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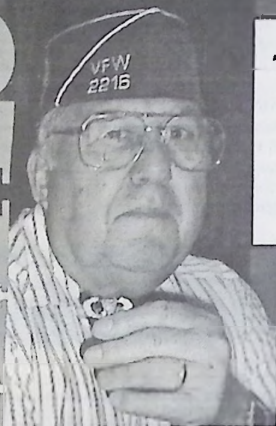
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Augusta Country

Down on the Farm
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November 2000 Vol. 7, Issue 10

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Honoring our veterans

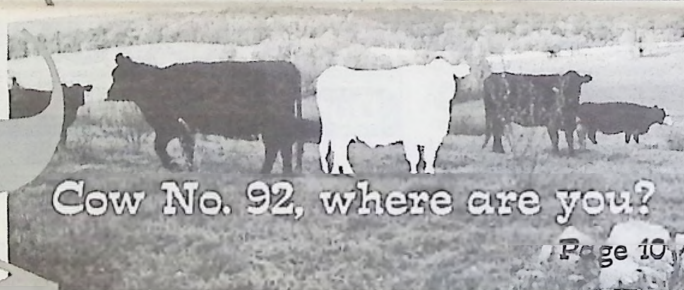
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cherishes her memories

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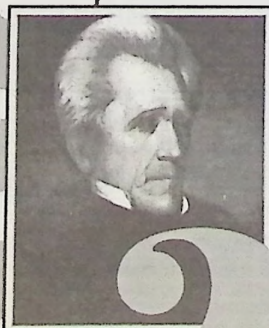
Bird Club
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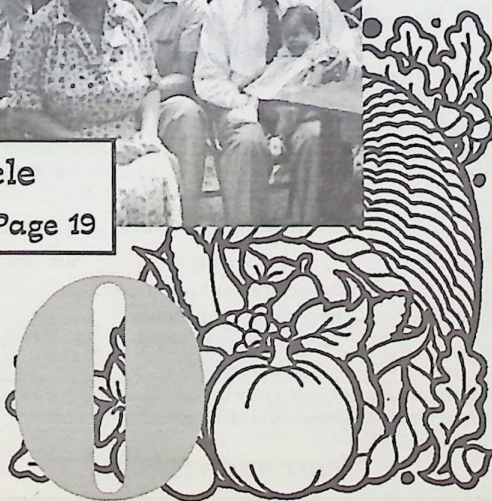
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A Thanksgiving miracle

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Augusta Farm Bureau honors local youths

AC staff report

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

Rosalea Riley, Bobby Drumheller, Elizabeth Ann Fuller, Rachel Swortzel and Jonathan Riley were recognized by AFBF as winners of contests held each year by Farm Bureau.

Miss Riley, a 2000 graduate of Buffalo Gap High School, was chosen Miss Augusta County Farm Bureau. She attends Virginia Tech and is a member of the Agriculture Education Society and volunteers her time to Appal Corps, an organization that helps rebuild communities. At Buffalo Gap she was president of the FFA, vice president of the National Honor Society and a member of the Gap Ruriteens. She is a member of Hebron Presbyterian Church and several state sheep production associations. She is the daughter of Donna and Doug Riley of Rt. 10, Staunton.

Drumheller was selected as the Farm Youth Leadership award recipient. He attends Buffalo Gap High School where he is vice presi-



ROSALEA RILEY



DRUMHELLER



FULLER



SWORTZEL



J. RILEY

dent of the Varsity Club and SAE chaplain. He is an FFA member and is a past president of the Gap Ruriteens. He is a member of Hebron Presbyterian Church and is the son of Vickie and Charles Drumheller of Swoope.

The Mary Frances Houff Outstanding Citizenship Award was presented to Miss Fuller. She is a student at Buffalo Gap High School where she is enrolled in the leadership class offered through Gap's ag department. She is FFA historian and is a member of the Augusta 4-H Dairy Club. She is a member of the Spanish Club, Ruriteens and Bison Against Drugs. She is a member of Mt. Solon Independent Bible Church and is the daughter of Barbara and Aubrey Fuller of Mt. Solon.

Miss Swortzel, of Greenville, was named the federation's Outstanding Young Agriculturist. She attends Stuarts Draft High School and is a member of its FFA chapter. Miss Swortzel maintains a 4.84 grade-point average. She is a mem-

ber of the International Thespian Society and the Stuarts Draft High School concert and show choir. She is sophomore class treasurer. She has participated in cross country and track for three years and is also active in 4-H. She is the daughter of Karen and Mac Swortzel.

Winner of the AFBF senior essay contest was Jonathan Riley. He is the 15-year-old son of Donna and Doug Riley of Rt. 10, Staunton, and is a student at Buffalo Gap High School. He is junior president of Gap's FFA chapter, is active on the 4-H livestock judging team and was a member of the state Junior Livestock Judging Team that represented Beverley Manor Middle School at the 1999 State FFA Convention. Riley has lived on a farm all his life, is actively involved in farming operations and is co-owner of Dorset and Southdown sheep as well as a small herd of goats.

The 2000 annual meeting represented Augusta Farm Bureau's 50th anniversary. Carmen Davis, secretary/treasurer of the Farm Bureau board, gave an overview of the organization's history. Davis was hired in July 1950 to work with the county's Farm Bureau membership drive and subscribed 300-plus new members to the organization in its first year. Prior to 1950, Farm Bureau functioned through the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bu-

reau. At the state convention in the fall of 1949, the group voted to reorganize as Virginia Farm Bureau.

While all other counties in the state had volunteer workers, Augusta was the only county with paid staff. Davis noted that Farm Bureau has provided a vehicle through which individuals can develop leadership skills. Since its inception, Davis noted, Farm Bureau has been in the forefront promoting rural health issues. He pointed to the Women's Committee and Young Farmer's Committee as playing integral roles in the group's success. Over its 50-year history, Augusta Farm Bureau has had 17 presidents and provided a number of individuals for service on the state and national levels.

In addition to celebrating their golden anniversary, Augusta Farm Bureau members considered legislative resolutions on a variety of subjects including everything from

real estate tax to the size of trout to be used for bait. The group approved a resolution encouraging Virginia Farm Bureau to explore methods to enhance public support for lobby efforts; approved a resolution supporting balancing population with available resources; approved a resolution supporting the increased use of sales tax as a method to reduce the real estate tax burden; approved a resolution encouraging education of the general public on the proper use and application of fertilizer and chemicals; approved a resolution recommending no minimum size for trout when used as bait provided they are legally obtained and used. Resolutions will be forwarded to the state resolution committee for action at the annual convention.

In other business, executive officers and directors were elected. Officers elected by Farm Bureau See **RESOLUTIONS**, page 6

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Veteran recalls Korea's 'forgotten war'

By NANCY SORRELLS

For Earl Desper Jr., the tedium sticks out in his mind as much as anything. There they were a bunch of teenagers and young men in their early 20s stuck in a hole in the ground on the 38th Parallel. Day after day they sat there and looked out across no man's land to the enemy who was doing the same thing.

"It was boring. We were holding our ground and they were holding theirs," he said.

The men were hunkered down in bunkers connected by a system of trenches dug into the ground. Some men played cards, but Earl never liked cards, while some read. Some passed the time talking or chewing tobacco — few dared smoke a cigarette because that gave the enemy a target for their snipers.

Day after day, week after week the crack 187th Infantry Regiment known as the Rakkasans held the line. The Rakkasans were an airborne unit out of Fort Campbell, Ky. The Japanese had nicknamed the unit the Rakkasans because that was the Japanese word for a man holding a big umbrella. When the paratroopers fell from the sky, they looked like they had big umbrellas over their heads.

Earl had actually signed up for the merchant marines but had been pulled off the ship to enter the army. The 18-year-old decided to go to jump school simply for the reason that it was \$50 more a month.

Basic training and jump school were rigorous he remembered. "You had to run for 10 miles and



Earl Desper Jr. holds his silver jump wings.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

do push-ups, sit-ups, and pull-ups. They had a chin-up bar in the mess hall and if you couldn't do 10 or 15 chin-ups then you had to go to the end of the line," he said.

After basic training and jump school, he left on a troop ship for Japan. They stayed in Beppu, in the southern part of Japan, for a month, long enough for Earl to get used to eating eggs fried in fish oil. "I got to where I liked it," he said.

Unfortunately, the next stop was Korea. It was the forgotten war in a forgotten land for many Americans. From June 25, 1950 until July 27, 1953, the United Nations forces, a large percentage of which were Americans, struggled against the North Korean and Chinese forces for control of the peninsula.

By the time Earl arrived in late 1952, the forces were stale-

"Everybody bleeds the same in war — they all bleed red. All we need is peace. Hate will never get you anywhere."

Earl Desper Jr.
Korean War veteran

mated at the 38th Parallel. Those trenches became his home until July 27, 1953 when the peace treaty was signed.

Life on the line meant one hot meal a day, sort of. "That meant that they put all the cans of C-rations in a garbage can of hot water to heat them up!" he said with a smile. "And anytime it was lunch time, we could expect mortar fire because they knew our schedule and knew we would be out of the trenches at that time. It was more harassment than anything else."

There were some C-rations that were better than others. Earl liked the butter beans and ham, but despised the corn beef and hash. "I weighed 168 pounds in Korea, so I didn't gain too much weight while I was there," he said.

Every three weeks, they took the soldiers off the front and allowed them to bathe in the mountain streams. "You would get in line and they would make you strip off all your clothes, but you got to keep

your boots which you carried with you. They had a shower set up at the river and when you came out of that they would fog you down to delouse you. Then you got all clean — not new, but clean — clothes except your boots which you had kept," he explained of the personal hygiene procedure.

"The people in prisons in this country today have it better than we had it," he said in comparison.

The countryside that the men saw on their trips off the line was one of devastation. "Everything looked like plowed fields from all the shells," he said.

Earl survived the brutal Korean winter and was well into the hot summer when peace came. "We knew they were going to sign the treaty at midnight, but that day we had more mortar fire than almost any other time. I guess they were trying to get rid of their ammunition. Then at midnight, it got real quiet," he said.

Although Earl says there were no good times up on the line, there was camaraderie. And the men had a good leader in Gen. William Westmoreland. "I have no complaints about him. He was right around there with you in the bunkers and trenches," Earl recalled. Another bright spot was that he got to see Jane Russell, Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio in a U.S.O. show.

Earl's unit remained in Korea until September 1953, and then the troops went back to Japan. In the weeks after peace, he had the opportunity to see some of the destruction caused by war, including little villages that were totally burned out.

Because paratroopers must jump every three months to keep their extra pay, Earl had to put in a few jumps while he was in Korea. To jump, the men had to sit in web seats in the loud, vibrating airplanes called C-119s, C-46s, and

C-47s. All told he jumped 33 times and although he never jumped into a live combat situation, he did tear his liver loose once which required a hospital stay. His time on the line under heavy mortar fire also permanently impaired his hearing and after the war was over and he was back in Japan, he contracted malaria.

Earl was discharged in 1954 and although he is proud of his service, he regrets that the Korean War is the forgotten war despite the fact that over 54,000 Americans lost their lives.

When Corp. Earl Desper Jr. left the army he had a Good Conduct Medal, a National Defense Service Medal, a Combat Infantry Badge, a Parachutists Badge, a United Nations Service Medal, and ROK Presidential Unit Citation.

He also has another medal, one that he refuses to discuss — a Korean Service Medal with a Bronze Star. Whatever circumstances earned Desper that medal created a man who, to this day, turns the television channel away from war movies.

"Everybody bleeds the same in war — they all bleed red," he says. "All we need is peace. Hate will never get you anywhere." —

Ruritans to honor veterans

MIDDLEBROOK — The Middlebrook Ruritans will honor veterans with a special program during the club's Nov. 8 meeting.

Veterans and their spouses who live in the Middlebrook-Greenville area are invited to be the guests of the Middlebrook Ruritans for this special military service recognition. Sen. John Warner has been invited to the program. Robert G. Lent of Lyndhurst, National Chief Devil Dog, Military Order of the Devil Dogs of the Marine Corps League, will address the group. The Mary Baldwin College Corps of Cadets color guard will be present and patriotic music will be provided by Ray Houser.

Any veteran who lives in the Middlebrook-Greenville area who wants to attend this special program should call Roy T. Stephenson at 886-1394 or write him at 406 Linden Drive, Staunton, Va. 24401 by Oct. 31 to RSVP. —

Parade to salute veterans

Nov. 11 will be a day of remembrance for area veterans. At 11 a.m. on Veterans Day there will be a parade in downtown Staunton to honor those who have served our nation. Over 50 units have signed up for the parade, including all the area high school bands, the National Guard, and the Coast Guard. There will also be a number of antique military vehicles. In addition to the parade, VFW Post 2216 on Frontier Drive will have an open house on that day.

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Mollie Rogers cherishes lifetime of memories

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — When you think about it, lives are made of memories. And memories were what brought Loyalton's oldest resident, 102 1/2-year-old Mollie Rogers, outside in the late summer sunshine recently to watch a bike rodeo being held in the retirement home's parking area.

Mollie's late husband, James Henry, had always enjoyed working with youth and helping coach their ball teams. Seeing the delighted youngsters on their bicycles stirred up those memories for Mollie.

Imagine, if you will, having memories from three different centuries like Mollie does! Her memories are clear and sharp and as she relates them, her face radiates contentment. Her first memories go back to a time when she was about two years old and fell deathly ill with malaria. She remembers the family being close and administering quinine.

Those childhood memories center in the tiny town of Roxboro, N.C., near Durham. There in the south is where she met James when she was 14 and he was a recent graduate of North Carolina State with a degree in agriculture. Money was not plentiful when the two were courting and when James

asked her to marry him, he presented her with his class ring as an engagement ring.

The real diamond did not come for 60 years. The couple was married on Aug. 7, 1917 when Mollie was 19 1/2. Sixty years later, at their anniversary celebration, James slipped a diamond ring on his sweetheart's finger. Today those two rings, given 60 years apart, as well as James' fraternity pin are always with her.

The young couple had seven children and seven decades of happiness before James passed away one spring. Their legacy now includes 26 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

In 1928 James and Mollie moved to Virginia. Except for a period during World War II, Mollie has lived in the Old Dominion ever since. There's one thing true about living more than a century, you get to experience plenty of history. During World War II, James took a job in quality control at the Glen L. Martin airplane manufacturing plant in White Marsh, Md., near Baltimore.

