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Down on the Farm
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Assembly line of love
turns out teddy bears

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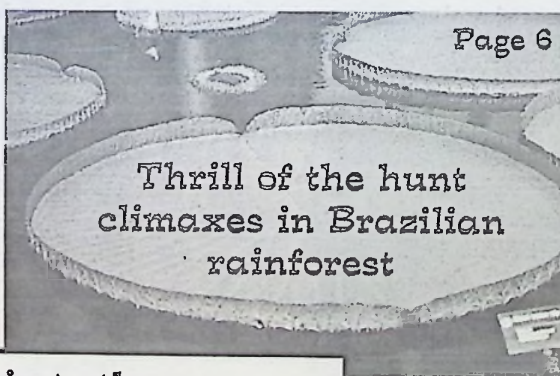
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with aMAZing things

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climaxes in Brazilian
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A trip to the
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Augusta 4-H honors members for achievement

WEYERS CAVE — Four Augusta County 4-Hers were recognized recently for outstanding accomplishments in project work.

Kaitlyn Ambler and Ben Heizer, both members of the Middlebrook Livestock 4-H Club, received awards for Outstanding Junior Girl and Boy, respectively. Elizabeth Cupp of the Spring Hill 4-H Club was honored as the Outstanding Senior Girl and Jonathan Coleman of the Middlebrook club was honored as the Outstanding Senior Boy. The awards were presented at the annual Augusta County 4-H Achievement Program held recently.

Ambler is a member of the 4-H livestock judging team. Locally she has helped her 4-H club with several fundraisers including selling Easter eggs, serving lunches and working at the Augusta County Fair Food Booth. She also has participated in her club's community service project by helping a needy family at Christmas. Beyond the club level, she has participated in the state fair, district and state livestock judging contests, 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show, Fashion Revue, and the Animal Science Challenge. "Farming is a big part of my life and 4-H helps me to learn more and to tell other kids and people about it," Ambler said.

Heizer also is a member of the



AMBLER



HEIZER



CUPP



COLEMAN

Galloping 4Hers. He completed six horse project books and has participated in judging clinics and the county and district presentations contest where he received a purple ribbon for giving the best presentation in his category. He participated in the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show showing lambs and steers, and received top honors in junior showmanship. He also has participated in the district qualifying 4-H Horse Show and the Virginia State 4-H Horse Show. He says he tries to be a helpful and willing member in both of his clubs.

Cupp, president of the Spring Hill club, also serves as secretary of the 4-H Honor Club and president of the County 4-H Council. She provided leadership to her 4-H Club by helping to plan and organize club activities. She also participated in all Honor Club activities

including fundraisers and community service projects. In June 1999, she was inducted into the Virginia 4-H All Stars, one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a 4-H member. In addition she recently began her service as the youth representative on the Augusta County Extension Leadership Council.

In addition to his membership in the Middlebrook club, Coleman also is a member of the 4-H Honor Club and the 4-H Livestock Judging Team. He participated in the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show showing lambs and steers. He served as vice president of the Middlebrook club and helped coordinate its steer and lamb clinics and gave demonstrations on clipping and showmanship. He also assisted with monthly programs at club meetings. Beyond his club he participated in the Animal Science

Challenge and the district and state livestock judging contests. He helped conduct the 4-H Achievement Night and the Market Animal Show Banquet. He is continually doing behind-the-scenes work, helping set up, cleaning up, hauling animals, and making phone calls.

Each of the outstanding 4-Hers received a \$100 U.S. Saving Bonds sponsored by the Valley Co-op Council.

Coleman also was honored with one of two "I Dare You" awards. Ellen Murray was recognized with the other "I Dare You" award. William Danforth, founder of the I Dare You Award, had genuine interest in people of all ages and all backgrounds. His philosophy was to challenge "the daring few who are headed somewhere." He recognized that each person had special gifts. He delighted in seeing talents developed and potential fulfilled. He regularly threw out the chal-

lenge, "Be your own self and at your very best all the time." Coleman and Murray were selected as 4-Hers who best represented Danforth's challenge: "Dare to be your best, to live a four-fold life, and to serve others. Stand tall, smile tall, think tall, and live tall."

Individuals inducted into the Augusta County 4-H Honor Club included Robert Grogg, Cliff Harris, Sarah Heizer, Angela Hinton, Ashley Keaton, Natasha James, Lindsey Kilbourn, Marc Noel, Nate Salatin, Rachael Salatin, Ashley Shifflett, Michelle Skeen, Josh Smith, Chance Snyder, Brandon Waldron, and Leah Waliky.

In other presentations, 4-H club leaders were recognized for years of service and members received achievement awards for completing project work in a variety of areas including dairy, horse, outdoor sports, judging competitions, presentations, Share the Fun, and Fashion Revue. —

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Assembly line of love turns out teddy bears

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON - It started with a simple decision by the staff at Loyalton to be more active in the community, but now their motto of "Reach one in 2001" has blossomed into a number of different volunteer projects.

"Melissa Bryant (Loyalton's director) and I were talking about doing more things in the community and we came up with the motto and some ideas," said Wendy DeLawder, the activity director at the retirement community in Staunton. One project that the staff has started to participate in is Meals on Wheels on Wednesday.

But the most popular project so far started in the activities room with about 15 of the center's senior citizens. This group of women and one man has turned the room into a beehive of activity that is sealed with a touch of love. They have gathered scissors, needles, thread, felt and stuffing and have created an assembly line to make teddy bears. The Loyal Bears, as the squeezable animals are being called, will be given to children in the hospital to help cheer them up and will be handed out by rescue squads and fire departments to calm scared youngsters during emergency situations.

"This was supposed to be a one-hour activity per week," said Wendy. "But several of them have been in the activities room all day



Sherry Tullis, left, and Milina Thompson pose with a few of the bears made by Loyalton residents. Some of the bears will

go to the pediatric unit at Augusta Medical Center. Others will be donated to local fire departments and rescue squads.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

long and take the materials back to their apartments to work on them in the evening."

In the first week of the project, the "team" has turned out 15 cudd-

ly bears. They have also started to perfect the process: Sherry Tullis and Milina Thompson are the backbone of the assembly line as they cut out the pieces and sew them together. Each bear gets a personalized, hand-stitched message on its stomach like "Hug Me," "Love You," or "Cuddles." Then the bears get turned over to the stuffers who plump up the felt toys with filling. Finally the bears are stitched shut and ready to go to work dispensing love.

"I'm not doing anything but overseeing the activity," said Wendy who indicated that word of the project has gotten around to other residents. "Some of the others in the community have seen what is happening and are now saying that they want to get involved in some part of the

activity," she added.

"I'm in for anything that involves working with my hands," said Sherry. "The more you keep the hands working, the more the brain operates. The two just go together."

Sitting across from Sherry was her friend Milina. "The bears have been getting better and we have been learning as we go along. Some of them have buttons for eyes, but we have started sewing on felt eyes for some of them that small children might have." Putting the extra stitches on the eyes and ears is worth the effort she said because it makes the bears safe for younger children who might pull off

buttons and choke on them.

The two women noted that they take pride in the bears because "somebody out there is going to look at them."

"We have been working on them day and night," Milina said.

Dot Grady has been involved in

the project because it shows support for the activities director and the Loyalton community. "If the director takes her time to promote these activities, the rest of use should respond."

Mollie Rogers, Loyalton's 102-year-old youngster, has also been helping. Although her vision is such that she can no longer sew, she volunteered to stuff bears. "I enjoy doing things with my hands but there is so little I can do that I decided to do this," she said.

Bruno Baldini, who was a NASA engineer in his younger days, likes the idea of having a room full of women to himself. He decided to get involved with the project to have something to do. "I like to keep busy. Idle minds become sick minds."

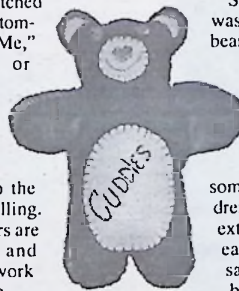
Marvey Switzer and Esther Boe expressed the same sentiments. "It gives us something to do and the bears are cute," explained Marvey. "I like crafts and I have done them all my life. It's nice to give things like this to the children and we're having fun making them," said Esther.

The first batch of bears is slated for delivery to the pediatric unit at Augusta Medical Center. Then a batch will go to the area rescue squads and fire departments. At the rate the assembly line is turning out the tender toys there will be extras for other places, like St. Jude's.

"When we go to AMC, I want to take as many of the people involved in this project as possible; after all it's their project," said Wendy.



Milina Thompson puts some finishing touches on a bear.



Dot Grady of Loyalton works on a teddy bear.

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Old linens receive new lease on life

By DEBORAH SENSABAUGH

LEXINGTON — Pat Iskenderian needed a new hobby, a justification for all those auctions she attended and all those collectibles she kept carrying home.

Then one day, an auction box was full of old linens, and suddenly she had found a purpose for all the standing in a crowd and raising her hand.

"I actually started eight years ago," the retiree explains. "I love going to auctions, and I love to buy things. But furniture is too heavy for me to carry. Then I discovered the old linens. I wondered why I couldn't recycle them, make them useful once again."

And that's what she has been doing, quite successfully, for years.

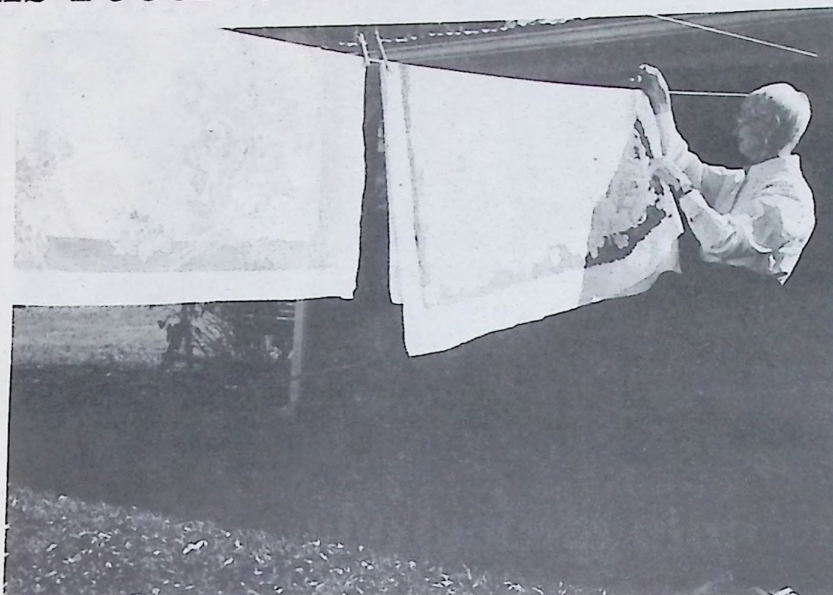
"I've found a ready market for them, too. Bed and breakfasts and even antique shops buy a lot of them. They end up as curtains and swags, table runners, lamp shade decor, and even shower curtains, with a plastic liner attached, of course," she says.

How does one actually recycle an old piece of fabric?

Iskenderian's pixyish face lights in a grin. "All those homemaking skills I learned in home ec and elementary school, when I didn't want to embroider or launder. But now? Oh, how thankful I am I was made to learn that. I have books about it, too, and I read *Victoria Magazine*. It tells a lot about how to display old linens."



Starching and ironing linens plays a big part of old fabric restoration. Here, Pat Iskenderian works on an old baby gown.



Pat Iskenderian checks on some linen tablecloths from the 40s which she had hung out on the line to dry. Restoring the old lin-

ens became a hobby for the retiree after she started purchasing them at auctions.

Photo by Deborah Sensabaugh

In beginning her restoration projects, she first soaks the old linens. In fact, they may soak for up to 48 hours. "You can't put them in a washing machine, not even on delicate cycle. And you never,

never, never put them in a dryer. In fact, you can't even put them in the sun too often."

Iskenderian advises beginning with the gentlest stain remover, usually vinegar, and then progressing as far as you must to remove the stains. She finds that lemon juice works the best, ("I haven't found too much that lemon juice won't get out.") and that there is nothing like dew for softening and whitening the old fabrics.

"You put them out about 7 p.m. and take them in the next morning. That's one way they used to soften and whiten diapers, you know. Back before all the disposable ones."

Next, the items go for repair. Broken embroidery threads are replaced and pulled threads in crochet or lace are worked back into position. Using her knowledge of handwork, she also reinvents whole sections of lace, if necessary.

Last, she starches and irons the items. Then they are ready for new homes.

Her finds range from damask to hand-crocheted tablecloths, to doilies and coverlets, from the linen tea towels and garish 40s tablecloths to gathered and flocked gowns and skirts worn by our great grandparents when the last century was young.

Iskenderian's watchword with the old fabrics is to never give up. "If I can't save something, I at least take the lace off. Then I can hand-sew it onto old percale or muslin pillowcases from the 50s."

While working with the old fabrics and items, Iskenderian has gotten in touch with a slower, gentler time. "I love to get a piece already repaired by someone else. Back then, the women took the time to make repairs. Life was slower. They made things for their families, almost everything by hand."

Most of Iskenderian's treasures come from the early 1900s, the 20s, the 30s. "Back then, almost everything was white. You didn't start seeing a lot of colors until the 30s, so what colors there were generally weren't vat dyes or color fast. I have to wash them very carefully."

She points to a linen cloth with delicate crewel flowers, all in white thread.

"You read of those old households doing laundry once a month, and it was an all-day process with piles and piles of laundry. Homes with a lot of linens hired a washerwoman."

One of the pluses in working with the old fabrics, Iskenderian explains, is that natural fabrics let go of the stains more easily than the modern synthetics. "You can bleach some of them, also. But I don't."

Then there are the mysteries, stitches she has never seen before in patterns that aren't common. "Sometimes, I don't know how to repair something. And sometimes a piece is so unusual I'd like to keep it. But I'd better not put it anywhere for display, because if I like something, I find that everyone else does, too. And then it finds a new home."

