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Let's go on
a bear hunt!

Page 17



Down on the Farm

Page 10

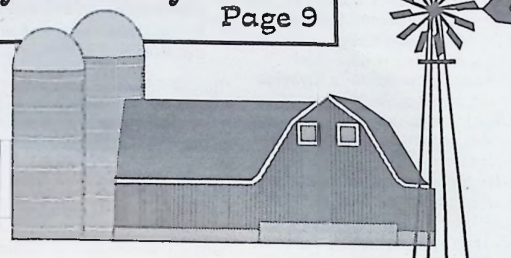
March 2001 Vol. 8, Issue 3


P.O. Box 51, Middlebrook, Va. 24459



Virginia Agriculture Week, March 18-24
Farming is bedrock of
Augusta County economy

Page 9



FFA  the
Discover  PowerSM

National FFA Week, Feb. 17-24

Local chapters, members busy
with contests, activities

Pages 6-7



Draft man looks
for clues to identify
mysterious photographs

Page 3



Augusta men's lives
shaped by ag education

Page 8



Pre-dawn February grass fire draws a crowd

By STACEY BAKER

It happened again. A loud knock — no — a loud banging at the back door early in the morning. Six a.m. may not seem early to a lot of folks, but it is on a Saturday morning when one had looked forward to sleeping late, especially after the wind ripped and shook the house all night.

I struggled out of bed and navigated carefully through the kids' room (so as not to injure my bare feet on scattered toys) in order to look out the window to see who was so insistent that I arise so early. Probably someone's cow or horse had strayed into the road.

Gazing out of the window, I never looked at the driveway or the back porch. There was a good reason. The pasture field next to ours was on fire! Three or four rows of flame were advancing up the hill and spreading to either side!

Heading for the stairs, toys scattering, I rushed for the back door, flipping on the outside light as I ran outside. A vehicle was sitting in the driveway, the driver was just about to back out. I ran over, against the gusting wind, and the gentleman explained he was driving by and saw the flames, which by this time, were approaching the fence line, just 15 yards or so from our barn.

Out he jumped. "Give me a rake or shovel, and I will try to see what I can do."

I ran to the woodshed, barefoot,



A pre-dawn grass fire burned off a section of this pasture leaving the ground bare and black. Cattle walk across the section of scorched sod.

Photo by Stacey Baker

in a 20-mile an hour February wind with nothing but pajamas to block it. I tossed this good neighbor a pitiful garden rake, and he headed for the fence, yelling over his shoulder that I should give the fire department a call. No kidding!

Back inside, everyone else was stirring. The kids were talking excitedly as they looked out of the window. I grabbed the phone, trying to push buttons while watching the fire. The flames were not large, a foot or so high. But, my!

They were just MOVING across the field! By the time I was able to focus my still-not-awake eyes on the phone, (only two minutes earlier, I was still sound asleep) I saw blinking red lights in the distance, several of them! Some other early riser had acted a bit quicker.

I could see the lights pause near the gate a quarter mile down the road. By this time, I was back outside — with shoes on this time — and ran up to the barn. The fire department trucks were already in the field, making a beeline to the barn, and soon made short work of

the small flames that had barely crept under the fence. The main part of the blaze had roared on to the top of the hill and over it. The sun was not yet up, the light from the fire reflected in the early morning sky as the trucks and firemen and other folks headed up the hill.

With the immediate crisis over, neighbors and a few volunteers remained standing near the fence just to make sure the blackened grass did not re-ignite. The discussion soon turned as to what started the fire. Pretty obvious to most. Just down the hill was a pile of old tree limbs and trunks. Two weeks ago, on a misty rainy night, some of the farm folks had burned most of the pile. A perfect time to do so, as everything was soaked.

Some hot embers must have survived, burning into the huge trunks of the old fallen trees, and were whipped into life again by the tremendous winds of the previous night.

Hard to believe, but as the sun

slowly spread its morning glow, there was the blackened grass, just to the east of the pile of logs, and the blackened area spread from there, fanned by the west winds.

The firemen, representing Middlebrook, Swoope, and Augusta County fire departments soon had the blaze under control. They are certainly to be commended for their quick response and efficient work in containing and extinguishing the fire.

I suppose one should always try to look at the positive side when things like this happen. Several acres were scorched, but no major harm done. One of the volunteers remarked, "Come spring, you'll see the best stand of grass in years in that burned-off area."

Hours later, with the sun high in the sky, and the fire trucks long gone, the only visitors looking over the blackened ground were several head of cattle. They stood in the midst of desolation, quite ready for the first sign of that spring grass.

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Draft man finds 'mystery' faces behind framed prints

By NANCY SORRELLS

STUARTS DRAFT — Although they didn't realize it until recently, Charles Crummett and his family have been sharing their house with a couple of strangers for years. Charles and Virginia Mae live in a gray-sided frame house on the main street of Stuarts Draft. It's the same house that his grandparents, Laura (Mitchell) and Charles Crummett, built in the 1940s. Laura was a schoolteacher just up the road at the school which has been turned into a restaurant. Charles was a barber at a shop just down the road.

As long as anyone can remember a pair of flower prints in big wooden oval frames hung on the living room

wall. When Charles and his family moved into the house they continued to display the Victorian-looking prints. Then a couple of years ago they rearranged the room and the frames were removed from the wall and stored away out of sight.

Recently Virginia Mae pulled the frames out of storage with the thought of dusting them off and rehanging them. That's when everybody got a big surprise. Out dropped a thin piece of metal from the back of the frame and there was an image on it. A quick check of the other frame revealed another old photograph. All of a sudden the face of a young boy and a stern, middle-aged woman were staring back at them.

The photographs, each one about

5 inches by 7 inches, are called tintypes or ferrotypes and they harken back to the days of photography's infancy. Forget digital cameras and Polaroids, photography was only a few decades old when tintypes took America by storm.

Photographers discovered that they could take a thin piece of iron which had been painted black and coat it with an emulsion that was light sensitive. The plate was inserted into a light-tight container and placed in a camera. An image was created on the metal by sliding up the front of the container so that light hit the metal. The slide was pulled back across the plate and the metal then taken to the dark room where it was developed.

In this process the piece of metal became both the negative and the print. In reality the image was a negative, but because the piece of metal is painted black, the photograph appears positive.

The tintype was developed in Ohio in 1852 and really took off during the Civil War (1860s). Tintypes were faster, cheaper and more durable than any other photography at the time. Previously, photographs had been created on a piece of glass instead of tin and were easily broken when dropped. Soon tintype photographers were catering to people at festivals, fairs and at tourist spots.

Tintypes remained popular until the early 1900s. The clothing of the two strangers in the Crummett's pictures looks like something from the late 1860s or so. The little boy has on a fancy suit with ruffled collar while the woman has a tight-fitting, high collared dress with a bow.



Charles Crummett of Stuarts Draft shows one of the picture frames in which he found a tintype of a woman. Crummett would like to know the identity of the woman and little boy, shown below at left.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells



Charles Crummett of Stuarts Draft found these "mystery" photos of a woman and little boy behind some framed prints which had been hanging in the family's home for many years. The photographs, each one about 5 inches by 7 inches, are called tintypes or ferrotypes. The image is actually reproduced on a piece of metal.

Student seeks info about WWII German POWs

Bridgewater College student Jeremiah Knupp is looking for information about German prisoners of war who were kept in the Augusta County area during World War II. He is interested in personal accounts, journals, pictures or newspaper articles related to this.

Knupp is researching information about German POWs who were "hosted" by local farmers

during the war years. Knupp will be studying the effect of the use of POW labor on local agriculture during World War II.

If you have information regarding German POWs, contact Knupp at 540/833-2522. His email address is jbk003@bridgewater.edu. Knupp also may be reached by calling the Augusta County Historical Society at 248-4151. —

Headwaters District offers tree seedlings

VERONA -- The Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District is offering for sale bare root tree seedlings for the 2001 spring planting season. Trees may be obtained to plant for wildlife habitat, windbreaks, screening, erosion control, stream bank stabilization or landscaping.