"They were manufacturing airplanes as fast as they could during the war," said Mollie. Many families moved right onto the Marsh complex where all the roads had airplane-related names. The Rogers, for instance, lived on Runway Road.

Much of the workforce at Marsh was female. This was the era of "Rosie the Riveter." With the men off in the military, the women were called full force into the manufacturing ranks. Mollie, too, had a role — she worked in a nursery for the children whose mothers were making planes.

"I took care of the children while the mothers riveted. Many of those women had never worked out of the home before. The nursery was kept open night and day," she remembered.

After the war, the Rogers returned to Virginia. Eventually Mollie wound up in New Hope where her daughter lived. There Mollie has taken an active role in the New Hope United Methodist Church. Only within the last year did she decide to move into Loyalton in order to "give her daughter some free time."

These days she continues to enjoy life and think back over the history of her own long life. "I feel sorry for those who don't have their memories to cherish. I have been blessed with a wonderful memory," she said.

The secret to a long life full of those memories, she explained, is love. "There is plenty of love in this world. God created this earth in love and love is what makes the world go round. Love will solve all your problems," she said. —



Mollie Rogers, 102, of Loyalton in Staunton says she is thankful for her memories.
Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Artist's work shows pre-interstate scenery

By STACEY BAKER

Just a few short years ago, in 1959 to be exact, a small four-year-old wandered over to a neighbor's yard to see what that strange grown-up was doing.

The grown-up, a woman who spoke so funny it was hard to understand, was sitting on an indoor chair in the front yard! And she had a strange contraption in front of her on which was perched a piece of white cardboard.

Many small brushes protruded from a glass of murky water as she stared into the distant field across the road. The child inquired as to what she was doing. She smiled and in an accented voice tried to explain as she pointed to the fields then to the white cardboard and finally to the brushes and paints. She then proceeded to capture the scene she had pointed out onto the paper with the magic of her talent and paints.

The child probably made several trips over to the artist that day and, maybe because of the interest shown, the artist presented the completed watercolor to the child's family.

The artist, Elizabeth Shepard, had been visiting here from Switzerland. Soon after the watercolor was completed she returned to her

See ARTIST, page 6



The photo above at left shows the watercolor by Elizabeth Shephard which the artist painted in 1959. The farm was located looking west from Lyndhurst Road near Oak Hill. The photo above at right shows the same scene today minus the farm but with Interstate 64.

Photos by Stacey Baker



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Season's end is also a time of renewal

The closing months of the year, although thought of primarily as wrap-up months in a gardener's calendar, are also good times to look over the garden and see if changes are needed or improvements made.

It's been seven and a half years since I moved to Staunton and began to redesign the garden that surrounds our hilltop cottage.

The front became a cottage garden set under a huge Siberian elm. A perennial border was created in front and down the side of the cedar picket fence.

Behind the house a small maple tree and many overgrown shrubs were removed. Wooden steps and a series of boxes (to grow flowers for cutting) were installed down a steep side slope. A wooden deck was built and curving beds were cut out of the existing lawn. These were filled with shrubs, both evergreen and deciduous, small trees (redbuds, a fringe tree, and a crape myrtle), and groundcovers. Around a large Norway

maple tree native spring ephemerals, sweet woodruff, and liriopse were planted.

Now the time has come to renew and rethink parts of the garden. It is a time to be bold and unafraid to pull up, divide, throw away, and give away plants.

Parts of the garden have grown too vigorously (thanks to all that compost and leafmold), and some plants have overgrown their allotted space and are crowding out recent additions.

Over a period of weeks in 2-3 day work sessions, Brad and I tackled several different areas.

All the perennials in the front and side border outside the picket fence were dug up. In all areas that we revitalized, the soil has been amended with dried cow manure, compost, and leaves and dug over deeply with a spading fork. Plants that had overrun the borders such as santolina, artemisia, yarrow, lily of the valley, and specialty mints were discarded or given away. Large clumps of rudbeckia, shasta daisies, daylilies, Siberian iris, and New England

asters were divided and spaced. Other favorites were replanted such as a low-spreading goldenrod, a groundcover forsythia, campanula (singles and doubles), purpleheaded cone-flower, obedient plant, and miniature roses.

The areas on either side of the garden gate were redesigned with pairs of *Chrysanthemum pacificum*, purple coneflowers, and cinquefoil "Gold Drop" and "Yellow Queen." Space was left for new yellow and red daisy cushion mums and blue and yellow winter pansies for seasonal color.

Inside the picket fence two separate gardens have evolved: one in full sun and one in dappled shade because of the big elm. On the sunny side old perennials were moved or removed (such as the four Provence lavender that had grown large and woody). In their place fountain grass, delphinium, turtlehead, and centaurea were planted. An area around a sundial has been cleaned out to give more space and light for two clumps of Japanese anemone, an ornamental grass, several lilies, and veronica.

In the Garden

By Jenifer Bradford



On the shady side, several overgrown plants were removed to sunnier sites and new shade lovers were added: a bergenia, bleeding heart, and stinking hellebore (a recent gift, and no, this plant does not smell!) to complement the existing Lenten rose (hellebore) and Japanese anemones.

Behind the house five of the cut flower beds were dug up and the miniature daylilies and gladioli, liatris, and pyrethrum were separated and replanted. Spring bulbs disturbed from many of the flower beds have been collected and await replanting.

The original Norway maple succumbed to old age two years ago and was taken down. The stump remains as a base for a terracotta bird bath. However, not all the groundcovers are adapting to full sun, so the area has to be landscaped. The shade lovers will be moved elsewhere, the sweet woodruff discarded, and the remaining plants will be regrouped once the soil has been reworked.

As each area has been finished we have added new mulch and watered well.

Once all leaves have dropped from deciduous shrubs we intend to dig up several beautiful, but now overlarge, kerrias and a fan-tail willow and give them to a friend with a new piece of country property. Two small English hollies also need a new home. Perhaps a neighbor will get these? This will mean more room for a flourishing hybrid crape myrtle, a caryopteris, and an oakleaf hydrangea and many low perennials.

I hope that this personal illustration will show you that time necessitates change, old standards give way to new cultivars and hybrids, nature and weather bring growth and death, and one's taste evolves each passing year.

