Great Lakes had a long history in this tradition, being more familiar with coastal lighthouses.

I have always loved lighthouses after being born under the reflecting rays of Flamborough Head Lighthouse, a tall white sentinel on high chalk cliffs overlooking Bridlington Bay in Yorkshire, England.

A Michigan friend, now living in Virginia, told me her state has more lighthouses — 116 — than any other in the U.S. and is the only state bordered by four of the five Great Lakes. She helped me plan a two-week driving tour concentrating on the Upper Peninsula (UP, as the locals say), which would highlight 10 lighthouses.

George Washington created the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1789. Michigan got its first lighthouse — Fort Gratiot Light — in Port Huron in 1825. Most of the state's lighthouses were built over 75 years from 1825-1900 as shipping increased, particularly after the Soo

Locks in Sioux St. Marie were completed in 1855. Light beams were magnified by simple metal reflectors until the 1850s when the Fresnel lens replaced them.

From simple wicks and lamps to lenses and from rowing boats to lifeboats and automation, eventually in the 1920s lightkeepers began to lose their jobs. In 1939 the Lighthouse Service became part of the U.S. Coast Guard. In 1983 the final Michigan keeper left his post at Point Betsie. Today Michigan's lighthouses are being saved and restored by private citizens and local historical societies.

My husband Alden and I left Staunton June 18 and reached Mackinaw City, gateway to the UP, the next afternoon. We rode the 15-minute ferry early the following morning to Mackinac Island in Lake Huron and passed by Round Island Lighthouse, our first sighting.

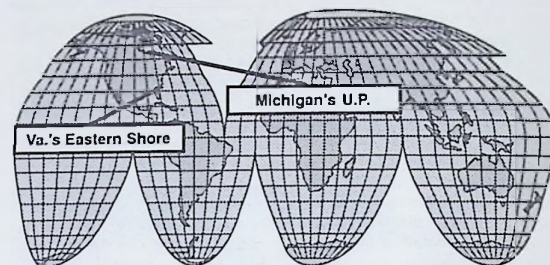
The three-story brick structure sits at the tip of a sandy point overlooking the harbor. It is a focal point from Main Street and the boardwalk, part of the Hiawatha National Forest, and can be reached only by boat. Built in 1895-96, it was abandoned in the late 1940s after a channel light closer to Mackinac was installed. Fortunately in the late 1970s

Round Island Lighthouse was saved. Local residents, government agencies, Boy Scout Troop 323, and the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association have all helped to preserve the picturesque brick red and white structure with black trim.

After two days on Victorian Mackinac where no autos are allowed and where one travels by horse (back or carriage), bicycle or on foot, we returned to the mainland and crossed the five-mile Mackinac Bridge to the UP.

A few facts... The UP is fairly flat and heavily wooded in pine, spruce, fir and white birch. It has no interstates, only two-lane roads bordered with wildflowers leading to small, old world towns or the lakeshore. The UP is 384 miles long from Drummond Island to Ironwood and 233 miles wide from Menominee to Copper Harbor at the tip. The peninsula is heavily sprinkled with native American names (and a few French ones) and the accents heard are a mix of Finnish, Swedish, Italian or Canadian. The driving was uncongested by the average price of gas was \$1.99/gallon.

1-75 took us north to view a giant barge going through a Soo Lock. Then we drove west for an overnight stop at a Swiss-owned



Inn in Marquette overlooking Lake Superior.

The next day it was on to the tiny village of Ahmeek on the coast of the Keweenaw Peninsula. Sand Hills is one of only two lighthouses open as bed and breakfast inns in Michigan. The square, cream-colored brick building lies at the end of 5 Mile Point Road. A wide lawn with old birches and cedar draw the eye to a stony beach filled with flotsam and jetsam.

We were warmly welcomed at 4 p.m. by our hosts, Mary and Bill Frabotta, shown to our elegant room, and given a full tour of their home. Each of the eight guest rooms at the inn is filled with antique furnishings of the Victorian era with wonderful woodwork, paneling, and lamps. The Frabottas run the inn themselves which is no small task.

Sand Hills was completed in 1917 and has three levels and a square central tower. It was designed as three separate living quarters for lightkeepers and their families. We climbed to the top of the tower to view the lens and the landscape. The light was automated in 1939 and extinguished in 1954.

In the a.m. we were served a

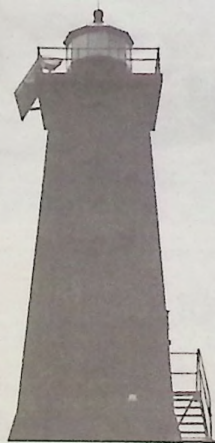
magnificent breakfast in the period dining room before we left to explore the peninsula. We photographed the handsome light in Eagle Harbor which sits on a narrow promontory of rock marking the western entrance to the harbor. The white tower rises above a two-story red brick house. The Keweenaw County Historical Society runs a nautical museum in the lighthouse and adjoining buildings.

Copper Harbor is a quaint village near the tip of the peninsula. Its lighthouse stands on state park property with no public access road. It can only be reached by ferry from the small Mackinac Island. Built in 1866, the light brown, square brick tower and attached house with dark red roof and white shutters is an attractive sight across the water. On its second floor, the Harbor Haus Restaurant provided evening views and an excellent dinner later in the day.

We viewed the Bete Brise or Mendota Lighthouse from across the Mendota Ship Canal, close to the village of Lac La Belle deep in Copper Country. The pale yellow, two-story structure is now a private residence. Pines, a boat house, and a dock framed the scene.

Next day we retraced our route to Marquette. The bright red Harbor Lighthouse is part of an active

See *LIGHTS*, page 9



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•Lights

Continued from page 8

Coast Guard station, so could not be visited. However, dramatic photos could be taken from the stone pier. The building sits high on the rocky cliff and shows up well against the green shrubbery.

A careful walk on the stone pier leads to the South Breakwater light, a tall white tower looking over Lake Superior. Originally the breakwater had a tunnel built inside to provide bad weather access to the light, but this is now sealed up.

Thirty miles from Marquette stands Big Bay Lighthouse, the second B&B in Michigan. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The setting of the red brick building with limestone corners and square tower is above the lake. It sits amid old rose bushes, water, perennial, and herb gardens and long expanses of lawn with fences, meadows, and woods filled with trails and flowers and ferns. Several outbuildings house an automated beacon, the original Fresnel lens, and a disused boat dock.

The residence has 14 rooms and seven guest rooms. It is furnished in an informal rustic style and has a living room with fireplace, library, sauna, and dining room for public use. Climbing the tower leads to an outdoor viewing area and a small octagonal room, the lantern room.

Big Bay, population 350, is famous for its 1950s film "Anatomy of a Murder," starring Jimmy Stewart and Lee Remick. We ate at the Thunder Bay Inn, once owned by Henry Ford, and drove by the notorious Lumberjack Tavern.

A family-style breakfast with our hosts and fellow travelers fortified us for another day of travel. This time we headed south to Rapid River and then east to Manistique, home of Paul Bunyan. We walked across the beach to a long concrete pier. At the end of the pier, which jutted out into Lake Michigan, we admired the tall red and black East Breakwater Light. A formidable tower guarding the entrance to the river.

Eleven miles further on we left Gulliver and took several turns to reach a highly recommended light at Seul Choix Point (pronounced Sis Shwa), once a busy fishing community in the 1800s.

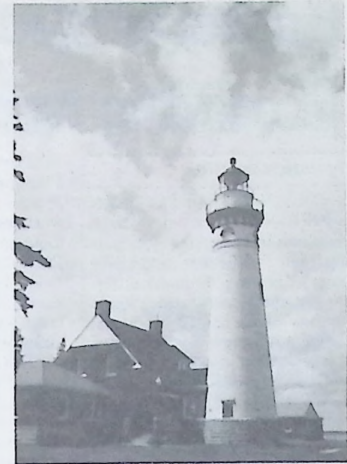
The light still operates but is automated. The 80-foot white tower is attached to the red brick dwelling which sits on a gray stone foundation and was once home to two keepers and their families. It was built between 1892-95. The rooms are furnished in the style of the early 1900s. The Gulliver Historical Society has owned the property since the mid 1970s and has done a wonderful job of restoration. We took a self-guided tour of the home, tower, fog signal building, museum

and grounds.

A short trail leads to the shore revealing a large limestone shoal stretching out nearly 100 yards into the lake. The reef continues for nearly three miles making this a very dangerous piece of water!

We ended our day along a scenic lakeshore highway to St. Ignace where once again we viewed the "Big Mac" Bridge and Mackinac Island with the Round Island Lighthouse in the distance.

Next day we crossed the bridge to the mainland and were homeward bound after stops in Bay City, Frankenmuth and Dearborn. With 10 lighthouses seen out of 116 total, we hope to return to do more exploring. In the meantime we have many happy memories, photographs, and nautical souvenirs to remind us of the lighthouses of Michigan and the Great Lakes. —



Seul Choix Point Lighthouse



Big Bay Point lighthouse, now a bed and breakfast inn



Marquette Harbor lighthouse



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See page 2 for details.

Eastern Shore's level terrain provides cycling pleasure

By NANCY SORRELLS

VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE — Thirteen times. On 13 occasions in 13 different summers my friend Sue Leonard and I have bicycled our way through a different part of the countryside. Sometimes we were joined by others; sometimes "others" insisted that a "bike vacation" was an oxymoron and they refused to join us.

Always we make the adventure last 4 or 5 days and we ride about 200 miles. We have explored the mountains of Southwest Virginia, the C&O Canal, the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia's Northern Neck, North Carolina's Outer Banks, and the Chesapeake. It is invariably fun, sometimes a little painful, and always memorable.