Order forms are available by

calling 248-4328, ext. 3. Deadline for orders is March 2.

Species available include sassafras, flowering crabapple, serviceberry, Dogwood, common lilac, black walnut, short leaf pine, Norway spruce, white oak, northern red oak, Chinese chestnut, sugar maple, eastern redbud, persimmon, and spicebush. All varieties are \$3 each

with the exception of short leaf pine which is \$1 each. Prices are discounted for quantities of 5, 10, and 25.

Bluebird houses, \$12 each, and tree shelter kits, \$4 each, are also available.

Proceeds from the sale of these trees will further the conservation programs and educational efforts of the Headwaters District. ---

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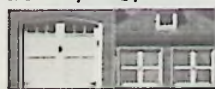
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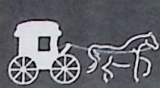
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ACHS banquet speaker to reveal insights to Moses, Anson history

How did the destinies of a plainspoken Yankee farmwife, later known to the world as Grandma Moses, and an aristocratic English Episcopal minister cross in Augusta County? The story will be revealed at the annual Augusta County Historical Society Banquet April 24.

The dinner will be held at the Staunton Holiday Inn with a social hour at 6 p.m. and the dinner beginning at 7 p.m.

Following the buffet dinner, the Reverend Ed Covert, who lives in Fort Defiance, will share the unique story of how an Episcopal chapel came to be built in Verona by an English immigrant and how Grandma Moses and her family attended that church during their time in Augusta County. Covert calls the program "Grandma Moses and Alfred Anson: Late Immigrants to Augusta County."

Covert, a native of North Carolina, attended the University of North Carolina where he majored in American history. He admits that history was his first and now his most recent love, but there was a 33-year-detour in theology. He attended Virginia Episcopal Seminary in Alexandria and was ordained in 1969. He served churches in North Carolina, South Carolina and finally in Martinsville, Va. He



The Reverend Alfred Anson, shown in this family photo, seated second from left, lived in Augusta County from 1871 to 1896. He was born into an aristocratic English family and became rector at Emmanuel Episcopal Chapel in Verona the building of which his mother financed. Anson's life in 19th century Augusta County will be revealed in a program at the annual Augusta County Historical Society banquet April 24.

was rector of that parish for 19 years before retiring in 1999. Currently he serves part-time at Emmanuel Church in Staunton.

It took a series of coincidences for Covert to piece together this Augusta County story. As Covert

relates it, a parishioner from Martinsville called one day saying she had found some papers in a friend's attic which pertained to a former rector. Fearing it would be a stack of old sermons, he avoided the visit as long as possible. When

he did visit, the "few papers" covered a dining room table and eventually grew to 14 trunks of letters, photographs, and other items documenting the Anson family from about 1860 to 1940.

Most interesting to Augusta history was when Covert discovered that the Reverend Alfred Anson had lived in Augusta County from 1871 to 1896. He was the third son of a noble family in England with no prospect of inheriting a title or fortune and decided that farming and the ministry were promising careers.

But was Anson, a graduate of Rugby School and Oxford University who grew up in Windsor Castle, suited for the world of farming in Reconstruction Virginia? Anson's letters provide humorous insight to this question.

Concerned that he was living in an "uncivilized area," his mother, Lady Caroline of Sudbury financed the building of Emmanuel Episcopal Chapel in Verona which stood near his home (one of two antebellum brick houses in Verona currently owned by Augusta County). The chapel is no longer standing but the site is currently occupied by the Shenandoah Baptist Church.

Emmanuel Chapel is the church that Grandma Moses attended while her family lived in the area. It is also where her children were baptized. The Grandma Moses house is the other brick house in Verona that is owned by Augusta County and is located a short distance away from the house once occupied by Anson.

WHAT: Augusta County Historical Society Annual Banquet

WHEN: April 24, 6 p.m. social hour, 7 p.m. dinner & program
WHERE: Holiday Inn, Staunton

PROGRAM: "Grandma Moses & Alfred Anson: Late Immigrants to Augusta County" by the Reverend Ed Covert
COST: \$20 (includes dinner and program)
CONTACT:

Augusta County Historical Society office, 540-248-4151

Did Grandma Moses and the Rev. Mr. Anson know each other? How did this aristocratic Englishman and a Yankee farmwife perceive each other? The answers to these questions will be revealed during the program.

Covert and his wife, Nan, now live just a few miles away from where this bit of local history unfolded more than a century ago. Nan is the chair of the art department at Bridgewater College, while Ed continues his work with the Anson papers and is active with the creation of the new History and Art Center in Staunton.

Tickets for the banquet must be obtained in advance and are \$20. Send payment for the number of tickets desired to ACHS Banquet, P.O. Box 686, Staunton, VA 24402, or call 540-248-4151 to order tickets. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m.-noon but an answering machine will take your message 24 hours a day. —

Mock ship details history of slave trade

Much is known about slavery; the trade of human beings between Africa and the Americas was a grim business, but even so it is hard to translate the shocking statistics and stories of that history into visual images. Joseph Goldenberg, an American history professor at Virginia State University, has found a way to give audiences a hands-on glimpse of the Middle Passage, as the voyage of Africans crammed into those slave ships was called.

Dr. Goldenberg, whose specialty

is maritime history, has built a portable slave ship, *Creole*, out of canvas and plywood. For several years now he has taken the ship on the road, literally, to teach students of all ages about the slave trade. Once his 75-foot vessel is set up, he delivers a program that describes the origins of the African slave trade in the 1440s and gives a brief overview of the history of the trade. He details how the trade became illegal in the early 1800s and how that led to changes in the designs of ships.

He will bring his program on slave ships and the Middle Passage to Staunton on March 21 and 22 through the sponsorship of the Augusta County Historical Society and Stuart Hall. A free public pro-

See *SHIP*, page 5



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To order tickets by mail, send personal check or credit card info to Valley Symphonic Concerts, P.O. Box 112, Staunton, Va. 24402-0112. VISA or MasterCard accepted. For information call 540/886-6186.

Display details African-American education

DAYTON — The story of African-American education in Virginia and specifically in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham area is the subject of a new exhibit at the Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center in Dayton. The exhibit is open on Monday and Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. The museum is closed on Tuesdays. The exhibit will be in place until March 11. There is a \$5 fee for those not members of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society, but that fee also allows entrance into the permanent exhibit "The Invincible Spirit: History in the Heart of the Shenandoah" which is an excellent walk through Shenandoah Valley and Rockingham history.

The African-American story told in this gallery is one of perseverance and strength against harsh odds and a world filled with prejudice and discrimination. The display is divided into two sections: "Jackson Davis and the Lost World of Jim Crow Education," and "The Harrisonburg Rockingham Experience."

The Jackson Davis display is part of a 5,500-image collection owned by the special collections library at the University of Virginia. The entire set of images can be viewed at www.lib.virginia.edu/speccol/jdavis. Davis was a white



LUCY SIMMS

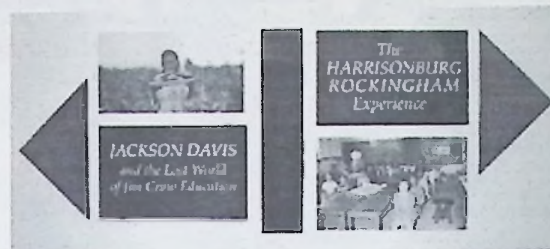
educator who grew up and was educated in a racially divided Virginia. In 1910 he was named white supervisor of black schools in Virginia. Although he never completely separated himself from the racial views of the time period, he was able to cross racial lines and work with sympathy and understanding among the African Americans living in his state in order to raise the quality of their education.

Although Davis never advocated desegregating Virginia's schools, he felt that there needed to be a strong push for separate and equal.