Everything that is old can be new again when we re-evaluate, revise, and re-work sections of the garden at season's end in preparation for a rebirth next spring! —

~~~ Garden tips for November ~~~

As I write these tips in early October we are enjoying an Indian Summer. Great weather for eating outdoors, strolling through the garden, or taking a scenic drive. Fortunately other days have been more seasonal, so the all-important fall cleanup is proceeding on track. November is usually an ideal month to put the garden to bed for the year in between morning fogs and evening chills. Some tips:

- Rake all leaves onto borders and beds to provide a winter mulch. They will compost before spring. Once all the deciduous leaves are down, add regular mulch to the beds for extra warmth.

- Wash all garden tools, dry, and wipe the steel heads with an oily cloth. Polish wooden handles. Sharpen blades. Hang on pegboard racks.
- Set lawn mowers on a high setting for the last cuts of the year.
- Drain lawn mowers after the last cut, disconnect spark plugs, and clean well. Do not store fuel in gas cans. Use up in your auto. Take mowers in for servicing and get blades sharpened.
- Store garden furniture and ornaments. Wash everything with warm, soapy water. Wrap

small ornaments well and pack into cardboard boxes. In our climate most materials will freeze and crack outdoors. Store in a dry garage, basement, or barn where temperatures will remain above 50 degrees.

- Clean up vegetable gardens. Pull up all summer debris, weeds, and perishing fruits and dig over the beds. Insect pests are looking for places to overwinter. Cleaning up the garden breaks up the life cycles of these insects.

- Weed ornamental borders. Cut back perennial stalks and remove dying foliage.
- Leave attractive seedheads and ornamental grasses for winter interest.

- Water evergreens, shrubs, and young trees if conditions are dry to prevent desiccation. Stop watering deciduous plants after their leaves drop, but continue watering evergreens until the ground freezes.

- Drain hoses and bring indoors. Pack away sprinklers.

- Winterize pools. Remove leaves and decomposing vegetation. Sink hardy water lilies. Put in a pool heater if you have fish.

- Plant for fall color. Consider sassafras, ser-

viceberry, Japanese maples, dogwood, pyracantha, callicarpa, and winterberry.

- Prepare new flower beds. Kill off the grass, pull up weeds, add leaves and organic matter, mix well and fork over the soil. Leave over the winter to freeze and thaw.

- Plant spring bulbs by the end of the month in odd-numbered clusters. Place them so that you can enjoy the flowers as you look out of your house windows or walk along paths, garden gates, or doorways.

- Protect broadleaf evergreens with an anti-transpirant such as Wilt-Pruf.

- Fertilize lawns in late fall.

- Review your garden once leaves are off trees and shrubs. Do you still have an interesting blend of shapes and sizes, textures, and colors? Do you have a good mix of evergreens and conifers? Do you need screening or new foundation plantings?

- Provide food and water for the birds.

Aim for Thanksgiving as your deadline for outdoor work to be done and enjoy the holiday season with a clear conscience. —

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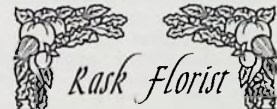
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Time to renew?
See page 2

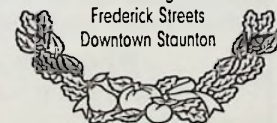


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Non-feathered bluebird community presents awards

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — The bluebird of happiness has come home to stay right here in Augusta County. Recently the folks of the Augusta Bird Club gathered to honor those who had participated in the inaugural year of the club's Cavity Nester Project.

Loss of habitat and competition from foreign species of birds have combined to put many of our country's cavity nesters in peril. Although the bluebird is the most famous of these birds, cavity nesters also include woodpeckers, nuthatches, chickadees, some warblers, kestrels, some ducks, flycatchers, owls, and swallows.

Mary Penn, who coordinated the club's project in its first year, noted that two workshops were held in the spring to build houses. Her husband, Bill Sorzano, built boxes and helped install them. The statistics tell the story of the club's success: there were 916 boxes up and watched by 134 monitors and 1,624 bluebirds and 204 tree swallows fledged.

When she volunteered to coordinate the project, Mary said she was unaware of the impressive history between the Augusta Bird



HYPES



SHEETS

Club and bluebirds — one that stretches back to 1972. The enthusiasm for the tiny russet, white and blue birds resonates through the club. Consider the fact that Winona Sheets had bluebird young in her box this year by April 4 — a new local record; or that Don Link monitored an amazing 98 boxes this year. A trail monitored by Marietta Beverage and Janet Doerr at the Frontier Museum was selected this year to be part of the transcontinental bluebird trail, only the second one in Virginia.

Choosing recipients for the inaugural Cavity Nesters Awards among so much hard work was naturally very difficult, but in the end two individuals were selected. The John Kiser Bluebird of the Year Award, given in memory of

the master bluebird box builder of all time, went to Wayne Hypes. He has maintained a trail for over 25 years and makes all of his own boxes. Sixty-six baby bluebirds fledged from his 22 boxes last year and 64 fledged this year. Wayne received his award from Julie Kutruff, the president of the Virginia Bluebird Society.

Kutruff turned around and presented Mary with a state award for being the County Coordinator of the Year because of her work with the cavity nesters project.

The other award handed out at the gathering was the YuLee Lamer Conservationist of the Year Award, presented in honor of the best known birder of the area. The award went to Tom Sheets and Blue Ridge Lumber for the donations of lumber given to the club to make boxes. The club sells the boxes and uses the money to send children to nature camp. Accepting the award for Sheets was his sister, Winona, an avid bluebird.

A special guest for the afternoon and the featured speaker was Doug LeVasseur, the president of the North American Bluebird Society. Doug waxed poetic about his favorite animal.

"I don't care if you are 8 or 88,



Mary Penn, center, who is in charge of the Augusta Bird Club's Cavity Nesters Program, looks at a state-of-the-art bluebird box with Doug LeVasseur, president of the North American Bluebird Society, and Julie Kutruff, president of the Virginia Bluebird Society.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

if you haven't discovered bluebirds you have one of the great joys of life ahead of you. I was 10 years old and looked in the cavity of a tree and had my moment of discovery," he said.

"The more you do for the bluebirds, the more you get back. There are really no other birds that you can work with and be so physically

close to. And they are a real conservation success story. We are now saying 'Welcome back to the bluebirds,' instead of 'Where have all the bluebirds gone?'"

If you are interested in learning more about the Augusta Bird Club, visit its website at: www.mbc.edu/abc/index.html or call the club president Crista Cabe at 886-5527. —

Resolutions

Continued from page 2

members included Charles Wonderley, president; Maxine Arey, vice president; and Mary Ruleman, women's chairman. Elected to three-year board terms were William Bashaw, Pastures; and Daniel Flora, Charles Curry and Harold Armstrong, at-large.

Outgoing directors honored included Willard Cline, Dennis Hewitt and David Simmons. —

Artist

Continued from page 4
home country, leaving behind this glimpse of the then rural area just outside Waynesboro.

The painting depicts an old farm — the brick house dating from before the Civil War. A barn and outbuildings are visible. The summer must have been hot and dry, judging from the few scraggly stalks of corn.

Forty-one years later it would be interesting to see how things have

changed. And changed they have.

A few years after the painting was made, the old house was destroyed in a fire. The barn and other buildings struggled on for a few years more, surviving the building of Interstate 64, but succumbing at last to time and lack of human attention.

As can be seen in the second photo, Interstate 64 now plows through the old cornfield. Trees and brush screen the foundations of the farm buildings. A glimpse

of them can still be had, if one looks carefully from the westbound lane of 64, just after passing under the Lyndhurst Road bridge.

Who would have guessed, in 1959, that things would change so much? Perhaps the artist did, giving her a reason to set up tripod and canvas in the summer grass to capture the scene across the road. This she accomplished very nicely, even with the interruptions of the small child from next door. —

Birds

Continued from page 17

departed, I looked down into the post to see four tiny eggs resting in a nest in the hollowed out top of the fence post. I was delighted to see the eggs and bluebirds — both evidence of what is possible when people care enough to make a difference on this earth.

And speaking of corn... WOW!!! What a corn crop we had this year. It's almost impossible to conceive

of two seasons so completely at opposites ends of the spectrum in comparing last summer to this summer. Last year we had the worst drought of the century. This year we had rain and plenty of it. And this year was the first year in several years when we could really see what good corn is.

We bought a corn chopper last January and took it to the field for the first time in September. It had taken six weeks to get a tractor retrofitted to operate the chopper only

to wonder then if the tractor we had retrofitted would have the power to pull the chopper through this year's mammoth corn. Last year the going was slow chopping corn because it was such a disaster it wouldn't even go through the corn chopper. This year it was a challenge to chop the corn simply because I was using a 90-horsepower tractor to harvest 120-horsepower corn. What a pleasant dilemma with which to be faced.

With this writing all the corn

has been chopped, the fall lambs have all arrived, hay has been cut three times, alfalfa four times, and pasture grasses are knee deep in places. The summer was wet and wonderful and not too hot either. Indian summer has been delightful, although things are getting a little dry. We could use some rain right about now. Being thankful this Thanksgiving won't be a stretch at all. But it never is anyway. We're thankful just to be here rambling around, and not thinking, down on the farm. —

Time to renew?

See page 2

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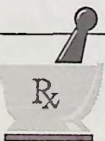
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Pondering pumpkins

Ever wonder about pumpkins?

Since my daughter has come along, she has given me pause to wonder about many things. Things that really are amazing and over the years I have come to take for granted. Like airplanes. She loves airplanes and insists on pointing to every one as it flies over our house. Every single time. And the moon. She looks for it every time we go outside. In the evening when she first spots it, she blows kisses to it.

So now she is onto pumpkins. Of all the harvest and Halloween images around, that is the one that she is most thrilled with. Big and orange and round, with happy faces carved into them, pumpkins must look friendly and warm to her — far from what their scary intentions really are. So, I began to wonder about pumpkins.

I found that pumpkin carving is relatively a new tradition in the realm of all things Halloween.

The origin of Halloween dates back 2000 years to Samhain, the Celtic celebration of the dead. A festival was held on Nov. 1, the first day of the Celtic New Year. The Celts believed that the souls of the dead returned on the evening before Nov. 1. These early events began as both a celebration of the

The origin of Halloween dates back 2000 years to Samhain, the Celtic celebration of the dead. A festival was held on Nov. 1, the first day of the Celtic New Year. The Celts believed that the souls of the dead returned on the evening before Nov. 1. These early events began as both a celebration of the harvest and an honoring of dead ancestors.

harvest and an honoring of dead ancestors.

Halloween spread throughout Europe in the seventh century. It began with "All Hallows Eve," the "Night of the Dead." It is immediately followed by "All Souls Day," a Christian holy day still celebrated today by some denominations.

The first lighted fruit was really carved out gourds and turnips. Sometime after the discovery of the New World, they were replaced by pumpkins, which were larger, easier to carve and were a native North American plant. European custom also included the lighting of pumpkins with scary faces to ward off evil spirits, especially spir-

its who roamed the streets and country during All Hallows Eve.

The Irish brought the tradition of carving turnips with them to America. They quickly discovered that pumpkins were easier to carve.

The harvesting and use of pumpkins was already well ensconced into the Native American culture when the settlers first came here. (In fact, Pumpkins originated in North America. Seeds from related plants found in Mexico date back over 7,000 years to 5500 B.C.)

Historians are not really sure if pumpkins were a part of the first Thanksgiving feast. But from that time forward, pumpkins have been and continue to be a tradition at the Thanksgiving feast.

Not only is it associated with the meal itself, but the pumpkin has adorned and decorated homes and communities in honor of this event for hundreds of years.

Although the pumpkin enjoys great popularity at this time of the year, and a interesting history, I was surprised to find how many pumpkin aficionados exist. There are pumpkin websites and homepages, with names like Jim's Giant Pumpkin Page, The Pumpkin Master, and the Pumpkin Nook. There is even a town that claims it is the

Down to Earth

By
Mollie Bryan



"Pumpkin capitol of the world" — Morton, Ill., which is where Libby has its plant.

Growing pumpkins seems a long and tricky task. Manuals I checked suggest planting inside toward the end of April, and transplanting around the middle of May, after you've gotten some leaves on your plants. All of the guides say that you cannot overwater your pumpkins. If you have given them enough water, sunlight, shade, and keep the bugs away, maturity comes in late September.

In the mean time, the next best thing to growing them yourself is to go to a pumpkin farm and pick out your own. We took Emma to the Pumpkin Patch in Stuarts Draft on a sunny Saturday morning. It has the added benefit of having animals to view — calves, chickens, pigs, sheep, a donkey, and the one that made the biggest impression on Emma — the turkey. We strolled through the fields with the mountains in clear view and pumpkins everywhere we looked. They even had a few scarecrows and bales of hay sitting around. What a perfect way to celebrate the season.

We helped Emma pick out a pumpkin; she then selected several small, brightly colored gourds, delighting in their textures. Seeing the joy on her chubby, 22-month old face, surrounded by pumpkins and gourds, made me realize that I must try to plant some pumpkins and gourds next year. Of course, by the time they reach harvest, Emma will most assuredly be on to something else. —

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Yesterday once more

Second Presbyterian: The Country Church in Town

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first installment of a two-part series about the history of Staunton's Second Presbyterian Church.

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — The Country Church in Town, as Second Presbyterian came to be called, is celebrating its 125th anniversary with a weekend of special events Nov. 11-12.

The anniversary theme, "Doorkeepers of the Millennium: Reflecting on the past; Preparing for the future," has also presented the congregation with an opportunity to learn more about its past. Special history exhibits have been created, older members of the congregation have gathered to share their memories, and the history of the church is being researched and written by Lot's Wife Publishing for a book which will be available next year. Anyone having photographs or historical information about the church can call the church office at 885-8159.

When the church was founded back in 1875, there were probably few who dared to predict the future of the fledgling congregation. The story began when 13 members of First Presbyterian asked the Lexington Presbytery if they could form their own church. Their motive for the separation was that Staunton's population had nearly doubled in the decade after the Civil War, making the city's only Presbyterian church too crowded.

The ringleader among the petitioners was Jedediah Hotchkiss, Stonewall Jackson's famous mapmaker and Staunton businessman. Two of Hotchkiss' family were also among the group as was Charles D. McCoy, the superintendent of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind.

The winding path that the con-

Schedule of events for the 125th anniversary celebration; the public is invited. Commemorative prints and Christmas ornaments are on sale, call 885-8159.

Saturday, Nov. 11

2-2:45, Historical room open

3-4 p.m., Organ recital featuring Robert Lent, David Shue, Robert Moody, Howard Hanson

4-5 p.m., refreshments, historical room open

Sunday, Nov. 12

10-10:45, historical room open

11 a.m., Worship service, Dr. Daniel S. Williams (current pastor) and Rev. Julius S. Garbett (former pastor)

Noon -- Luncheon

12:15-2 p.m. historical room open.

gregation has taken since its request was granted has been interesting. Second Church, as the group came to be called, has met in a school, in the town hall, and in a movie theater and has had three buildings in 125 years.

The members soon became known as the Country church in Town because they were the small, home-town church that newcomers from the countryside began attending. Hotchkiss himself had lived in the county before the war. The congregational membership roll stretched from Staunton out into the farmland along every major road. Some country folks living as many as 10 miles outside the city limits came into town to worship.