Iskenderian also has noticed that different parts of the country have different linen histories. For example, at upstate New York auctions, where Iskenderian and her husband, Aram, still have a small farmhouse, satin sheets are the norm. While items like that aren't common in the rural South, floral feed sacks are. Up North, she has found only plain feed sacks.

Iskenderian doesn't spend all her time in her basement workshop revitalizing old fabric treasures.

"I have a life beyond this," she says, waving her hand across her ironing board and across the lines and racks of hanging fabric. "I like to paint, too." She proudly shows off her quality primitives and soft, realistic looking old houses and barns.

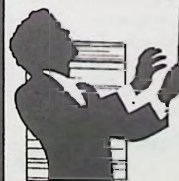
"Like the linens, they won't be there someday. So I like to capture them on canvas before they are gone forever." —

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Mazes x 3 make for interesting summer diversion

By NANCY SORRELLS

Last summer was aMAZing. Two mazes at the beginning of the summer and one at the end left me barely able to determine my left from my right or my east from my west. My friends and family will tell you that I am somewhat cartographically challenged — (EDITOR'S NOTE: This means she couldn't beat her way out of a wet sack.) — so the fact that I even entered these mazes willingly was a very brave (or foolhardy) thing to do. The fact that I emerged unscathed is even more AMAZING.

Mazes, by the way, go back at least 4,000 years to ancient Greece, but they weren't puzzles, merely pathways for ritual walking, running and processioning.

I stumbled across the first maze in



The Blenheim Maze

a little English village called Bourton-on-the-Water. The Dragonfly Maze, which wound through a yew hedge, was a puzzle within a puzzle. Kay Mansfield and I took up the challenge of finding our way through the maze AND finding the Golden Dragonfly. Stepping stone clues were scattered throughout the maze. All the clues had to be found in order to enter the ornate central pavilion which houses the bejeweled Minotaur within a mirrored case. Then we had to solve the mystery of where the Golden Dragonfly was hidden.

The average time in the maze is 20 minutes but we were able to make it to the pavilion in a much faster time. Unfortunately we had to retrace our steps to find the rest of the clues. Here is where we made a critical mistake, we separated and wound up hopelessly lost. We could see each other through the hedges, but we couldn't figure out how to get back together. In the midst of our panic we also realized that the stepping stone clues were very tricky because they were num-

bered with Roman numerals, therefore XI could also be IX. We weren't sure if we were looking at clue number 11 or 9.

Forty-five minutes later we were back at the pavilion with our completed clues so we entered the inner chamber. There we followed the clues (stepping on a certain spot, placing our hands on a certain ceramic tile, etc.) until the lights came on and the giant toad sculpture opened its mouth to reveal...a golden dragonfly. If you want to see more about this maze, designed by artist Kit Williams, go to: www.bourton-on-the-water.co.uk.

Hedge mazes are English in origin. Symbolism and puzzles in mazes were started by the English. Maze master Adrian Fisher, who designed two of the three mazes I was in this year, is from England. You can find him

at www.mazemaker.com.

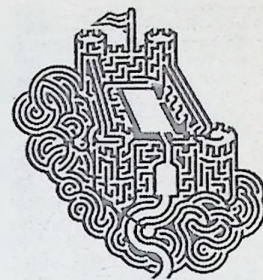
Maze number two came a few days later and just a few miles away at Blenheim Palace, the home to the Duke of Marlborough (where Winston Churchill was born). Kay and I had so much fun in the first maze that we convinced Katharine Brown to accompany us through this one, designed by Fisher. The formal hedges of this maze commemorated the Battle of Blenheim with the letters B-L-E-N-H-E-M spelled out with the living shrubs. Fun, but not a great challenge, we finished the maze in about 15 minutes.

I figured that my amazing adventures were over for the year, particularly because I was soon back in Virginia, but in late September I was amazed to have the opportunity to go through another of Adrian Fisher's mazes — this one in Fredericksburg. The 12-acre Maize Maze can be found in season at Belvedere Plantation (www.belvedereplantation.com). This maze, the largest in the eastern United States, offers plenty of challenge. Seen from the air, the paths through this maze create the illusion of a castle floating in the clouds. Seen from the ground, it is a labyrinth of 10-foot-tall corn stalks.

Today there are all kinds of

mazes: fence, hedge, turf, brick, stone, mirror, wood and water. The first maze in an American cornfield — a maize maze — was created in 1993. These mazes are unique because they last just one season.

Armed with the knowledge that the average length of time spent in the Castle in the Clouds Maze was 90 minutes, my husband, Randy, my 6-year-old nephew Justin, and I accepted the challenge. The group coming out of the maze as we entered had been lost in the maze for three hours! Everyone entering the castle in the clouds is given a long flag to be carried along the footpaths and waved in case of panic. Nine pieces of a map are located throughout the maze; get all the pieces and you will know the way out. Three bridges are located within the 3-D puzzle. On one sits Sir Lostalot who will give you a



Belvedere Plantation's 12-acre Maize Maze is the largest in the eastern United States. Seen from the air, the paths through this maze create the illusion of a castle floating in the clouds.



Kay Mansfield writes down a clue in the Dragonfly Maze.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells



Kay Mansfield and Katharine Brown try to decide which way to go in Blenheim Maze.

clue to help you get out.

We found all three bridges, talked to Sir Lostalot, and we still were hopelessly lost (luckily we had our cell phone so we knew that we could call for help if nobody

responded to our flag waving). This maze is so big and so confusing that there are water coolers and portable toilets located within the stalks (however, we never found the portable toilets so they didn't do us much good).

We had found only three pieces of the map and things were looking pretty grim when we accidentally took a correct path and found ourselves at Victory Tower — the end of the maze. Although our 40-minute trip was nowhere near the record of 17 minutes, we felt that it was pretty respectable. We even had enough time for Justin to try some of the mini-mazes within the corn castle's walls. He particularly liked the string maze where he had to follow one color string all the way through a tangle of colored strings.

You should try one of these labyrinths as well — it's like a brainteaser in 3-D. Once the weather turned cold, the Corn Castle at Belvedere Plantation became nothing but a memory, but I plan to visit Fredericksburg next summer for another amazing experience.

To see the details of every full-size maze in the world, go to www.maze-world.com.



Randy Sorrells and Justin Walker have a difference of opinion about which way to go in the Maize Maze at Belvedere Plantation in Fredericksburg.

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Thrill of the hunt climaxes in Brazilian rainforest

By KEITH FOLSOM

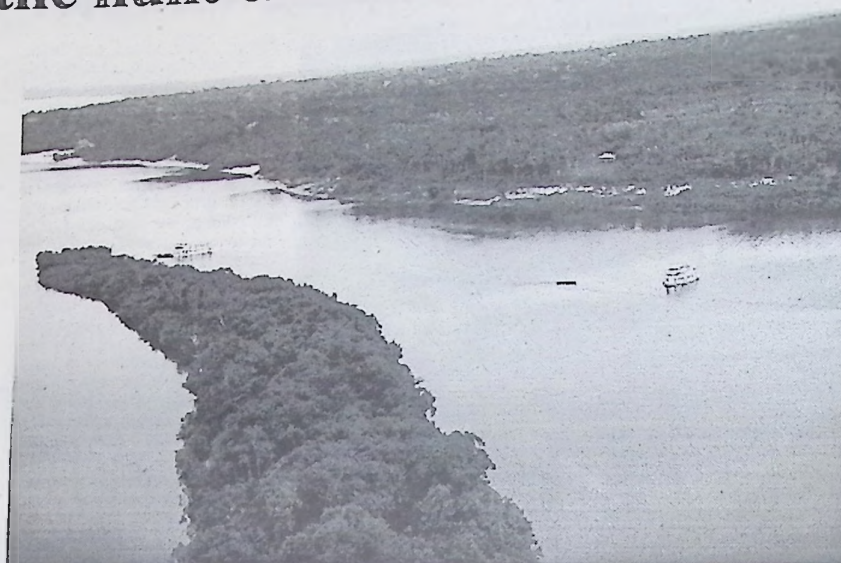
EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles about travels along two rivers in the Brazilian rainforest.

When hunting, the search for the elusive quarry is half of fun. Searching the Brazilian rainforest for the giant Amazon water lily, *Victoria amazonica*, was much better than half the fun.

My wife, a friend of ours and I met in Miami on Nov. 10, 2000 with 37 others from around the U.S. and United Kingdom to depart for nine days of travel on two rivers in Brazil. This was a combination business and pleasure trip for the three of us and it was a great opportunity to rub elbows with folks of similar interests and occupations.

Most notable among the participants were people like the curator for the water lily collection at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pa., the curator for the palm collection at Kew Gardens in the United Kingdom, a representative of the Denver Botanic Garden as well as many other aquatic plant growers. A physician was on the trip to look out for those who needed medical attention. We even had a noted hydrologist along to help us understand the dynamics of the river systems. It was along these rainforest waterways that we conducted our search for the Amazon water lily, *Victoria amazonica*.

This giant among aquatic plants that graces the water gardens of conservatories and large estate ponds is found growing naturally in the region of central Brazil known as



Flying in over Brazil's Amazon Basin

Photos by Keith Folsom

Amazonia. Immense leaves, up to seven feet in diameter, float on the surface of hidden "ponds" in the deep forest tributaries of the great Amazon River. The spiny leaves and fragrant night-blooming flowers are found throughout the year, but are more difficult to reach during the Amazon basin's low-water time. Residing in hidden ponds and lagoons, this magnificent plant — in fact, the largest of all aquatic plants — can be as difficult to locate as it is tough to get to.

The quest for the *Victoria*, actually for the seed of this tropical

wonder, began when our flight departed Miami en route to Manaus, a Brazilian city in the state Amazonas, located at the confluence of the Amazon River and the Rio Negro. Leaving behind the cold of Virginia, the journey to South America put us three degrees south of the equator. While technically spring, the days had all the trappings of summer back home.

Daily adventures from our home base — a 30-plus passenger boat

— included cruising the rivers and watching pink dolphins fish off of the bow. Hikes into the rainforest found us looking for whatever could be found — flowers, animals, insects, and — yes — birds like the parrots, macaws and toucans. Nighttime treks by land or small boat took us deep into the forest searching the dark with powerful spotlights. Glowing eyes sparkled from the water's surface, telling us of the presence of caiman

(second cousin to an alligator) or even an occasional snake. Toads and tarantulas, monkeys and monkey spiders — you never knew what you would find.

What we wanted to find, but so far had not, was the *Victoria*. Frustration over not having seen the first evidence of this plant was tempered by all of the exciting exploration taking place. We knew the plant could be just around the next bend, but where? Our guide decided to charter a flight over the rainforest to cover territory that extended as far as the eye could see, even from a thousand feet in the air.

In fact we found we were not far from *Victoria*, but could never have found the plant without aerial reconnaissance. We boarded small boats that we always kept in tow behind the main boat and headed up a small tributary that was home to a small fishing and farming community, the landmark for our search. The villages in this region are temporary due to the 20- to 30-foot fluctuation of the river level. Homes are either built on stilts, high up on the riverbank, or are constructed on massive floating logs and tethered to the bank.

The place we were heading for stood out curiously from the others. This eight-person family who owned the home where we stopped lived in what appeared to be a two-room, sparsely furnished floating house. The thing that stood out to us was the fact that the place was beautifully landscaped with lush, tropical aquatic plants. The plants were in full flower and planted around the ends and along the sides of the house. It was obvious to all that while living in what we would consider primitive conditions, pride in their home was very evident.

Our group beached the boats at a steep bank nearby and waited while our guide and crew slashed

See VICTORIA, page 7



This 30-plus passenger boat served as home for nine days for those exploring two rivers in the rainforests of Brazil.



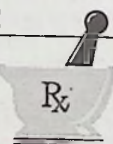
The approach to the tributary of the Amazon which led to the lake where the *Victoria* would be found. The houses float along the shore to accommodate the seasonal rise and fall of the river.

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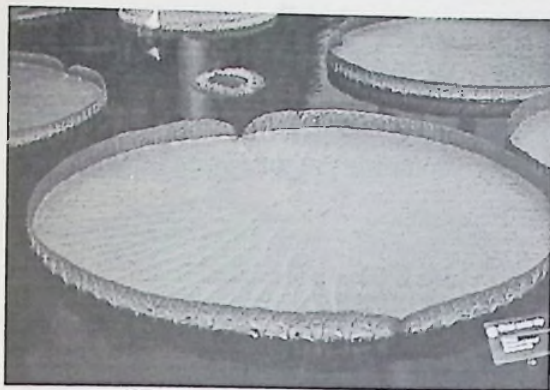
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This hybrid of *Victoria amazonica* is on display at the Missouri Botanical Gardens in St. Louis. It is found growing naturally in the region of central Brazil known as Amazonia. Immense leaves, up to seven feet in diameter, float on the surface of hidden "ponds" in the deep forest tributaries of the great Amazon River.

Victoria

Continued from page 6

a path into the rainforest with their ever-present machetes. After a short walk through dense and often spiny understory growth, we arrived at a low-lying wetland. It is interesting to note that while we had gone up a 15-foot bank and then a couple hundred yards into the forest, this small lake would soon merge with the river as the waters of the river reach its summertime levels. Where we stood, the forest floor would be 10 to 15

feet under the water, forcing animal and insect life to move into the treetops. For now, the *Victoria amazonica* that we had searched for lay before us in waist-deep water with knee-deep mud beneath.

The plants were in their early-season stage of growth, so the foliage was not perfect, but the plants were in flower. While keeping a vigilant eye for caiman and snakes, we obtained water and soil samples and a global position via satellite (to identify the specific plant for future harvest), leaf tissue samples for DNA

identification. The seedpods could now be collected. The large spiny fruits, about the size of a softball are collected and bagged for later processing back on the boat.