He traveled throughout the south photographing black schools and was shocked by the poor conditions under which students were taught. His photos show students crowded into dimly-lit log cabins and using the dark logs as chalkboards to work out lessons. He felt that the educational success of Virginia's black students would only change "if we can make the schoolroom attractive and the schoolgrounds attractive."

The gallery space in the Jackson Davis section contains a representative sample of Davis' photographs which have been divided into categories like Rural Schools, Manual and Industrial Training, Demonstration Farming, and Separate and Unequal.

The Harrisonburg Rockingham Experience draws together the specific story of black education locally. Many of the school materials and photographs here are on display for the first time. The first documented African-American school in Harrisonburg was opened in a hotel room in 1868. The two teachers, hired by the Freedmen's Bureau, were from Maine. In 1882, the Effinger Street School was built. That four-room school was given a three-room addition in 1910. Eventually there were also



16 black schools in Rockingham County although not all of them operated at the same time. Most were one-room buildings.

One family in particular contributed mightily to African-American education in the area: Ulysses Grant Wilson and his half-sister Lucy Simms were both early teachers. Ms. Simms became synonymous with area black education. Born a slave in 1855, she began teaching when she was 17 or 18 and also squeezed in some time for training at Hampton. She taught for 56 straight years and only lost one-half day to illness during that time. She stopped teaching in 1934 and died on July 10 of that same year. It was estimated that she instructed 1,800 boys and girls during her tenure. In 1938 when a new African-American school was built in Harrisonburg, it

was named in her honor.

Other important black teachers for the area were George A. Newman, Robert Webb, and W.N.P. Harris. Information about these teachers and about the schools and school activities has been gathered and put on loan by area residents. Included in the display is the 1912 composition book/diary of Ruby Edith Newman, reports from the school at Zenda (Athens), numerous photographs from both the Lucy F. Simms School and Effinger Street School including chorus groups, athletic teams, festivals, and operettas.

This temporary exhibit and the permanent display at the museum are a must-see. Visitors will also be impressed with the large selection of local history and genealogy books for sale at the museum. —

Ship

Continued from page 4

gram will be held at the new Stuart Hall gym at 7 p.m. March 21. During the day on Wednesday and Thursday he will be presenting the program to various school groups.

His description of *Creole*, a Virginia brig of 1841, is detailed and horrifying. When his presentation is complete, he encourages questions and invites the audience to walk on the ship (in slippers or with shoes off) and to sign their names on the boards. Visitors come away with detailed images of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Although his interest in slave ships goes back 20 years, his interest in sailing vessels goes back to the age of 6. That was when the budding mariner nailed some boards across a 2x4, cut off the head of a broomstick to get a mast, cut up a clothesline for rigging, grabbed a sheet for a sail, and nailed a tin Whitman's Sampler box to the deck to hold rations. He

dragged the contraption up the basement stairs and down a hill to a pond where he launched the boat and it floated.

"I was quite proud of my work until I tried to board the craft. That was my first effort at boatbuilding," he said. "My current project is much bigger — 75 feet long — but even less seaworthy."

Dr. Goldenberg has written extensively on maritime history and the University Press of Virginia published his book, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*. His two historical interests of ships and the slave trade merged years ago when he hosted a slave conference at Virginia State and set about building a full-sized cross section of a slave ship as a stage prop. Four years ago he built a lighter version that fit, just barely, into his vehicle. That model when assembled was 8 feet high, 18 feet wide and 16 inches deep.

His current project is much more ambitious. "I wondered how I might come up with a 75-foot-long slave ship that fit into my car so I

had a piece of canvas sewn together that was 75 feet by 18 feet and shaped like a ship's deck. It rolls up to a bundle that is 5 feet by 2 feet by 1 foot. Then I cut plywood flats that hinge together to form deck structures. To give people an idea of what a complete slaveship of the 1820s looked like, I also built a crude model that is 5 feet long including masts and paper sails. It shows the interior of the vessel. And I have a 6-foot chart of the Atlantic basin to show where slaves came from and the areas that imported them," he said of his traveling show that now arrives via a rented truck.

During the short time that his ship has "sailed" around the state, the reception has been amazing. "We live in a visual age and it's much easier to talk about the slave trade when one sees a full-sized mock-up of a slaver. People never cease to be surprised at how such a small vessel could carry hundreds of people," he said.

Dr. Goldenberg's ship and the history he presents comes from his meticulous research into the records of the time period. It's not a pretty part of our history — in fact the story is pretty grim says Dr. Goldenberg — but it's an important segment of America's past nevertheless and one that should never be forgotten.

For more information on Dr. Goldenberg's free public slave ship program at Stuart Hall, call the Augusta County Historical Society at 540/248-4151. —

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There is an amazing power within each and every high school student. A student's success is simply a matter of finding that power and putting it to work. The National FFA is a proactive organization that encourages and assists students in discovering the power they possess. Agricultural education, a supervised agricultural experience and FFA form a solid foundation for students to develop leadership skills, global agricultural knowledge and practical experience needed to succeed in their careers and everyday life.

National FFA advisor Dr. Larry D. Case says that "FFA takes class-

room knowledge and brings it to life and provides many opportunities for members to develop self-confidence, leadership skills and positive values."

Dressed in their familiar blue and gold jackets, FFA members are popularly associated with raising animals or growing crops. From this proud heritage, many people are surprised to discover there are more than 300 careers in the business, science and industry of agriculture. FFA members, from urban, suburban and rural areas, are preparing for careers in such diverse fields as genetic engineering, marketing, law and communications.

The number of agriculture positions is anticipated to expand as countries depend more on the United States for their food, fiber and natural resources requirements.

FFA members from the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam will organize events and activities to build awareness of agricultural education and support during national FFA Week, Feb. 17-24, 2001. National FFA Week is held each year during the week of George Washington's birthday to recognize his leadership and commitment to American agriculture.

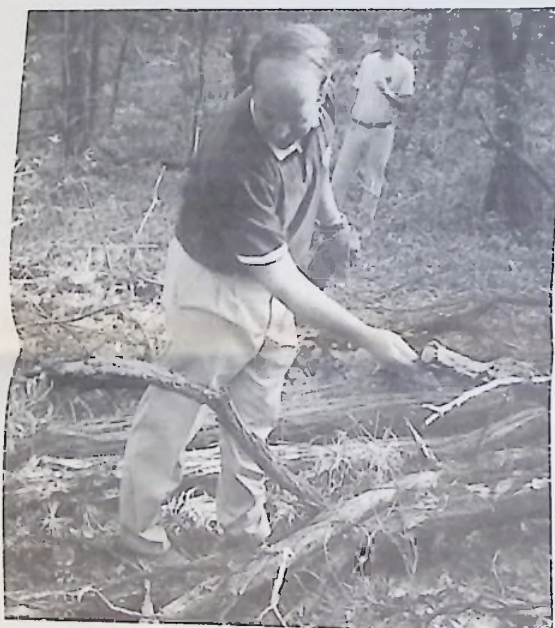
Financial support for National

FFA Week promotional materials is provided by Case Corp. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

This year's theme, "FFA — Discover the Power," illustrates how FFA's programs allow students the opportunity to apply classroom information to real-life situations. Even if students decide not to pursue one of the hundreds of agricultural careers, they benefit from public speaking skills, career experience and leadership skills gained from the FFA.

FFA is a national organization of 453,902 members preparing for leadership and careers in the sci-

ence, business and technology of agriculture. Local, state and national programs provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. The organization has 7,220 local chapters located throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. FFA's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. National FFA online, www.ffa.org, FFA's internet website, provides information about the National FFA. —



Wilson ag instructor Mike Brown and Wilson FFA member Parker Kessler work on the school's nature trail.

Wilson chapter plans activities

FISHERSVILLE — Wilson FFA has had a busy year so far and has many more activities planned.

Wilson started off the year with two new ag teachers, Mike Brown and Jeremiah Major. We kicked the year off with our fall contests including forestry and the state fair. Also throughout the year we have had various speakers come to our meetings, as well as having a few speakers from our chapter. On Feb.