The success of the church was phenomenal, increasing by about 300 persons every 25 years. In 1900 there were 358 members, in 1925 there were 658, and in 1950 there were 916 members.

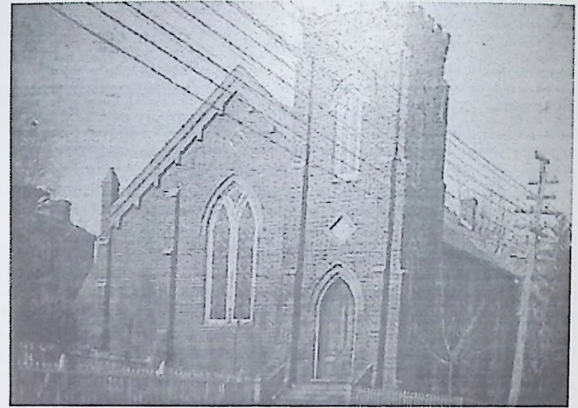
When you only have 13 members, everyone has to pitch in which is exactly what happened in late 1875. The new congregation hired an Irish preacher, McDuff Simpson for \$700 per year. The first session met in early January at the Virginia

School for the Deaf and the Blind, where the church's first elder, McCoy, was superintendent. William Hudson and Henry Walker were at the meeting as well, having been ordained as the church's first deacons. Walker was also church treasurer.

Although a church had been formed, it had no place to call home. For the first year of its existence, Second Presbyterian met in the old town hall (now the Masonic building) on Beverley Street. Despite being in existence only a few months by Christmas, a Sunday school had already been established and its 40 members had a Christmas tree in 1875. They also had an organ purchased with a \$30 donation.

In 1876 the congregation purchased, for \$3,000, the lot on the corner of Frederick and Lewis where the present church stands. By the end of the year, the growing congregation had a red brick structure in which to worship.

Although Second Church was clearly growing in its first decade, its people were called upon for some large expenses including the minister's salary, the purchase of



Second Presbyterian Church's first structure, located on the corner of Lewis and Frederick streets, was built in 1876. A new structure was built in 1901 to accommodate the increasing number of members in the growing church's congregation.

the town lot and the construction of a church. When the original members broke away from First Presbyterian in 1875, there were some hard feelings in the original church. By 1885, however, those old wounds had healed and First Presbyterian came through with financial assistance to help pay the minister's salary until Second Church could stand alone.

The women at Second Church were also pitching in to help with the debt. May 1885 is when the Ladies Aid Society was formed with 15 charter members. Their fund-raising activities included a Strawberry Festival. The first president of the society was Mrs. Charles Holt.

During those early years, the church saw a succession of ministers. Simpson stayed two years, James Booker was there seven years, Herbert Hawes remained six years, William Cumming stayed

four years, and John Wells remained five years.

Despite the relative instability in ministers, the church continued to grow. Eventually Hotchkiss was named Sunday school superintendent. Before the war, he had operated two boys' schools in Augusta County. It was his devotion to the Sunday school that eventually spelled his demise. When he found himself in Richmond on a Saturday, he knew he must find transportation back to Staunton for Sunday. Unfortunately he was forced to take a freight train rather than a passenger train and the severe jolting made him so seriously ill that

See HOTCHKISS, page 9



Members of Second Presbyterian Church hold an impromptu Fourth of July parade while on retreat at Massanetta Springs near Harrisonburg. The photo was taken in July 1929.

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Valley Pike to be topic of ACHS meeting

At one time, the stretch of U.S. 11 that ran from Winchester to Staunton was not only the main road in the Shenandoah Valley, but was considered by many to be the best road in the entire South. Mary Baldwin history professor Ken Keller will speak on the theme "The Best Road in the South: The Valley Turnpike, 1834-1918" at the Nov. 19 meeting of the Augusta County Historical Society. The 3 p.m. meeting will be held at Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church, which is alongside the Valley Pike at Fort Defiance.

Dr. Keller's illustrated lecture will discuss how the Pike began and what the Pike meant to Virginians in the Valley. At first, the Pike was established by a semi-private corporation to provide easier access to the Potomac for Valley products, especially Valley wheat, and to open Valley markets to products from Philadelphia and Baltimore. Dr. Keller will describe how the Pike was

WHAT: ACHS Fall Meeting

WHEN: Sunday, Nov. 19, 3 p.m.

WHERE:

**Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church
Fort Defiance**

PROGRAM:

The Valley Pike, 1834-1918 by Dr. Ken Keller

built as a macadamized road for the extensive wagon trade on the Valley's Great Wagon Road.

Even as the Pike was being built, it became an object of political contention, as different groups championed a road that was straight rather than gently sloping. Once the Pike was built, it began to change the landscape of the Valley near it, as towns along its route began to grow around the road.

With the coming of the railroad in the 1830s and 1840s, farmers turned to the "iron horse" and the turnpike became primarily a local

road for local travel. The Civil War also damaged the Pike as Stonewall Jackson hauled locomotives over it on at least two occasions. However, the role of the Pike changed again with the coming of the automobile. Its high speed tore up the macadam, and motorists became frustrated at the 19 toll gates that slowed their progress along the route.

Development of the automobile and its spread to the Valley around 1905 led to a movement for better roads, a state highway system, and transfer of

the Pike to state jurisdiction.

Tourists from the North began to use the Pike, and garages, tourist homes, service stations, and tourist attractions began to appear along the Pike. Finally in 1918, when Harry F. Byrd was president of the corporation that ran the turnpike, the state assumed control of the Valley Pike and the toll-gates came down.

During Woodrow Wilson's presidency, the Commonwealth made the Pike part of an extensive network of highways, and with the passage of the first federal law to provide federal aid to the states for good roads, the Pike was on its way to becoming U.S. 11.

For information about the fall meeting, which is free and open to the public, call the ACHS office at 540/248-4151. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. until noon. If you call at other times, please leave a message on the answering machine and your call will be returned. —

Stuart Chapter bestows heritage awards

By NANCY GUM

The recently reactivated J.E.B. Stuart Chapter 156, UDC has bestowed eight Crosses of Military Service and two National Defense Medals. These are the most prized awards bestowed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy on veterans with Confederate heritage who have served honorably in time of War or Conflict.

Eight of the recipients were lineal descendants of Joseph Vincent Lively, who served in Lowry's Battery of Virginia Artillery from 1861 to 1865. World War II Cross of Military Service recipients were James Paul Bennett, Fishersville and Richard O. Bennett, Staunton. Vietnam Conflict Crosses of Military Service were bestowed upon Robert G. Bennett, Jr., Verona, and Fred A. Bennett, Elkton. Harold Wayne Bennett, Harrisonburg, and Clay Everett Bennett, Richmond, received National Defense Medals for the Vietnam Conflict.

Posthumous World War II Crosses of Military Service awards were accepted by Ada Bennett, widow of Everett Bennett, and Mary Frances Bennett, widow of Robert G. Bennett Sr.

On behalf of her deceased uncles, Mrs. Irving F. Painter accepted posthumous World War II Crosses of Military Service Awards for Henry Elwood Coffey and Charles Maywood Coffey whose Confederate ancestor was James W. Harris, a corporal in Co. H, 5th Virginia Infantry.

Division President Susan Whitacre and Division Recorder of Military Service Awards Rebecca Ferguson, conducted the bestowal ceremony assisted by Marie Ham, J.E.B. Stuart Chapter Recorder of Military Service Awards.

The two members of J.E.B. Stuart Chapter who applied for these Awards were Gertrude Bennett and Phyllis Painter, both of Staunton. Each Military Service Award costs \$28.

An address, "On Things Confederate," was given by Maryland author, Gregory Clemmer, who is a native of Augusta County. —

Hotchkiss

Continued from page 8

he was sent back Richmond for surgery. In late December he again tried to make his way back to Staunton, this time for a Sunday school Christmas pageant. He soon fell ill and died on Jan. 17, 1899.

It was during those same years that several Sunday school outposts were established by Second Church. The most successful was called Endeavor Chapel. It was located on Sears Hill and was organized by the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor in 1895. The outpost was organized into a church, known as Third Presbyterian, in November 1897. Twenty-eight members of Second Church were dismissed to become members of Third church and a minister was hired. Although there appears to be a period of time from

1901 to 1913 when this new church was inactive, this outreach eventually became what is now known as Third Presbyterian through the help and blessings of Second Church.

Other Sunday school outposts were located at Two-Mile Hill, or Englewood Sunday School, Greenville Road and Folly Mills. The Greenville Road school, which operated in an old store building, bused children from Frank's Mill and Buffalo Gap until at least the 1930s.

During the early 20th century, much of the growth of the church was probably due to the longevity of William Scott who stayed as minister for 18 years. He had only arrived from Texas a few months before the session decided to build a new church to accommodate its growing congregation and Sunday

school. The cost of the new structure, built in late 1901, was \$15,000. In the true spirit of hard work, the Ladies Aid Society raised \$2,500 toward furnishing the church, and the Church Workers Society raised money for the organ. In 1915 an annex was added to the building to house the large Sunday school.

Scott's health eventually failed. He left in 1919 and died shortly thereafter. The William N. Scott Memorial Fund was established in his memory to be used to loan money for the education of ministers and religious workers. Scott was followed by the Rev. Charles Lawrence who served for two years. Watson E. Davis then led the church from October 1923 until October 1926. Under him the women were reorganized into

the Woman's Auxiliary and a men's organization was established. The first Daily Vacation Bible School was also held in the summer of 1923.

It was during Davis' tenure that the church celebrated its 50th birthday. It had grown and prospered and established itself as an important part of the Presbyterian community both in town and in the country. When Davis resigned in late 1926, nobody in the congregation knew what was in store, but the man who soon walked into their lives proved to be an important one. —

Next month: Augusta Country will introduce readers to the Rev. Ray Lawrence St. Clair and will tell what happened when the church under his leadership was nearly destroyed by fire and then rebuilt.



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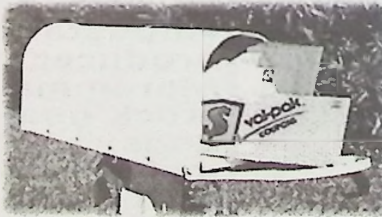
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Beware all ye thinkers — shoo, skit, skidaddle

Down on the farm we're not thinking. We've all but given up on it. It just hurts too much. And it seems to get us in trouble. So as I write this column, I'm not going to think about too much of any one thing in particular. The train of thought has pulled out of the station and we missed the last, "AIIIIIIII abooooooooaaaaaarrd!!" In other words, I'm about to ramble. If you're not in a ramblin' mood, you better skit and skidaddle. If you're looking for something cogent and thought provoking, you won't find it here. So, shoo. Go away. Get out of here. But for all you ramblers, come on along.

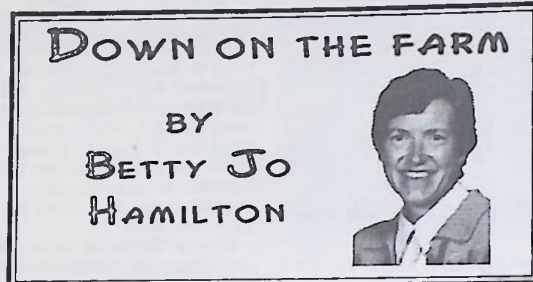
First of all, she's gone. Cow No. 92 has left the building once again. You will recall in the July 2000 issue of *Augusta Country* that I alerted readers to the wanderings of our bovine Big Foot. The cow escaped from rented pasture along the Middlebrook Road and took to wandering about people's hayfields and yards. Her capture was made all the more difficult by the fact that the cow had adopted a take-no-prisoners attitude in resisting her return to polite bovine society.

Violent threats against the cow's existence were bandied. However, she was eventually coaxed into a pasture where there were some cows with whom she seemed very content to abide. Therein began what became about once weekly visits to this property — not ours — for visits with the cattle — also not ours — to try and woo back our errant bovine.

Sweet talk and sweet hay were the prescribed treatment for winning back the cow's confidence. On each of our visits we would take along a couple bales of tasty alfalfa hay and dole it out off the back of the truck. The cattle would come up to the pickup, more than happy to collect the treat. The errant cow resolved to join the group and we could stand within just a few feet of her without causing her undue alarm. We would talk to her a little bit, sort of coaxing her down from her free-ranging high of just a month or so before.

After several weeks of the sweet hay, sweet talk treatment and once we'd made friends with all the other cows in the pasture too, we determined to have a go at bringing the cow — No. 92 — home. My father went to the farm and brought the cattle into a barn lot, coaxing them in with some of the succulent sweet hay. No. 92, another cow and a bull remained in the barn lot once the gate was closed. We went back with the trailer to retrieve our errant cow. While there was a good bit of thrashing about by No. 92, the other cow and the bull — which was exuding way too much testosterone that day — we managed to get No. 92 loaded on the trailer and secured for the ride home.

She, perhaps, wasn't what you might call "amenable" to the whole



process, but we did manage it. We trailered her home and pulled the trailer out to the field where her former pasture mates were. No. 92 bounced off the trailer and into the welcoming knolls of her home grasslands; the other cows greeted her with some butting and pushing and they all trotted off into the sunset.

In the ensuing weeks I noticed No. 92 out in the pasture from time to time. She seemed all right, as much as a cow can seem all right, I suppose. I had the occasion from time to time to point her out in her

reunited status with the rest of the herd to some of her former naysayers. You may recall there were some people who wanted to shoot her for her rampaging ways. There were a number of votes to "TAKE HER TO TOWN!!!!" said in the same tone as one might shout, "KILL THE BEAST!!!" when confronted with a truly gross and disfigured character from a children's fairy tale.

My father and I were just content to have No. 92 home and not wreaking havoc over the countryside. We reckoned she would be

having a calf soon and this might give her reason to re-assess her life on planet earth. I had taken umbrage at people's keen dislike to the cow and her behavior. There were extenuating circumstances after all. She had been mistakenly separated from her calf when cows were moved to pasture in the late winter and, well, the whole episode — my fault entirely — kind of made the cow berserk.

I felt we had managed an even-handed solution to the whole Cow No. 92 situation. I was happy to be ready to report to *Augusta Country* readers — many of whom have been kind enough to ask about the cow since the article ran in July — that the cow had been safely returned home and was once again leading a productive life here down on the farm. A photo, I thought, of Cow No. 92, content in her native pasture, lolling blissfully among the cowherd, would be a great addition to this issue of *Augusta Country*.

So I went with 35 millimeter in hand last week to snap the photo of Cow No. 92. One pass through

the cowherd yielded no sighting of the cow. Two passes through the cowherd yielded no sighting of the cow. "Well, I'm just not paying attention," I thought. So the third time, driving from one cow to the next to the next, I looked for No. 92. I don't need to see her eartag to verify that she is No. 92. I recognize her on sight without that identification. But yet, I could find no Cow No. 92. I looked high and low, from one pasture corner to the next, in all of the little cow nook and crannies where they like to hide and came up empty handed and photoless. I visited two neighbors' pastures and looked high and low there as well, and no Cow No. 92 did I find.

We don't keep an inventory of our cows. The fact that I even know there is a Cow No. 92 in the herd is only because she has behaved in such a manner that had her flying above our radar so there was reason for us to detect her. We keep track of our cattle mostly by count and not by roll call. So under ordinary circumstances I wouldn't even know there was a Cow No. 92 in the herd unless I went looking for her for a specific reason. The eartag numbers are basically just a convenience.

If I go looking for a particular cow, I know which one I'm looking for by the way she looks. It doesn't matter if there are six solid black cows in the herd or four black-white face cows in the herd, or seven speckled face cows in the herd, each one is distinct and I don't need to see an eartag number in order to verify a cow's identity.

The numbers come in handy when I have to ask someone who is not familiar with the cows to go look at a particular cow in the herd. Or if I've seen a cow that needs to be checked at calving time, I make note of the eartag number and remind my father to "check No. 186" when he feeds the cattle daily. Then I ask him, "Did you check No. 186?" and he says he couldn't see

See COWS, page 11



Cow No. 92, where are you? The errant bovine Big Foot was returned home in late August. Although she was seen a number

of times following her return, she has since vanished without a trace. Perhaps she was abducted by aliens.

Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton

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•COWS

Continued from page 10

the cartag numbers but he didn't see anything wrong. Which means maybe there wasn't anything wrong or maybe No. 186 was down over the hill or off in a corner and wasn't anywhere she could have been seen to be checked anyway. So the cartag numbers don't mean much around here.