The meticulous handling of the seedpod is to obtain a known seed source of what will hopefully turn out to be a completely pure strain of *Victoria amazonica*. The reason this is important is there has been some cross-pollination with a Peruvian strain, resulting in a hybrid that has made its way to the United States. The hybrids have proven to be problematic for breeders in the U.S. who need pure seed stock from which to grow their parent plants for future hybridization. The DNA is analyzed and recorded in a seed bank in Denver, Colo., for those who have need of the pure seed. If the seed turns out to be pure *V. amazonica*, then the exact location of the source plant is known and can be revisited.

Back on board, the laborious process of separating the seed from the pod began. Once cleaning was complete, the seed was cataloged, stored and brought into the United States after being cleared through U.S. Customs and with the close inspection process of the Agriculture Department.

The three hours or so it took to harvest the *Victoria* seed was interesting and fun. But this process paled in comparison to the thrill of the hunt for the giant water lily in Brazil's tropical rainforest.

Keith Folsom owns and operates Springdale Water Gardens in Greenville.



Along the Rio Negro, one of two rivers explored during a trip to Brazil's rainforests.



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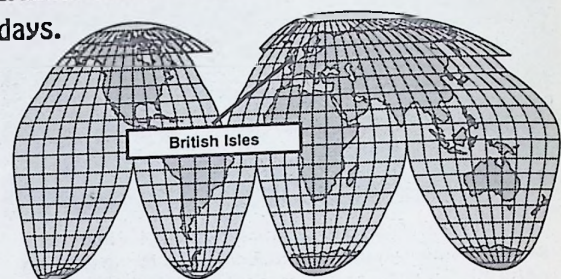
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The hunt for *Victoria amazonica* (photo above) culminated in this "pond" found along a tributary of the Amazon River in Brazil. The water here, covered with *Victoria*'s giant lily pads, was 2-3 feet deep. Seeds from the plant were harvested and the plant's location was recorded with the use of a global positioning satellite.



Notes from the road

In this issue, *Augusta Country* staff writer Nancy Sorrells takes us on a journey to the British Isles where she learned there are remarkable similarities among farm animals there and those of Augusta County's earliest days.



Vacation to British Isles takes on a livestock theme

By NANCY SORRELLS

NORTHERN IRELAND AND ENGLAND — Who would have thought that I would take a trip overseas that included a "livestock" theme, but that's exactly what happened last June.

The impetus for the trip was the Ulster-American Heritage Symposium in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. This conference, which is held every two years, is hosted alternately in the United States and in Ulster, a region in the north of Ireland. The purpose of the gathering is to celebrate the shared heritage that comes from the large numbers of Ulster families which immigrated to places like the Shenandoah Valley and then set down roots. These immigrants came to be known in this country as Scotch-Irish.

My paper proposal comparing Augusta County livestock of the 18th and 19th centuries to that in Ireland at the same time had been accepted and so I was one of many speakers at the three-day conference. After the symposium, I was planning to fly to England and join up with four other acquaintances (two women from the States and two from Northern Ireland) and rent a cottage in the Cotswolds for a week.

And so began my livestock adventure. Suffice to say that mine was the only presentation at the conference dealing with such earthy matters. And everyone

Animals pictured on these pages were photographed at Cotswold Farm Park in England near Moreton-in-Marsh. The living museum works to preserve rare breeds of domestic animals.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

seemed to enjoy the break from the more genealogical, philosophical and ideological papers in order to hear 30 minutes worth of my speaking about short horses, types of draft animals and grazing patterns in Augusta County and Ireland.

Turns out that there were many similarities between the two regions, particularly in the practice of sending animals into the hills for summertime grazing and in the preference of horses rather than oxen for work animals. Perhaps those Augusta County men were simply carrying on an agricultural tradition brought with them from the Old World.

At the conclusion of the conference we headed to the small English village of Moreton-in-Marsh, located in the Cotswolds which are the hills northwest of London. Although I did not realize it at the time, the very name Cotswolds has its origins in sheep farming. "Wolds" means hills, and "cotes" is the word for the wattle enclosures sheep were held



Gloucester cattle

in during the winter. Put the two together and you have the hills where sheep are kept.

Rearing sheep for their wool has been an important business in this area for generations. In fact a long-woolled breed of sheep, the Cotswold, was developed in this region and the wool trade brought incredible wealth here during the medieval period. Many beautiful cathedrals and churches, called wool churches, were financed and constructed as a result of the sheep.

Ironically, changes in agricultural

practices around the world have placed sheep like the Cotswold breed on the endangered list. When we think of rare, endangered or extinct animals our mind usually doesn't come up with examples of farm animals. Instead we think of bald eagles or spotted owls. But throughout the world there are literally hundreds of breeds of cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry whose gene pools are at risk of disappearing forever.

Man has kept domesticated animals through countless centuries

and during those generations each isolated population of people has created special breeds of agricultural animals specifically adapted to the local needs. People on the Shetland Islands, for instance, bred a type of small, hardy pony that would fit into the tiny barns built of scavenged wood and would survive in the harsh weather on little more than marsh grass and rough fodder. Farmers in the Scottish Highlands developed a shaggy-haired breed of cattle that could

See **LIVESTOCK**, page 9



Gloucester old spots



Jacob sheep

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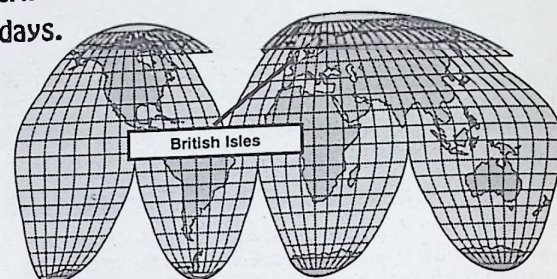
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English 'holiday' becomes linguistic tour de farce

By NANCY SORRELLS

MORETON-IN-MARSH, England — I recently had the privilege of spending a week of vacation in an English cottage with four other women. Or should I say we were on holiday? You see, three of us were from the States, while the other two were from Northern Ireland. We found out very quickly that we were separated by a common language.

It's amazing how different the English language is from one side of the world to the other. To start, there is the "odd" way those in the British Isles pronounce words (o.k., maybe our way is the odd way). Every time I hear schedule, film, controversy, specialty, herbs, garage, and vegetables I have to re-run the words through my head to

figure out what has been said.

But it gets worse. I first got an inkling that things could be difficult when the five of us squeezed ourselves and our luggage into a rental car. We were exiting London's Heathrow Airport via the M-40, one of the busiest roads in all of England, akin to the dreaded Beltway in Washington, D.C.

Behind the wheel on the right side of the car was one of the Ulster women. Seated next to her in the front was an American (who happened to have more than a year of residency in the British Isles). In the back seat to the right and left were the other two Americans who were novices at the English language on this side of the water. Squeezed between them in the back was the other Irish woman.

Before we knew it we were in

the thick of the traffic and the driver was naturally nervous. As we exited the airport she had rolled down the window using the power window button — one of those buttons which you push down to lower the window and pull up with your fingertip in order to raise the window. It was a system with which she was unfamiliar.

As we picked up speed, she wanted to raise the window and so began pushing down on the button. Nothing happened and she became flustered. Unable to glance down and see how to manipulate the button, she resolved aloud that we would just have to make the high-speed journey with the window down and the wind roaring into the car.

From the back of the car we novice Americans, being familiar with that type of window button, began

yelling out to the driver over the sound of the wind:

"Pull up, pull up," we shouted, meaning to pull up on the button to raise the window.

The driver, however, kept responding to our advice with what we thought were the most bizarre answers.

"I can't, this isn't the proper place for it...it's too dangerous here and it's not allowed."

Perplexed, we kept shouting back, "Pull up, pull up."

Finally the American in the front seat acted as a translator to resolve the situation. You see, in England and Ulster, pulling up means to pull off the road or pull over. The driver thought we were telling her to pull off the road so that we could figure out the window system!

As the week progressed we had

many a laugh about our common language. In England one doesn't dim the lights of a car, they dip them and you don't yield in traffic, you give way. Those aren't trucks on the road, they are lorries.

Then there are the different ways people use words. We go on vacation, they take holiday. We have a plan, they have a scheme. Cars don't pass, they overtake. It's not a highway, it's a motorway and they don't watch for a sign that says, "exit," they look for the sign that says, "way out." We say counter-clockwise, they say anti-clockwise.

There's no doubt about it, the challenges of our common language were frustrating, but that was the fun of it. All in all we had some really good crack, and in England it's okay to say that in public because "crack" means "fun." —

•Livestock

Continued from page 8

withstand the harsh climate there on a poor diet and still thrive.

Many of these variances on the standard cow or horse or pig were quite versatile. A cow, for instance, produced a fair amount of milk, was a good draft animal, and provided a good carcass for eating, but the versatility meant that the animal was not outstanding in any one of those areas.

As agriculture has become more and more specialized in order to meet the high production demands of an increasing population, breeds that were superior in only one area, like Holsteins which are renowned for producing prodigious quantities

of milk, were increasingly the farmers' choice. It no longer mattered about whether or not the Holstein could survive on the poor pasture in the mountains because they were kept in big modern barns. And it didn't matter if they were good draft animals or even good beef animals. As a result, many of the multi-purpose, hardy old breeds have disappeared and the populations of others have dipped dangerously low.

In 1973 a group of farmers in England became concerned about this situation and formed the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, an organization which now has 10,000 members. (There is a similar organization in America called the Ameri-

See BREEDS, page 12



Despite being designated as "rare breeds," farm animals like those found at the Cotswold Farm Park are bred, raised and

marketed in the same fashion as modern-day breeds. A butcher shop in the Oxford marketplace in minor breed products.



Cotswold sheep, above; Scottish highland cattle, at right



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In lieu of a genuine winter storm

Down on the farm we're thinking about winters we'd rather forget. We'd rather forget that December 2000 was... what was it... the sixth coldest December on record in 160 years? It was cold, yes. But it could have been worse. It could have been THE COLDEST December on record in 160 years. Just the same, it proved to be a brutal beginning to the winter of 2000-01.

In lieu of a genuine winter storm, I'm recalling weather of just a few years ago when winter gave us something to remember.

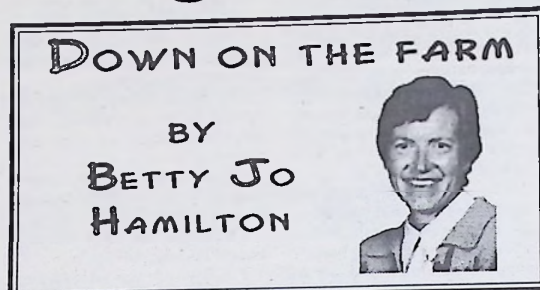
The severity of winters vary. We may have a mild one with few snows or we may have heavy snows and frigid temperatures. If bad weather comes, it usually hits in January. Even then, March and April don't seem far away. Spring is just around the corner if we can make it through the first month of the year.

But some years are different. I recall one year not so long ago. The calendar showed that winter was still "officially" three days away, but it seemed the season had its own ideas about marking its "unofficial" beginning. The ground had been covered with snow for three weeks. Daytime temperatures had not risen above 30 degrees and nighttime saw the mercury plummet to sub-zero levels.

The harsh winter weather had come as no surprise to community sages who interpret nature's signs. In the fall that year, all had seen the solid black woolly worms rippling their way to cold weather hiding places. The unbroken color of these creatures foretold a long, hard winter. There had been 23 foggy mornings in August indicating the number of snows we could expect. And when the first snow of the season fell on the 22nd day of November, this also indicated and confirmed the number of snows which lay in store for us in the winter ahead. The onslaught of winter weather early in December made us fear what January might hold for us.

But the community sages thought that if everyone would eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day, the good luck produced by that effort might reverse the weather's trend. It was hoped we could avoid a January similar to one we had experienced a few years before — the legendary month of January 1987.

It began snowing early one



morning in mid-January. It seemed an innocuous enough snowfall, yet it continued through the day and into the night. By the next morning, there was well over a foot of snow on the ground and it was still snowing.

"I b'lieve it's lettin' up," was my father's optimistic opinion of the weather that morning. I would withhold my opinion until the snow actually stopped.

Having taken a hog to town to be butchered the day before, my father and I were due to go pick up the meat the morning following the night of snow. My father had gone to feed at the other farms and I met him later in Middlebrook. He left his pickup in the village and we headed into town.

When we had a hog butchered we would bring the meat home, wrap it and freeze it ourselves as opposed to paying the butcher to do it. We also cured the hams which had to be done immediately after the hog was butchered and the meat had cooled. Because of the severity of the weather on this occasion, we chose to pick up only the hams from the butcher, leaving the rest to be dealt with by him. We had enough to keep us busy and thought we would be doing good to get the hams home and cured. Although only 13 miles from town, snow made the trip into town hazardous even in a four-wheel drive truck. We wasted little time getting the hams and heading home.

As the snow had tapered off and then stopped falling that morning, the sun came out. A good sign, we thought — until the wind began to blow. Twelve inches of new-fallen snow can be bad news; wind can turn it into a nightmare. When we reached the outskirts of town and open fields, my father and I could tell by what we saw that

things were going to get bad.

The wind picked up the snow and created a horizontal, moving white wall which distorted the landscape. Ground was exposed in some places and in other places snow drifted into waist-deep mounds. Snow plows had cleared the road but there remained little evidence of the effort. A mile from home the road was practically impassable. Within the hour of our passing, it became so. Travel conditions were deteriorating so quickly we did not even take time to stop and get the other pickup which had been left parked a mile-and-a-half from home in Middlebrook. The truck would go unretrieved for five days.

Walking to the barn the next morning I was struck by the silence. There was not the usual sound of traffic on the road as neighbors traveled to work or went about feeding their stock. Even the animals were quiet. Usually mooing or bleating in anticipation of their morning feed, the animals stood silently looking about, seemingly dazed by the weather.