14, Wilson FFA and TSA chapters had a joint meeting at which Ben Jones, also known as "Cooter" from the well known television show "Dukes of Hazzard," made a presentation to members.

During National FFA Week in February, Wilson has a full schedule including dress-up days, radio spots and our traditional venison feast which was Thursday. The dress-up days were Virginia Tech

day, Monday; flannel day, Tuesday; overall and Carhartt day, Wednesday; FFA colors and official dress day, Thursday; and tractor driving and camouflage day, Friday.

Wilson will also begin to prepare for spring contests such as horse, livestock, and dairy judging. We plan on participating in Food for America and some other activities. We will also be preparing for the state convention this summer. —

Gap makes progress on 'to do' list

SWOOP — The Buffalo Gap FFA Chapter has been very active so far this year. Before the current school year began, the senior chapter officers attended the officer-training workshop. The speakers at the workshop were Leslie Funkhouser,

former Virginia FFA president, and Matt Hickey, former Virginia Northern Area vice president.

Junior officer interviews were held in September with the new slate of junior officers being elected. October was a very busy month for

the chapter. Starting off the month was the fruit sale which lasted all month. In addition members participated in the forestry contest, tractor operators contest, and the food science and technology contest.

Each year the Augusta County Farm Bureau Federation sponsors five contests for Augusta County youth. This year Buffalo Gap FFA members won three of the contests and a former member, Rosalea See GAP, page 7



Buffalo Gap FFA members work on a construction project.

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Fort chapter looks toward future

FORT DEFIANCE — This year the Fort Defiance FFA Chapter has gone to great lengths to promote and support FFA and its outstanding members. The chapter kicked off the year with an exciting meeting led by state officers Bill Dick and Jonathan Heishman. FFA members in class were given the opportunity to experience the leadership workshops done by the state officers.

Once again the Fort Defiance FFA chapter traveled to Louisville, Ky., for the 73rd annual National FFA Convention. The chapter sent two teams; a marketing team and an agriculture sales team, as well as four American Degree winners and participants in the PALS program. The marketing team brought home a gold rating, ranking fourth in the nation. The team consisted of Jessica Allivule, Lee Roadcap, and Wendy Slusher. The sales team placed sixth high in the nation earning them a gold rating. Caitlyn McNulty placed sixth high individually; Aaron Shifflet received gold rating; Brittany Stansberry and Jeremy Arey received silver ratings.

For Christmas the chapter's junior officers sponsored a school-wide toy drive for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots, while the chapter participated in the Federation Toy Drive by collecting money from Fort students. The money was combined with money from the other chapters in the federation and federation officers shopped for toys for the children. The Toy Drive was a huge success between the five county high schools and Stewart Middle. The Federation officers were able to raise over \$400 and delivered toys to eight children.

The chapter was fortunate to have received part of a grant written by vocational director for the county Jenny Groh. The grant has provided the school with a new greenhouse. The agriculture mechanics classes built the greenhouse and students have started learning about horticulture and are trying their hand at growing bedding plants. Both Mr. Seibel and Mrs. Hawkins have become busier with the new agriculture/biology classes and the equine science class. Mrs. Hawkins is going full

force in her new equine class, preparing and presenting videos, PowerPoint programs and hands-on activities that allow students to have a better understanding of horse management.

The Agriculture II/Biology class has been a great success this year. The year-long class integrates biology and agriculture. Students have been able to participate in many hands-on activities such as building cell models, going to the Boy Scout Camp for tree identification and woodlot management, dissecting chicken digestive tracts, and cow reproductive tracts. The mechanics classes continue to rebuild tractors that are purchased with a loan with the help of the alumni.

As spring approaches the chapter's involvement will increase. With our Food for America program and preparations for state convention, the chapter only has room for improvement. We want to thank the alumni, parents, high school, and our supporters for all the help they have given us. Without them our chapter would not be where it is or where it is going. —



Fort Defiance High School students enrolled in the ag business class work in the school's new greenhouse watering tomatoes and silver dust plants. The students are, from left, Lee Roadcap, Maribeth Robertson, Travis Moyers, Nathan Homes and Robbie Hinkle.

Draft chapter keeps busy with activities

STUARTS DRAFT — The Stuarts Draft FFA Chapter is enjoying a very exciting year. We began the year with our annual Fall-Fling. The Fall-Fling is the first activity of the year where members have the opportunity to meet fellow FFA members and take part in the FFA. Activities at the Fall-Fling included Forestry Field Day events, pie eating, hay stacking, and horseshoe pitching contests. This is always a very popular and exciting activity for members.

The officer team at Stuarts Draft has been working hard all year planning and conducting FFA activities. The officer team consists of Rachel Swartzel, president;

Michael Harmon, vice president; Erika Brooks, secretary; Rebecca Gutkaiss, treasurer; Donica Bean, reporter; Kristin Lindsay, sentinel and Heather Hewitt, historian.

This year Stuarts Draft is excited to have a new agriculture teacher and FFA advisor, Jeremiah Major. He is in his first year as a teacher and as an advisor. He spends half a day at Stuarts Draft High School and half a day at Wilson Memorial High School.

In September the chapter went to the Virginia State Fair in Richmond. Several members participated in the Forestry Field Day Contest. The contest consists of a

See DRAFT, page 20

RHS members excel in events



Jason McIlwee, (far left) Aaron Root, and Bryan Shomo, (far right) all senior FFA members at Riverheads High School are shown with an engine they are presently overhauling in their advanced agricultural machinery service class.

GREENVILLE — The Riverheads FFA Chapter has an enrollment of 80 members for the 2000-2001 school year.

In the fall, contests such as forestry judging and tractor driving provided many opportunities for students. Bryan Shomo won the chapter tractor driving contest, the federation contest as well as the area contest. He will compete in the state competition at Virginia Tech in June.

In September the chapter received the Outstanding Mechanics Exhibit award at the Virginia State Fair and sold ads for the FFA calendar. Jason McIlwee was selected as vice president of the Augusta Federation and Amanda Hemp was selected as director for the 2000-2001 year.

During October the chapter conducted the annual citrus fruit sale. Top salesmen were Angela Hinton, Jason McIlwee, and Philip Miller.

Chapter members Jason McIlwee, Justin Fravel, Aaron Root, Jason Barker, Jonathan Coleman, Angela Hinton, and Erin Lowry represented Riverheads in Louisville Ky., at the National FFA Convention. Angela Hinton competed in the dairy showmanship contest

See RHS, page 20

Gap

Continued from page 6

Riley, was named Miss Augusta County Farm Bureau. Elizabeth Fuller won the Mary Frances Houff Outstanding Citizenship Award, Jonathan Riley won the Junior Essay Contest, and Bobby Drumheller won the Leadership Award.

On Oct. 10, 2000, the junior officers attended the AES Leadership Conference held at Virginia Tech. Also at that time, the seniors toured the Virginia Tech campus. That same day, the Food Science and Technology team won the state contest, making them eligible to attend the National Convention and

compete in the national contest.

The greatly anticipated week of Oct. 23-28 was National Convention. Buffalo Gap traveled to Louisville, Ky., with Riverheads, Fort Defiance, Wilson Memorial, and Stuarts Draft High Schools on a charter bus. Thirteen members from Gap and ag instructor Shirley Kaufman attended the convention. At the convention, the food science and technology team placed seventh in the nation.

The month of November proved to be a time to reorganize before the next busy month of December. The Market Animal Show weighing in was held on Nov. 4, 2000. The month of December started with fruit deliveries. After fruit deliveries, the officers had a Christmas party and exchanged Secret Santa gifts. We also prepared a Christmas meal for an orphanage in Verona. Furthermore, we donated fruit to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank and to needy families.