Having noted the cow's disappearance I apprised my father of the situation. "Wonder where she is?" he said. I speculated perhaps she got into the corn field or the woods, had her calf and is now hiding. In the 10 days since her disappearance was noted, my father has asked me almost daily, "Have you seen anything of that cow?" as if she might drop by my house one morning to chat over a cup of coffee and an alfalfa tart about where she's been to these many days. "No, I haven't seen the cow," is my sorrowful response.

If you are a neighboring property owner of ours and an extra cow has turned up on your farm, give us a call. We're pining for our lost cow. Cow No. 92, where are you? If you spot the cow, I suggest that you not approach her. She is very tolerant of pickups but a little leery of people on foot. She is responsive to sweet talk and sweet hay. We just want her safely home. We haven't received any ransom notes, so I don't think Cow No. 92 is being held hostage by any subversive political action groups. Maybe she's off on a trip. She hadn't had a calf when I last saw her, but it's very possible that she might have one by now. Maybe hunters will find her. Hunters seem to find everything when they hit the woods.

In the July 1999 issue of *Augusta*

Country I reported to you about the arrival of a set of triplet calves down on the farm. It was startling for us to find that a cow had delivered triplets on her own March 17, 1999 and was taking care of them pretty well to boot. We brought the cow and her calves — two bulls and a heifer — in and I supplemented the calves with bottles to help the cow along with her herd.

We kept the cow and the triplets in the front meadow through the summer and fall. The cow needed some extra feed to help her take care of the calves. And the calves needed to get started on some good feed themselves, in addition to the supplemental bottle feedings, as soon as they began to eat and digest feed. The calves were weaned from the cow early last winter and the cow was returned to the herd.

I wasn't surprised when the cow didn't deliver a calf this past spring. Because she had been held in the meadow through the summer and fall, she had not been with the bull to be bred back. Neither was I very surprised to see her deliver a calf in September, indicating that she had gotten bred almost as soon as she had been returned to the herd in midwinter. She just had one calf this time around. She looked relieved. Her calf this year is a nice looking heifer, one I hope to use as a replacement if all goes well. The cow is quite the milker and she knows how to take care of her calf.

A cow delivering triplet calves would be enough of an accomplishment to earn her a spot in our Stall of Fame. Multiple birth calves sometimes never amount to much in the long run. They're usually runts to begin with and struggle all along the way. But these triplet calves made their mother proud. They were sold as yearlings in a state-graded sale in mid-October. One weighed 680 pounds, one weighed 755 pounds, and one weighed 855 pounds for a combined weight of 2,290 pounds. How's that for a yearling weight? Bet you haven't seen many calves post a yearling weight in excess of a ton. Put that in your EPD and smoke it.

While I'm thinking about it, (oops, I mean, while I'm NOT thinking about it) I want to thank students at Beverley Manor Middle School for wishing me Happy

Farmer's Day. I don't know the exact date of Farmer's Day. In fact, I didn't even know there was such an observance. But I have received two hand-made greeting cards made by students wishing me well.

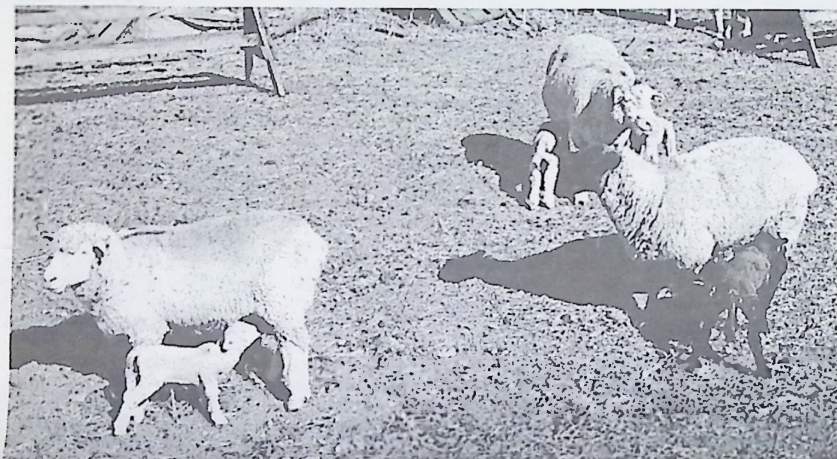
One card says, "Thanks for producing all of the good food. We couldn't live without you. You do a lot of hard work. Thanks a bunch." The card has a drawing of a sheep and a rabbit and the sun with some balloons on the front. The other card says, "I know you try your hardest, doing what you do, I want to tell you how much I appreciate it. Thank you for the

ing some time learning what it means to be a farmer. I can state with some certainty that I've never been simply thanked for being a farmer. And it gave me a good feeling -- kind of like the way you feel when you put on clean clothes that are still warm from being in the dryer.

If you haven't read it yet in Betty Gatewood's story on page 15, I want to make sure you pick up on the little tidbit she provides about Staunton's YuLee Lerner. YuLee is the doyenne of the Augusta County Bird Club. If it has feathers and chirps in Augusta

therefore they need lots of golf clubs for left-handed players. I learned this tidbit of completely useless trivia while watching a golf match on TV to see if I could hear any misplaced bird songs. I didn't hear any bird songs at all. YuLee, hats off to you for being able to endure the mindless drivel of the sports commentators in order to uncover the misplaced bird song conspiracy.

That YuLee, she's a pistol. Seems that as YuLee watched golf matches on TV she became amazed at how the bird songs lacked variation, how they sang in



It's been a busy fall down on the farm. The corn is chopped, the hay has been cut three times, the alfalfa four times and another lamb crop is on the ground.

Food. I bless the hands that PRODUCE the food? Inside this card is a drawing of the sun with its rays beaming down on the ground encouraging small sprouts from the soil. The front of the card is adorned with, according to my best artistic judgment, what must be a shower of alfalfa leaves cascading down across it. The backs of the cards say, "This is a special project created by the 6th grade AgriScience students in Mrs. Shomo's class at Beverley Manor Middle School."

I thank the BMMS sixth graders, particularly Kimberly Badgley and Christina Bommer, for remembering the farmers. I don't get much personal mail -- lots of bills, catalogs and other junk mail -- so the students' greeting cards really put a button on my day when I received them. It's reassuring to know there are students in our schools spend-

County, YuLee has seen it, heard it, counted it and recorded it. Seems that YuLee has been researching misplaced bird songs heard on televised golf matches.

Now, in the first place, who watches golf on TV? In the second place, who watches golf on TV with the volume turned up? In the third place, who watches golf on TV with the volume turned up and is able to hear birds chirping in the background over the non-sensical yakking of the sports commentators calling the shots?

By the way, did you know that only eight percent of golf clubs manufactured in the United States are made for left-handed players? But that in Canada, more than 30 percent of golf clubs manufactured are made for left-handed golfers. Why? Because they play so much hockey in Canada that they train themselves to be left-handed, so

predictable sequences and how they were out of place geographically. Asking some rather pointed questions of other golf/birders in the county, YuLee found she wasn't the only one to question the authenticity of bird songs as aired in televised golf matches. Through some not-so-subtle inquiries on YuLee's part and articles in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* it has been revealed that bird songs heard in televised golf matches are recordings being played to increase the ambiance of the game. And it was Staunton's own YuLee Lerner who blew the cover off the whole misplaced bird songs in televised golf matches conspiracy. You go, girl! I say, crank up the bird songs and seal the beaks of the sports commentators. Better yet, give YuLee the microphone and let her tell us about which bird is chirping

See *GOLF*, page 17

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20th annual Art for Gifts boasts all Virginia artists

The Staunton Augusta Art Center has revamped its annual holiday show. In its 20th year, Art for Gifts will feature fine art and crafts from select Virginia artists. Unlike years past, this year's show is completely invitational, ensuring a mix of high quality gift items.

"The idea behind Art for Gifts has always been to encourage folks to give their loved ones a treasure at holiday time," says Margo McGirr, SAAC executive director. "By hand-picking the artists and choosing work exclusively by Virginians, we hope to make that task a little easier."

Artists and craftspeople from across the state have accepted the invitation to participate. Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional work in styles ranging from fine to funky will pepper the walls, display tables, and jewelry cases at the Art Center. Paintings, lamps, ornaments, bowls, blown glass, felted

hats, woolly children's winter wear, and art depicting sites of local interest are just a few of the items the art center staff will be preparing for display in the weeks to come. Local artists such as Craig Holt, Phil Nolley, Kyle Leister, Barbara Coyle Holt, and Paul Borzelleca will exhibit as well as more than 45 artists and artisans from around the state. Every piece on the floor will be "made in Virginia."

"I think this show is a wonderful opportunity for the Art Center to highlight the work of Virginia artists," says McGirr. "I'm grateful to the art community for being so supportive. We've been completely delighted by the artists' willingness to participate and we're not the only ones who are excited. Everyone to whom I've mentioned the show has had an 'I-can't-wait' response to the changes we've made. We want the gallery to feel magical this year and thanks to the

talent on board, it will be."

The gallery is getting a new look for the season as well. Swathed in white lights and tulle and sporting not one but three trees, the atmosphere is sure to be festive in the gallery located adjacent to Gypsy Hill Park's main entrance on Churchville Avenue. Volunteers from the United Way's Make a Difference Day Program are scheduled to begin helping prepare the gallery at the end of October. Christmas trees are arriving the first of November and the opening night party is scheduled for Nov. 9 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Art Center invites everyone to ring in the holidays with a cup of good cheer and some holiday shopping. For information, contact the Staunton Augusta Art Center at 540/885-2028.

Art for Gifts is sponsored by Donald V. Steger Jr. C.P.A. and by the Virginia Commission for the Arts. —

New Hope FCE hears about herbs

The New Hope FCE Club held its September meeting at the Verona Extension Office. Sarah Whitmore, Extension agent, CFCS, of Rockingham county, gave a program on "Using Herbs for medicine." Herbal remedies are dietary supplements which include vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals and amino acids.

People need to be very careful when taking herbs along with drugs and should check with a physician before using herbs. Herbs that can have adverse affects with certain drugs are Echinacea, Ephedra, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, licorice, St. John's wort and valerian. Ms. Whitmore gave handouts on

Herbal Resources, how to read labels, questions to ask oneself before taking herbs and do's and don'ts of herbal medication.

During the business meeting, enrollment forms were completed for next year. Final plans were made for Achievement Day in November. Members were reminded of West Central Region Meeting at Salem Civic Center on Oct. 25. A report was given on the three-day state conference at Ingleside Resort in September.

The study of the month was Healing Springs on U.S. 220 south of Hot Springs in Bath County and Brunswick Inn Lithia Springs located in Waynesboro at 13th Street

and Wayne Avenue. Healing Springs development started in 1850 and the hotel is called the Cascades Inn today. During the Civil War it was used as a Confederate hospital. Newell Brothers built a hotel called Brunswick Hotel at Lithia Springs in 1891. Later the name was changed to Ford's Hotel and finally to Brunswick Inn. Du Pont Chemical Co. leased the building from 1929-1932 to house employees who were building a local chemical plant. The inn was closed in 1937, and now all traces of the hotel and springs are gone.

For information about FCE, call Nellie Flora at 540/363-5204. —

S.O.C.C. presents prizes

GREENVILLE — Jean and Lee Taylor and Sandy Taylor took home the top prizes in the raffle held by the Save Our County Committee, Inc. at its October meeting.

S.O.C.C. is a group of more than 300 Augusta County citizens and supporters working to preserve the rural heritage and small town character of Augusta County.

Jean and Lee Taylor won a clock made by McKinley crafts-

man Irvin Rosen. Sandy Taylor won a framed print donated by Mary Ann Vessey.

A number of others prizes donated by S.O.C.C. supporters were also given away. They included: a Lisa Geiman print won by Patty Mawyer, a Robin and Linda Williams CD won by E.J. Taztch, Virginia bicycling books won by Evelyn Driver and dinner for two at the Edelweiss Restaurant won by

Cathy Ward. Becky Thibodeaux and Keely Ramsey each won a set of porcelain Christmas ornaments, while Warren Miller, Bonny Strassler, Sandy Taylor, Patty Benson, and Sandy Foxx all won signed prints by artist Joe Nutt.

S.O.C.C. meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 in the Riverheads Elementary School cafeteria. For information about S.O.C.C. call 540/377-6390. —

New Woodrow Wilson traveling exhibit comes home to Staunton

STAUNTON — Interactive CD-ROMs. Computer touchtone technology. Video. Hearing the voice of President Woodrow Wilson over audiosticks. All are part of the experience of a new traveling exhibit from the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace. The exhibit, "Hinge to the 20th Century," which opened Sept. 28, proves that museum exhibits are not exactly what they used to be. "The exhibit is nontraditional in its use of technology and by the fact that we are exploring his (Wilson's) legacies as well as the components of his character," says Patrick Clarke, executive director, Woodrow Wilson Birthplace. "This is a very exciting exhibit. It's the first time there has ever been an object-based traveling exhibit on President Woodrow Wilson." And it's also the first time that two major Wilson collections have come together for an exhibit — the Birthplace and the Woodrow Wilson House in Washington, D.C. After its opening stint in Richmond at the Virginia Historical Society, the exhibit went on to the Wilson House.

After displaying in the state's capital, then the nation's capital, the exhibit is now home in Staunton.

"One of the most common remarks we get from visitors at the Birthplace is they are surprised to learn that Woodrow Wilson was a Southerner," says Clarke. "In the exhibit, we take a close look at Wilson the Southerner and how that helped to shape his character."

In fact, "Wilson the Southerner" is one of the three categories of the exhibit, the other two are "Wilson the Domestic Reformer," and "Wilson the Inter-

national Leader." Each part of the exhibit displays interesting artifacts, such as the big-red kangaroo coat that Wilson wore and the walking stick that he carried bearing one of his favorite limericks:

"As a beauty, I am not a star, there are others more handsome, by far. But my face, I don't mind it, for I am behind it, the people in front get the jar."

Some of the other objects include campaign buttons and posters, sheet music, and family memorabilia, such as a lithograph of Pocahontas that belonged to his second wife, Edith, who was a descendant. The exhibit will remain in Staunton through Wilson's birthday celebration Dec. 28. The birthplace will then make part of it available, along with the CD-ROM, to schools throughout the state of Virginia. Schools will only bear the costs for shipping.

The cost of the exhibit was underwritten by The Commonwealth of Virginia, The Thomas F. Jefferson Memorial, The Friendship Fund, The Jessie Ball duPont Fund, and Media General.

Located in the heart of Gospel Hill District, one of Staunton's five National Historic Districts, the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace is one of the few presidential birthplaces open to the public. The Woodrow Wilson Birthplace Foundation exists to preserve the Presbyterian manse where Woodrow Wilson was born, and to increase awareness and understanding of the life, principles, and accomplishments of the 28th President of the United States. For more information, contact Clarke at 540/885-0897. —



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Notes from the road

In this issue, *Augusta Country* staff writer Nancy Sorrells take us on a journey to Nashville, Tenn., home of the Grand Ole Opry. But you won't find any country-western crooners here. Just a whole lot of Jacksonian democracy.

'Old Hickory' made name for common man in politics

By NANCY SORRELLS

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Modern political campaign tactics that include finger-pointing, name-calling and mudslinging might outrage most Americans, but a recent trip to Nashville, Tenn. reminded me all this is nothing new to the presidential race.

The folks at The Hermitage, home of the seventh U.S. President Andrew Jackson, have set up the Campaign Headquarters of 1828 in the museum adjacent to the plantation house. The exhibit, which runs through November explains how that election year marked a turning point in U.S. history. It was the birth of the modern presidential campaign — and 1828 featured one of the dirtiest in history — as well as the beginning of democracy for the common man.

Unlike his predecessors to the nation's highest office, Jackson was a self-made man. He was born in poverty to a Scotch-Irish immigrant couple in the backwoods of

South Carolina. His schooling was minimal and by the time he was 14 he had fought in the American Revolution, been captured and wounded, had survived smallpox, and was an orphan.

After the war, Jackson began reading for the law and passed the bar in 1787. Known more for his rough and wild behavior than his studiousness, Jackson nonetheless received an appointment as public prosecutor for North Carolina's Western District and moved to the tiny hamlet of Nashville in 1788.

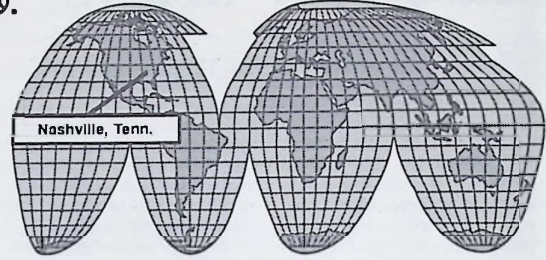
There he met and fell in love with Rachel Donelson who was in the process of obtaining a divorce. Once her divorce was secured, the backwoods lawyer married his sweetheart. Unfortunately, the couple discovered that the divorce was not final and so had to "remarry" to make things legal. This blunder of paperwork would come back to haunt Rachel and Andrew years later during the 1828 presidential campaign.



ANDREW JACKSON