This year, lucky number 13, was no different. We decided to explore Virginia's Eastern Shore — the end of that thin strip of land called the Delmarva Peninsula that juts down east of the Chesapeake Bay. Why did we choose that venue? The answer is a simple, four letter word — **F L A T**.

Of course it's an adventure to even get our bicycle-laden vehicle over to the Eastern Shore, although nothing like it was before 1964.

That's the year that the 17.6-mile Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel opened for traffic. Instantly the world became a smaller place for those on the "Shore" and a way of life was changed forever.

The trip across the bridge took about a half-hour and cost \$10 (each way) and soon we were motoring up the peninsula's main drag, Va. 13. Our goal was the small village of Belle Haven where we parked our vehicle at a friend's house and took off at a fast clip for the city of Onancock.

Even with the engineering connection to the mainland, the Shore remains a down-home, friendly, unique place to visit. And with placenames like Nassawadox, Machipongo, Pungoteague, Wachapreague and Onancock, we sure knew we weren't in the Shenandoah Valley. Of course the flat terrain told us that as well.

The reason behind our brisk pace to Onancock was that we wanted to make the 10 a.m. ferry to Tangier Island. So we pushed the 17 or so miles to the dock in record time — thank goodness for those flat roads and no wind!

We made the ferry and soon we (and our bikes) were chugging through the water westward to the

island which sits in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. The island has a Virginia pedigree almost as long as that of Jamestown. It was discovered in 1608 by Captain John Smith although the first permanent settlement was not established there until 1686.

Tangier is nothing if not home town. Most of the fishing village's 750 or so residents are named Crockett or Pruitt and they still make their living as watermen. We had about five hours to kill on the island before catching the ferry to Crisfield, Md. That's a lot of time in a place so small that a guided tour of the island in a "stretch" golf cart takes only 15 minutes. We saw every business and civic building on the island including the 125-student school (K-12) and the wellness center.

After our guided tour we made the one-mile loop by bicycle another time or two and settled down for a crab cake lunch (the main reason for coming to the island!). That done, we still had about three hours before the ferry departed so we stopped by the dock for a chat with the captain of the boat which had transported us from Onancock.

Mr. Pruitt was a native of the island and he recalled times before Tangier was part of the outside world. His accent and word usage is peculiar to the Tangier folk, and to my ears resembled a strange mixture of cockney British and Appalachian twang. Words like "onlyest" and "oncest" were scattered throughout the conversation.

Winters were particularly rough in the old days, he said, remembering the times when his family ran short of heating fuel and gathered the dried marsh plants burn. The islanders didn't get electricity until 1946; telephones arrived in 1968. An airport was built in 1969 and today a doctor flies out regularly to the island. An emergency helicopter service is on call 24 hours a day.

Isolation is no longer the problem it once was, Mr. Pruitt allowed, noting the many people had cars either on the mainland or on the Eastern Shore and that the women knew exactly where to find the shopping malls when they left the island!



Cycling on Virginia's Eastern Shore is made all the more enjoyable by the region's level terrain. Sue Leonard coasts across Tangier Island's biggest hill.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

Almost all the islanders still make their living on the water — either as crabbers or oystermen — and Mr. Pruitt noted that most white collar jobs puzzled him. He had one relative who dressed in a shirt and tie and went off to work everyday. "And when he came home that shirt and tie looked the same as when he left. I don't call that work if your shirt looks the same when you come home as when you left!" he said.

Our ferry left Tangier about 4 and arrived in Crisfield, Md., an hour later. We hopped back on our bikes and pedaled southward toward Virginia. We made it as far as Pocomoke City, Md., and stopped for the night, having logged 43 miles on our odometers.

The next day was a 51-mile journey along backroads from Pocomoke City through Onancock (we found a place with perhaps the See *JOURNEY*, page 11



Chincoteague Is perhaps the best known placename on Virginia's Eastern Shore. This sculpture is an artist's rendering of "Misty of Chincoteague" made famous by author Marguerite Henry.



For as long as people can remember, wild ponies have roamed the barrier islands that hug the Eastern Shore. Some say they are descended from the wreck of a 16th century Spanish galleon off Assateague Island which is just east of Chincoteague Island.

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Here, there, & everywhere

FCE members view quilts, visit arboretum

NEW HOPE — The New Hope FCE Club took two educational tours for its August meeting. Fifteen members and two guests toured the Virginia Quilt Museum in Harrisonburg. There were many quilts on display, one of which, was the 16,000 piece "wedding dress" quilt.

The Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU was the second tour where

director Dennis Mietzel gave a talk and tour to members. The arboretum was opened to the public in 1985 and has 125 acres of trees, plants and flowers native to Virginia. It contains 18 gardens including herb, specialty, culinary and medicinal.

During a short business meeting, members were reminded of the

State FCE Conference at Ingleside Resort, Sept 18-20. A donation of \$50 was made to the 4-H Camp. Short reports were given by members who attended the West Virginia Poultry Festival at Moorefield July 2. A committee was assigned to plan Achievement Day in November. For the month of July the club held a family pic-

nic at the Middle River Church of the Brethren picnic shelter.

The next meeting is 1 p.m. Sept. 25 at the Augusta County Extension Office. Sarah Whitmore, FICS Extension Agent Rockingham County, will give a program, "Using Herbs for Medicine."

Contact Nellie Flora, 363-5204, for information about FCE. —

St. John's supper is Oct. 7

MIDDLEBROOK — St. John's Reformed United Church of Christ will hold its annual fall supper Oct. 7 beginning at 4 p.m.

Proceeds go to area Week-day Religious Education programs and for the purchase of new tables and chairs for the church social hall.

The dinner will feature country ham, turkey, dressing, gravy, mashed potatoes, sauerkraut, green beans, corn, homemade rolls and pies. Take-out meals will be available.

The supper will also feature a country store offering homemade baked goods and crafts for sale. The church, located at 1515 Arbor Hill Road, off Va. 701 (Howardsville Road), is celebrating its 220th year at the same site. —

AROUND THE CORNER

Sept. 21-Oct. 1 — State Fair of Virginia, Strawberry Hill in Richmond, call 1-800-LUV-FAIR for ticket information.

Sept. 26, Sheep Industry Assistance Package program, 7 p.m., Augusta County Extension Office, call 245-5750 for information.

Sept. 30, Battery Bounty Day, 8:30 a.m. - noon, bring lead/acid batteries to the Augusta County Government Center in Verona, get cash for old batteries — auto cores, \$1; light commercial cores, \$2; heavy commercial cores, \$4; small cores, \$5 and 25 cents; bring in 10 cores and receive a free Interstate Battery race hat.

Oct. 2, Augusta County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Weyers Cave Community Center, call 886-2353 to make reservations for dinner.

Oct. 3, National 4-H Week Open House, 5-8 p.m., Augusta County Extension Office, local 4-H clubs will present information about their clubs and activities.

Oct. 5, Field Day, Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Steeles Tavern, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., call 540/377-2255 for information.

Oct. 7, St. John's Reformed United Church of Christ, Middlebrook, annual fall dinner, 4-7 p.m., bake sale, crafts.

Oct. 9, Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale, Rockingham County Fair-

grounds, breakfast, quilt auction, lots of food... lots and lots of food.

Oct. 15, Valley Symphonic Concerts, Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 p.m., Robert E. Lee High School, Staunton, tickets at the door — adults, \$12, students, \$5, call 886-6186 for advance and season ticket information.

Oct. 19-20, Virginia Tech Sheep Management Basics Workshop, Blacksburg, call 540/231-9159 for information.

Oct. 23, Sheep Nutrition & Ration Development, 7 p.m., Rockbridge Extension Office, Lexington, call

245-5750 to register.

Oct. 28, Virginia Bred Ewe Sale, Rockingham County Fairgrounds, call 540/231-9159 for information.

Nov. 9, Sheep Flock Health Issues, 7 p.m. Rockbridge Extension Office, Lexington, call 245-5750 to register.

Jan. 5-6, Virginia-North Carolina Shepherd's Symposium, Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Harrisonburg, call 540/231-9159 for information.

Jan. 6, Virginia Commercial Ewe Lamb Development Program Sale, Rockingham County Fairgrounds, call 540/231-9159 for information. ---

*Journey

Continued from page 10

best chocolate shakes in the world!) and then to Belle Haven.

Our best decision of the day was to get off Va. 13 and wind our way southwestward through the countryside at a leisurely pace. Not only are the back roads of this part of Virginia flat, but they are so lightly traveled that we practically had the ride all to ourselves. All the main shore traffic, on the other hand, is on Va. 13. That includes the poultry trucks — poultry farming is a big business on the shore — which roared past us quite regularly, leaving a swirl of white feathers floating down upon us.

Once back at Belle Haven we retrieved our car and drove eastward across the peninsula to

Chincoteague, perhaps the best known placename on the Eastern Shore. Who hasn't heard of the Chincoteague ponies made famous by Marguerite Henry's book "Misty of Chincoteague?"

For as long as people can remember, wild ponies have roamed these barrier islands that hug the Eastern Shore. Some say they are descended from the wreck of a 16th century Spanish galleon off Assateague Island which is just east of Chincoteague Island.

The idea for the pony penning and sale was borne out of a series of tragic fires in Chincoteague village in the 1920s. After a 1924 fire, the hat was passed and the \$4.16 that was collected helped create the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company. The first carnival and pony penning was held that same year in order to buy a water pumper and hose.