Last summer construction began on three buildings at Gap. The construction was headed by area Young Farmers, who were assisted by Buffalo Gap students. The new build-

See BUILDINGS, page 20

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Augusta men's lives shaped by ag education

By NANCY SORRELLS

In 1935 the world seemed a lot bigger, especially to a couple of farm boys from Augusta County. That was the year that Calvin Crum and R.W. Moffett took a trip that would change their lives. The two teenagers were enrolled in vocational agriculture classes and had been selected to represent Virginia because of their livestock judging prowess and take a trip to Kansas City.

The two young men were the direct recipients of the enthusiasm of a youthful ag teacher named L.O. Brumback who was carrying out the mission of Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech). That mission was to bring a sense of pride, accomplishment, and agricultural education to the state's rural students. As part of that movement, vocational agricultural was instituted in Augusta County's curriculum in 1924.

In 1925 Walter S. Newman was appointed State Supervisor of Agricultural Education. Through his work at Virginia Tech, he had visited the state's high schools to see the vocational agriculture classes. Sensing that many young men were abandoning the farm for other vocations, he felt that farming needed a moral boost. He discussed his ideas with members of VPI's staff and his thoughts were as follows:

"In my opinion the farm boys of Virginia who are enrolled in vocational agriculture are equal to any other group of boys in the state. But somehow the boys themselves seem to have a feeling of inferiority. Especially is this true when the farm boy goes to the city and has to compete with his city cousin.

This condition should not exist. I believe that a strong organization of our boys in agriculture would help them to overcome this handicap. Let's form an organization that will give them a greater opportunity for self-expression and for the development of leadership. In this way they will develop confidence in their own ability and pride in the fact that they are farm boys."

That September 1925 meeting in Blacksburg is remembered as the beginning of the plan for Future Farmers of Virginia, which later became the Future Farmers of America. The first chartered chapter was in Weyers Cave.

The idea caught on quickly and within a year the organization was called FFA and was headquartered in Kansas City.

It was only a few years later that young Calvin and R.W. came along to ride that early wave of agricultural education. Calvin was raised on a 250-acre farm in Swoope. The tiny railroad village was quite different in the 1930s. "Swoope used to have a country store, a cannery, a depot and a lot of freight trains stopping there. You didn't need a watch because you could tell what time it was by when the trains came through because they were so regular," recalled Calvin.

Every morning Calvin caught a school bus at the Swoope store at 8 a.m. after walking the mile from his house to the village. The bus took him to Beverley Manor High School. He arrived home each afternoon about 4:30 and had to hit the farm chores.

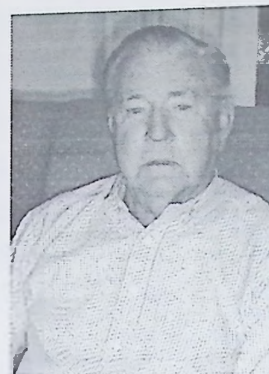
Calvin's ag teacher was Brumback who had launched an FFA chapter at Beverley Manor

and Middlebrook in 1934. There were 10 or 15 students in the ag class. During the year Brumback would take his livestock judging team around to area farms to judge different classes of livestock, beef and draft horses.

R.W. Moffett grew up in the Mint Spring area and went to Stuarts Draft High School. When he got to high school he joined FFA and Brumback was there as a teacher. In fact Brumback was a presence at several area high schools. R.W. said recently that only a few years ago Brumback explained why he was active at so many of the schools in those early days. "He said along about 1931 or 1932 all the teachers of the county schools were told that they were getting a reduction in pay. But they told Brumback that they would not reduce his pay if he took on one more school, so he did. He didn't get a raise either, just no reduction."

All told, Brumback influenced agricultural students at Stuarts Draft, Beverley Manor, Spottswood, and Middlebrook.

The summer of 1935 was a lettermark year for the two high



CALVIN CRUM



R.W. MOFFETT

school boys and Brumback. During that summer, 45 Augusta County boys went down to Blacksburg for a state FFA rally that included livestock judging and a track meet. Although each school had a team, the Virginia team chosen to represent the state in Kansas City was to be made up of the top four placers from this rally. Three would be on the team and the fourth-place finisher would go as an alternate. The team's coach

was the coach of the top state finisher.

For Calvin the trip to Blacksburg was his first time out of Augusta County. "We went down on a school bus and I remember that we stopped along the way and had an ice cream cone."

The three-day livestock judging competition was strenuous recalls both Calvin and R.W. "I just went down there and did what I was supposed to do," said Calvin. "At the end of the second day the coach came into the room and said I was in the final 12, which surprised me," he said.

On the last day the finalists were asked to judge four Hereford steers. "That class of cattle was so close that

No. 4 could easily have been No. 1," said Calvin. R.W. agreed that the four animals were tough to judge. When the final tallies were in, Calvin was first with a score that was higher than the combined score

of three students from Augusta County who had been to the 4-H contest in Chicago the year before. "That was something I was really proud of," remembered Calvin. "I suppose I had an inherent ability plus being raised on a farm where I had the opportunity to observe good livestock helped. We had horses, sheep, cattle and hogs on our farm."

R.W. wound up placing fourth in the competition which was good. See JUDGING, page 12



R.W. Moffett's American Farmer Degree gold charm.



R.W. Moffett of Mint Spring looks at a grandfather clock which he built.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells



A 1935 newspaper clipping shows Virginia's FFA livestock judging team which included Augustans Calvin Crum, second from left, and R.W. Moffett, far right. Ag instructor L.O. Brumback is far left.

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Farming is bedrock of Augusta County economy

By NANCY SORRELLS

You don't think about them at the drive-through or when you sit down for a family meal. They don't cross your mind when you put on your clothes in the morning or when you cash your pay check and put the money in a leather wallet or purse. And I'll bet you don't think of them when you decorate your Christmas tree, order flowers for Valentine's Day, or pour some Kibbles into your dog's bowl.

In fact they get less respect than Rodney Dangerfield and yet none of us could get through one hour of one day without them. The "who" in all these cases is anyone involved in the profession of agriculture. Maybe it's because farmers aren't usually out there promoting themselves. Instead they are in the milking parlor at the crack of dawn, on the tractor in the dog days of summer, and lying on the cold barn floor when it's five below zero helping some animal give birth.

But whether you realize it or not, agriculture is important to Augusta County — always has been. The first settlers in the area came here to clear land, put in crops and make a good living. The first cash crop was hemp — for ropes and cloth. Then they began putting in wheat and Augusta County became the breadbasket of the country for more than a century.

Over 250 years after the first farmers came into Augusta, farming is still vitally important to the economy, livelihoods and quality of life in the area. But for those of you who think agriculture has slipped out the back door, think again. Agriculture is one of the leading industries in Augusta County and, in turn, Augusta County leads the state in agriculture.

Agriculture production in Augusta County
Farm acreage: 282,152 acres on 1,499 farms; ranks first in the state.
Beef cattle: 102,641 cattle; ranks first in the state.
Sheep: 8,500 sheep; ranks first in the state.
Alfalfa hay: Ranks first in the state.
Farm income: \$139 million, ranks second in the state.
Tons of corn silage: Ranks second in the state.
Dairy cows: 10,234 milk cows; ranks third in the state.
Poultry production: Ranks seventh in the state.

Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture

"Agriculture has remained one of Augusta County's major industries, having an impact as significant as that of manufacturing," says a recent report at the Central Shenandoah Planning Commission. In 1997, the most current statistics available, the market value of agricultural products produced in the county was approximately \$139 million with livestock, poultry and related products accounting for \$125 million of that total. Those numbers are high enough to rank Augusta second in the state, behind Rockingham, in value of agricultural production.

Augusta also ranks first in farm acreage with 282,152 acres on 1,499 farms. There are 102,641 cows in the county which ranks first in the state and 10,234 milk cows which ranks third in Virginia. There are more sheep in Augusta than in any other locality in the Old Dominion, 8,500. The county's poultry production ranks seventh in the state, its alfalfa hay production is first in Virginia, and the number of tons of corn silage are second.