Jackson continued to make the most of opportunity and began farming (growing cotton) while rising in the political world. He helped Tennessee secure statehood and then was elected as the new state's first Congressional representative. In 1802 he was elected major general of the Tennessee militia in what turned out to be the most important turning point in his career.

Sixteen years after arriving in Nashville, he purchased the Hermitage. By then he had gained a reputation as a strong-willed man, proud (sometimes to a fault), with a love of horse racing and a quick, sometimes violent, temper. Above all else, though, it was his work with the Tennessee militia that created his public persona. Although he had no formal military training, he proved himself a natural military man. As soon as he heard that the U.S. had declared war on Brit-



ain in 1812 he volunteered the Tennessee militia. He and his 1,500 men were deployed to New Orleans and then dismissed without ever receiving pay or being put into action.

Jackson was outraged at this treatment of his men and he refused to disband them, instead marching them as a unit through 500 miles of grueling wilderness. It was here that he won the loyalty of the common foot soldier, ordering the officers' horses to be used to transport the sick men. Jackson himself marched the entire way on foot alongside the common soldier, causing the men to comment that he was as tough as Tennessee hickory. The nickname "Old Hickory" would carry him to the White House.

A dispute that had its roots in the wilderness march caused Jackson to be involved in a street brawl back in Nashville in which he was killed and shot. When news of an Indian uprising in what is now Alabama caused Jackson to regroup his militia, he gathered his forces despite the fact that he was still weak from the brawl. In a series of brutal attacks he crushed the Indian uprising and eased the fears of Americans living on the frontier. His victories cemented his reputation as a military leader and opened up western settlement opportunities.

Jackson so impressed authorities in Washington that they commissioned him a major general in the U.S. Army and put him in command of the defense of New Orleans against the British. Rather than going straight to New Orleans, Jackson strengthened defenses at

Mobile, made an unauthorized invasion of Florida to keep the Spanish from siding with the British, then marched a ragtag military force to New Orleans. There he recruited help from local pirates and men in the free black community, and placed the city under martial law — the only time in American history that a U.S. general has taken such action.

He positioned his army behind some crude earthworks and bales of cotton and waited for the 8,000 Redcoats to march forward in formation. The result was a resounding American victory. Jackson's men were able to pick off the British at will and more than 2,000 British fell. The Americans had 20 casualties and only 13 deaths.

The January 1815 victory at the Battle of New Orleans, despite coming after the official end of the War of 1812, sent a strong message to Europe that the North American continent was for American, not European, expansion. It also reaffirmed American independence, gave the new country something to be proud of, and made Old Hickory an instant American hero.

Jackson knew full well that he was following a path similar to an earlier American hero, George Washington, and he began to cultivate his image: attending banquets, having his portrait painted, and commissioning a biography. Soon he was called into more military action, cleaning up problems with the Native Americans, and helping run the Spanish out of Florida. However legally questionable many of his activities were, his popularity soared with the American people who saw him as protecting their rights and lives on the restless borders of the country.

Back home in Nashville, Jackson began to improve his plantation to a scale appropriate to a national hero. He and Rachel had lived in a log house but in 1819 he had a brick Federal style house built. It is the same house which can be visited today. In 1824 he "allowed" a group of powerful Tennessee politicians to nominate him for president. He won the popular

See JACKSON, page 17

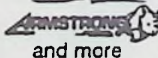
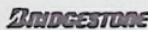
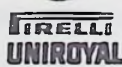
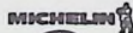
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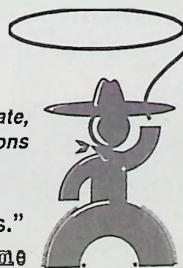
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Schoolhouse News

State Fair draws FCCLA members

By ALESHA LAYMAN

RICHMOND — Fifty-five members of Riverheads High School Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) had an action-packed day at the Virginia State Fair Sept. 22. The day began with a leadership activity conducted by the state officers. With the theme "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" Contestants were selected from the 2,000 member youth audience. After the elimination process, one member remained and successfully answered all questions. Questions and segments between play related to state and national FCCLA programs and upcoming events.

Following the leadership activity, fair participants completed a scavenger hunt, stressing SOL topics such as: technology, regions of the state, craftsmen from past history, transportation, and resources of the state. To obtain correct answers the

members interacted with fair displays, exhibits, and fair personnel.

Special emphasis was given to the state FCCLA exhibit. The booth called attention to the newest national program, STOP the Violence. Chapters from across the state, including Riverheads, took time out of the busy day to spend an hour in the exhibit answering questions and promoting local chapter activities to the many fairgoers.

As the day progressed, time was spent taking in the sights, sounds, and tastes of the fair. Educational exhibits, commercial displays, fair competitions, and recreational opportunities were welcomed by all the members, many of whom were attending the state fair for the first time. It is our hope that the state officers will continue this day at the fair. —

Alesha Layman is a ninth grade student at Riverheads High School and an FCCLA member.



Riverheads High School FCCLA officers Jenny Gardner, Crystal Smith, and Carla Snow work in the FCCLA booth at the Virginia State Fair.

RHS staff photo

Buffalo Gap arts group to present plays

BUFFALO GAP — The Buffalo Gap High School theater arts program will present two theater pieces in the high school auditorium 8 p.m., Nov. 2 following parent-teacher conferences.

The first play will be *New Voices 3*, written and performed by the Theater Arts I class. The second play will be the drama club's production of *Dummies*, the one-act play which the club will take to the Virginia High School League festival later in November.

The entire presentation should last about 45 minutes and tickets will be \$2 for adults, \$1 for seniors/students. —

RHS yearbook staff supports Valley Mission

By KIM MCCRAY

GREENVILLE — Not many yearbook staffs have taken on as many duties as the Riverheads High School photojournalism classes have this year. Not only does the RHS staff produce the yearbook, but it also makes seasonal sports brochures three times a year, sells literary magazines filled with student works, and writes articles for the school newsletter and *Augusta County*.

This September, literary magazine editor Sarah Saunders proposed yet another project. Sarah told the staff that she was interested in having the yearbook members donate items to the Valley Mission in Staunton which, as always, needs and welcomes any gifts.

"I thought that the yearbook staff should be involved with the community, and this was a great way to do that, by helping people," Sarah said. Staff members agreed unanimously to go along with the project.

For the next couple weeks, items were brought

See **PROJECT**, page 15



Sarah Saunders (right) and Connie Roberts load items to deliver to the Valley Mission.

RHS staff photo

Tech to host youth weekend

BLACKSBURG — The Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences at Virginia Tech will host the fifth annual Virginia Tech Livestock and Poultry Youth Weekend Dec. 1-2. This educational program is designed to provide in-depth education programming on topics related to the animal sciences.

The program includes hands-on work in a laboratory setting. Sessions will be taught by qualified professionals and will involve work with high technological applications of science with animals. Cutting edge topics will dominate the schedule but each topic will have direct application to animal production. There also will be topics to help participants see how they fit into the world of livestock

production and animal science.

Topics covered in the weekend program include swine production, fetal sexing, equine selection, swine artificial insemination, lamb obstetrics, bovine embryo transfer, beef quality assurance and embryology.

The weekend is open to high-school age students and the non-refundable registration fee is \$20. Registration forms must be postmarked by Nov. 17. Attendance will be limited to the first 250 participants to register. Registration fees should be sent to Mark L. Wahlberg, Dept. of Animal and Poultry Sciences (0306), Virginia Tech, 372 Litton Reeves Hall, Blacksburg, Va. 24061. For information, call the Augusta County Extension Office at 245-5750. —

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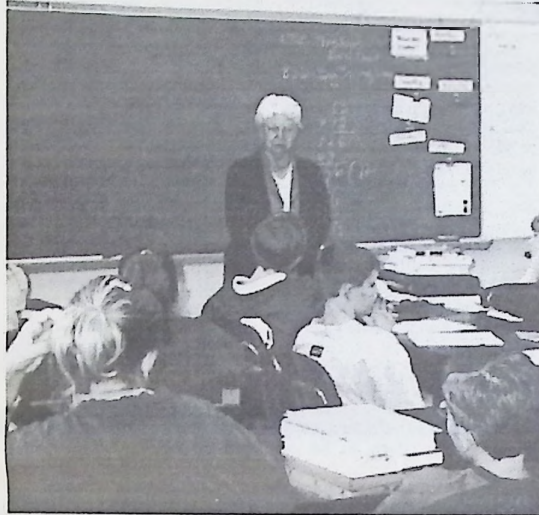
Stewart students getting up-close and personal with feathered friends

By BETTY GATEWOOD

Our new team classrooms had three windows! Our next brainstorm was, "Let's feed birds!" We had the space, the groundcover and the opportunity — and after consulting with our principal — we also had the permission. That led to my investigating the possibility of doing a classroom participation in Classroom FeederWatch, an in-depth bird study curriculum for fourth through eighth grade students provided by the renowned Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, N.Y.

During last winter feeding season at home, My Husband the Outdoor Writer participated in the Cornell citizen-based project, Project FeederWatch, and submitted his data on-line directly to the lab. He had to do vegetation analysis of our feeder area, data collection and entry and... just plain bird feeder watching. Since my weekends are usually spent focusing on entering data in my grade book, I left Project FeederWatch data collection and submission up to him.

On Cornell Lab's Project FeederWatch website, he could pull up distribution maps of every bird species he saw, counted and entered. The purpose of this citizen and student program is to use the expertise of private individuals to assist professionals in determining the movement of different species during the winter feeding season. By correlating temperature and other weather factors, ornithologists at Cornell can scientifically determine why and



YuLee Lerner of Staunton talks to students at Stewart Middle School in Fort Defiance about developing a field guide from data they will gather observing bird species.

Photo by Betty Gatewood

where certain species go during the winter feeding season.

Having lots of citizens watching birds all over the country is also a good way to get information on the health of a certain species. Ornithologists want to know this because it is common knowledge that birds are environmental indicators. I often remind students about the old story of the "canary in the coal mine," i.e. birds are often the first

to show indications of environmental problems. Hence the project to determine abundance or lack thereof of bird species would be indicators of environmental health, movement of wintering populations and any species-specific observations. We really wanted our kids to participate in this project, but the roadblock was the cost of the curriculum materials. I began to investigate possible sources of funding.

An inquiry to YuLee Lerner about Classroom FeederWatch encouraged me that possibly the Augusta Bird Club might be interested in assisting us with the cost of the project. At the summer board meeting, the club decided to award us

the whole registration fee of \$199 for Classroom FeederWatch! We were so appreciative and surprised with the generosity of their gift.

On Friday of our first week of school, my Classroom FeederWatch module arrived. What a wealth of information, ideas, materials — I was really getting excited and couldn't wait to begin sharing it with my students. We were on our way!

YuLee and I had been sharing ideas about how our students could study the birds of Augusta County as an interdisciplinary unit. As I mentioned last month, we came up with the idea of researching local birds and making an elementary field guide/coloring book. We were working on a plan for YuLee to come to class and help the students with their research that would culminate in the "field guide" which could be used with elementary school students.

I wanted the students to meet YuLee and learn that lifelong learning about anything might just begin in their middle school years like it did for her and birds. YuLee is THE local bird guru, the author of two books on Augusta County birds, and the records keeper for the Augusta Bird Club, and she is one dedicated and delightful educator. She spent two mornings with us — telling about what she does, how she does it and how she is still learning new things about her bird interest every day.

Her latest avian learning focus was researching about misplaced bird songs heard on TV golf matches. She was amazed how the songs lacked variation, how they sang in predictable sequences, and how they were out of place geographically. By chatting with other golf/birders across the county, she found that she was not the only or-

nithologist who raised suspicion at the authenticity of the songs. As a result of her questioning, the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* carried articles in which she was quoted and the ruse was uncovered. The misplaced bird songs were recordings being played at the golf match to increase the ambience! Her interests, influence and expertise are far reaching!

Together YuLee and I came up with a list of 60 birds common to Augusta County and the students have been assigned one, maybe two birds each. As the project stands now, their information pages are in the third draft, and ready for the computer lab so we can type them up in a common format and font. Each bird has been depicted by original art and those pictures are on hall display until we can get our information pages in a more complete form to finish the project. It's taking a bit longer than I envisioned and I imagine that it will be an on-going project for the year. Then comes the challenge of how to get it printed and distributed... (B-R-O-A-D hint to any local civic group or business that would like to help support this special school project.)

This local bird research will help in implementing Classroom FeederWatch. Right now, I'm using the Cornell feeder bird slides provided in the curriculum kit. As we view each species on the slide, a student will recall his or her research and share it with the class. One class in particular is learning the 30 or so common feeder birds so they can recognize them as they begin to frequent the feeders. In all my science classes, I will incorporate the Classroom FeederWatch lesson on birds in food chains to illustrate how important birds are

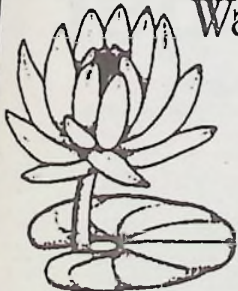
See *BIRDS*, page 17



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By Betty Gatewood

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•Project

Continued from page 14

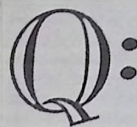
in by many yearbook staff members. Some generous people, who were not members of the yearbook staff, also gave to the cause.

On Sept. 15, Sarah and fellow yearbook member Connie Roberts went to the Mission and unloaded all the bags of food and toiletries. More than \$200 worth of items were collected. The Mission was very grateful and encourages other clubs and organizations to donate as well.

Now that the Mission project is completed, the fall sports brochure has been produced, and the first bake sale has been completed, many yearbook members are just wondering, what's next?! —

The Hitching Post

Even 'experienced' riders start out as beginners



Q: I have been looking at horses for sale. Some of the ads ask for experienced riders. I know I am not a "dead" beginner, but how do I know if I am considered experienced enough?

C.L., Staunton

To answer your question we can first try to define beginner, intermediate, and experienced.

To me a beginner rider is someone who does not know what he or she is doing. He or she may know how to "sit" a horse, but does not yet understand training psychology or basic training. He or she is still developing as a rider and may not be ready to be responsible to the horse itself. Thus, a beginner often creates bad habits in horses through poor training.

For example, a beginner who wants to learn to canter may canter a horse to the point that the horse becomes a "runaway." The rider did not consider the horse's training in the riding. He or she is so excited about "doing" the canter and doesn't always understand the

habit being created in the horse.

Intermediate riders begin to consider the horse. They have achieved some balance, communication skills, and the proper use of aids. The horse begins to become more important to the rider in the partnership and the rider takes more responsibility for the horse's habits, good or bad. This means they are aware of the training they are doing each time they ride. They consider their own habits and how they affect the horse's training. An intermediate rider has more confidence in his or her ability and begins to expand into problem correction in the horse. Intermediate riders expose themselves to more problems and work on correction as part of their riding experience. They know how to apply their riding skills.

Experienced riders can be considered part trainer. This means they are willing to work on problem correction on horses, maintain a balanced riding routine to prevent problems, and understand a more advanced level of horse psychology. They are usually more confident, have had a great deal of exposure to different horses, and can ride well in difficult situations. An example of a difficult situation would be a horse that refuses a jump. The rider must "force" the horse over even if it means a difficult challenge. The experienced rider does not back down at the first sign of trouble from a horse.