When snow drifts, alternate routes of travel become open. My lane was drifted shut. I could see attempts to use it would be futile. On the other hand, the relatively flat meadow was maneuverable. I opened gates and drove out through the meadow bypassing the worst drifts in the lane. The wind had blown parallel to the front section of the lane and it was open. I drove to the end of the lane to the main road and looked in each direction. Within 100 yards of my lane snow was drifted to the tops of fence posts blocking the road in either direction. I turned the truck around and headed back to the barn.

Whenever it snows we look for snow plows from the state highway

department when we see them. When storms of the magnitude we experienced that January occur, we know all the state road crews and private contractors concentrate their efforts on the interstate highways and primary roads. The less traveled secondary roads on which we live are the last ones plowed. After three days in that January white-out, we had yet to see a snow plow. Finally, late in the afternoon of the fourth day, I heard the groan of heavy equipment approaching.

It took a grader — normally used for road repairs — with a huge V-blade attached to its front end an hour to clear a path along a half-mile stretch of the road past my house. The grader reached Middlebrook just before nightfall but within hours the mile-and-a-half stretch of road had drifted shut again.

In those days, my off-farm employment at the local newspaper kept me in a supply of black-and-white film. I had been taking photos of the snow thinking these might be used in the newspaper. Getting the film into town and to the newspaper office had not been possible with the roads closed. When the plows and a snowblower came into view the next day, I decided to make a break for it.

While I had been in and out of my house tending to farm chores, my mother and sister had been shut up in their respective houses for the better part of a week. I knew that while they probably had some supplies on hand, more than likely they were running short on groceries. With the roads just passable, my brother-in-law had driven my sister to my parents' house and left her there while he went about his farm work. When I went in my parents' house that afternoon, my mother and sister were just sitting there — each running high cabin fevers.

"I'm gonna' try to get into town. Do y'all wanna' go?" I asked. Catatonic stares were returned to my question and I repeated it — rewording and simplifying it — hoping the two women would comprehend.

"To town. Groceries. Do you need anything?"

My sister showed signs of life first with a weak, "Town?"

"Yes," I said. "I'm taking some film into the newspaper and I can

take you all to the grocery store if you need anything." They still were not registering any response so I had to shock them into reality.

"Look," I said, "the plows just went by. I'm going into town while the road is open." It was apparent to me that only a small window of opportunity in the swiftly deteriorating road conditions would allow us to make the trip into town and back home safely.

"Are y'all comin' or not?" I asked firmly and with more than a little impatience. The technique worked to the point that the women started to at least talk about going.

"Well, yes, I could use a few things," my mother said, "but I can't go lookin' like this." Both women were in jeans and everyday shirts. They wore clothes normally worn around the house. But for my mother, attire for a trip into town usually means no less than a skirt and blouse. The same holds true for my sister. I was standing in the kitchen in gum boots, coveralls and a waist-length insulated jacket.

"Just go like you are," I said. "I'm goin' like this."

"You are?" my sister asked incredulously. I don't normally wear my work clothes to town either but these were extreme circumstances which called for extreme measures. I had determined there was no time to waste with the frivolity of trying to choose some natty little outfit to wear to town — not to mention the impracticality of being stranded in a snow drift while dressed to the nines. Facing the very likely possibility of having to shovel my way through drifting snow, I didn't want to be caught out in weather in clothes not suitable for shoveling snow. As native New Yorker friends have pointed out, "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing." However convincing my mother and sister of the need to sacrifice their keen fashion senses to practicality was a point not easily won.

"I'm going to the truck now," I said. "You all get a move on if you're goin' with me." It was apparent the drill sergeant technique was the only approach which might move the two women to action.

Surprisingly I had waited in the truck for only a few minutes when my mother and sister came out of the house. They had not changed

See STORM, page 11

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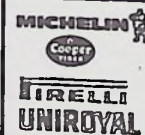


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•Storm

Continued from page 10

clothes but I could tell they had combed their hair. When they got in the truck it was obvious at least one of them had gone a step further. With the doors closed and three of us packed in the cab of the truck, I noticed it.

"What is that smell?" I asked.

"Oh, that's my Giorgio perfume," my mother said. "Do you like it?" I asked if there was any left in the bottle.

"That's pretty strong stuff," I said, cracking a window.

"Well I thought if I couldn't look nice I could at least smell nice," my mother reasoned.

We reached town with little trouble and went to the newspaper office first. I had worked there a little over two years and the thought did not occur to me that these people saw me on a daily basis dressed quite differently from my usual farm attire. For me, workplace attire consisted mostly of skirts and dresses and, on the odd occasion, nice slacks. Wearing sunglasses and regaled in gum boots,

coveralls and a heavy coat, I walked through the newsroom door. A reporter working at a desk just inside the door looked up at me from the work he was doing and asked: "May I help you?" I didn't reply because I knew this was treatment reserved only for strangers to the newsroom. It occurred to me then that—despite having known me for two years—my farm persona was unrecognizable to the reporter.

"It's me," I said, raising my sunglasses above my eyes, "Betty Jo." The reporter looked at me long and hard. Even after I identified myself, my work colleague couldn't equate the person he knew with the one he saw standing before him.

A few minutes later—having left the film to be processed and having convinced all concerned of my identity—I was back out the door and crossing the street to the truck. The windows were steamed up and when I opened the door waves of Giorgio perfume swept out of the truck and over me. I rolled the window down as I climbed in the truck and then turned in the direction of the grocery store.

"Now you all remember we

don't have much time," I said as my mother and sister got out of the truck at the grocery store. It would be dark in a little more than an hour and I wanted to be well on the way home before then. "And remember, anything you get we'll have to carry up the hill so just get the necessities." My parents' house is at the top of a steep hill. Even with moderate amounts of snow, the driveway can be impossible to navigate.

Two hairpin curves make getting up any speed a futile maneuver. When it snows, cars are left at the bottom of the hill. Drifted snow makes the driveway impassable even to four-wheel drive vehicles. When I had gone to pick up my mother and sister, I had made the ascent to my parents' house by driving up across the hayfield in front of the house. This allowed me to get a little closer to the house than the bottom of the driveway but still left me a considerable distance from the back door. I was hoping my mother was keeping this in mind as she shopped for emergency rations—the key words here being "emergency rations."

Some time later the grocery cart I

saw rolling out to the truck was full.

"I thought you just needed a few things," I said. Among the "emergency rations," I saw a 25-pound bag of cat litter and two 12-packs of Coca-Cola. Putting those items and the other four or five bags of groceries in the truck bed, I asked: "Why didn't you just get a small bag of cat litter or a six-pack of Coke?" You realize we're gonna have to carry all this stuff up the hill."

"Well, what if it snows again and I can't get back into town for another week?" my mother said indignantly and reasoned defensively. Since the groceries were bought and paid for, pursuing the issue was senseless.

I dropped my sister and her groceries at her house. We had no trouble getting up her driveway and pulled right up to the back door. I knew the situation would be different at my parents' house. Driving up across the hayfield in front of their house a few minutes later, I wasn't looking forward to carrying the groceries up the hill to the house. When I had driven the truck as far as it would go in the mounded

snow, I stopped and my mother and I got out. She picked up an armload of groceries and waded off through the knee-deep powder. I trudged after her, hoisting the cat litter onto one shoulder and picking up a 12-pack of the drinks with the opposite hand. The sun was beginning to set, rose-colored in a crystal blue sky. In my mother's wake, a wisp of a breeze carried the fragrance of Giorgio perfume back to me.

Maybe my mother could help Giorgio out with its next ad slogan. "He may forget about the weather, but he'll never forget Giorgio." Or how about, "Giorgio—stronger than a January snowstorm." Or maybe, "Giorgio—you'll wear it no matter what."

I may forget many things in this lifetime, but I will never forget the smell of Giorgio perfume wafting over drifts of January snow—the sweetly chilled evening air washing over me under my burden of cat litter and Coke.

Winters will come and go. Some will not bear remembering. Others will leave indelible marks on our memories, down on the farm. —

Rexford Roquefort Gastone III — little pig, big name

By JEAN H. BRYDGE

Rexford Roquefort Gastone III was a very big name for a teeny-tiny pig, and he was teeny-tiny, you see.

Sometimes when Mama Pig has a large litter, all of the piglets cannot get to the table. This usually results in the smallest, or the "runt," not receiving sufficient nourishment.

Rexford Roquefort Gastone III was such a runt. When my husband Lee and I were asked

if we wanted a pig, we were delighted and Lee rushed to the farm to acquire the new pet.

When Lee arrived back at home, he was accompanied by the dirtiest, smelliest, hungriest, squealiest pig anyone had ever seen! Immediately Lee's mother said, "He has to have a bath!"

So she soaked him in a bucket of warm, sudsy water and he turned into a little pink wiggler. For good measure, they put some baby powder on him, sort of a touch of perfume, you know. Next a baby bed in the form of a shoebox with a

baby blanket was prepared. Rexford snuggled in but kept crying so the next item on the agenda was a baby bottle. He gulped down weakened condensed milk and then went to sleep.

At this point, everyone looked at everyone else and chorused, "He has to have a name."

I said, "I like Rexford. It sounds English."

Lee said, "I like Roquefort. That's what he smelled like."

Jean's sister, Helene, spoke up with the suggestion of "Gastone."

"It sounds sort of French," she said. I said, "We'll call him all three but let's make him the 'III.' That has a distinctive ring to it." Thus, this wee piglet, about the size of my hand, became Rexford Roquefort Gastone III.

Later that evening, we three pig guardians plus Ted (Helene's husband) decided to go to a drive-in movie. The time frame was the late 50s and the musical "Oklahoma" was playing.

There was a perplexing problem—this little pig had to be fed every half-hour. What to do?!

Someone said, "We'll take Rexford Roquefort Gastone III (We always used his full name because he hated to have his name abbreviated!) with us to the drive-in."

Helene and I mixed sufficient formula, then snuggled the pig into his bed and away we went.

There were several factors we had failed to consider! It was summertime so we had to have the car windows down and baby pigs squeal!

Finally, the musical started. Unfortunately the pig started squealing.

I told Helene to keep the pig quiet and we took turns patting and talking and feeding him but

he wouldn't shut up. By this time, people in surrounding cars were trying to figure out where that pig was.

The four of us kept looking around as though we were also searching for the source. BUT, it's difficult to be nonchalant when there's a pig in your car screaming its head off. He was making such a ruckus he was actually drowning out the movie.

Lee and Ted kept insisting that the womenfolk "keep that pig quiet!" But not having been pig parents before, we didn't know what to do.

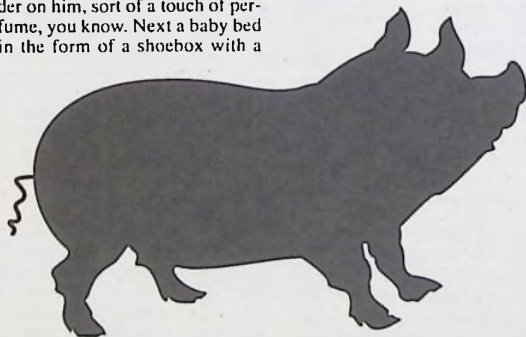
Finally, after one prolonged loud squeal, Rexford Roquefort Gastone III gasped... and died.

This presented a new set of problems. Helene and I didn't want to sit in the back seat with a dead pig. Four people couldn't sit in the front seat and no one dared get out and put Rexford Roquefort Gastone III in the trunk. After disrupting an entire theater, we were afraid we would be stoned.

Solution—leave the movie. Alas, it was never determined what killed Rexford Roquefort Gastone III. One of the husbands suggested it was the music. Someone else said perhaps the bath gave him pneumonia. There was even the thought it could have been his name.

But for a short while he lived the life of royalty—just as his name implied. —

Jean Brydge lives in Lyndhurst. She formerly wrote a column for the GE Plant News and has published articles in local newspapers. She has published poetry and this article represents her first published short story.



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What's new in gardening for 2001?

Early each year many societies and organizations announce their top picks and new introductions for the coming year. We should read these lists and pay attention to details about the improved selections of shrubs, trees, and plants. We may love our tried and true favorites but we need to be aware of hardier cultivars to combat cold winters, drought-resistant strains to fight hot summers, and brighter colors, varied foliage, and more profuse flowers to add impact to our gardening efforts.

The U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. is known for its research and new introductions. This year two miniature crape myrtles will be on sale through the trade. Each only grows 20 inches tall and 30 inches wide, so they can be planted in pots on your deck or patio as specimens.

Two American elms possessing the classic vase shape of older strains, yet resistant to Dutch Elm disease, have been in-

troduced. Look out for these cultivars: "Valley Forge" and "New Harmony."

For more information on new Arboretum introductions check out the Internet site <http://www.arsgrin.gov/na/>

Roses are summer favorites and the All-American Rose Selections organization in Chicago has cited three varieties that it feels will be winners. These plants have been grown for two years in 25 test gardens around the country and evaluated on 15 points.

We have Sun Sprinkles, a miniature bright yellow rose with 2 inch double flowers. This tiny plant grows to 2 feet and reblooms.

Marmalade Skies is a floribunda with tangerine flowers that blooms throughout the season.

Glowing Peace is a classic orange (tipped with yellow) rose, offspring of a famous grandparent, the original Peace.

These new selections will be available in early spring.

There is increased interest in growing organic heirloom vegetables and many catalogs are offering transplants. Seed Savers Exchange at 3076 N. Winn Road, Decorah, Iowa 52101 is selling pepper and tomato transplants.

American breeders have been developing compact cultivars of hibiscus with more colors and adaptability to lower light in our homes. Chinese hibiscus have flowers that average 6-8 inches in width. Grow these plants in a southfacing window or under lights. Move onto your patio for the summer.