"Augusta has always played a significant role in Virginia's agriculture and it remains one of the top agricultural counties in the state. Agriculture is most likely the

largest industry in Augusta County," said Gregory Hicks, communications director for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation.

"The production value is impressive," said Mary Joy Scala, executive director of the Valley Conser-

vation Council, "and it is just part of the total economic value of agriculture to the community. Each farming operation provides employment opportunities and also supports other related businesses in the community, such as seed, fertilizer, fencing and equipment sales."

Her point is important. One has to look no further than within the boundaries of the city of Staunton to drive the point home. Just off Statler Boulevard well within the city limits is Staunton Union Stockyards, Inc. Farmers come from a 150-mile radius every Tuesday and Friday to buy and sell animals. The business started back in the 1930s when the local farmers didn't have a place to sell cattle. Instead they had to rely on an agent who trav-

eled from farm to farm. Since 1936 that hasn't been the case.

"We have them come from 150 miles or more. They come from West Virginia, from Franklin County, and from Chase City in addition to all the counties surrounding Augusta. The local people can sell their livestock and buy replacement animals as well," said E.M. Hewitt Jr., vice-president of the stockyard, about the size of the customer base.

The impact on the local economy is significant. Not only do local farmers have an outlet, but those who travel to the city have to buy gas and food. In the period from June 1999 to June 2000, between 70,000 and 75,000 head of cattle

See AUGUSTA, page 11



Staunton Union Stockyard, located on New Hope Road, generated around \$40 million in sales during 2000. Producers within a 150-mile radius of Staunton bring livestock to the yard for sale.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Thank a farmer during Agriculture Week, March 18-24

RICHMOND — March 18 - 24, 2001 is Virginia Agriculture Week. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services suggests that it's the perfect opportunity to give credit where credit is due. During this special week, take a minute to thank a farmer. No engraved note paper or frilly bouquets required; a thoughtful nod will do.

Of course every farmer has a lot of help, but gratitude for all of Virginia's growers will not be misplaced. Here are a few good reasons.

Start with your breakfast cereal and milk. Consider the fruit you add, the cotton robe and sheepskin slippers you are wearing when you eat breakfast and the cut flowers that decorate the breakfast table.

You can thank a farmer for these.

Add the turkey sandwich, apple, potato chips and ginger ale you're having for lunch, your mid-afternoon peanut snack and the steak with mushrooms, fresh vegetables, crusty rolls and Virginia wine you enjoyed for dinner. Kudos to the farmers who had a hand in putting all this on your table.

Outside look for newly laid sod, an array of colorful bedding plants tucked into a blanket of mulch, bird seed in the feeder and firewood stacked by the back door. A pat on the back for the farmers who helped array your backyard.

Farmers don't ask for gratitude and none would expect it however well deserved. But it is time to thank our farmers, not only for the rich and varied agricultural bounty which provides nourishment, clothing, shelter and beauty for all Vir-

ginians, but for the intangible, indomitable spirit that keeps them going despite rough times and daunting obstacles.

And that's not all. Farmers deserve thanks:

- for persevering despite drought and flood, freezing temperatures, parching sun, fluctuating prices and constantly changing markets;

- for seeking better ways to do their jobs — using new techniques and advances in technology to sim-

See AG WEEK, page 13

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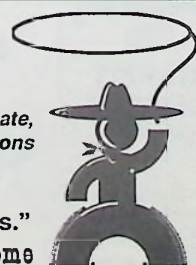
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'He/she' and the world's next-to-oldest profession

Down on the farm we're thinking about the future of farming. I suppose there are some people who would say that is an oxymoron — that there is no future in farming. I would beg to differ with these people's less-than-optimistic opinion of the world's next-to-oldest profession.

The human race has been farming for a long time. Early man (well, probably early woman) began farming when "he/she" figured out it might be easier to raise food products than go out scouring the countryside hunting and gathering. "He/she" also probably thought it would be less likely that "he/she" would become something else's main entrée in the process of hunting and gathering if things were grown in safe and close proximity to the homestead/cave.

Probably what happened was that "she" began farming. Then one day "he" came home to find the bounty of "her" harvest spread out on the cave floor ready to eat (this was some time before Swanson frozen dinners mind you) and "he" figured it wasn't much use for him to go out roving the countryside — starving to death in the process — while "she" was back home cooking up the grub "she" was raising. Of course, this is all speculation. Perhaps some of *Augusta Country's* staff historians can lend some insight to Neolithic farming practices.

Of course, an ice age or two has passed since "he/she" started farming. Things down on the farm are a whole lot different now than they were then. Things are a whole lot different down on the farm now than they were 10 years ago, for that matter.

For example, take a Saturday and attend a sale of purebred cattle and you'll find people buying — not cattle — but embryos. I still haven't quite wrapped my mind around this. Or you may find people bidding on a lot of six "flushmate" bulls. That is, all these bulls of the same approximate age have the same dam and sire. How'd they do that? Well, eggs from a cow were collected then fertilized with bull semen. Then the embryos are transplanted in recipient (surrogate) cows which gestate the embryos, give birth to the calf and raise it to weaning weight thus yielding "flushmates." Or people may be buying "pregnancies." In other words they are bidding on calves that haven't been born yet. These are calves of known pedigrees and the buyers can even know if they

DOWN ON THE FARM

BY
BETTY JO
HAMILTON



are buying a heifer pregnancy or a bull pregnancy. Of course, at these same sales people still have the opportunity to buy cattle of the flesh and blood variety which they can see before their very eyes. And I don't even want to think about what cloning is going to do cattle, sheep or swine seedstock production. Just don't go there.

Advances in farming go beyond the reproductive sciences too. Crops can be planted and harvested according to information gathered from satellite uplink. Likewise, fertilizer can be applied using the same technology. With computers onboard harvesting equipment or in fertilizer applicators — computers which are sending and receiving information from a satellite thousands of miles above the earth — the process of planting and har-

vesting crops has come a long way from looking up the astrological sign in the farmer's almanac to determine the best time for seeding and harvesting. (Some farmers probably use the latter in addition to the satellite uplink method just to be on the safe side.)

So much has been learned about the animals and crops we raise that American farmers have become innovators themselves, riding the wave of breaking technology sometimes way ahead of other industries and big business. In fact, while personal computers have become commonplace in most businesses, not to mention American homes, in the last five years, farmers long ago were using computers to record herd data and transmit this data via landline to herd improvement associations.



Aaron Root, Scotty Brookman, Eugene McIlwee, Jason McIlwee and Bryan Shomo (clockwise from lower left) work on a 3020 John Deere tractor which they are overhauling. The students are enrolled in the advanced agricultural machinery service class at Riverheads High School. McIlwee is their instructor.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Sure, everybody has a cell phone now. But who do you suppose were some of the first folks to start snapping those babies up when they become affordable? Next time you see a farmer, check his belt and you'll probably see a personal pager clipped there. Next time you see a farmer's truck, look on the seat and I'll bet you'll see several things — probably an empty soda can, a tattered coat, a roll of duct tape (never leave home without it) and a cell phone. If the words "rube" or "hayseed" come to mind when you think of farmers, you better think again. Farmers have moved quantum leaps beyond the images of these stereotypical characters.

For that matter, farmers may be some of the most open-minded people you'll come across when it comes to technology and change. Farmers resistant to new ideas?? I don't think so. Put a modern advance out there that will save time, money and manpower on the farm and farmers will latch onto it and put it into practice before you can say "round baler or square."

Of course, most of the things I've mentioned so far speak to the mechanics of farming or getting it done. The huge variable in the rather complicated equation of farming today is the people who do it. I'm one of these people. My father is another one of these people. We have neighbors who are these people. We have family members who are these people. But our numbers amount to less than two percent of the population of the United States.