Owners may advertise a horse that needs experienced riders for a couple of reasons. One might be that the horse is considered rather valuable and they do not want a beginner to hurt its training. This would be a preventive measure. Another reason might be because they feel the horse is too "green" and a beginner can make too many mistakes that will confuse and frustrate a young horse. A third reason is the horse itself. The horse might not have the pa-

tience for a beginner or it might be an honest handful. Asking for experienced riders can take pressure off the seller to take chances with a temperamental mount.

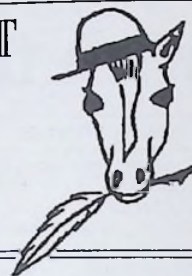
Beginner horses are often patient and have been exposed to many different situations and have proven themselves steady, reliable, and very safe. Intermediate horses will challenge the rider. They are not dangerous, but they can be more stubborn and cause the rider to apply the aids more forcefully. A horse that needs an experienced rider can have less patience, be more aggressive, and sometimes needs professional training.

If you are not a beginner, but don't know if you consider yourself

experienced, then the best advice I can give you is to call the owner and talk to them. Ask why an experienced rider was suggested. If the concerns they have are not a problem for you it might be possible to make a match. You might find a horse that needs a little work, but might be a diamond in the rough!

Everyone starts off as a beginner, but the horse itself will let you know how experienced you really are. When you lose your confidence or sense of control you've gone too far. Step back to basics and work on what made you lose your confidence or control. Take it from the horse's mouth, sometimes the only way to find out how experienced you are is to take a chance and try. —

I.B. HOOFINIT
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See page 2

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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Golf

Continued from page 11

and all about the bird species while we watch a little golf at the same time. They have cable television channels for every other interest, why not this? It would be sort of an ESPN/Animal Planet cross.

New YuLee has got me wondering about all televised sports events and the ambient sounds heard. How do we know the crowd is really cheering? How do we know the crack of the bat we hear is really the crack of the bat we see? How do we know the football players are really making all those grunting noises?

And while I'm rambling on about our feathered friends, I want to thank YuLee and all of the many bird enthusiasts -- bless their little ornithological hearts -- for all the help they have provided over the years in reviving the local bluebird population. Last week one morning I had walked out the lane to give some bottles to fawns. On my walk back to the barn, I noticed it seemed to be taking me a long time to make the short walk. I wasn't dawdling but I wasn't paying nearly as much attention to my pace as I was the two juvenile bluebirds I was watching as I walked. The

birds kept ahead of me at a safe distance flitting from the top of one fence post to the next, then to the phone line suspended over the meadow. As juveniles, their blue heads, wings and tails and russet breasts were not nearly so brilliant as they will be next spring. Bluebirds are always a delight to see and hear, and I usually hear them before I see them. I don't pay much attention to the meadowlark's song or the flicker's chant or the kingfisher's clicking. But the bluebird's song rises up and makes me pay attention. I look to find the bluebird where it's perched or where it's flitting.

The Augusta Bird Club has been tireless in its efforts to build and put up boxes across the county for bluebirds and other cavity nesters. We don't have any of the bluebird boxes down on the farm, but we've got plenty of old rousing fence posts. We may have the worst fences in the county, but we're doing our part to boost the bluebird population.

Back in the spring when we were out in the field planting corn, I noticed a pair of bluebirds making regular trips to the top of an old fence post. Once both birds had

See BIRDS, page 6

Jackson

Continued from page 13

vote, but not the electoral college vote. The decision was settled in the House of Representatives and, with the backing of House Speaker Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams became President. Adams immediately named Clay as Secretary of State. Disgusted with the outcome, Jackson called it a "corrupt bargain."

But Jackson and his supporters did not retire to Nashville and lick their wounds. Instead they began laying the groundwork for the election of 1828 and in the process created the modern political campaign and the Democratic Party. The timing was perfect. With the addition of five new states and the expansion of the voting rights in most states to any white males over 21 regardless of whether they owned property, there was a whole new crop of voters. They were the common people not the elite.

In 1828 Jackson ran as the representative, defender and champion of the common folk and he gained their votes with slogans, parades, barbecues, political rallies, cartoons, campaign mementos, and newspaper coverage. Four times as many voters went to the polls in 1828 as had in 1824.

As the time to November 1828

got closer, the campaign got dirtier. Adams sought desperately to be re-elected and Jackson sought revenge for the common folk. Dredging up Rachel's problems with her divorce, Adams' supporters called the Jacksons adulterers and bigamists. They said Jackson's mother was a prostitute and he was a dueler, brawler, slave trader, gambler, cockfighter, and had committed treason against the U.S. On the other hand, Adams was accused of spending thousands of dollars equipping the White House with gambling equipment. He was also accused of being remote, and behaving like an aristocrat.

Although Jackson was hurt by the accusations, the ones against his beloved wife cut to the quick. He directed the campaign himself from the Hermitage, the first time a candidate had been so actively involved in the race. From his campaign headquarters at home he wrote letters, met with supporters and organized rebuttals against the charges about him and his family. As he played upon his nickname, this campaign also became the first to begin using symbols. Hickory leaves and hickory poles appeared in areas that supported Old Hickory.

Despite Adams' campaign to besmirch Jackson's character, the

American people elected Jackson overwhelmingly. Sadly, Rachel died suddenly on Dec. 22, 1828, and Jackson blamed the lies spread by his political enemies as the cause of her death. On Christmas Eve he buried Rachel in the Hermitage garden. Later he raised a temple above her grave and visited it daily when he was at home.

Jackson's inauguration ushered in the age of Democracy for the common man in America. At his inaugural speech, some 10,000 people described as "fank, lean, famished" folk pressed in close to their hero. As they swarmed over the White House grounds, Jackson was forced to slip out a side door. When the rowdy reception was over smashed china, broken windows and mud-smeared furniture remained in the presidential home.

Jackson's two terms would signal a shift in American politics, so much so that the era has been called Jacksonian Democracy. When he died in 1845, he was laid to rest beside Rachel. This uneducated backwoods boy had ushered in a new era, one where the American dream of pulling oneself up by the bootstrap can really happen. After Jackson, any parent, no matter how humble could tell a son that he, too, could grow up to be President of the United States. —

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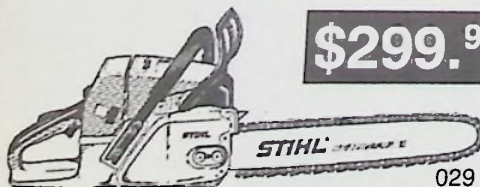
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Birds

Continued from page 15

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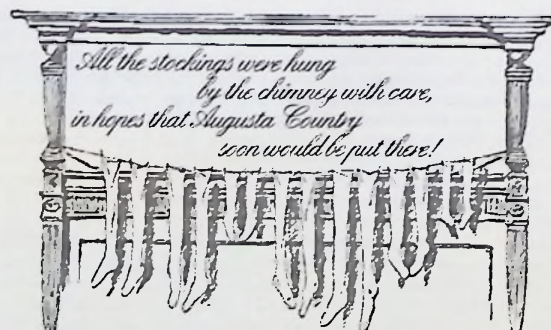
Our feeding station is now just two window feeders and a hanging suet feeder. I hope to expand on our offerings at the feeding station soon by hanging some more feeders from free standing poles that will be positioned right outside our classroom windows. At a wild-

life habitat workshop last week, I was given a hanging platform feeder, a watering "feeder," and lots of ideas about how to attract wildlife on school property. The feeders don't come with poles, so that will be an expense, but one well worth the cost when I see the look of surprise and awe on students' faces as they learn birds by seeing them so close. The ultimate learning connection occurs when a

bird comes to our window feeder!

Our first feeder visitor, a tufted titmouse, came the week that YuLee came to class. Her expertise is certainly far reaching!

Counting and entering feeder data for Classroom FeederWatch doesn't begin until mid-November. By then I hope we'll have identifications down, our station will be well-established and our avian friends will be flocking to see us! —



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Reflecting pool reflections

October 2000

Dear Maude:

Oh, my goodness, we are down to the countdown! The presidential race has been going on for far too long, but at last we are in the final stretch. First it's Gore by a nose, no, wait — it's Bush moving ahead. Now it's Gore in the lead again, but here comes Bush overtaking Gore again. Now we are down to the wire — is this state going Democratic or Republican? No one seems to know who is going to win. Even in this town where everyone takes great pride in having the inside information, in being able to predict that a certain person will win, there is that horrible sense of not knowing. Can you imagine how it is for someone to whom others come for the latest scoop to have to say "it's a toss-up" thereby admitting that they don't know everything? Oh, how hard that is on the ego!

For those of us who are ordinary workers in Washington, the race has indeed been a long one. It is interesting how our memories work, however. For some strange reason, we seem to forget just how bad it gets in Washington every fourth October. This time it has been so tense, that a group of my friends feeling that they had reached the limit of their endurance, planned for a few days out of town at one of the Delaware beaches, and invited me to go along. We could have gone just for the weekend, but decided to take an extra day or two of vacation time as well. The various bosses were not very happy when we asked for those personal leave days — some of the group even had to claim expected doctor's appointments (which did not materialize, of course) but all of us managed to escape. *The beach itself is so peaceful this time of year, and we decided that we would not turn on a television or radio or buy a newspaper while we were there.* It was difficult to do, conditioned as we are to be right on top of everything, but we managed to get through the first day and really enjoyed the following ones. Our only slip was a

"...and my opponent's record shows ..." that blurted loudly from the car radio as we started the ignition to leave. We quickly slammed a cassette in before whomever it was could finish his sentence.

Needless to say the morning after we returned I was not as anxious to get out of bed and dash to the office as I should have been. In fact, I was so late getting up that I did not have time for coffee and the paper. Arriving at the office, I figured I had better find out what had gone on while I was away. I asked a fellow worker, "Is Congress still in session?"

The person I asked had a strange, puzzled look on her face. "I am not sure," she replied. Just then the boss came dashing in.

"Quick, cut me a check for..." He was off to another fundraiser and obviously not in the best of moods. There was no need in asking him what was happening, if anything, on the Hill, so I picked up the phone and called a friend of mine at one of the government agencies who keeps us up to date with Washington's activities rather well.

Our first topic was the Million Family March, which did not turn out to be the problem everyone had feared. For some strange reason it was scheduled for a Monday and Federal employees were told that they could take a personal leave day, because the streets would be blocked off and the subways probably all messed up. But personal leave days come off one's vacation, so few did that. But it turned out to be just a normal Monday. A few people were seen on the subway who obviously were not your ordinary commuters, but there was plenty of parking space — more than usual this time of year. We decided that they must have brought the marchers in on buses. It would be nice if all of the marches in our city could disrupt things as little as this one did. Perhaps they should all be held on Mondays!

Then the conversation moved on and we discussed

the debates:

"What did you think of the first debate?"

"Didn't see it — watched a Vincent Price horror movie instead. Didn't watch the second one either, since I was at my sister's and we went out to dinner."

"What about the third one?"

"Oh, that one — let me think. Now I remember. At first I had a hard time deciding between the debate, a comedy special and Diagnosis Murder. Diagnosis Murder won."

Well, so much for the debates. I then asked him if Congress was still in session.

"I'm not sure," he said. "Seems like they are still passing continuing resolutions."

So I said to myself, "I may as well go to the source," and made a call to a friend who works in one of the Senate offices.

"Oh yes, they are still here," she informed me. "Every week we think that Friday will be the day." The original hoped-for adjournment day had been right after the first of October, but there they still are, dashing from Committee meeting to the floor for a vote, to a fundraiser, and back again to the floor, trying to get things wrapped up before the election. The members really do not want to come back as a lame duck Congress, but they also want, and in many cases, need, to get home and say hello to those local voters who will or will not send them back in January.

So, needless to say this is really a crazy place right now. All of us in the office are marking off the days until Nov. 7, when we can take a deep breath and erase from our memories all the chaos of the past few months. Maybe then I will be able to come to Middlebrook for a little bit of down-home comfort.

Give everyone my love and tell them I hope to see them soon.
LuLu



By Roberta Hamlin

November ballot to include proposed amendments

By STEVE LANDES

It is my hope by now that most citizens of Virginia are aware that they will be voting on two amendments to the Constitution of Virginia on Nov. 7. My purpose with this article is to explain both amendments, and why the General Assembly of Virginia believed them to be important to add to our state Constitution. As required by the Constitution, both amendments were adopted by a majority of both Houses of the General Assembly during the last two legislative sessions. Between those two sessions, as the Constitution further requires, an election of the House of Delegates took place as well.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment 1: "Shall the Constitution of Virginia be amended to provide for a Lottery Proceeds Fund and the distribution of the net lottery revenues to the localities to spend for public education purposes?"

Although the General Assembly during the last two sessions is directing the net lottery proceeds back to localities for education, the Assembly is doing so only through the budget, which can be changed or amended every year. Most of the constituents I have spoken with since being elected in 1995 believed when they voted for the state lottery that the funds raised would be used for public education. Unfortunately that was not the case, be-

cause those funds were simply placed in the state's general fund with all other revenues.

Therefore, to make sure the Commonwealth of Virginia makes good on what many perceived as a promise, adoption of this amendment will ensure that the lottery proceeds go only for education and no other purpose. With this amendment the General Assembly will no longer have the broad discretion to appropriate the lottery profits for any other public program. These funds will be utilized by our local school divisions and will provide for additional resources for our public school systems.

If the voters do approve Proposed Amendment 1, it shall take effect July 1, 2001.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment 2: "Shall the Constitution of Virginia be amended by adding a provision concerning the right of people to hunt, fish, and harvest game?"

At present there is no provision in our state Constitution on the right to hunt, fish or harvest game. In Virginia we have a long tradition going back to colonial times of utilizing game and fish — first for survival, and then as a continuing tradition for sport and recreation. Of the two proposed amendments this one seems to have become the most controversial.

If this amendment is adopted this new right will be subject to regulations and restrictions that the General Assembly enacts by general law. Many laws and regulations are already on the books for the public's safety

and to ensure that we protect and manage our natural wildlife resources in a responsible manner. Why then, one might ask, do we need this constitutional amendment?

The answer is that there are a number of groups that do not believe citizens should hunt, fish, or harvest game in any form. These groups in many cases promote doing away with eating meat as well. In some states these groups have proposed strict prohibitions against allowing hunting or fishing. They hold strong beliefs and work to stop citizens from hunting and fishing.

This amendment would make it the Commonwealth of Virginia's clear policy to allow our citizens this simple right. This amendment also sends a clear message to those who might want to take this right away as well. It will still be up to the General Assembly to define the scope of the right to hunt and fish and the limits on that right, but this amendment clearly makes this right inherent.

If the voters approve Proposed Amendment 2, it will take effect January 1, 2001.

Finally, some citizens have expressed concern about why we should adopt any amendments to our state Constitution. Let me say that as a member of the House of Delegates I too believe we should be careful with the changes we make to our state Constitution. Yet, unlike our United States Constitution, with which we rarely see amendments adopted, state constitutions have al-