With the exception of two years



Crab sheds line the harbor on the approach to Tangler Island.
Photo by Sue Leonard

during World War II, the event has been held every year since on the last Wednesday and Thursday in July. On Wednesday the ponies are rounded up and forced to swim from Assateague to Chincoteague.

On Thursday many of the young ponies are auctioned off. In the 1920s and 1930s some of the ponies sold for \$20 or so, but today's

See *PONIES*, page 12

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Deceptive prickly pear lives up to its name

By MARK GATEWOOD

We were riding our bikes down the Cowpasture River road — my Wife the Biology Teacher, Nancy Sorrells, Stephanie Caplen and I — when the Biology Teacher spotted a patch of prickly pear on a cutbank above the road. We ditched the bikes and scrambled up the bank for a nature appreciation moment with this minor player in our local flora.

Seeing it, I was reminded of the time I transplanted some prickly pear — for what seemed like a good reason, at the time — and got quite an education on the ways of cactus.

I thought I knew something about cactus. My Wife The Biology Teacher and I had spent a few

years in the West and visited some deserts where we became acquainted with the local cacti. One that especially sticks in my mind from those visits is the teddy bear cholla, a pudgy, happy little monster sheathed in inch-long spines as sharp as hypodermic needles. But the prickly pear I was working on was nothing like this. There were no spines, just little tufts of hair. No problem! My high-dollar specialty catalog gloves would take care of that.

The transplant went without a hitch (and those prickly pears are thriving to this day, on the south side of the American farmhouse at the Museum of American Frontier Culture). But the education didn't start just then.

Over the next several days, I

wore those gloves for other work and my hands began breaking out in itching, stinging red spots. I examined the gloves and found tufts of those hairs embedded in the gloves. And so the term glochidia entered my vocabulary, as well as my skin. Glochidia — plural — are barbed hairs characteristic of prickly pear. Like little porcupine quills, they work their way into gloves, skin or clothing. Needless to say, my appreciation of the Highland County plants was from a respectful distance.

Prickly pear is found from Massachusetts to Florida. It's the only cactus native to the Eastern United States, so you can safely say it's Virginia's only native cactus. And that's about as interesting as it gets, in this part of the world. But in

Mexico and the Canary Islands, prickly pear has long been the center of a modest industry in the production of red dye.

Before the development of synthetic dye materials, there were few sources in nature for a true, deep carmine red. There is, however, a scale insect called the cochineal insect, which lives and feeds on prickly pear and which is collected and crushed to produce a bright red dyestuff. Prior to 1875, when the aniline dyes were introduced, cochineal was a lucrative and important product.

I don't understand how a white insect, feeding on a green plant, can produce a red dye, but I can tell you it happens. My Wife The Biology Teacher, in her none-too-

abundant free time, enjoys spinning, weaving and dyeing natural fibers. She ordered some cochineal from a natural dye supply house, at some expense, as I recall. What came in the mail was a plastic bag of crushed bug flakes, decidedly red in color. And the resulting color, on wool yarn, was redder than anything she'd ever gotten from other sources.

Our eastern plants don't have cochineal insects, but they do have a sprightly yellow flower to dress up the dry, rocky habitat they occupy. And they've got those nice barbed hairs, to insure that we appreciate them at a distance. If you really need one for your garden, I suggest handling it with barbecue tongs. —

Nighthawks provide migration spectacle

By MARK GATEWOOD

One of the side benefits of knowing your local birds and plants is that you never know when something will come along and transform an ordinary event into something memorable.

As a recent example, one September afternoon I was backed up to the dumpster at Mt. Sidney. A *large thunderhead loomed to the north and cars coming south on U.S. 11 had their lights on. But it wasn't the weather that attracted my attention. It was a loose congregation of birds dipping and swooping against the thunderhead backdrop. Larger than a robin, they had slender, pointed wings and looked sort of hawklike. They*

were, in fact, nighthawks, one of the many flocks that migrate through the valley in September.

A nighthawk's not a bird you're likely to see up close or sitting still. Most often, they're high overhead, gleaming flying insects from the air. The nighthawk has a tiny beak but a wide mouth. Stiff "whiskers" or bristles jut forward from the bird's face forming a funnel to scoop insects into the gaping mouth. *The early naturalists badly misread this form-to-function relationship and declared that these birds flew into the barn and sucked milk from goats' teats. To this day, this family of birds bears the name Goat-sucker. The nighthawk's nearest relatives in our area are the Whip-poor-will and the Chuck-wills-*

widow, both named for their nocturnal calls. Worldwide, the Goat-suckers include things most of us have only seen on public television, such as nightjars, potoos and frogmouths, all sharing the gaping mouth and in-flight feeding traits.

In modern America, the nighthawk is pretty much an urban bird, nesting on the flat, gravelled roofs of buildings and feeding on insects attracted to city lights. *Go into Staunton most any summer evening and you'll hear a strident "bzzzzt!" high overhead. You may never see the source, above the glare of lights, but that's the nighthawk, hard at work on the insect population.*

Seeing the nighthawks overhead always takes me back to another

September, another valley, another migration and the only chance I ever had to see a nighthawk in the hand. The bird lay by the side of the road, crumpled beyond repair. It had swooped too low in pursuit of food and had been hit by a car. It was still alive.

There's an accepted way to euthanize a small bird: clench your fingers tightly around the body — not to crush it, but just to prevent it from breathing. With a small bird's high metabolic rate, it doesn't take long. Within thirty seconds, the nighthawk was limp in my hand and I took some time to admire the slender wings and the color scheme of mottled browns and tans. There's something else unique

about our Goatsuckers: they don't perch perpendicular to a branch like other birds. They perch lengthways on the branch, almost lying on it. With its mottled brown color, a perching nighthawk looks just like a knot on the limb. I put the nighthawk down in the woods, across the fence where the dog wouldn't get it, and went back to watching the surviving birds.

Since nighthawks are largely nocturnal during the summer, you have the best chance of seeing them during the September migration, though they may be high overhead. So look up from your chores occasionally, and keep binoculars handy. This migration spectacle is too good to miss. —

• Ponies

Continued from page 11
prices can reach figures close to \$2,000!

We spent the evening exploring Chincoteague village and made it a point to stop and see the Misty of Chincoteague bronze sculpture which was presented to the village in 1997, the 50th anniversary of Henry's book. The life-size statue of Misty as a foal scaring up some barnyard fowl was created by Brian Maughan.

Just across a short bridge from Chincoteague Island is Assateague

Island, home to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and the Assateague Island National Seashore. The refuge has a 3.2 paved wildlife loop that gives an up-close-and-personal introduction to the ecology and dynamics of a maritime habitat. Cars aren't allowed on the loop during the day so it was just us cyclists and pedestrians. Not only did we see dozens of ponies up close and personal, but plenty of birds, deer, squirrels, and, yes, mosquitoes!

With our explorations of the easternmost part of the peninsula complete we decided to head west

and go coast to coast to coast in one day. We set off from our hotel at Chincoteague and pedaled east. The ride across the long narrow bridge was not particularly fun — there was a lot of traffic, no shoulder and what would have been a beautiful view of the marshland was marred by nearly 100 billboards advertising every imaginable business on Chincoteague from funeral services to boat engine repair.

Eventually we were crossing dry land rather than bridges and shortly after that we turned off the main drag and traveled through some

cool forests. The ride became more enjoyable as the traffic dropped away and within an hour or so we were dangling our feet in the water at Pitts Landing in the Chesapeake Bay. We had gone coast to coast, now all that remained was to retrace our route to complete the coast to coast to coast ride. The ride back was not as fun, not only because we were tired, but because a strong headwind seemed to push us back one foot for every two feet we pedaled.

It was late afternoon by the time we returned to our car, having pedaled 52 miles (although we really

thought we should have been credited with at least 62 miles because of the vicious headwind). We hopped, or rather slumped, into the car and drove back to Belle Haven where we were spending the night and being entertained with a fine seafood dinner eaten while sitting on a deck overlooking Occahanock Creek. It's good to have connections in the right places!

Because we had biked to the eastern and western most points of the peninsula on Wednesday, we decided to go north to south on Thursday and find the end of the

See BIKING, page 15

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Feathered friends bring twinkle to students' eyes

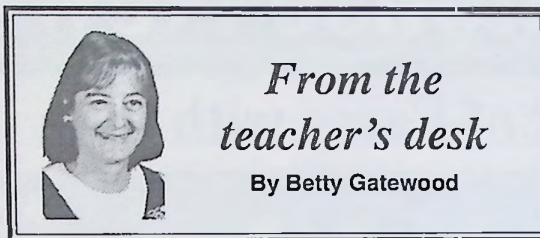
Teacher, Tea-cher, TEA-cher, TEACHER, TEA-CHER, T-E-A-C-H-E-R!!! Only to a bird-watching educator, could this phrase have a double meaning.

Springtime for a teacher means SOL tests, teacher contracts, self-evaluation of the year's teaching, and anxious moments of the waiting to hear about next year's teacher-team assignments. Springtime for a bird-watcher means watching bluebird boxes for inhabitants, changing your bird feeder types from seed to sugar water, awakening to that dawn chorus, and trying to catch a glimpse of those elusive, tree top, avian migrants, the wood warblers.

Fall for a teacher means organizing your classroom, planning new units with your team, attending meetings and getting butterflies in your stomach in anticipation of the first day of school. Fall for a bird-watcher means watching goldfinches pulling thistle-down to line their late summer nests, listening to the 'chips' of migrants in the autumn foliage, cleaning out bluebird boxes and readying bird feeders for a winter of use. It is interesting to me that avian happenings and teacher preoccupations have parallel escalations during the equinoxes.