Another handsome houseplant is the rex begonia. This family loves a minimum temperature of 65 degrees. The latest introduction is "Escargot," which has large, round leaves and wide bands of green on a black background resembling a snail shell. Grow in a west or east window in shallow containers in a light soil. Dry out between waterings.

Birches are beautiful trees because of their white bark and catkins, but

In the Garden

By Jenifer Bradford



many traditional cultivars do not like our hot summers and humidity and are prone to many pests and diseases.

Try a Heritage cultivar, the native Virginia roundleaf birch (available from Woodlanders, 1128 Colleton Avenue, Aiken, S.C. 29801), or the unusual B. nigra "Little King," which grows only 8-10 feet high (obtainable from Fairweather Gardens, Box 330, Greenwich, N.J. 08323).

Ornamental grasses provide winter interest and now related plants, sedges and rushes are being featured in perennial catalogs. These plants are low growing, make dense clumps, are often evergreen, and usually favor moist areas.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in Philadelphia (sponsors of the famous Philadelphia Flower Show each spring) has selected three cultivars of one plant among its 2001 Gold Medal Plant awards — a first in its 23-year history. *Ilex opaca*, the American holly, now has three outstanding cultivars: "Satyr Hill," "Old Heavy Berry," and "Jersey Princess," chosen because of their outstanding form, foliage, and fruit.

Even an old favorite shrub has been surpassed. *Daphne x burkwoodii* "Carol Mackie," introduced 30 years ago and known for its dense growth, 3-foot height, hardness, and spring-blooming masses of fragrant pink blooms with cream-edged leaves, now has a competitor. "Briggs Moonlight" has the same fragrant, pink flowers but the leaf color is reversed. The new cultivar likes good drainage and slightly acid soil. Plant among conifers or evergreens with dark foliage in full sun or partial shade but do plant it in a protected place away from drying winds. Nandina and crape myrtles get the same treatment in our climate.