Now two percent doesn't seem like much. And it's not. But when you consider that two percent of the population is feeding 100 percent of the population, that makes that little two percent pretty important, don't you think? Nod your heads yes. Vigorously nod your heads yes if your mouth happens to be full at present.

The other big part of the farming equation is land — farmers have to have land to be able to raise crops or cattle or sheep or produce milk. And land — my friends — is a vanishing commodity, whether we want to admit it or not. It's difficult to balance landowners' property rights against a desire to keep land in farms and open space. How can a landowner pass up a lucrative opportunity to turn land into cash? How can a farmer pass up a lucrative opportunity to sell his farm for more money than he can make farming it? These are diffi-

cult questions to answer and if you're expecting me to provide answers, I'm sorry to say I'm going to disappoint you.

I know what the answer is for me. If I'm going to continue farming, then I need land for that purpose. I'm a farmer, not a real estate agent. I'm not interested in cashing in the chips, so to speak. Perhaps this is an easy decision for me to make living on the western side of the county. I might be of a completely different mindset if my land was located at an interstate interchange or urban development had sprawled its way to my cattle guard. I'm glad my situation is of the former and not the latter.

Of course, another big part of the farming equation is money. It takes a pile of money to keep a farm going. Sometimes it's not easy to maintain the right kind of cash flow to keep the farm financially healthy. Farmers are at the mercy of the weather and a supply-and-demand marketplace. When supply goes up and demand goes down, so do prices. When supply goes down and demand goes up, so do market prices. Farmers can't always control their supply in order to capitalize on market conditions. If you've got a house full of turkeys ready to go to market, they go whether the price is at its peak or in the basement. Farmers "manufacture" products with very limited shelf-lives in terms of market readiness.

When the farmer goes in the red on his operation, he needs money to operate until the next season when, perhaps, he can raise crops that will eliminate losses from a previous season. If you're in farm-

See MARKET, page 11

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Market

Continued from page 10

ing, it never hurts to know a good banker — one with deep pockets, who is patient and generous and kind and generous and understanding and generous and compassionate and generous (Oh, be still my heart! Did you say I can have that loan at three-quarter percent under prime?) Farmers need bankers who understand how agriculture works and can make money available in the form of loans when finances get tight or when a farmer wants to make some capital improvement in his operation. One green thing

farmers can't grow is money.

Back to the people part of the equation. Articles in other sections of this issue of Augusta County relate stories about other folks involved in farming. Of particular note, I want to direct your attention to the section devoted to National FFA Week. The young people involved in this organization are the real future of farming. No, they all won't grow up to be farmers. In fact, a very small percentage of them will farm at some point in the future. But some of them will go on to be the bioengineers, the geneticists, the

researchers, the veterinarians, the entomologists, the mechanical engineers, the Extension agents, the agriculture instructors, the bookkeepers (yeah, yeah, I know, but even farmers need the pencil pushers), the feed salesmen, the grocers, the bankers, the packers and all the other professions which relate to farming. We need good young people coming into hands-on farming but farmers also need all these other people and professions to provide support for farming on other levels. Future Farmers of America and the public schools' agriculture programs help young

people begin their journey toward a future in farming, whether it be hands on or supportive.

Recently I was talking with a member of the Augusta County School Board. Usually I don't lobby my elected representatives too much, but I told this school board member, "Whatever you do to the schools, don't you DARE change a single thing about the agriculture program other than giving it more money." I said this because on the occasions I have to interact with this part of Augusta County's school system I see tremendous things happening with young people.

Within the FFA organization itself, I've been astounded by the commitment of these young people to their work through FFA. You would have to look hard to find a group of young folks who are schooled so completely in presenting themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. Oh sure, they have their lapses like any other youngsters coming along. But of all the events I have attended that have been sponsored and organized by FFA chapters at the various county high schools, I have never been to

See YOUNGSTERS, page 18

Saluting Augusta County's agricultural heritage, March 18-24, 2001 — Virginia Agriculture Week

Augusta

Continued from page 9

passed in and out of Staunton Union's sale ring. In addition, 6,340 sheep and lambs were sold, 126 goats, 545 hogs and 1,055 pigs.

Hewitt noted that cattle sold at the Staunton yard are shipped out of state to Nebraska, Indiana and Pennsylvania. Buyers from these states inject money into Augusta's economy through the livestock they buy.

"We had around \$40 million in sales last year and we pay taxes to the city of Staunton based on our commissions. We also use city water and sewer," said Hewitt of the economic impact the stockyard has on the city coffers.

Additionally, Staunton Union Stockyard serves as the site of the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show

held annually each May. The show, the largest of its kind east of the Mississippi River, showcases area youth and their livestock projects. The event extends through more than the last half-century of Augusta County's history.

There are other ways to look at the economic impact of farming on the area's economy according to Rick Shiflet, an area farmer and the immediate past president of the Augusta County Farm Bureau. "Farming is the only industry that returns a net income to the treasury of Augusta County when all the factors are figured in. Agriculture is built with private money. It is people investing in their own land year after year. There are no prof- fers, no grants, no free land, no gimme's. There is a basic difference in the way this industry was

built which gives it an economic stability. We're not an industry that says we're going to lay everybody off. We don't say we are going to quit lambing or that we're going to stop feeding the cows," he said.

The stability factor of agriculture is echoed by Scala. "Maintaining agriculture also allows the county to grow at a measured and deliberate pace, to better plan for services like new schools and sewer and water lines that can quickly deplete a locality's resources. Because agriculture does not require a high level of services, it generates a fiscal surplus for the county," she said, while pointing out that between 1991 and 1996 farm and forest lands in the county generated a NET SURPLUS of \$5.7 million while during the same period resi-

dential land generated a NET DEFICIT of \$45.6 million.

"It's not just the dollars, the gross revenue," said Shiflet. "But it's how many times the dollar turns over in the community. We support the local businesses. Some people consider land use taxes (reduced taxes on land in agricultural production) as a gift to farmers. It is not a gift to us. We are still paying a whole lot more for services than we receive."

Despite the importance of agriculture to the quality of life and fiscal soundness of all of Augusta County's citizens, farmers are increasingly embattled as the majority of the population becomes further and further removed from the farm and development encroaches on the rural landscape. Augusta County lost 37 farms from 1987

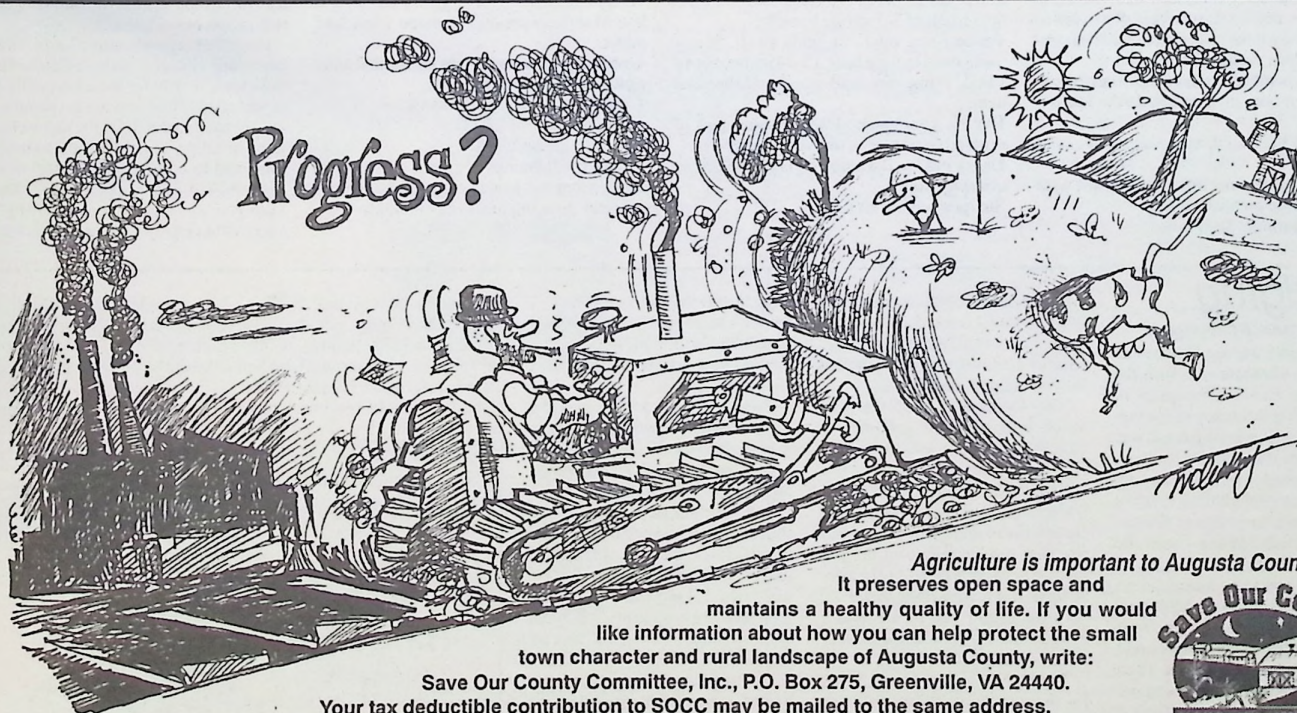
until 1997 and just over 10,000 fewer acres were farmed at the end of that decade than at the beginning.