The Spring Encounter: It was a very warm spring morning — almost too warm to bike, so we decided to get our "spring warbler fix" by hiking in the Madison Run area of Shenandoah National Park. It was a weekend morning, and I was a little preoccupied with "school stuff". I usually spend several hours grading papers, planning lessons and labs, attending to student and teacher paperwork each weekend. I was procrastinating I guess — the morning was too enticing to stay at home doing that.

We parked the car at the trailhead in Grottoes and began walking up the Madison Run fire road that extends up to Skyline Drive within the park. The frequented area offers an opportunity for a spur of the moment, quick getaway destination for us for birding, botanizing, fishing, or hiking. Today, our goal was



From the teacher's desk

By Betty Gatewood

to check out the spring wildflowers, AND to catch some glimpses of those jewels of spring song, the wood warblers.

My mind was on finding those warblers, but between sightings, I also was thinking about my upcoming class assignment for next year. I was excited to be once again teaching the science curriculum I love, life science, but I was also going to teach math along with it. I was a little apprehensive since my forte is science not math. How can I connect the two disciplines, make it relevant AND meet the SOLs....?

We decided to ford the run and hike up to higher elevation in hopes of seeing some tree-top dwellers — those furtive, frantic, fancy spring birds referred to as wood warblers. During their nocturnal migration from the near tropics of Central America and the Caribbean, they stop off for some rest and feeding in the high treetops. Stopover requirements are food, water and cover — Madison Run has it all. Locating them requires walking, listening, watching and flexing your neck into an unnatural head-on-back-of-shoulder/mouth-gaping-open position. "Warbler neck" is an affliction of springtime bird watchers, but the rewards are worth the discomfort.

I was remarking about the geometry of the azalea's cluster of blossoms when we heard it — "Teacher! Tea-cher! TEA-cher! TEACHER, TEA-CHER! T-E-A-C-H-E-R!!!" It was one of my favorites, the extremely elusive wood warbler, the ovenbird. Found usually in the understorey of rich woods, this warbler is distinguished and sleek in its green-brown plumage with russet strip-

ing on its crown. The ovenbird is most often heard, not seen, however. I once caught one in a banding net at Augusta Springs and was amazed at the sleekness and sophisticated beauty of this migrant as I held it in my hand. It was a jewel, an amazing jewel from the tropics, and that day it inspired and tantalized me with its irony.

The Fall Encounter: Many of my apprehensive moments about new beginnings for the new school year

what per cent of body weight is feathers. I could do part of my favorite exploratory class "For the Birds," using study skins, feather, chicken skeleton, bird feeder and outdoor labs. In literature, we could analyze the symbolism of the William Saroyan short story "The Hummingbird That Lived Through Winter." In language arts we could tie in the abundance of Latin words in the scientific and English language. In civics we could study the local, federal and state regulations that apply to protecting wild birds — their habitats, feathers, nests, bones, bird-banding regulations. Wow. We were excited.

As a team building and introductory activity to begin the year, we decided to make a student generated field guide for common Augusta County birds. Each student has had to gather information on an assigned bird to make their

field guide, we marveled at the shape of its nest and then he understood why the bird was called the ovenbird. I told him about how I almost stepped on an ovenbird nest when I was hiking a few springs ago, and how I had to get down on my hands and knees to see inside because it was open only from the side.

Tuesday he showed me his drawing of the ovenbird that completely captured the russet striping on the head and the green-brown of its back.

On Wednesday, he was puzzled with a reference somewhere in his ovenbird research about animal "dung." I relished the opportunity — the whole class needed to know this one — seventh graders are into gore and bodily functions anyway, so I made a great flourish in telling the whole group that "dung" was "poop!" Everyone giggled, reddened and learned. I had them where I wanted them. They were hooked.

On Friday, the student ovenbird researcher found information about its song, and I just had to imitate the call for him. "Teacher, Tea-cher, TEA-cher, TEACHER, TEA-CHER, T-E-A-C-H-E-R!!!" I crowed. He probably was embarrassed for me for making such a fool of myself, but he would remember that moment, and maybe someday he would remember the call when he heard it himself in the early spring woods.

So we all learned this week. All my anxious weeks of worrying, planning, and anticipating were replaced in an instant by these treasured teachable moments. Long ago during graduate training at Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center in Ohio, our director, Doug Dickinson, told me that the natural world is a tonic for every ill. I was relearning this in a new way — even teaching about the natural world inside the classroom was tonic for me. My worries flew away and satisfaction took their place. The kids were learning life skills such as scientific inquiry, research methods, art techniques, an appreciation for our avian world and they seemed to be having fun doing it. Sometimes, things just click. We owe it to that sleek and sophisticated jewel, the "teacher bird," who makes it click for us all this time.

Next month: Classroom FeederWatch for the AVES team!

Sometimes there are those magic moments in a teacher's work — the twinkle of "fun-while-learning" detected in a student's eye — the "Now I get it!" moment when book learning connects to the real world for a student. These moments are gratifying and cherished by every teacher.

were dispelled when I found that my new teammate teacher also has a love of birds! After thinking about and discarding lots of team name ideas we decided that our new team would be known as the AdVenturE Seekers or AVES. (Not coincidentally, Aves is the Latin name for the class of vertebrates known as birds.) This name would allow us to take our students in so many directions, cover the SOLs — and focus on birds whenever we chose!

I could do lots of science/math activities with bird data — graphing the number of feathers for different kinds of birds, and determine

"field guide page," then they have had to illustrate their bird using colored pencils. We hope that the final product will be used as a field guide at the elementary school level. Science discovery, language arts skills and art techniques are working hand in hand as we develop the project.

Sometimes there are those magic moments in a teacher's work — the twinkle of "fun-while-learning" detected in a student's eye — the "Now I get it!" moment when book learning connects to the real world for a student. These moments are gratifying and cherished by every teacher. Such moments occurred last week when one of my students was researching, yes, the ovenbird.

On Monday he hadn't found information about its nest, so together we looked in the Peterson Field Guide to Birds' Nests. As we poured over pictures and text in the

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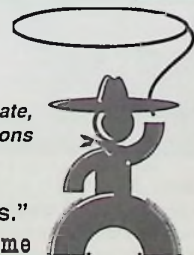
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Schoolhouse News

Riverheads opens Hall of Fame with nine inductees

By NANCY SORRELLS

GREENVILLE — The inaugural Riverheads High School Athletic Hall of Fame banquet was nothing if not a family reunion. Laughter, tears, good-humored groans at old stories, and several standing ovations marked the induction of nine coaches, athletes, and supporters at the banquet held in the school's impressive new gym.

"Your contributions to Riverheads High School athletics programs are the reason we are here," Riverheads principal Chuck Bishop told the inductees. "The contributions of these individuals will always be remembered."

David Hardie, president of the Riverheads Booster Club which sponsored the program, explained that the idea for the hall of fame grew out of the pride felt for the new gym completed in 1997. "We are the beneficiaries of all the work from a lot of people who never had a chance to play here. Now we can give back to them what they had given to us," he said.

Three among the honorees have never played in Riverheads uniforms. Nonetheless, Dr. H. Lynn Moore, known affectionately as "Doc" to the Gladiators, has been a fixture at Riverheads games and meets since the school's inception in 1962. In that time he has given several thousand pre-season physicals to potential players and has never charged a penny. Not only that, but he attends to injuries day and night and is the official team

doctor for the football team, traveling with them wherever they go. His name is so intertwined with Gladiator football that the field house is named for him.

Dr. Moore was introduced by Riverheads coaches Larry Hull and Ron Wilkerson. "He never turned anyone away. No school I know has a person who has given what Dr. Moore has given to Riverheads," said Hull.

"In the booster club variety shows he was the most beautiful lady who ever walked the halls," joked Wilkerson of Moore's participation in the school's "beauty contest."

"I don't know how he does it. I never heard Doc Moore ask for anything. He's a friend to the community, to the athletes, and I'm proud to say he's a friend of mine," he added.

Upon receiving his award, Moore said: "It's been a pleasure. Nothing would make me happier than to see a few hundred kids lining up for physicals. If athletics are good for a few people, they ought to be good for all."

The other symbol of Riverheads for much of its history has been another of the evening's award winners, retired principal Cecil Layman, Jr. He started as a teacher and coach at Spottswood High School, went in the military for a couple of years, and was at the helm of Riverheads during its inaugural school year in 1962-1963.

For 26 years Layman was the principal at Riverheads, setting a



Inducted recently into the Riverheads High School Hall of Fame were (from left) H.T. Miller, Tony DeMacio, Cecil Layman, H. Lynn

Moore, Larry Phillips, Norman Coyner and Heather Harlow Boros.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

high standard of excellence at the school. He was also the voice of track meets, handling announcing chores at all levels of track and field competitions. "He always said that if you took care of the little things, then the big things would take care of themselves," said his introducer, Jim Stout.

"This evening is a great thing for the school and the community," Layman said. "It is one of the highlights of my career."

The third non-Gladia athlete was in the thick of high school competition nonetheless. Tony DeMacio coached football and baseball and brought the meaning of Red Pride to a tiny high school out in the country.

DeMacio was introduced by Stout who noted that the former Gladiator coach, now the director of scouting for the Baltimore Orioles, showed the athletes what

"dedication, hard work, and a positive attitude" could do. "He set the standard a little higher for all of us."

"This will always be like home to me," said DeMacio of the honor. "It takes a lot of hard work to be successful. You can't do it one day out of seven and I hope I instilled that in my players. We had success because they learned to be the best they could be, regardless of what that best was, that's why they got the most out of their ability."