Later in the spring lists of new annuals and perennials will appear. Watch out for these 2001 selections. Give some a try! —

~~~ Garden tips for February ~~~

This season we are getting a "real" winter with frequent freezing temperatures and periodic snowfalls and snow showers. The ground appears frozen to several inches as I write in early January. No doubt the worst is yet to come!

Yet who doesn't love the changes in weather, even cold ones? It gives us the opportunity to enjoy our indoor plants and potted bulbs, read our horticulture catalogs and gift books, plan future outdoor projects, and take a well deserved rest from garden toil.

No doubt snow removal will provide exercise enough. And a winter walk is always refreshing to look over our property, check out neighboring gardens, or take a walk in the park or woods to view natural plantings.

Indoors we can:

- Select a calendar strictly for garden use and begin recording observations.
- Plant up pots of spring bulbs over several weeks to replace fading Christmas plants.
- Set hyacinth bulbs atop a clear glass "hyacinth" vase and fill the vase with water up to the base of the bulb. Roots will soon grow downward as leaves grow upward.
- Grow paperwhite narcissi in pots filled with pebbles and stones and top up with water to the base of the bulbs. Keep the container topped

up with water as the water dissipates.

- Keep houseplant foliage clean with weekly baths (in the bathtub or kitchen sink).
- Force shrub branches into flower. Cut long stems on a warm day, crush stems, and place overnight in warm water. Then arrange in vases. Suitable flowering shrubs are forsythia, pussy willow, quince, apple and cherry blossom, and winter jasmine.
- Order seeds and plants from catalogs.

Outdoors we can:

- Feed the birds and give them fresh water.
- Prune evergreens and fruit trees while they are dormant. Choose a warmish day. Prune summer-blooming ornamental shrubs and trees. Do not prune spring-blooming trees and shrubs else you will remove the flower buds.
- Trim irregular or crossed branches and suckers from deciduous trees.
- Push back soil and mulch from around perennials to ensure they haven't heaved out of the ground by alternating freezing and thawing.
- Apply anti-desiccants to broadleaf evergreens on a day above freezing to prevent windburn.
- Keep off frozen lawns to prevent crown damage.

•Breeds

Continued from page 9

can Livestock Breeds Conservancy.) Just a few miles from our cottage the mission of the Rare Breeds group is being fulfilled at the Cotswold Farm Park near the little villages of Stow-on-the-Wold and Guiting Power.

According to the people at the farm park, there are three main reasons to conserve rare breeds: 1. As a living museum piece to enable people to see the type of animals used by their ancestors, 2. For research and to study the characteristics of these older breeds, and 3. Most importantly to preserve the gene pool because once a breed is extinct, its unique collection of genetic material is gone forever.

The farm park was just a few miles from Moreton-in-Marsh, so

we decided to visit this outdoor museum early in the week. A self-guided walking tour took us around the farm site where we observed animals prevalent in the Iron Age to the 19th century. The animals reflected the history of Great Britain. For instance, the shaggy-haired highland cattle, the small-bodied, bay colored Exmoor horse, and the short-tailed, self-shedding brown Soay sheep are remnants of the pre-historic Iron Age.

About 2,000 years ago the Romans invaded England and brought their own varieties of livestock, including long-wooled sheep. As these sheep crossed with the Soay type then certain varieties like the Cotswold emerged. Sheep began to be selectively bred for wool quality. These sheep were no longer self-shedding, but when they were shorn, the long forelock was left

intact so that the quality of a sheep's fleece could always be judged by the remaining "sample."

The Romans also brought white cattle, the descendants of which are white park cattle, animals that are all white except for their black ears and noses. Fewer than 500 of these are left in the world. In addition, the Romans also changed the gene pools of goats and pigs.

The next introduction of new livestock blood in England came with the Vikings. Several multi-horned sheep breeds, including Hebridean and Manx Loughan, and the naturally polled British white cattle, trace their ancestry back to the Vikings.

The Viking agricultural invasion came from the north, but the Saxons came from the south, from northern France. The Saxons had a profound effect on the sheep popu-

lation of Britain. Prior to the introduction of this continental blood, British sheep had been short-tailed, hairy (and for the most part self-shedding), multi-colored animals. Those older breeds were pushed further north until they were eventually isolated on the islands off the Scottish Coast. There, breeds like

North Ronaldsay, Shetland, and Orkney sheep remained as isolated remnant populations of the ancient breeds. The north Ronaldsay is a unique population which has adapted to a diet that consists entirely of seaweed.

The Normans arrived in England
See SHEEP, page 13

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USDA makes move to define 'organic'

When we first moved to the Shenandoah Valley, we lived in an apartment in Hartsburg, Georgia. Our daughter Emma was just two months old and my days were filled with the magic and terror of new motherhood. I used to walk around the parking lot of the apartment complex with Emma and take her out on the road to show her the cows. One of the reasons we moved here is because we wanted her to be able to run in fields and breathe fresh country air.

Well, about that fresh country air... almost three or four weeks after settling, we noticed a terrible smell permeating outside and inside our apartment. It smelled a little like cow manure, which never bothered me before. But the smell had a chemical taint to it - such a hard one that I became sick from it. My head ached, my stomach churned, and my skin felt like it was on fire. I had to call my husband to come home from work to tend to Emma.

I guess if you live in the rural parts of the valley, you become accustomed to the smell from fertilizer that gets spread on the fields. The smell, of course, went away in a few days, but I found it disturbing. The thought I could not wash my mind was this: if that is what is getting into our earth and our food, is that to be good?

Essentially, the new organic standard offers a national definition for the term "organic." It details the methods, practices and substances that can be used in producing and handling organic crops and livestock, as well as processed products.

next, I was sick just from the smell of it. I had flirted with the idea of organic food before I moved here. In Boston, we lived close to a Whole Foods Market, we tried to eat mostly organic fruits and vegetables, but they were too fast and were much more expensive. Our local Giant began to carry it at a more reasonable price and we thought a good bit of it, though we were never strictly organic.

But the combination of the horrible smell and of being a new mother turned me into another organic mame. I mean, what mother would knowingly feed her baby chemical-laden fruits, vegetables or milk?

It then became an confusing - different certifications, labels, and what not. We did not mind making the trek to Whole Foods in Charlottesville or paying extra for food

for Emma. But it was hard to tell if what we were paying was worth it. Well, as of Dec. 20, things in the organic food arena changed. The first national standard rule for the production, handling and processing of organically grown agricultural products was passed.

Essentially, the new organic standard offers a national definition for the term "organic." It details the methods, practices and substances that can be used in producing and handling organic crops and livestock, as well as processed products. It establishes clear organic labeling criteria, and specifically prohibits the use of genetic engineering methods, ionizing radiation, and sewage sludge for fertilization.

All agricultural products labeled organic must come from farms or handling operations certified by a state or private agency accredited by USDA. Farms and handling operations that sell less than \$5,000 worth per year of organic agricultural products are exempt from certification. Farmers and handlers have 18 months to comply with the national standards.

The final standard includes several changes from the first proposed rule issued last March.

- Enhancing market incentives for organic products by making product content requirements stricter before the term organic can be used on the main label, including, changing the percentage of organic ingredients in products labeled "Made with Organic Ingredients" from at least 50 percent to at least 70 percent.

- Providing better information for consumers by allowing manufacturers to state the exact percentage of organic ingredients on the principal display panel.

- Providing greater flexibility for organic farmers by simplifying requirements for composting of manure and by providing new options for dairy operations converting a whole herd to organic production.

- Incorporating industry standard practices by allowing wine produced with sulfur dioxide to be labeled "made with organic grapes" and adopting 5 percent



Down to Earth
By
Wollie Bryan

of the EPA pesticide tolerance as the pesticide residue level above which a product cannot be sold as organic.

We consumers of organic food will begin to see new organic labeling on products in our grocery stores by the summer of 2001, with full implementation by mid-2002.

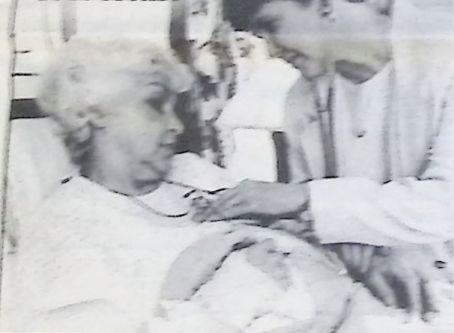
In doing this research, one thing amazed me - I found that organic farming was one of the fastest growing segments of U.S. agriculture during the 1990s. USDA estimates that the value of retail sales of organic foods in 1999 was approximately \$1 billion. The number of organic farmers is increasing by about 12 percent per year and now stands at about 12,200 nationwide, most of them small-scale producers. According to a recent USDA study, certified organic cropland more than doubled from 1992 to 1997. Two organic livestock sectors, eggs and dairy, grew even faster.

I am not a farmer and I am not a scientist, but I've done a lot of reading about food and the effect our environment has on our food and us. (One of the best books I've read is *Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment*, by Sandra Steingraber.) But it makes good sense to me that what we put in the land ends up - in one form or another - lodging in our bodies, and that we should pay attention to it. Especially when it comes to our children and babies because they are so small, what they eat affects them more.

I am glad that the USDA is taking steps in this direction. The current National Organic Standards Board is comprised of four farmers/growers, two handlers/processors, one retailer, one scientist, three consumer/public interest advocates, and one environmentalist. The statute states that three environmentalists serve on the board. Currently, there are two open environmentalist seats that are to be filled in upcoming months. Members come from all four U.S. regions. A 15th board member, representing certifying agents, will be appointed once the standards are in place.

Sounds like all they really need now is a couple of label-reading Moms to round out the mix.

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•Sheep

Continued from page 12

in 1056 and put their own imprint on the agricultural scene. The rise of the wool trade and the emergence of cattle prized for their dairy production were both results of this invasion. As people began making cheese to supply the growing population of London, then the Gloucester cattle breed emerged in the Cotswolds by the 13th century. These dark mahogany animals with a white line along the spine, a white belly and a white tail were responsible for the famous Double Gloucester cheese. Unfortunately, more modern demands of dairy production have favored quantity over quality so the Gloucester fell out of favor and breeds like the Holstein became popular. By 1975 there were only 12

Gloucester bulls and 60 females in all of England. The long-term outlook for this ancient animal is now more promising thanks, in part, to the breeding program at the Cotswold Farm, but the animal is still on the endangered list.

The Norman period also saw the rise of several massive draft horses including the Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk punch. When tractors replaced horses, the numbers of these animals dropped dramatically.

A number of breeds began to develop during the Tudor Period of the 16th and 17th centuries. The Portland sheep, probably a cross between the indigenous medieval sheep and some Spanish blood, emerged during this time. It was the first breed of British sheep able to have lambs at any time of the year. The older breeds are fertile only in the au-

See ANCIENT, page 17

British museum preserves life, times of 'James Herriot'

By JENIFER M. BRADFORD

Three thousand miles from England I'm sure that many readers in Augusta County know the names of Darrowby, Skeldale House, James Herriot, and Siegfried and Tristan Farnon. However, 23 Kirkgate, Alf Wight, and Donald and Brian Sinclair may be less familiar names. Actually fiction and fact merge in the World of James Herriot, the name Wight used to pen a series of books beginning with *All Creatures Great and Small*. The Yorkshire vet who became famous through his books now has a museum dedicated in his honor, the only museum in the British Isles devoted to veterinary science.

The setting is Thirsk, a small market town in the Yorkshire Dales. Solidly square-cut stone buildings line the streets beneath the dramatic hills. St. Mary's Church sits at one end of the street, aptly named Kirkgate, where Wight and his wife, Joan, were married. Number 23 faces the cobbled marketplace, a three-story building covered with ivy set behind wrought-iron railings. A bright red door with two plaques welcomes visitors. The original surgery and the house next door were bought in 1995 by the local Hambleton District Council after the death of Wight, restored, and reopened in April 1999 as The World of James Herriot Visitor Center.

Wight was born in Sunderland on Oct. 3, 1916. He was raised in Scotland by parents who loved books and music, and he studied to become a vet in Glasgow. In the

summer of 1940 he joined Donald Sinclair in his Yorkshire practice, and remained there for almost 50 years. Both men lived above the surgery initially. Joan joined Alf in rooms at the top of the house after they were married. The flat had a kitchen, but no running water. Donald married in 1943 and moved out two years later. Thus in 1945 Alf's family, which now included children Jim and Rosie, and Joan's mother, Laura Danbury, moved into the entire house.

Until the late 1960s, home and work shared the same space on the ground floor. There was no consulting room. The living room also served as the waiting room and the dining room doubled as the office. A tiny room functioned as the dispensary. The kitchen held a cookstove over which the laundry dried on wooden racks. A large table provided a place to eat and do homework.

The sitting room is now probably the most famous room in the house. It was recreated for the PBS television series "All Creatures Great and Small." From the French windows the long, walled garden can be seen filled with a neat lawn, flowers, and climbing wisteria. Eventually this sitting room became the practice waiting room and one afternoon a week Alf used to sign autographs for visitors here, including many American visitors. Although I never met Wight I did see his partner, Donald Sinclair, a tall, thin man, leaving the surgery one afternoon a few years ago.

The house with its 10 rooms was heated by only two fireplaces. With living accommodations such as this, it's fortunate

Wight was a fresh air fiend!

When son Jim was nine the family moved to their own home, a modern house (but without central heating). An Aga stove kept the kitchen cozy.

Last summer when I visited number 23 with my family we relived the "good old days" of which Wight (Herriot) wrote. The rooms on the ground floor have been recreated to reflect life as the family would have lived it in the 1950s. It was fascinating to walk into the "real" Skeldale House and see why the dining room at the front of the house was used as an office, to walk through the stone hallways, and to imagine the rooms full of clients, animals, and family. Everything has been arranged as if the cast of characters has but slipped out for a moment.

After leaving the kitchen and scullery we walked to the bottom of the garden. Outbuildings portray a typical animal foldyard. Old tools and farm utensils have been assembled and a short film narrated by actor Christopher Timothy (who portrayed James Herriot in the 90-part PBS series) is shown.

Back indoors we saw three studio sets from the TV series and then climbed up to the museum proper to look at the "visible farm" with real and working models of farm animals, antique surgical equipment, wonderful old photographs and mementos.

Jim Wight is now 56 and a vet himself in a modern practice nearby. Rosie is a recently retired medical doctor. Both have inherited their father's love of the Dales, its people, and animals. Both love to hike along some of their father's



Now a museum, 23 Kirkgate in Thirsk was made famous by author James Herriot, a.k.a. Alf Wight, in a series of books, which began with *All Creatures Great and Small*, about his veterinary practice in Yorkshire.

Photo by Jenifer Bradford

favorite routes and each May they join friends to go walking in Scotland, Wight's birthplace.

Wight (a.k.a. James Herriot) is remembered in many ways, but for

those of us who never met him in person we can read his stories, see him portrayed on film, and visit a special museum in his adopted homeplace of Thirsk in Yorkshire. —

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The rolling countryside of the Yorkshire Dales

Photo by Jenifer Bradford

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Schoolhouse News

'Mad scientists' use humor to teach laboratory safety

We all know that laughter is the best medicine. I should be able to quote my source, but for now, let's just say that research has proven that laughing chemically affects brain functioning in a positive way and makes us capable of accepting new ideas, forming conclusions, releasing tension... and remembering things.

Five years of teaching in a hall close to two of the best kidders and joksters at Beverley Manor Middle School helped me through lots of stressful situations. They also helped me teach better by remembering that humor is so important in the classroom. Our hallway WAS pretty funny — you never knew just what to expect. A sign of "Science Smells" appeared mysteriously in our hallway one day — George Savage loved making a stink in his Room 30! His nutrition experiments, shark and turkey dissections really turned heads (noses?) and he relished that.

One year, Patsy Kislek, across the hall in Room 29, bought an octopus at Wal-Mart! We all let the kids work the suction cups on the tentacles and put their hands in its mantle. We'd refreeze it until each of the teacher trio needed it. It got a little fishy smelling toward the end of the day, and by the end of our units. The smell of boiling lobster came from my room (Room 31) AFTER we had our lobster races. I wanted students to be able to taste that delicacy, so we had a "lobster feast" that culminated our crustacean unit. Great fun. Many of the things Patsy and George taught me had to do with finding humor in most any situation. Together, we often used humor to our advantage, not at the students' expense, mind you, but making some



"Mad scientists" (from left) Axel Dently, Duit Wong, and Breaka daRules, a.k.a. Betty Gatewood, George Savage and Patsy Kislek use humor to teach students about lab safety.

enjoyable learning experiences for our students.

George taught me lots about laughing, joking, and turning a "teachable moment" into a "remembering moment" by adding a line, a joke, a funny story, or a weird activity. Patsy taught me not to take myself too seriously and to remember that some frustrations

are pretty minor in the cosmic scale of things. Most importantly they both taught me that kids learn best if they are having a good time.

One of our finest, funniest and most amusing times came as a result of me trying to figure out how I could make teaching lab safety a little more interesting and memorable. I had just read an article in



From the teacher's desk

By Betty Gatewood

ScienceScope magazine about how a science teacher taught safety by demonstrating everything in an inappropriate way and then having her students recount to her the mistakes she made. Wouldn't the kids have a good time seeing US do everything wrong and in an unsafe way? Maybe they would remember the crazy antics, and remember the right way of being safe in the lab.

I decided that I would dress up like the "mad scientist" and do it. I then had the brainstorm to ask George and Patsy if they would like to do it too so we could involve all three teams of students. They were enthusiastic; our mad-cap happening was hatched. On our mad scientist day, we decided to exit our respective rooms with a little fib about meeting a guest speaker, then reappeared "in character." Enter The Mad Scientist Trio...