VOTE NOV. 7

Upon entering the voting booth on Nov. 7, take time to study the ballot before casting your vote. Amendment questions are usually listed along the very top of the ballot — above the candidates names — and most folks have to look up to see the questions and cast their votes. Once you pull the lever and register your vote, it's all over but the crying. — bjh

ways been intended to be more flexible, and therefore have been amended more often.

In fact since the present Constitution of Virginia took effect in 1971, we have amended it 32 times. Some have been minor adjustments, and some have been more substantial changes like the two amendments proposed this year. It is my sincere hope that all citizens will read and carefully consider the two proposed amendments, and then exercise our most important right, the right to vote. —

Del. R. Steven Landes, (R-Weyers Cave) represents the 25th House District, which includes the city of Waynesboro, and portions of Augusta and Rockingham counties.

Miracle gives family special Thanksgiving memories

By NANCY SORRELLS

It was an unexpected Thanksgiving miracle handed to us out of the blue, but one which we will never forget. How often have you wished to spend time with a departed family member or friend? For a few short hours on that memorable Thanksgiving, we were given that privilege.

Technically my grandmother was not dead, of course, but for all intents and purposes she was no longer with us. Mommom had been physically and mentally sharp well into her 80s, but when the deterioration began it was swift and heart-wrenching.

Perhaps it was a series of strokes, or Parkinson's, or hardening of the arteries, or a combination of medical conditions. For reasons that were never quite clear, she drifted away quite rapidly and nearly completely. The mind that had sleuthed out every branch of our family tree to the 15th century was locked tight or gone — we didn't know which — and the voice that could recall historical details with the knowledge of a history professor was silenced.

When we visited her and talked, the blue eyes were blank and distant with no glimmer of recognition. If we could extract one or two words — never mind complete sentences — from her then we counted that as a successful outing. After Mommom entered a local nursing home, she took to wandering the halls with her walker, never speaking or showing a spark of recognition to anything or anybody. Oddly enough, she developed this bird-



Nancy "Mommom" Taylor at a family gathering in August 1959. The babe in arms is none other than *Augusta Country* staff writer Nancy Sorrells. (Nice booties, Nancy.) That's Nancy's dad, John Taylor, in the center. Nancy is being held by Vince Griffith, her great grandfather.

like chirping noise as she traveled the corridors so that you could tell that she was in the vicinity and track her progress from one end of the building to the other.

We visited regularly despite the disheartening sadness of it all. Often in the middle of a visit she would grab her walker and wander away from us, chirping her way down the halls.

In many ways, to us, she was already gone; certainly the Mommom we knew and loved was no longer with us in any recognizable form.

Then came the miracle Thanksgiving. We had debated about

whether to bring Mommom home for the day to celebrate the holiday with the family, but had decided that not only would such an effort be unsettling to her psyche, but the logistics were daunting.

Nonetheless, everyone deserves a Thanksgiving and so while we waited to sit down to turkey and dressing in Staunton, my father made the short drive to the nursing home for a quick visit with Mommom. When he failed to return at the appointed hour for our feast we were a bit worried and perhaps annoyed.

Then my uncle and his wife ar-

rived with an amazed look on their faces. The story, as it has been related to me, was that my father had arrived at the nursing home to visit Mommom and had found her sitting in a chair and perfectly lucid. Not only did she welcome him and talk, but she asked about the rest of the family.

The human brain is a funny thing; its secrets hard to fathom. My father, leery of just how much had apparently returned to Mommom's brain, began asking her genealogy questions. She recoiled off the answers like a pro. He even tried to trick her by deliberately misspelling one surname, but she interrupted him with the correct spelling.

Eager to seize the moment and knowing that the veracity of his story might be questioned, he hustled Mommom off to the nearest phone so that she could wish her other son, my uncle, a happy Thanksgiving. That was the reason for the amazement on my uncle's face. He had just finished chatting with his mother in a fashion which he had thought would never occur again.

When my father arrived for dinner, he related the tale in disbelief. Eager to see for ourselves, the grandchildren gulped down dinner and rushed out to the nursing home to visit with Mommom. It was me, my brother and his wife and their month-old baby girl, Erin, and my very pregnant sister.

We arrived at meal time for the residents so we pulled up a chair and talked to Mommom while she ate. She recognized us, breaking into a wide grin when she saw Erin, whom she immediately declared

"our baby," thereby putting a stamp of approval on her tiny great-grandchild. Mommom's blue eyes sparkled as she eyed my sister's bulging stomach and finally she could resist no longer and laid her hand on the distended abdomen as if to connect with the next generation.

By the time the meal was finished, it was becoming obvious that Mommom was slipping away from us. Her conversation reverted to a few words rather than complete sentences. We took her back to her room and talked to her some more but the blank look was returning to those eyes and she appeared to be struggling between two worlds. The last lucid thing she said to us involved her little great granddaughter. We asked her if she remembered her name. Mommom's brow furrowed in concentration and then from deep within her she had the answer. "Erin," she said triumphantly.

With that, the curtains were closed. Shortly afterward she took off with her walker, chirping down the hallway.

It was a Thanksgiving miracle. We knew that whatever that brain held was still there, but locked mysteriously away from this world. For a few short hours on that one day, for whatever reason, the veil was lifted. And then it dropped back down, just as mysteriously as it had lifted.

Just over a year later, and without ever really speaking lucidly again, Mommom passed away. But for us she had departed long ago except for those few short hours on that special Thanksgiving day. —

Time to
renew?
See page 2

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Appearing Nightly

Authors: Let Mother Nature lead the way

By JENIFER BRADFORD

The Landscaping Revolution
Garden with Mother Nature,
Not Against Her

Andy Wasowski with Sally
Wasowski

Published by Contemporary
Books (Chicago, IL), 2000 \$27.95;
ISBN 0-8092-2665-0; 166 pp.

This is the fifth book in *The Contemporary Gardener* series. Its 14 chapters have provocative titles such as: *The Birth of the Lemon Landscape*; *Your Lawn Has a Drinking Problem*; *Homogenize Milk*; *Not Landscapes*; *The Natives Are Friendly*; and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Creeper?*

Andy Wasowski writes in a very

humorous, yet pithy style about a grassroots movement that is slowly sweeping the country. Yes, Virginia, there is an alternative to a lawn-centered, pesticide ridden, water- and labor-intensive landscape. The profuse color photographs reinforce the message that the typical American home landscape looks like a boring clone filled with vast areas of manicured lawn, perfectly pruned shrubs, scattered trees, and borders of annuals. The photographs show that many of our cities and state capitals reflect none of their indigenous habitat either.

This book illustrates how superior our landscapes can be by using native plants from our localized regions. Our "lemon landscapes" require very high maintenance (hours on the mini-mower, chainsaws and trimmers, gallons of water on the lawns and annuals, and pounds of chemicals). We are poisoning ourselves and our environment.

Actor Richard Widmark, *Lawnmower Man*, is quoted about his passion for cutting

grass (40 acres in Connecticut plus the lawns of neighbors). "Mowing is very satisfying. It's all about wanting everything to be neat and under control."

Virginia doesn't emerge well as examples show how typical subdivisions are scraped clean of vegetation and leveled, trees are cut down, and valuable habitat is lost.

Thankfully "There's gotta be a Better Way" emerges to counter-balance the neat freak mentality. The green revolution is catching on as native gardening is now routinely featured in national magazines, written about by respected authors, promoted by state native plant societies and Master Gardener classes, the subject of Federal directives, and featured in prominent botanical gardens and parks. Water departments are getting out the word on "xeriscaping," a technique for water conservation first introduced in Denver in 1981.

Chapters in the book cite native lawn alternatives, substitutes such as moss and groundcovers using all manner of wildflowers and ferns.

See *LANDSCAPE*, page 20

ADDRESS CHANGE?

If your address has changed for any reason or if you are planning to move, you must notify *Augusta Country* of the change. Call 885-0266 or 1-800-884-8248 or write *Augusta Country*, P.O. Box 51, Middlebrook, Va. 24459. Please help us keep our records up to date. *Thank you*

Remember the Titans is a true story well told

Alexandria's seamless social integration immediately struck screenwriter Gregory Allen Howard when he returned to his hometown after years of living in Los Angeles. Whenever he asked why race relations seemed better in this Washington D.C. suburb than in other places, people everywhere recalled Herman Boone and his winning Titan football team. Howard tells their story in *Remember the Titans*.

The movie's plot is based on the true story of Alexandria's court-ordered school integration which combined two segregated high schools — one all white and the other all black — under one roof at T.C. Williams High School. The white community assumed that Bill Yoast, the head football coach at all white Hammond High School would be named the Titan's new head football coach and that Herman Boone hired away from a North Carolina school, would become the new basketball coach.

The school board has other ideas, however, when it makes Boone the Titan's head football coach and Yoast the assistant. Thus snubbed, Yoast resigns his position and then reconsiders the example his resignation sets when he learns the white players are going to boycott the football season.

The actors who portray Yoast and Boone — Will Patton and Denzel Washington — do a good job of bringing these real-life characters to the big screen. Patton (*Armageddon*, *Spitfire Grill*) and Washington (*Pelican Brief*, *Phila-*

If your name is Herb Yost, call me

When I first read about Bill Yoast in a magazine several months ago, I remembered that there was a coach at my alma mater, George C. Marshall High School, named Yoast or Yost. I especially remembered that Coach Yost's wife was the secretary at my elementary school. I wondered if he was the Bill Yoast of Titans fame.

Coincidentally, I met Ed Henry at a restaurant in Charlottesville last month. Henry was returning from a trip to Northern Virginia. He'd been invited to the third

delphia Story) perform admirably in their respective roles. They show two men caught at the center of the controversy brought about by school integration, each being driven by forces beyond their personal interests. Boone is forced into a no-win situation by a black community that needs a leader, albeit a figurehead one. Yoast is forced into a no-win situation by a white community that is determined not to give up a single yard, whether it be on the playing field or in the close-knit neighborhoods of Alexandria.

Faced with the daunting task of producing a cohesive team that could win — everyone loves a winner — Boone has to build his team and forge solidarity among his coaching staff. Team building becomes the focus of summer training camp at Gettysburg College as

screening of Titans but didn't go because he didn't want to rent a tux. He had just talked to Herman Boone and Bill Yoast that weekend and reported that they were excited about the movie and really excited about the money they had been paid for the rights to their story.

But alas, it was Herb Yost not Bill Yoast who coached at my high school. Herb Yost, he told me, has retired to Harrisonburg. So Herb, if you're an *Augusta Country* reader, give me a call. —

players and coaches face their own demons about race. In one scene, Boone punishes the kids with an early morning run that ends up in a Civil War cemetery. As schmaltzy as it is, Washington pulls off a great speech about the sacrifice thousands of people made, about the blood that spilled on those killing fields to make equality more than just a nice idea in America.

This monumental effort pays off. Slowly the boys' devotion to football overcomes all but the most entrenched racism. Halfback Julius "Big Ju" Campbell (Wood Harris) and team captain Gerry Bertier (Ryan Hurst) in particular change their preconceived notions of race and of each other to fashion a lifetime friendship that transcends color.

What the team accomplishes, however, eludes the rest of the town. That is until the Titans start

winning. As had the boys on the team, Alexandria shakes off its bitterness over desegregation as the team goes on to post an undefeated season and play Ed Henry's powerhouse George C. Marshall High School for the state championship. (It was fun to see the scarlet and columbine blue colors of my alma mater's team, the G. C. Marshall Statesmen, on the big screen.)

Directed by Boaz Yakin, the Titan's cast is strong and ensemble-like. Washington and Patton turn in marvelous performances as the two coaches. Neither creates characters who are paragons of virtue: Washington's Boone isn't always noble and Patton's Yoast captures the conflict folks struggle with when it comes to race without being racist. They do capture the professionalism of these two men who care deeply about kids and football. Although the story seems a bit contrived — like the team's stadium entrance dance to Temptations music — and some characters stereotyped — like "Rev," a.k.a. dumb jock — it all manages to work in this movie. Hurst and Farson do credible jobs as two kids struggling to understand each other in trying times.



The movie oozes high school football. Think testosterone overdose — all those grunting football players banging their helmets together. Having grown up in Northern Virginia, the Alexandria scenes stretch credibility. Hollywood's version of Northern Virginia isn't what I remember. But I'm being picky.

Remember the Titans is a family movie. The whole family can go and enjoy it. It doesn't make a statement as much as it makes you feel good. And you'll come out humming Temptations tunes.

Hannah's mom gives *Remember the Titans* three-and-a-half bananas. Rated PG for thematic content relating to race. —

•Landscape

Continued from page 19

Small native trees and shrubs can create wonderful borders. There are short perennials as options to lawns and tall perennials for distant vistas.

Portraits of landscaping revolutionaries, people who have tried a new approach or fought and won an important court case, are scat-

tered throughout the pages.

If you are looking for a Christmas gift for yourself, a friend, or a neighbor, are interested in benign alternatives to the average labor-intensive garden, have an open mind, and a sense of the absurd, this book is for you. Happy Reading! —

Yesterday's weather

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

Nov. 2, 1946 — A heavy wet snow began to cover the Southern Rockies. Up to three feet of snow blanketed the mountains of New Mexico, and a 31-inch snow at Denver, Colo., caused roofs to collapse.

Nov. 7, 1951 — At 7 a.m., a blinding flash, a huge ball of fire, and a terrific roar occurred over parts of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, caused by a disintegrating meteor. Windows were broken in and near Hinton, Okla., by the concussion.

Nov. 10, 1987 — A cold front brought snow to the Appalachian Region and freezing temperatures to the cen-

tral U.S. Up to nine inches of snow blanketed Garrett County of extreme western Maryland. Freezing temperatures were reported as far south as El Paso, Texas and San Angelo, Texas. Gale force winds lashed the Middle Atlantic Coast and the coast of southern New England. Thunderstorms brought fire quenching rains to Alabama, and produced large hail and damaging winds to eastern North Carolina. Ahead of the cold front, seven cities in Florida and Georgia reported record high temperatures for the date as readings warmed into the 80s.

Nov. 14-15, 1900 — A record lake-effect snowstorm at Watertown, N.Y., produced 45 inches in 24 hours. The storm total was 49 inches.

Nov. 19, 1981 — An unusually early snowstorm struck the Twin Cities of Minnesota, with as much as a foot of snow reported. The weight of the heavy snow caused the newly inflated fabric dome of the Hubert Humphrey Metrodome in downtown Minneapolis to col-

lapse and rip.

Nov. 22, 1641 — An observer at Boston, Mass., recorded a "great tempest of wind and rain from the southeast all night, as fierce as a hurricane, and thereupon followed the highest tide which we have seen since our arrival here."

Nov. 25, 1982 — Hurricane Iwa lashed the Hawaiian Islands of Niihau, Kauai, and Oahu with high winds and surf. Winds gusting to 120 mph caused extensive shoreline damage. Damage totaled \$150 million on Kauai, and \$50 million on Oahu. The peak storm surge on the south shore was six to eight feet. It marked the first time in 25 years that Hawaii had been affected by a hurricane.

Nov. 26, 1888 — A late season hurricane brushed the East Coast with heavy rain and gale force winds. The hurricane passed inside Nantucket and over Cape Cod, then crossed Nova Scotia.

Nov. 29, 1985 — The temperature at Bismarck, N.D., plunged to 30 degrees below zero to establish the state's record low for the month of November. The high that day was 4 degrees below zero. —

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

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