DeMacio was also on the stage earlier in the evening when he introduced inductee Bernard Stewart who played football, basketball and tennis for the Gladiators. Stewart, who earned a degree at James Madison and went on to captain the football team there, could not attend the banquet because of scheduling conflicts with his job as a Virginia State Trooper.

"Bee is a great human being, a

very soft spoken person, but a darting runner on the football field," his former coach said. Stewart gained a thousand yards rushing two seasons in a row as the Gladiators became a district powerhouse and went on to regional action. On the basketball court, he ran the show from the point guard position.

One of the more recent athletes to gain induction was Heather Harlow Boros who was introduced by her former coach Steve Barnett. "Heather was one of the best to ever don a Riverheads uniform," he said of Boros who starred in basketball, volleyball, and track and went on to play basketball at Virginia Commonwealth.

"She simply refused to lose. The truly great ones love to compete and they compete to win," he added.

"This is an incredible honor for See HALL, page 17

RHS Crop and vegetable show draws 1,100 entries



Carrie Brown, left, and Amanda Hemp, members of the Riverheads FFA chapter, sort entries for the annual Crop and Vegetable Show held Sept. 7 at the school. The show drew 1,100 entries.

Photo by Sarah Hurdley

By STEPHANIE BRANCH

GREENVILLE — The Riverheads FFA chapter's annual Crop and Vegetable Show boasted 1,100 entries. Held Sept. 7, the show took place in the school's agriculture shop.

Of the 1,100 entries brought in, 95 percent were brought in by RHS FFA members. The entries were brought in from many different areas, including farms, gardens, fields, and woods. By the end of the day of the show, the ag shop was completely filled with these different crops and vegetables.

Amanda Hemp was the FFA

member who brought in the most entries with 115 different items. The member with the next highest number of entries was Philip Miller with 93. Josh Smith finished third with 52 entries.

Members like these who go all out are the ones who made the show such a success. Of course, many parents also helped a great deal, coming to help set out their children's entries.

Many local teachers also helped in the show. The teachers who made the show go well included Eugene McIlwee, RHS Ag teacher, Mac McCray, RHS science teacher, Darryl Steege, Stuarts Draft ag

teacher, Barry Gray and Shirley Kaufman, Buffalo Gap teachers, and Jenny Groh, curriculum supervisor for Augusta County Schools.

The judges had a difficult time deciding which crops were the best. All the items were excellent, and it was hard to make a final decision on first, second, and third place entries. After the ribbons were given out to the winners, the chapter officers arrived to greet and talk with the parents. The officers all agreed that this was a successful show, and they want to thank all who helped to make it possible.

Stephanie Branch is a member of the Riverheads FFA chapter.

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Young historians form club at RHS

By KIM McCRAY

GREENVILLE — The opening of a new school year at Riverheads High School brought with it the formation of a new club.

The RHS Virginia and Local History Club held its inaugural meeting Sept. 13 at the school. The club, headed by Gary Barr, is open to all RHS students who hold a B or higher average in their current social studies course or students

who obtain a written recommendation from a social studies teacher. Dues, which will help pay for activities, is \$7.

Barr, who teaches geography at RHS, said he had been considering beginning a local history club for quite some time. He knew that Virginia has a great deal of interesting history and realized that many students would be interested in finding out more about the historical importance of our immedi-

ate area and state.

At this point the club is considering engaging in many activities throughout the year, including several possible short trips to historic homes and museums and also perhaps participating in an archaeological dig. Other options which are open to club members include doing a research project on family history, going to Civil War re-enactments and roundtables, listening to various guest speakers, and perhaps

having an historical costume dance. All these activities will be decided upon later by History Club members. Barr stresses the importance of having the participants in the club be the ones who make most of the final decisions about activities.

Barr says the club's two main objectives are to take advantage of learning our local history and to have fun in the process. For information about the club, contact Barr at RHS. —

Bill provides tuition assistance

RICHMOND — Gov. Jim Gilmore has signed a new bill that allows Virginia National Guard members the opportunity to get up to 100 percent of their state-supported college/state-supported trade school tuition paid. Virginia is one of only a few states which provides National Guard soldiers with up to full tuition assistance.

This change allows maximum opportunity for all qualified Virginians to complete a college education for little or no out of pocket tuition costs.

Application deadline for the spring 2000 semester is Nov. 1. Deadline for summer 2001 term is April 1. All applications must go through the Virginia Army National Education office.

For information about state tuition assistance through the Virginia National Guard call Sgt. Scott Canterbury, 540/332-7744. —

FFA members win honors at convention

BLACKSBURG — FFA members from Augusta County schools were honored with numerous awards during the FFA state convention held in June at Virginia Tech.

Receiving state degrees were Jack Hinton, Todd Jarvis, Carrie Brown, Adam Glenn, Aaron Root, Sarah Huntley, Tim Simmons, Jason Melliwee, Amanda Hemp and Justin Fravel, all of Riverheads High School; and Kenny Campbell, Brian Vess, Colt Lyle, Emily Curry, Rosalea Riley, Mandy Robinson, Jeff Hewitt, Jason Archart and Thomas Lail, all of Buffalo Gap High School.

Proficiency award winners from Buffalo Gap were Kenny Campbell, agricultural mechanics

(placement); Emily Curry, swine production (entrepreneurship); Rosalea Riley, sheep production (entrepreneurship); and Doug Britt, ag sales (placement).

The agriculture business class from Buffalo Gap was the top team in the state for its work in the commodity marketing activity.

Angela Hinton of Riverheads placed second in state dairy showmanship. Justin Fravel of RHS and Jeremy Nance and Ryan Sheffer, both of Buffalo Gap, also participated in dairy showmanship.

In livestock judging, Jason Archart of Gap was fourth high individual. He was followed by fifth high individual Jonathan Coleman of RHS. Jeff Hewitt of Gap was sixth high individual. The Gap

team of Archart, Hewitt, Emily Curry and Jimmy Crosby, placed second in the state. The RHS team of Coleman, Amanda Hemp, Neal Buchanan and Cole Heizer placed seventh overall.

The RHS ag sales team of Andrew Glenn, Jason Melliwee, Franklin Dull, and Jason Shultz placed fourth overall. Glenn was second high individual and Dull was fifth high individual in the contest.

Gap's Meats Judging Team placed fourth in the state. Team members were Brad Hewitt, Tina Wilson, Hock Jones and Rosalea Riley. Wilson was third high individual in the contest. Riley placed ninth. The dairy judging team from Gap placed fifth in the state. Team members were Audrey Fuller,

Elizabeth Fuller, Zach Waldron and Mandy Robinson. Waldron was eighth high individual and Audrey Fuller with ninth high individual.

Gap's crop judging team of Brian Vess, Allen Rawley, Casey Shinaberry, and James Ramsey placed fifth in the state contest. The horse judging team from Gap, whose members included Heather Kisamore, Gina Smith, Emily Conroy, and Ashley Simmons, placed fourth in state competition. Simmons was sixth high individual in horse judging.

RHS earned a superior chapter award and won a silver rating for public relations. Gap's chapter scrapbook, prepared by Amanda Coyner, received a bronze rating. —

Send school
news to
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•Biking

Continued from page 12

Virginia Peninsula. We cheated a bit and drove south to a little Episcopal church in Eastville. There the minister let us fill up our water bottles with ice from the parish refrigerator and we set out on our final adventure.

We worked our way south until the hard surface road ended at a wildlife refuge and then we took

the oyster shell road until it ended in a marshy estuary. We were seeking a glimpse of Cape Charles lighthouse on Smith Island just off the southern tip of the peninsula. We ran into a few sea kayakers who assured us that the lighthouse was just out of our line of vision so we were unable to gain a glimpse.

We were, however, at the end of the land so we turned around and headed back. On our way north, we

swung a little more to the west and suddenly found ourselves on Arlington Road. "Now why," I thought, "would there be a place called Arlington here as well as on the outskirts of Washington, D.C.?" Turns out that the two are related and in fact the story goes back to Gloucestershire County, England where a family named Custis once

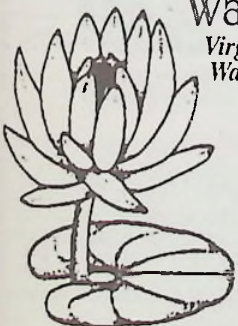
See CUSTIS, page 17



At the western-most point on their coast to coast to coast ride, Sue Leonard and Nancy Sorrells take a breather before heading back east.

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The Hitching Post

Horse's show time jitters may be caused by rider

Q: My mare is doing so well at home. Sold First Level, schooling 2nd (dressage). Whenever I bring her to a competition I lose her! She has an absolute mental breakdown! She is so distracted that I can't get her to pay attention to me let alone soften and supple her back. Needless to say, our scores are terrible with comments like "disobedient," "stiff through her back," "above the bit" etc. It's VERY discouraging. I've tried everything from loughing her until she's ready to drop to having her on Regumate (very expensive) — all to no avail. This is our third serious show season so this isn't anything new to her. Any suggestions?

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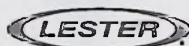
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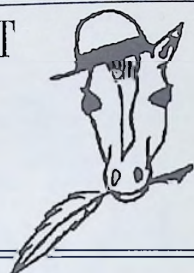
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The first thing that comes to mind in this situation is tension. A great deal goes into competition and the hustle and bustle might excite her because it means so much to YOU. This means that you will have a different attitude and emotional state than you do at home schooling situations.