Meet Sweden's own "Breaka daRules" (a.k.a. Patsy Kislek) and since you can't experience her in person, imagine hearing her undulating, thick Swedish accent while she is playing with two unknown chemicals and drinking soda out of a beaker. "Yaah! Lits puut zis and zat toegather, yaah????? Ooooooh, such preeetty colers and what fizzzzzzies!! Yaahh!! Ohhh, such thirsteeeee work!!!" (Lessons to be covered: Never combine unknown chemicals in unknown amounts and never eat or drink in lab.)

Meet "Duit Wong" (a.k.a. George Savage) - recently relocated from China to Augusta County where his specialty is doing everything "wong." Imagine, if you could, his nodding, bowing and repeated, "AAAhhhhhh, SSSooooo! AAAhhhhh,

SSSooooo!" as he "lights" a Bunsen burner and then tosses the match into the waste basket, puts a piece of broken glassware on the burner, and refuses to use goggles for the lab time. (Lessons: Fire safety [match disposal, goggles use]; and glassware safety)

Meet yours truly — "Axel Dently" — sometimes her accent indicates she's from "the hills," sometimes you'd swear she's from London, but wherever she's from, it is a wonder she made it anywhere since she's very accident prone. She enters the classroom wearing her mis-buttoned lab coat and pushing her lab cart of tricks. Snakes coil through her flowing coat sleeves and out of her front pockets, her myriad necklaces are swinging, goggles strapped onto her upper arm, and her long, bushy hair is flying. She accidentally overturns a beaker of chemicals as she pulls out a (plastic) turtle, "hacks away" at it without any procedures. She tosses "unnecessary" lab papers and egg shells all over the demonstration lab desk and tells students to not tell anyone about her spills and mess because the janitor will get it later. (Lessons: The dress code in lab means no flowing sleeves/jewelry and that long hair must be secured; treat all animals with respect; follow directions during an experiment and if an accident or spill occurs, tell the teacher right away and clean it up.)

The trio members do have some similarities: they all wear full-length white lab coats, wigs and those funny glasses with the attached noses/mustaches. On the day we do this craziness, we sched-

See SCIENCE, page 19

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ONCE UPON A TIME

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Local youth attend leadership seminar

By HOLLY BUNN

Select students from schools in Rotary District 7570 recently attended a youth leadership conference at Virginia Tech. Each school's local Rotary Club sponsored the trip and provided chaperones for the students. The purpose of the seminar was to recognize the leadership potential and achievements of young people in the area.

The conference provided many

speakers and activities, all with messages relating to the students' roles as leaders. One of the best programs presented was "True Colors" by professor Robert Meadows of Virginia Tech. This allowed all of the participants to first learn about themselves as leaders. A short test was taken by everyone to help each student discover his or her own leadership characteristics. Based on the results four groups were formed and assigned various team activities.

Other speakers also conversed

with the seminar participants. Dave Meyer, a quarterback of the Virginia Tech football team, discussed his role as a leader on and off the field. Additional speakers included Fred Combs and exchange students who spoke about the youth exchange program in our area.

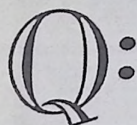
One of the most entertaining parts of the weekend was a segment dealing with problem solving and conflict management. All participants were divided into small groups and given a list of

dilemmas faced by today's society. The issues were discussed within each group and one was performed in a skit involving all group members. This allowed everyone to learn how to deal with the tough situations of today.

Students from Stuarts Draft, Wilson Memorial, Lee, Riverheads, and Buffalo Gap high schools attended. Although the seminar was cut short due to the weather, it was an excellent and useful program for all in attendance. —

The Hitching Post

Read between the lines in horse-for-sale ads



I am looking to purchase a horse for my daughter. She has been taking lessons for a while now and when looking at ads we see terms that we are not sure about. "Smooth, flashy mover," and "started under saddle," are unfamiliar. What do these mean? She is a beginner to intermediate rider and wants a horse to show in 4-H. Can you explain some of the terms to us?

— D.W., Waynesboro

It will be important for you to consider some of these terms for show purposes. One of the basics you will need to understand is conformation. This is a term referring to how a horse is put together. If a horse is said to be smooth, then it means it has conformation or physical attributes that make a smooth gait. The rider does not "bounce" all over the place as one would on a rough-gaited horse. Part of the picture is in conformation. *There are lots of books that can help you understand the conformation of a horse better.*

An ad that advertises a smooth gait means that the seller is saying the horse travels well. The rider does not bounce around. If your daughter rides different horses she will understand what this means. Some horses' gaits are choppy or rough which is more difficult for the rider to sit. Riding a smooth gaited horse is like having a glass of water on top of your head without spilling a drop.

The term "flashy mover" means

that the horse attracts attention. This could be for different reasons. Some horses have color, such as four white socks that draw favorable attention. When the horse moves, the color draws the eye to the legs and movements of the horse. It also could mean that the horse has charisma or a type of energy when moving. This energy can be in athletic ability or in personality. The horse draws attention to it because it has a spark of enthusiasm.

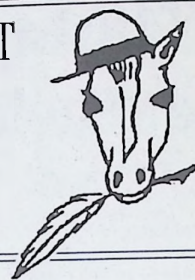
Horses that are started under saddle are usually not well broke. The training has begun, but the horse has not had experience or exposure to a lot of different situations. This means that the horse has just begun to be ridden. I do not recommend a horse that is started under saddle for a beginner unless they work with a trainer. If the temperament is good, a horse started under saddle can be trained by a beginner, but the beginner will often have a difficult time "seeing"

problems ahead of time. A trainer or instructor can help with common problems and keep serious problems from starting.

An example of potential problems is the clashing of aids. If the beginner can keep the aids clear and straightforward he will train the horse well. If the rider clashes the aids, such as pulling on the mouth when the horse moves off or squeezing with the heels to hang on when asking the horse to halt, then it confuses the horse. If the horse becomes confused in the early stages of training then it doesn't develop a clear understanding of the aids and the rider will not have a solid foundation upon which to build.

Another term you might see is "green broke." This is a term for horses that are just being started under saddle, too. They are not solid enough in their training yet to take many mistakes from a rider. Mistakes will undo their training rather easily. Horses that are well broke can weather more mistakes and still maintain most of their training (foundation). It is the difference between "schooling" a horse and "training" a horse. Schooling a horse is when a rider "tunes up" a horse that already knows right and wrong. The horse might pick up bad habits from inexperience, but a good rider can

I.B.HOOFINIT
From
the
Horse's Mouth



correct the horse quickly. This often happens with lesson horses. The horses are well-trained, beginners ride and untrain, the instructor rides and reschools them back to being well trained. It is a constant cycle.

When a horse is trained it is starting out as a clean slate. The trainer teaches the horse what is expected and reinforces the actions and reactions constantly. The trainer squeezes his legs and the horse learns to move off. The trainer pulls back on the reins and the horse learns to stop. The horse has to be taught to respond to the pressure correctly through repetition. It takes time and patience for the horse to learn to react to the pressure the same way EVERY time. That is training.

Another term you might see is

bomb proof. This means the horse has been exposed to many different situations and does not spook. It remains steady as a rock in all situations. This is a good term to look for when buying a horse.

I suggest that you take some time to learn about conformation and how it affects the horse's movements. If you are considering showing the horse it will be one of the most important investments you can make. A horse with poor conformation will rarely place in the ring except in equitation classes, which judges the rider.

Take it from the horse's mouth, besides temperament, breed selection, and training, conformation is also a very important consideration in any purchase.

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 ap-

proval. 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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Here, there, & everywhere

FCE holds annual Achievement Day

The New Hope FCE Club celebrated its year activities by holding an Achievement Day at New Hope United Methodist Church recently. Special guests were Crislin Campbell, Augusta County Extension agent; Kay Frye, Augusta County Middle River District Supervisor; Janet Kline, Virginia FCE president-elect; Ruth Cox, Rockbridge County FCE president; Mary Aruther, Rockbridge County FCA vice president; and Sara Fitzwater, Area VI secretary.

Nellie Flora, New Hope club president, gave a report on the club's accomplishments during the year noting that 16 members volunteered over 3,700 hours and read 713 books.

Ms. Campbell installed officers for 2001 including Judy Grove, president; Linda Howdyshell, vice president; Catherine Crickenberger, secretary; and Jean Miller, treasurer.

Kay Hipes, "The Bear Lady" of 15 years, entertained members with her varied collection of bears. She gave a program during which she related each bear to a story or verse of the Bible.

Years of membership and reading certificates for 2000 were awarded as following: Mary Jane Shaver — 49 years, 110 books; Betty Ott — 48 years, 32 books; Nellie Flora — 47 years, 15 books; Catherine Crickenberger — 38 years, 225 books; Wilhelmina Gaddy — 40 years, 5 books; Bettye Randolph — 32 years, 15 books; Linda Howdyshell — 20 years, 40 books; Judy Grove — 20 years, 65 books; Helen Stogdale — 16 years; Jean Critzer — 9 years,

120 books; Jean Miller — 6 years, 15 books; and Helen Braunworth — 5 years, 29 books.

New Members were recognized and given reading certificates as follows: Betty Coffman, 19 books; Charlotte Blosser, 12 books; Lena Mahone, 94 books; and Sue Bendle.

On display were 36 bears which members dressed for the Salvation Army. This was the club's service project. The bears will be given to children at Christmas. A covered dish luncheon and door prizes ended the celebration. —

Augusta agent wins national 4-H award

DENVER, Colo. — Jennifer Mercer, Augusta County 4-H Extension agent with Virginia Cooperative Extension, was honored with the Achievement In Service Award by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents. Mercer was among over 1,300 youth professionals from



MERCER

across the nation to participate in the association's 54th annual conference Nov. 5-9 in Denver, Colo.

Each year NAE4-HA recognizes members for Extension work by presenting awards for outstanding accomplishments in achievement, leadership, and communication. Mercer received the Achievement in Service Award during the Annual Recognition Banquet, Nov. 7.

This award is presented to an NAE4-HA member with at least three but not more than seven years of service to Extension Youth Programming. The ASA is based on work with professional associations and Extension Committees, professional improvement, professional accomplishments, personal interests, and community contributions.

The conference theme was "Personal and Professional Peaks." The conference allowed Extension youth professionals the opportunity to learn innovative, up-to-date educational information, methods and techniques, exchange ideas, and to promote cooperation among all Extension personnel. —

Virginia Museum quilt exhibition on display at Staunton-Augusta Art Center

STAUNTON — An exhibition by Virginia quiltmakers is on display at the Staunton Augusta Art Center through February 16. This exhibit features the work of 11 Virginia quiltmakers in an exhibition conceived and organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and sponsored locally by Planters Bank and the Staunton Augusta Art Center.

Quilts are valued for their warmth, their beauty, and the story that each quilt tells.

Quiltmaker Becky Brown of Richmond remembers the quilts that have been in her family for years. "Their makers come alive in my mind and define my link in the genealogy chain. I know who I am," she explains. In addition to traditional or sentimental value, however, a quilt can express individual creativity that can imbue it with artistic value, according to Eileen Mott of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts staff.

Mrs. Mott, the exhibition's organizer, worked with quilting guilds from across Virginia to select 11

accomplished quilters, including Mrs. Brown. Each was asked to submit a single patch in each of three styles. "The results were imaginative, astonishingly intricate and colorful, and genuinely show the unrecognized creative and artistic talents of Virginia's quiltmakers," Mrs. Mott says.

In addition to Mrs. Brown, the quiltmakers represented in the 11 panels are Lena M. Behme of Winchester, Isabel Biller and Maly H. Scott of Lynchburg, Katherine Bowles and Jill Quick of Roanoke, Beth Ford and Barbara Zygiel of Alexandria, Bonnie Lucy of Virginia Beach, Ella Opheim of Norge, and Shedd Reese of Charlottesville. Each artist brings her own inspiration to quilt making. "I grew up sleeping under the quilts my grandmother made," says Ms. Barbara Zygiel. "Some day the quilts I make may become part of someone's treasured possessions or memories. My greatest joy is knowing that my work will live after me." Ms. Lucy's love of quilting comes from a different center. "I would say that quilting has been a passion of mine for the last 10

years," she says. "I see quilting designs everywhere I look. I will never be able to make all the ideas I have in my head."

The 30 squares in the single full-size pieced quilt in the display were created by women representing quilting guilds from throughout the state. Each was provided with swatches of material and worked in her favorite patchwork design. "We provided some fabrics to lend visual coherence to the final product," says Mrs. Mott, "but each of the 30 quilters added material of her choice for individual expression." Finally, the 30 squares were assembled into a whole quilt by members of the Richmond Quilter's Guild, who contributed more than 400 volunteer hours to the project.

"Like other artists, quilters must make decisions about color, shape, line, and pattern," Mrs. Mott explains. "'Pieces of Virginia' explores these ideas and decisions through outstanding examples of patchwork design." Mrs. Mott likens the patchwork quilt to another artistic form — jazz — because both quilting and jazz are uniquely

American. "The quilt is a vibrant explosion of color, full of contrasting and clashing elements, which in the final work are arranged into harmonious and rhythmic compositions," she says. "The full-size quilt in 'Pieces of Virginia' is a fine example of all these factors coming together in a successful whole," she concludes.

The exhibit is also fascinating because of the insight it offers into the quilting tradition in Virginia. "Pieces of Virginia" presents one full-size quilt and 11 panels containing five elements each: a statement by the quilter, a color photograph of the quilter and her work, and pieced-quilt patches in three traditional designs — log cabin, drunkard's path, and feathered star.

The exhibit will be on view at the Staunton Augusta Art Center through Feb. 16. The Art Center, located adjacent to the main entrance of Gypsy Hill Park, is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday. Admission is free. Call the Art Center at 885-2028 for information. —

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•Ancient

Continued from page 13

turn and thus only lamb in the spring. In 1993 there were less than 500 Portland ewes in the world.

The 17th and 18th centuries saw a dramatic change in the breeds of pigs due to the introduction of Asian blood. Swine from the Far East did a poorer job of filling out as meat animals, but they produced extremely large litters of up to 30 babies compared to the half a dozen or so in the litters of the older pig varieties.

The Asian blood changed the appearance of pigs giving them the

punched in nose and lop ears found on almost all modern pig breeds. The red-colored Tamworth is the rare example of a breed little influenced by the Asian blood. They have long snouts, prick ears and produce small litters of just 7 or 8 piglets.

Tamworths do well when foraging out in the fields and forests and their dark hair and skin makes them resistant to sunburn. Because they do not mature to butchering size as quickly and have relatively small litters, they have not been the breed of choice by modern pig farmers. In 1995 there were less than 100

See PIGS, page 19

Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin



January 2001

Dear Maude,

Thank goodness I was able to spend some time at home over the holidays, get a little rest and build up my energy level. I certainly have needed that extra energy this month! There has been so much going on that it has been hard to keep track of things. And, to make things worse, the first few weeks of the month, no one knew exactly what was going to happen or who would be offered what position. It is awfully hard to be the first one to welcome and entertain a soon-to-be powerful person when the signals are so mixed. The boss did a lot of pacing the floor and biting his nails. We managed to encourage him to go to the gym and work off his frustrations as well as a few pounds from that massive entertaining spree he engaged in over the last months of the year 2000.

Once we got the boss out of the office, then there was no time to spare. One person spent almost all of his time trying to keep up with the final days of the Clinton administration. The executive orders were being issued faster than we could deal with them. And then, as word of the expected appointments began to start leaking out, in dashed the boss in a fluster. "Call the restaurant for reservations."

He was doing his homework so that when the confirmation hearings began, the appointee just might recognize a good friend's face in the crowd. All of this might not be so bad, except that there was the upcoming inauguration to deal with. There were tickets to be obtained. There were calls to be made reminding certain people of past favors, and that one only needed four tickets, after all. "We will see what we can do," became a familiar

response to our requests. That answer did not bother those of us on the staff so much, but it sure did get the boss into a rather excited mood. Of course, those old favors usually are paid off. Unfortunately, at the last minute someone has to go stand in line to pick up those precious tickets. My turn came on a cold rainy day and I ruined one of my best pairs of shoes as well as managing to pick up a few germs that attacked my head and throat.

Inauguration week itself was pretty crazy. All sorts of things had to be done to get ready for a show like the one scheduled for the 20th. The reviewing stand, as well as bleachers had to be constructed. Traffic around the White House was altered and streets blocked off. All of a sudden the route you have always taken is no longer open to you. With the free concert on the Mall on Thursday, not only were streets closed but bridges as well. Disgruntled workers speculating about their evening trip home were not the easiest of people to deal with that morning. The next morning they were in an even worse frame of mind. It was good that all of our requests had been taken care of before then, or the boss would really have been in a state.

When all of the dust settled, the boss actually had a couple of extra tickets to the inaugural services and offered them to the staff. I decided to decline the one offered to me for I could not afford to ruin still another pair of shoes standing in not only rain but snow as well. I opted instead to spend the day in bed with a big cup of hot chocolate, a good mystery novel, and view the proceedings on my little television set. And now the transition has taken place. Suddenly things seem so very still. The air in

town is like that at a large family reunion with relatives you either do not know or never met. We have lost that entertainment value of the Clinton years, but then it is difficult to sit through eight years of fast-paced, sexy movies without a little break.