When I was a younger horse and competed regularly it wasn't always a piece of cake. A great deal determined my success. First of all was practice, practice, practice. Habituation is a horse's main learning skill. Second was obedience to rider at ALL times. This has to do with the training. In dressage the competition consists of a series of movements that add up to the actual test. The rider must practice all the parts of the test without actually teaching the horse the test itself. This will prevent anticipation.

The third part of my success depended a great deal upon the rider's attitude. Sometimes a competition could be so important to the rider that I felt "pressure" to DO something, but I didn't always understand what. The physical part was easy, but the emotional pressure confused me. The emotional climate between home and the competition had changed from practice, practice, practice to... a tense, suspenseful ride. There's a big difference between "let's do it over and

I.B. HOOFINIT
From
the
Horse's Mouth



over" to you've got to do it right NOW."

Maybe I can help you by telling you about two riders I had and how they approached competition. One rider made me nervous and the other one excited me. We got excited together. Fear and excitement are closely related emotions. They both cause adrenal line rushes. They both cause the heart to beat and tension to build. But the rider who expressed nervous fear caused me to tense up, feel intimidated, and lose focus. The other rider got excited! This made me feel excited and energetic, too.

Sure I became a handful of fire and energy, but it was channeled into the competition. I know I made mistakes, but I also know that we

enjoyed ourselves more than ever. The rider never felt a loss of control (a major cause of rider fear!) because I was responsive and ready to go. I felt every nerve actually ready for action rather than defensive and unsure. I felt confident and it felt good.

I know that riders have different temperaments, just as we horses, do. I know that some horses are timid, bold, aggressive, shy, confident, etc. Trainers work on the spooky horse to overcome fear. Trainers also work to humble the aggressive horse. These additional workouts are part of our training as well as our physical conditioning. If riders could work on their

See **COMPETITION**, page 17

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 136, Greenville, Va. 24440. 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.

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Staunton stable offers riding academy

STAUNTON -- Attention horse lovers! Here's your chance to enroll in the new Independent Horsemanship Riding Academy. Students can take riding lessons based on a published course written by Chris Marrs, director of programs and head instructor of the new riding school.

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mile behind Shoney's of Staunton, off U.S. 250).

Registration is \$50 which includes books and a uniform shirt. Lesson rates are \$20 per hour, \$15 for Staunton 4-H Club members. Tuition rates are also available for schools and colleges.

Call Chris Marrs for more information (540) 337-0737. —

4-H horse club forms in Staunton

STAUNTON -- Horse lovers may now participate in the new Staunton 4-H Horse Club sponsored by the Independent Horsemanship Riding Academy of Staunton.

The club meets every first and third Saturday from 2 to 4 p.m. Everyone interested in learning about horses is welcome to join. Enrollment fee is \$2 (covers insurance) and dues are \$1 at each meeting.

Activities will include grooming horses, learning stable management, and horse care. The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 7 at the Independent Horsemanship Riding Academy (located one mile behind Shoney's of Staunton.)

For more information call leader Chris Marrs at 540/337-0737. —

•Competition

Continued from page 16

emotional conditioning they would be able to take fear of competition (no matter how subtle) and turn it into excitement.

My suggestion to you is to work on your viewpoint of competition. Ask yourself how much it means to you and why? Can you expose your mate and yourself to more emotional pressure at home rather than just at a competition. Competition exposes you to out side criticism. Other people witness your work during competition, where at home you are private. How do you see this exposure? Is it nerve wracking? Creating a new angle to

work from might help your nerves and create a more positive emotional atmosphere for YOU and your horse. Start by asking friends and relatives to watch you work. Working in front of people at home might help condition you and your horse for competitions together.

Competitions are meant to judge your work against your peers. Win, lose, or draw, the experience adds up. A good trainer can take a "diamond in the rough" and make things happen. Take it From the Horse's Mouth, if you and your mare aren't enjoying the ride it might mean you need to take a second look at what competition really means to you! —

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See page 2 for details.

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•Hall

Continued from page 14

me," said Boros. "I will always have a part of Red Pride in me."

Also unable to attend because of a scheduling conflict and because he lives in Seattle, Wash., was former standout John Brubeck. He was introduced by Riverheads assistant principal and athletic supporter Dennis Case, while the award was accepted by Brubeck's parents, Bill and Sally.

In the athletic arena, Brubeck starred in football, basketball, and baseball. As a quarterback he could throw with his right or his left hand and was the team kicker. He made the all-district squad in an unheard of four positions.

"It was worth going to the game just to see him work the umpire from his catcher's position," noted Case.

Brubeck sent an e-mail to be read at the banquet that credited his success to his parents. Upon accepting the award for his son, Bill Brubeck noted that at his birth the future Riverheads star weighed in at a tiny 3 pounds, 10 ounces and nobody would have dared predict such future athletic success.

Another one of DeMacio's student athletes was also among the honorees. H.T. Miller was a three-

sport standout in football, basketball, and baseball. His rushing record, which surpassed Bernard Stewart, stood unbroken from 1982 until last year. In football he was the All City-County Player of the Year. On the basketball court he ran the show as the point guard, and on the baseball field he gained a reputation as a leading hitter and notorious base stealer. In his career he nabbed 70 bases and was only thrown out once.

"H.T. was quite an athlete. I don't think the selection committee could have done a better job," said Miller's introducer Wade Cash.

"This place (Riverheads) was and still is and will always be in my heart," said Miller. "Coach DeMacio taught me how to work to be successful. He instilled in me a work ethic."

Rounding out the slate of inductees was a pair of athletes who harkened back to the first years of the school. "Stormin'" Norman Coyner was introduced by the Gladiators' original football coach, Jim Digges. "Norman and Larry (Phillips) were part of the Five Iron Men that we had in football and basketball," said Digges.

"In 20 some years of coaching, I have never had a player with the

dedication and courage of Norman Coyner," he said. He related one anecdote about Coyner and the tendency of Coyner's shoulder to become dislocated. "In one game I put his shoulder back in place three times!" said Digges.

"My hat is off to my coaches for their coaching abilities," said Coyner of Digges and Ken Downey. "I was just proud to be a part of it."

Coyner's teammate, Larry Phillips was introduced by Downey who coached Phillips at Spotswood and Riverheads. "He was as good an athlete as ever wore a Gladiator uniform," he said.

Phillips played safety and split end on the football team and pitched on the baseball team. He once pitched both games of a double header and hit the winning home run in the second game. But it was on the basketball court that Phillips really shone. He scored over 1,700 points in his five-year career with a career high of 41 points.

In his speech, Downey, who spent 18 years at Riverheads, not only praised Phillips, but all of the athletes who ever donned a Gladiator uniform.

"The Gladiators are a family," he said. —

•Custis

Continued from page 15

lived in a village called Arlington. Sometime before 1653 John Custis II came to the Eastern Shore of Virginia, raised tobacco and built a mansion house that measured 54 by 44 feet.

Custis died in 1696, but his descendants would figure prominently in American history. One man, George Washington Parke Custis, was Martha Washington's grandson (by her first marriage) and was adopted as a son by Martha and George Washington. George Washington Parke Custis built a great mansion house just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. He named the house and farm Arlington. Today the house sits in the middle of Arlington National Cemetery which is within the city of Arlington. Custis's daughter married Robert E. Lee, the famed Confederate general. During the Civil War, in retaliation for Lee's part in leading a rebellion against the United States, the mansion house was confiscated and the surrounding farmland was

turned into a national cemetery.

Today the Arlington in northern Virginia is far better known than Virginia's original Arlington way across the Chesapeake Bay. All that remains of that Arlington is a small family cemetery containing several of the original Custis settlers and the foundations of a 17th-century plantation house.

We were in for one more surprise on our final day of riding. Remember those sea kayakers that we had spotted on the point where Virginia's soil ran out? Well, when we stopped for lunch at the only restaurant for miles around, there they were. We all recognized each other and struck up a conversation. Turns out they were from Staunton!

When we entered the restaurant, I had decided against wearing a hat to cover my "helmet hair" which was standing up at odd angles all over my head because I knew that there would be nobody in the establishment who would recognize me. It is certainly a small world. We didn't have many miles left after lunch and as we finished we could take satisfaction in the fact

that we had ridden 52 miles, giving us 200 miles for the four days.

We crossed the bridge/tunnel late that afternoon knowing that there was still one day of adventure ahead of us. We wanted to see the tall ships that were coming into Hampton Roads on their way from Puerto Rico to Portland, Maine. We had cut our biking short with the specific purpose of finagling a way to see OpSail 2000, the largest assemblage of sailing vessels ever in the world.

With the help of some friends, we got passes that allowed us front row seats along the sea wall at Fort Monroe. There for two hours we watched more than 40 sailing ships and 100 military vessels (from subs to aircraft carriers to bombing planes) pass in front of us.

The ships came from 18 countries and ranged in size from the Russian "Kruzenshtern," the second largest sailing ship in the world at 376 feet to the tiny 65-foot "Pride of Many," a replica of Columbus's Pinta which made the journey to America's shores in 1492.

See SHIPS, page 19

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Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

September 2000

Dear Maude:

Well, it's that time again. Every two years we get hit with this semi-torture and have become a bit immune to it, however, every four years we get the full fledged thing. Oh, election time! The time when things are never quite what they seem.

And, oh, with what care our honorable, elected officials apply that winning smile! The voice assumes a sincere, intimate quality of trust implying that even though there is so much work to be done, one always has time to listen. One always has time to promise.

Yes, indeed, it really is the joyful season of promises.

"If I am elected, I promise you that I will..."

We can be promised anything. Our representatives could promise us that each child in America will graduate with a straight A average and be guaranteed a full scholarship to the university of his or her choice. We can be promised that every one of them will begin their working careers at a minimum wage of \$100,000 per year. We can be promised that legislation will be introduced and passed to require the wind to blow, at a most comfortable and pleasant speed, from a southerly direction on at least three days a week. We can be promised that our legislators will see to it

that taxes will go down and prices will go down and on and on. Oh, what a glorious time it will be. Just think of it — if all the promises made by the politicians came true, what more could we ever want?!

But promises are just that. Most that are made can be nothing more, for no politician by himself or herself can achieve anything single-handed. The presidential candidates love to tell us what they will do. "I will cut taxes!" No they won't, for they don't have that authority. They can try to persuade congress to do so, but that is not always such an easy task. The president can, of course, veto a bill passed by congress, but that's about it. But it makes them feel good to promise all those things, so I guess we simply have to think of it as a form of entertainment on a channel we can't turn off.

There is an old story that has been around the political circles for years. Earl Long, former governor of Louisiana, made lots of promises in his campaign for that office. When he came into a district where his support was weak, he would pick out the strongest leader, promise that person that when he, Uncle Earl, was elected, he was going to make that person the Commissioner of Public Works, or Conservation, or whatever struck his fancy that day. Uncle Earl's support soared. Everyone rushed out on election day and voted for him. After the dust settled, all of those

local leaders began arriving at the governor's mansion for their new positions. Gov. Long's aide came in one day and said, "Governor, there are several men in the outer office swearing you promised each one of them the job of Commissioner of Public Works. What can I tell them?"

Mr. Earl simply looked the aide straight in the face and in his gravelly voice replied, "Well, just go tell them I lied."

One wonders why those interested in politics think the story is funny. Probably because it is almost unbelievable that any politician would admit that he lied! But I suspect that there may be a few of them that suspect, somewhere deep down inside, that maybe, well, — just barely maybe, they might be guilty of stretching things, just a little, in their enthusiasm to go serve their friends and neighbors.

Yes, I am afraid that it is true that things are not always what they appear to be.

I am reminded of a building past which I have to walk quite often. Not far off Pennsylvania Avenue, it appears to be a restored old building — probably once a large city house. There is beautiful architectural detail at the windows and doors. The trim is a soft gray against the warm red of old brick. But on closer observation, one sees that some of the brick are painted, and that some of the walls are obviously new bricks. Looking

By Roberta Hamlin



up toward the upper floors, one sees that the red brick structure is really only a shell which actually wraps around a massive yellow brick office building with large plate glass windows. The edges of the office building are in a buff colored marble — very inconspicuous. There may be some portions of the older building incorporated, however probably not many. It is definitely not what it appears to be at first glance.

So, on that note, I shall get back to my work at hand — keeping up with all the political promises (for curiosity's sake) and updating the boss' schedule for the additional fund raisers that have arrived in today's mail. He is now off purchasing a new suit to update his own smiling facade which he will be sure to have many occasions to perfect as he wanders about from one breakfast to another luncheon or reception, checks in hand, assuring that politician that he will do everything in his power to make sure he is re-elected.

The next day, the boss will assure his opponent of the same thing.

There is one thing about an election year in Washington — one never has to worry about all those promises coming true!

Tell everyone at home I really miss them.

Love, LuLu

A purple and pink palette says autumn is here

We are fortunate to enjoy four variable seasons in Virginia and the third season brings a very attractive palette of many tones from dark purple to pale lavender and deep pink to light mauve.

Many of my favorite plants are in flower from late August onward. Among these fall bloomers are liriopse, impatiens, obedient plant, sedum, asters, cushion mums, Japanese anemones, butterfly bush, crape myrtle, and caryopteris.

Every garden should have a varied mix of these showy plants to extend this season. Any type of greenery will set them off, whether evergreen or deciduous, and any white flowers, whether hostas, daisies, asters, or mums will provide a sharp contrast.

As a low border or groundcover liriopse is hard to beat. It takes sun or shade, has neat grasslike foliage, and produces lavender flowers that turn into black fruits as winter approaches.

Impatiens come in many colors. I tried "Tempo Blue Satin" (lavender) this year in front of my liriopse border and was pleased with the two-tone effect.

Obedient plants or physostegia make tall accents for the back of a bed. Flowers atop the spikes range from white to pink.