One has to admit that the Clintons had the power to take our minds off our own mundane activities. Who could worry about the weather and how much that new hair cut cost when we had Monica to keep up with! What are a couple of our own unpaid bills compared to poor Linda Tripp's terrible woes? But now we can settle down to a little down home, rainy afternoon activity, watching television and waiting for something exciting to happen.

This will not be a bad thing, because all of us here in this office as well as the rest of Washington need to conserve our energy for what is to come. Congress should keep the private sector hopping with all this talk of tax cuts. It does not matter what form those tax cuts take or who will benefit; it is the shock value of the "tax" word and the "cut" word. Suppose when either one occurs that someone messes with a special tax privilege? The slightest possibility of something like that happening triggers the sending of letters (as well as invoices) to the clients, and sends the rest of us scurrying back and forth to the hill to listen to every word spoken by the honorable members there.

With all of this ahead of me, I guess I had better go out tomorrow and buy myself some new shoes!

Love to all at home,
LuLu

Winter is for the birds, or did I use that already?

By MARK GATEWOOD

Looking through my notebooks for the past year confirmed a nagging suspicion: I didn't get out much last winter. It's not that the weather was bad; on balance, it was quite a mild winter. Maybe it was because my judgement is improving: no more going fishing in 40-degree rain or hiking on iced-over snow (that was the Furnace Mountain Trail in Shenandoah National Park; never again!) Or maybe something came along which made me content to stay at home and let the outdoors come to me.

Most Saturdays and Sundays, mid-morning and again late afternoon, found me standing at the window with binoculars, a clipboard and a pencil, counting and recording the birds at our feeders. I had become a Project FeederWatch junkie.

If you've read *From the Teacher's Desk*, you know about Classroom FeederWatch. What I'm doing is the home version. It's a

program of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, an education and research organization promoting the study of birds. Project Feeder Watch was started in 1987 as a winter survey of birds at backyard feeders in North America. Goals of the project include tracking the distribution and abundance of birds over time, detecting changes in the winter ranges of feeder birds, and monitoring the movements of nomadic birds such as the red-breasted nuthatch which occurred here in numbers last winter.

I have been birding and keeping notes and lists for over 30 years, but this is the first time I've really done anything so systematic. It has made me pay attention to numbers of birds at our feeders and their distribution throughout the season. For instance, just by looking at my data for last year, I've noticed that this year's feeder season got off to a slow start because of the abundance of natural food created by last summer's good growing season. As late as Nov. 18, my second

count weekend, birds were feeding on masses of poison ivy and Virginia creeper berries on the hill above our house. The hill, in fact, was crawling with birds, but only a few were showing up at the feeders. Also, we have a new — or did I just miss it last year? — species, the white-crowned sparrow. The male is a strikingly handsome bird with broad white crown stripes and a pink bill. I'm happy to see them here.

I mentioned a FeederWatch goal of monitoring the movement of nomadic birds. This is the sort of things that puts birders all atwitter: the so-called "northern finch winter," when numbers of birds whose regular winter ranges are far to the north — we're talking about Canada — suddenly show up at feeders in the lower 48. Even the names are exciting: redpoll, crossbill, grosbeak. It was once thought that bad weather drove these birds south. Now, it appears that cycles of scarcity of coniferous tree seeds drive the birds south. Just like our

oaks, the northern conifers produce years of abundant seed followed by years of scarcity. One of the nifty things you get as a FeederWatcher is access (via Internet) to animated range maps that show the yearly ebb and flow of these northern visitors.

How much work is it to do a FeederWatch? As little or as much as you like. They ask that you count on two consecutive days every other week, or weekly if you submit data online. A few minutes of actual observation might be all that's needed, or you may get into longer sessions. The goal is to get the maximum number of each species seen at your feeders at one time. The observations also record basic weather data for the period and an estimate of the amount of time you spend. At some point in the season, you have to register your feeder site, which entails describing the location of your site and details of landscaping, plantings or other things attractive to birds. There is a fee of \$15 per

year which supports the program and provides watchers with instruction packets and data sheets. There don't seem to be many sites in the area, so if you think you'd like to pitch in, write the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850 or log on at <http://birds.cornell.edu/pfw>.

Ecologists have long believed that birds may be indicators of the health of our environment. A recent example is the apparent reduction in numbers of warblers returning to North America each spring which is linked to the destruction of their wintering range in the tropical rainforests. FeederWatch data will show population trends right here at home which may alert us to our own environmental problems. As a side benefit, FeederWatch also contributes to mental health — mine! On days when the weather is really too bad to get outside, counting those feeder birds has saved me from a raging case of cabin fever. —

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4-H Outdoor Sports Club hosts match

VERONA — The Augusta County 4-H Outdoor Sports Club held its annual Bill Suter Christmas Air Rifle Match Dec. 14, 2000. Nineteen shooters participated in the match. All participants are members of the 4-H Outdoor Sports Club. The course of fire for the competition included 10 rounds in each of three positions — prone, kneeling, and standing.

The results of the 2000 match were as follows: high individual overall, Lee Kelley; high rookie (first time participating in the match) David McCutchen; high prone, John Fulton; high kneeling, Matt Mitchell; high standing, Lee Kelley. Boys and girls ages 9-19 are eli-

gible to join the 4-H Outdoor Sports Club, which meets two times per month throughout the year. The club is given leadership by several volunteers including Don Studer who serves as the head range officer. Each new member must go through a safety course conducted by the club before being allowed to go on the range. An indoor range with 19 firing points and all equipment is provided and there is no membership fee to join. Members learn gun safety, handling, and shooting skills through practice with air rifles. For information about this club, call Jennifer Mercer, 4-H Extension agent at 540/245-5750. —



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MCCUTCHEN



FULTON

MITCHELL

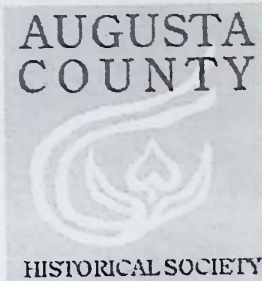
Augusta County Historical Society unveils new logo

Nearly 35 years after it was founded, the Augusta County Historical Society has a logo of its own. The first use of the new logo will be on the society's journal, *The Augusta Historical Bulletin*, announced ACHS president Nancy Sorrells.

"It is fitting that the new logo be on the *Bulletin* because this issue, which members will be receiving shortly, has an entirely new look," said Sorrells. The new *Bulletin* will be published annually, instead of semiannually, and will be much longer. "Now it will always be around 125 pages, more than twice the size of the old journal, it will be indexed and will have a spine like a real book," she added.

The artwork on the new logo was taken from a tombstone in the Glebe Burying Ground, one of the oldest cemeteries in the county with stones dating back to the 18th century. The graveyard is located on what was once the Glebe Farm — land that Augusta County was required to supply to its Anglican minister. In the colonial period, there was no separation of church and state and the Anglican church (now Episcopal) was part of the government and supported by taxes. The people buried in the cemetery are county citizens who lived nearby.

For a number of years now the



historical society has been charged with maintaining the cemetery, which is located southwest of Staunton. Before that, the Daughters of the American Revolution oversaw its upkeep in the 20th century. Buried within the one-acre plot are at least six Revolutionary War soldiers, one member of the House of Burgesses, and three people who were killed in an Indian raid. Although many of the stones bear the names of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, one stone is written in German.

The flourish on the logo is half of what visitors would see on the top of Mary Trimble's tombstone. Her stone is not only the oldest dated stone in the cemetery, but is rare because it is a coffin-shaped ledger stone meaning that the long stone lies flat on the ground and instead of being rectangular, it is shaped like an 18th-century coffin. The tombstone carver added some of his own personality with the folksy carving at the top. Then he chipped out the following inscription:

"Here, Lyes, the Body of Mary Trimble, who departed, This Life Feb. 18th in the Year of Our Lord 1770. Grave to All you that Come. My Grave 'To See. As I am Now So Must You Bee. Repent. In Time make No Delay. In the Bloom of Youth I was Snatched Away."

"We have incorporated a piece of artwork from an artist whose name is lost to history but who was an active stonecarver here in the county when this was still a frontier," said Sorrells. "What better way to reach out and embrace our past than with this logo that spans the centuries?"

Sorrells had high praise for the logo's designer, Cheryl Lyon of Rockingham County. Lyon designs gifts and accessories in porcelain and glass. Area residents have seen Lyon's work in historical anniversary pieces like the plate created for Staunton's 250th birthday. In addition to the new ACHS logo, which Lyon created at no cost, she also designed the cover for the new *Bulletin*. For more information about joining the historical society, call 248-4151. ---

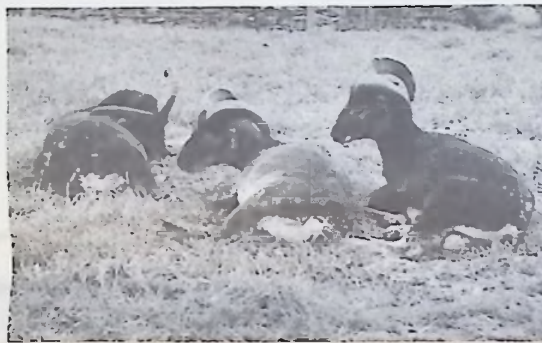
•Pigs

Continued from page 17

Tamworth sows in England.

The farm park also had a number of poultry breeds, including a variety of ducks, chickens, geese, guineas and turkeys. Many people don't realize that some of the weirder-looking poultry types, those with feathered feet and fuzzy heads, are actually very old, with pedigrees that go back to Ancient Rome or beyond. In fact, all domestic poultry descend from Asian Red Jungle Fowl. Just as with other types of

See POULTRY, page 20



Soay sheep — the oldest breed of domestic sheep

•Science

Continued from page 15

ule ourselves pretty tightly even though it might seem improvised on the spot. We "perform" in our own classes first, then after about 15 minutes of antics with the class of that period, we dance to the other's classroom and do the same for another class. All 300 seventh

grade science students get to see and experience all three mad scientists regardless of whose team they are on. It is a hoot. We have great fun. The kids have fun and they remember. The kids clamor for the return of The Trio and sometimes we accommodated them at Friday lunches and once at the spring talent (?) show. Lessons were learned with a little laughter - ours and theirs! It was a kick.

Duit, Breaka and Axel really had something there, but things are

changing. I recently transferred to Stewart Middle School and brought "Axel Dently" to life as a solo performance. It just wasn't the same, and it won't be just like that again. Patsy is pretty comfortable at Beverley Manor and George will retire this year. But wait! Maybe Duit will come out of retirement to visit an old colleague next year for a demonstration????!! Hey, George, don't pack that wig too far away! Now, how can we get Breaka for a day???? —

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Mary Trimble's tombstone is the oldest dated stone in the Glebe Burying Ground near Swoope. The rare ledger stone is shaped like an 18th-century coffin and bears a symbol which has been incorporated into the design of the new logo for the Augusta County Historical Society.

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Appearing Nightly

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon serves up sumptuous oriental fare

Director Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* defies genre. Written by James Schamus, Wang Hui Ling and Tsai Kuo Jung and based on a 70-year-old novel by Wang Du Lu, it is an action-adventure, fantasy, romance, drama, myth, tragedy, and martial-arts film. I even detected a good, old-fashioned kick-butt western buried in it. Yet when all is said and done, it is very Chinese.

Li Mu Bai (Yun-Fat Chow) has given up his life as a Wudan Warrior — and his chance to avenge the death of his mentor. In a symbolic gesture he gives away his sword, the Green Destiny. A fellow warrior and his dearly beloved Yu Shu Lien (Michelle Yeoh) takes the weapon to a friend in Peking, the legendary Sir Te.

No one who beholds the Green Destiny can resist its incredible beauty and power. The very night Sir Te accepts the sword into his house, a darkened figure breaks in

and steals it. Alerted to danger, Shu Lien chases and confronts the culprit in what turns out to be the first martial arts fight of the movie. Their gracefully, silent race over rooftops, up and down vertical walls, and lightning-swift sword play hints at what is in store for the viewer.

The thief escapes into the night, identity still unknown. What Shu Lien does know is that the thief is exceptionally well trained in Wudan. The next day the neighborhood is abuzz with news of the theft and rumors that it is the work of Jade Fox — the murderer of Li's master. Shu Lien, however, suspects it is the governor's young daughter Jen Yu, whose fascination with the adventurous Wudan life reveals how much she chafes at her female destiny.

The story is far too convoluted to explain and any attempt to do so would surely ruin all the surprises. Suffice to say, the evil Jade

Fox is at the heart of everything and the inscrutable Jen hides many secrets — one of them a bandit named Lo. The *Hidden Dragon* of the film is all of its twists and turns interspersed with some breathtaking martial arts.

Even if, like me, you are not a martial arts fan, there is poetry and plot in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* that ties all the action scenes together. A few parts seem to drag or are hard to understand because of the subtitles — yes, everyone speaks Chinese, but you'll get over it — yet there is a romance and spirituality that carries the day.

The film stars Yun-Fat Chow (*Anna and the King*) and Michelle Yeoh (*Tomorrow Never Dies*, *Moonlight Express*), both veteran martial arts stars who have extraordinary athletic as well as acting abilities. Of the two love stories in the movie, theirs is the most poignant. Their love for each other is

obvious and they reveal it in so many ways except in words.

The other love story is less subtle and far more passionate. Ziyi Zhang is fabulous as the fiery Jen, a porcelain Chinese doll of a girl who harbors many secrets. Chen Chang, who plays Lo must be a heart throb in his native China. He's handsome, funny, and gives as good as he gets. Pei-pei Cheng, (*How to Meet the Lucky Stars*, *Spirit of the Dragon*, *The Rock*) a martial arts star from the 1960s, stars as the sinister Jade Fox, a character who gives new definition to the term "a woman scorned."

The movie's martial arts battles were choreographed by Yuen Woo-Ping, a well-known name in martial arts filmmaking and best known for his work on *The Matrix* and on many Jackie Chan films. His scenes defy gravity and the speed of light and they probably couldn't have been made had the film been produced in the United States. North-

FLICK



FLAK

A movie review by

Hannah's mom, Sue Simmons

ing in this movie is digitized. Actors were harnessed to cables and then suspended from cranes and swung from place to place, Peter Pan style. The result is breathtaking. Most memorable is Ziyi Zhang and Yun-Fat Chow's fight in the treetops as they leap and dangle from branch to branch and fly crane-like over lakes and waterfalls.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon is an exciting, action packed, elegant movie. No less than cellist Yo-Yo Ma supplies the music. Hannah's mom gives it four bananas. The film is rated PG-13 for martial arts violence and some sexuality; contains no bad language that is readily recognizable — in English, anyway. —

•Poultry

Continued from page 19

farm animals, modern farming methods have led to the selection of breeds that have as their sole redeeming characteristic the ability to meet high production levels of eggs or to mature quickly for meat.

The living exhibits at the park presented a fascinating history and gave voice to an alarming situation. The wonderful diversity of domestic animals that has helped man through the ages has disappeared only to be replaced by specialized breeds known as large milk yielding animals, large beef yielding breeds, lean, commercial bacon animals, prodigious egg laying strains, and fast growing fat lambs. In the process, all those other breeds have started to disappear. At least 20

breeds have become extinct since 1900 and many more have critically low population numbers.

We visited the farm park at the beginning of our week in the Cotswolds. On our last full day, in the crowded marketplace at Oxford, I accidentally discovered another example of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust at work. It was a butcher shop! Squeezed in among all the other market stalls was a real old-fashioned butcher's shop with pig carcasses, lamb, sausages, poultry, and even eggs. And the place was doing a booming business with everybody from little old ladies to young yuppies queuing up to pay extra for the shop's goods.

So how is a butcher helping to preserve rare breeds of livestock? As the literature from the Rare Breeds Survival Trust says, "At

first glance, promoting the eating of rare breeds seems an odd way of conserving them. But unlike wild animals, farm animals, rare or otherwise, have to pay their way. Farming is, after all, a business — and a difficult one at that."

What the rare breeds group has done is create a market for these breeds that are raised in non-intensive, traditional farming environments. They contend that because the older breeds mature slowly the flavor is better and the animals have increased disease resistance. Case in point is the fact that England's minor breeds have been virtually unaffected by the mad cow disease which swept the island.

Their marketing slogan is: "Now meat does taste like it used to." The meat has a flavor and quality of old

and even though there is, at times, more fat, the fat adds taste without adding cholesterol because the traditional breeds are often higher in polyunsaturated fats that do not adversely affect cholesterol levels.

The plan is that the demand for these better tasting, healthier meats will cause more farmers to raise the minor breeds and with more being raised the numbers will increase. If the customers lining up at the butcher shop in Oxford were any indication, then the idea is working.

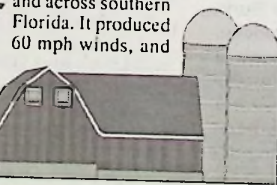
And so I had a livestock vaca-

tion of sorts. It flowed from the conference room at the Ulster American Folk Park in Northern Ireland, to the rolling hills of a farm park and finally to the butcher's stall in the lively city of Oxford. The history of man's interaction with domestic livestock is fascinating and one with the last chapter yet to be written.

If you would like to learn more about the Rare Breeds Survival Trust or the meat marketing plan, visit (www.farmshop.net/rbst/) the website today. —

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. Feb. 2-3, 1952 — The only tropical storm of record to hit the U.S. in February moved out of the Gulf of Mexico and across southern Florida. It produced 60 mph winds, and



two to four inches of rain.

Feb. 3, 1947 — The temperature at Tanacross AK plunged to a record 75 degrees below zero.

Feb. 6, 1978 — A massive nor'easter buried the cities of the northeastern U.S. Storm totals included 18 inches at New York City, 16 inches at Philadelphia, and 14 inches at Baltimore. The Boston, Mass., area received 25 to 30 inches in "The Great New England Blizzard," and the mayor outlawed travel in the city for an entire week.

Feb. 10, 1899 — The temperature at Monterey plunged to 29 de-

grees below zero, establishing a record for the state of Virginia.

Feb. 12, 1960 — A snowstorm in the Deep South produced more than a foot of snow in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Feb. 21, 1918 — A spectacular chinook wind at Granville, N.D., caused the temperature to spurt from a morning low of 33 degrees below zero to an afternoon high of 50 degrees above zero.

Feb. 25, 1922 — The temperature at Los Angeles, Calif., soared to 92 degrees to establish a record for the month of February. —



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