Sedums are perennial succulents and popular rock garden plants. The hybrids we tend to see in fall are S. "Autumn Joy", whose pink flowers turn rosy-red and then copper; "Brilliant" and "Meteor" with pink-carmine flowers; and "Atropurpureum" with

~~~Garden tips for October~~~

Fall is officially here and daylight savings time ends Oct. 29 so every hour is precious to a dedicated gardener to prepare for the close of the season.

Temperatures in the 60s and 70s are normally conducive to working outdoors and humidity is generally lower. As leaves and foliage turn to autumn hues (the peak foliage time in Highland County is the second week of October) we can enjoy nature, attend festivals, and spend time in our gardens. Some tips are:

- Clip back all dead or dying foliage. Dead-head spent flowers. Weed all beds. Keep vegetable gardens picked and old debris or rotting fruits removed. Our wet summer has produced powdery mildew and soggy vegeta-

lovely maroon foliage. All grow 1-2 feet. Two smaller sedums with dark leaves are "Vera Jameson" and "Sunset Cloud."

I think most gardeners are familiar with the many varieties and colors of asters and cushion mums. Once summer annuals fade, replace these with the perfect substitutes, the low mounds of asters and mums.

My very favorite perennials of the season are Japanese anemones. Each year the clumps expand, particularly in a sunny site. They have large, maple-like leaves and tall

stems so spend extra time on clean up.

- Feed and weed your lawn if you haven't done this yet.
- Aerate or de-thatch lawns if necessary.
- Pull up faded annuals and divide overgrown perennials.
- Catch end of season sales at local nurseries. This is an excellent time to buy perennials at bargain prices. Cut back the foliage to create a compact plant.
- Dig up summer bulbs such as cannas, dahlias, gladioli, caladiums, and calla lilies, clean and remove tops, dry for two weeks, and store in a dry place in vermiculite or peat moss or hang up in mesh bags.
- Clean out and prepare ponds for winter.

See TIPS, page 19

stalks of white, pink, mauve, and rose flowers in single or semi-double forms. They like moist, rich soil, but dislike wind and drought. Japanese anemones make good cut flowers. Some popular cultivars are "September Sprite" and "September Charm" (single, pink) and "Alba" (single, white); "Profusion," "Queen Charlotte," and "Margaretel" (semi-double, rose); and "Whirlwind" (semidouble, white).

Two "must have" fall-blooming deciduous shrubs are butterfly bush (buddleia) and

In the Garden

By Jenifer Bradford



caryopteris. Both love sun and need to be cut back to about a foot in early spring. Buddleia has long, large leaves and can get quite leggy. Its panicles vary from blue-black (Black Knight), reddish-purple (Nanho Purple), and white (White Ball) with many shades in between. Caryopteris is a handsome shrub, has silver-gray leaves, and grows 2-3 feet. We usually see the blue form. "Azure" and "Heavenly Blue" have bright blue flowers and "Blue Mist" has light blue flowers. There is also a white shrub.

I wrote about Crape Myrtles in August and recommend this Autumn blooming small tree. I like to see these multi-trunked trees pruned up so as to enjoy the exfoliating bark. The new cultivars have the softest colors and complement the other mentioned plants in the purple-pink palette.

Plan and plant for a grand display next year! —

Meditation on green beans

One of the most exciting things to me about being a parent is introducing Emma, my 19-month-old daughter, to some of my favorite things. It was with her in mind that we planted two 20-foot long rows of green beans this year. We thought we would out-smart her, you see, up until this time, she would not eat any green vegetable. Surely, we thought, she would not be able to resist one of summer's most heralded crops.

I, myself, have some warm and not so warm memories about green beans as a child. I loved eating them — especially raw, just picked from the bush.

What I hated most about beans was picking them. Our garden sat down at the bottom of a hill, quite a far away from the house and very close to a dense patch of woods in which there was a stream that would rise on occasion and make every piece of ground a bit soggy. I really did not mind the physical act of picking them, but I was afraid of snakes. I don't know if I'd seen one near the garden or what, but I was terrified. I remember crying and picking beans.

My father was not one to suffer those tears — he thought I just wanted to get out of doing the work! (Years later, while chatting with a colleague of mine, she told me that she had the same experience. I knew then that Yolonda and I would become friends — it was extremely hard to find anybody among my Washington D.C. colleagues who had ever had a garden, let alone picked green beans while crying in fear snakes.)

It is with this mixture of memories and attachments that I approach green beans every year. No, I am not afraid of snakes anymore, but I am afraid of back aches and just the thought of canning in the summer heat

The more I learn about gardening and the history and folklore surrounding it, the more mystical it becomes to me. Even when you understand the science aspect to it, there is still something magical about it. When you think about it, where did the bean even come from? When did people begin to cultivate it?

the way my Mom and Dad did makes me anxious.

This year, a new friend Carolyn told me, "Why don't you just blanch them and freeze them? That's what my Mom does now." What an oasis in my muddled, hectic life.

It occurs to me how grateful I am to have people like Carolyn and Yolonda in my life. Those who can appreciate the utter perfection and joy of a good green bean fresh from the garden. And those who share in the same kind of memories about gardening — the satisfaction that comes from putting your hands in the earth, planting a seed, and watching plants miraculously grow. I admit, every year, I am amazed at the process. It brings out the child in me.

The more I learn about gardening and the history and folklore surrounding it, the more mystical it becomes to me. Even when you understand the science aspect to it, there is still something magical about it. When you think about it, where did the bean even come from? When did people begin to cultivate it?

Well, according to the Food Museum, which is in Ireland and is mostly focused on potatoes, the green bean we enjoy today is actually a "haricot", a word we associate with

the French language, but when applied to beans means a plant originating in South America. In fact, haricot is an Aztec word, originally, ayacotl. Haricot beans include limas, black beans, pinto beans, white beans, green beans, kidney beans, even black-eyed peas, which are, in fact, beans. All these variations stem from an ancestral plant that has been dated back 9,000 years.

Both northern and southern native Americans made extensive use of the bean, then, as now. Botanically, the haricot is Phaseolus vulgaris, and encompasses most of the beans we think of as beans.

According to Eating in America, native Americans of the eastern United States probably developed their own beans independently. They were already widespread when the first explorers reached the coast. String beans existed also; Cherokee women wound them into long chains and hung them up to dry in the sun, producing what we later called "leather britches beans." Within a century after the discovery of America, several beans developed by the Indians were being exported to the Old World.

So those of us who herald the coming of green beans from our gardens, and make its

Down to Earth

By
Mollie Bryan



planting, cooking, and preserving a part of our yearly ritual are in essence taking part in an ancient earth practice.

For my family in Pennsylvania, part of the ritual was boiling green beans with potatoes and adding a slab of bacon or ham to it. Now that I am a vegetarian, I add something called liquid smoke, which adds the flavor without all the fat.

So when Emma and I began picking beans one sunny Saturday, we were both participating in not only our family ritual, but also an age-old human family ritual. I could almost hear native American drums beating, and voices rising in unison, singing while picking. Oh, I was feeling my Earth Mother roots and so at one with the universe as I watched my baby pick a bean. Well, Emma took a bite of one, set it aside, then took a bite out of another, set it aside, until she became bored and just walked away. Kind of anticlimactic.

Later, beans cooked and ready for the table, her father and I awaited in eager anticipation. Our daughter's first meal with green beans that we had planted and picked. It brought back memories for us both. Is there anything better than the first batch of green beans cooked just right? Well, according to Emma, who would not even take a bite, there's plenty — starting with macaroni and cheese. —

•Ships

Continued from page 17

In addition to the three- and four-masted ships, there were two-masted brigs and brigantines, three-masted barks and barkentines, and two-masted schooners, including the America's Cup winner, "America." There were also tiny yawls and ketches with

their sails up as well as numerous privately-owned boats bouncing around in the waves.

As they swept close to the reviewing stand, the sleekness and grace of these sailing ships recalled a bygone era. We could even hear the sailors who were hanging high in the rigging as they sang or even shouted out a hearty "Viva! Viva!" to the appreciative crowd. Ships

with cannons fired off their guns with a boom and a puff of smoke.

When the last ship had passed into the protective waters of the harbor and the crowd began to disperse, we knew we had witnessed the perfect end to our lucky No. 13 trip. It had been a trip with parameters laid out and defined by the ocean rather than the land, and the land as far as the eye could see had been flat. —

•Tips

Continued from page 18

ter. Small pools can be covered with netting to catch leaves.

• Rake leaves from lawns and top dress flowerbeds or add to the compost pile. Note: It is important to weed and clean up all beds as early as possible before most leaves fall.

• Do not prune spring-flowering shrubs or you will remove the buds already set for next year.

• Plant spring bulbs at month's end.

• Bring tender potted plants in-

doors. Wash and debug first.

• Plant or transplant trees and shrubs.

• Keep cutting flowers for indoor bouquets.

• Take cuttings of favorite plants to grow inside over the winter.

• Set out cool-season annuals such as pansies and violas.

• Leave seedheads of sunflowers for the birds to enjoy.

• Pot up a selection of herbs to grow on your kitchen window ready to clip and use over the winter.

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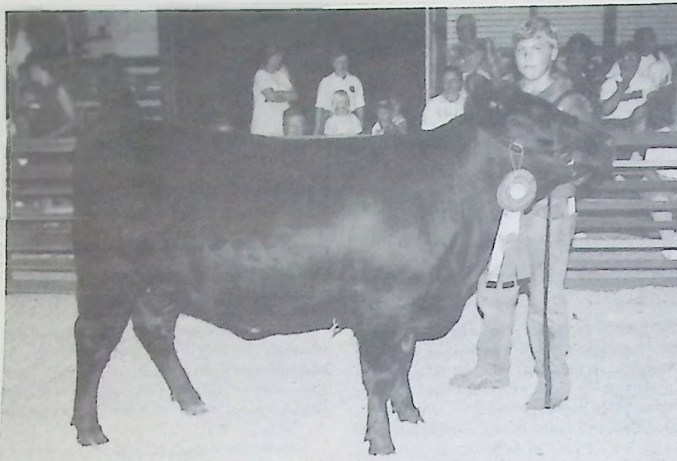
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Garrett Johnston exhibited the Supreme Champion female at the Augusta County Fair held Aug. 8-12 in Fishersville. He is the son of Donnie and Dinah Johnston of Arbor Hill and is a member of the Middlebrook 4-H Livestock Club.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton



Exhibitors in the novice showmanship class at the Augusta County Fair line up before the critical eye of the judge.

Purple loosestrife noxious, banned in Virginia

By JENIFER BRADFORD

Effective July 1, Virginia SB-162, introduced by Sen. John Watkins became law. The summary of the bill passed reads: Noxious weeds. Declares the purple loosestrife, and its hybrids and cultivars, a noxious weed and requires the Commissioner and the Board of Agriculture and Consumer Services to regulate the transport and sale of this weed under the Noxious Weed Law.

The bill was signed by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate on March 24 and by Gov. Gilmore on April 4.

Purple loosestrife or *Lythrum salicaria* has been a serious threat to our natural wetlands since its introduction. The Virginia Native

Plant Society and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Natural Heritage Program have detailed criteria for listing and ranking invasive alien plants and have worked hard to publicize the dangers of loosestrife.

Originating in Eurasia, loosestrife was introduced into northeastern U.S. and Canada early in the 1800s. It has spread through most of temperate North America and into 28 counties in Virginia. It thrives in wetlands and I saw recently a large colony along the banks of the river in Goshen. In New England en route to Canada it flourishes by the acre.

What does this noxious weed look like? It is an herbaceous perennial with tall showy spikes of magenta

flowers. It usually grows to 4 feet in gardens but often exceeds 10 feet in wetlands. Each flower has 5-7 petals which form in dense clusters on terminal spikes. It has opposite leaves or whorls of three. It blooms from June to September.

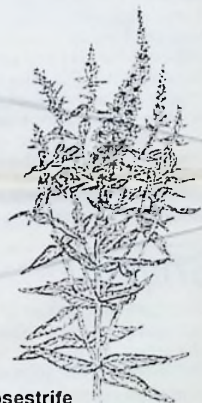
The dangers of purple loosestrife are many. It crowds out native vegetation and forms a monoculture to replace diverse species providing food and shelter to wildlife. It is of no value to wildlife. A single stalk can produce 300,000 seeds. Densities of up to 80,000 stalks per acre have been reported. The species also reproduces vegetatively from root or stem segments.

Although cultivars sold by nurseries are advertised as being infertile, research has shown that when

crossed among themselves or in the wild they become highly fertile.

Please do not buy or grow loosestrife. Hand pull any existing clumps (ideally before they flower). Burn plants or bag them. Repeat these measures as necessary to eradicate new plants that have sprouted from seed. Roundup should work. Digging up clumps is NOT recommended.

Replace purple loosestrife in your garden with plants of similar height, color, and growth habit such as obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*). "Vivid" is pink and "Summer Snow" is white; liatris (lavender), or *Sidalcea Elsie Hough* which is a pale pink. Foxgloves (*Digitalis*) are also tall, handsome plants. —



Loosestrife

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.

Oct. 2, 1882 — An early season windstorm over Oregon and northern California blew down thousands of trees and caused great crop damage in the Sacramento Valley.

Oct. 5, 1786 — The famous "Pumpkin Flood" occurred on the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers. Harris-



burg, Pa., reported a river stage of 22 feet. The heavy rains culminated a wet season.

Oct. 9, 1903 — New York City was deluged with 11.17 inches of rain 24 hours to establish a state record. Severe flooding occurred in the Passaic Valley of New Jersey where more than 15 inches of rain was reported.

Oct. 15, 1880 — A violent early season blizzard raked Minnesota and the Dakotas. Winds gusted to 70 mph at Yankton, S.D., and snow drifts 10 to 15 feet high were reported in northwest Iowa and southeast South Dakota. Saint Paul, Minn., reported a barometric pressure of 28.65 inches on the 16th. Railroads were blocked by drifts of snow which remained throughout the severe winter to

follow. Gales did extensive damage to ships on the Great Lakes. (15th-16th)

Oct. 22, 1988 — A "nor'easter" swept across the coast of New England. Winds gusted to 75 mph, and large waves and high tides caused extensive shoreline flooding. A heavy wet snow blanketed much of eastern New York State, with a foot of snow reported in Lewis County.

Oct. 27, 1764 — A "very remarkable storm of snow with high winds" produced 22 inches at Rutland in central Massachusetts.

Oct. 31, 1846 — Eighty-seven pioneers were trapped by early snows in the Sierra Nevada Mountains that piled five feet deep, with 30 to 40 foot drifts. Just 47 persons survived the "Donner Pass Tragedy."



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