"Everybody takes us for granted because we have always been around," said Shiflet who owns a 180-acre farm and works an additional 50 acres. He has 40 brood cows, a turkey house and raises timothy hay for the horse industry. "As farmers we are fighting every day to stay in the business. There are a lot of people out there making a lot of money a lot easier than we are," he said.

According to Hewitt, farmers operate without a safety net. "I don't think people realize how much risk there is (in farming)," he said. "It's risky business."

The survival of the family farm is important not just for people like

See RISKY, page 13



Agriculture is important to Augusta County.

It preserves open space and

maintains a healthy quality of life. If you would

like information about how you can help protect the small

town character and rural landscape of Augusta County, write:

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PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Tulips for the spring garden: A Dutch treat

In medieval Holland tulip-mania once dominated the country and obsessed gardeners paid huge sums of gold coins to possess a single bulb. Fortunes were made and lost.

Today, Holland is still a major producer of tulips (*Tulipa*). We can buy its bulbs and cut flowers and visit its beautiful parks that show off the amazing range of colors, cultivars, heights, and forms. Keijkenhof Gardens are world renown. Fortunately prices have dropped and tulips can be bought, planted, and enjoyed by all gardeners.

The tulip probably originated in Turkey but its original parentage is debatable since it has been hybridized for over 600 years. It blooms in our area from early May through early June depending on spring temperatures. Tulips are easy to grow and like open, sunny locations. Plant deeply (8-12 inches) late in the year (early November) several inches apart in light, humus-rich soil. If you plant deeply you deter rodents from digging them up and you can overplant with perennials. Whereas daffodil bulbs are poisonous to rodents, tulips are a favorite food. Buy good-sized bulbs from a reputable grower.

Tulips look best when massed together by color, size, and variety. If you have the space, design a bed by shape and mound the soil up slightly to form a small hill. If space is limited, group collections of the same variety together in odd numbers from 11 upwards. You will still obtain a nice effect.

Water the tulip bed after planting and occasionally in the fall if it doesn't rain. However, you don't want any bulbs to sit in water. All need good drainage.

Tulips are not heavy feeders but do need adequate food to maintain health and a good size. Fertilize well above ground (compost, granular or liquid) and this food will filter down to the bulbs. You grow the foliage, not the flower. Thus, after flowering snap off the head, leave the stalk if you can, and let the foliage wither and yellow naturally. Then pull off very gently.

Tulips prefer hot, dry summers and dry soil. Thus our conditions in the Shenandoah Valley tend to favor the "resting and growing" period of this bulb.

As daffodils are classified by division by the Royal Horticultural Society in London, so tulips are classified by division by the Royal Horticultural Association of Holland.

Originally there were 15 divisions but some classes were changed and incorporated. The list now reads: Single Early, Double Early, Triumph, Darwin Hybrid, Single Late, Lily-Flowered, Fringed, *Vividiflora*, Rembrandt, Parrot, Double Late, *Kaufmanniana*, *Fosteriana*, Greigii, and Botanical (all wild species).

For our purposes time of bloom is how we determine what we plant if we intend to cover the full range of cultivars.

First to flower in May are the

Kaufmannianas. These tiny bulbs (Height: 4-8 inches) are often striped and are perfect in the rock garden ('Ancilla' and 'Showwinner'). Next come the *Fosterianas* (Ht: 12-16 inches), they naturalize well ('Red Emperor' and 'Yellow Empress').

The Single Early tulips (Ht: 12-16 inches) have good, upright stems and nice mixed markings ('Princess Irene').

The Double Early tulips (Ht: 12-18 inches) have a similar growth form to the singles but the flowers have irregular petals that resemble small peonies ('Electra').

Darwin Hybrids (Ht: 14-20 inches) have the largest flowers of any tulip and strong stems which make them good cut flowers. Colors are pink, yellow, red, and orange ('Apeldoorn' and 'President Kennedy').

The Triumphs (Ht: 18-24 inches) bloom midseason and come in many colors from white, pink, purple, red, which tend to flame. They have strong stems for cutting ('Attila' and 'Washington').

Greigii tulips (Ht: B-12 inches) have good, striped foliage and bright colors and grow at the front of a border. The flower centers are darker ('Red Riding Hood,' 'Corsage,' and 'Oratorio').

There are several tulips that grow from the fourth week of May through the first week of June. Lily-flowered (Ht: 16-24 inches) have pointed petals flaring backwards that give them a distinctive look. They have a good color range

In the Garden

By Jenifer Bradford



('China Pink,' 'Ballade,' and 'Marilyn').

Fringed (Ht: 10-30 inches) are just that and have elegant flowers in delicate shades ('Fancy Frills' and 'Majal').

Vividiflora tulips (Ht: 18-24 inches) are just as distinctive but their appeal lies in the broken coloring that blends into green stripes. This class has a long flowering period ('Red Pimpernel,' 'Greenland,' and 'Golden Artist').

Rembrandt tulips (Ht: 16-30 inches) originally were the result of a virus that produced mottle streaks and two-toned petals. These originals are no longer sold. Today we have look-alike flowers that are bred to be genetically stable ('Malak').

Parrot tulips (Ht: 16-20 inches) have large, heavily fringed petals with green areas early in their development. Stems are supple. Colors tend to flame ('Texas Flame,' 'Erna Lindgreen,' and 'Fantasy').

Double Late or Peony-Flowered tulips (Ht: 12-16 inches) have large flowers that look like peonies. The petals are weather sensitive so need to be protected. Colors tend to be red related ('Allegretto' and 'May Wonder').

The species or botanical tulips comprise many heights and bloom times. Many are quite short (6 inches) and come from mountainous habitats. They look best in naturalized settings. Most bloom quite early in the season (*Tulipa saxatilis*, *Tulipa clusiana*, and *Tulipa chrysanthal*).

Once the very early miniature bulbs and the many daffodil cultivars have finished blooming then it is time for the tulip family to take center stage. Now you are prepared with article in hand to watch for the many classifications of tulips, to note names, to mark catalogs, and to order your favorites next summer and fall. If you plant some tulips each year you will ensure an ever-changing and successful display of these Dutch treats. —

~~~ Garden tips for March ~~~

Garden tips This month spring officially arrives with the vernal equinox on March 20. Birds are chirping, early wildflowers are peeking out, and the grass is greening up. We usually get some mild days in between March winds and strong rains.

Are you getting in the mood and preparing for some early outdoor tasks? Be careful if the ground is soggy. Keep off wet lawns and do not dig if the soil is saturated. If shrubbery is frozen do not touch.

Thus, depending upon outside conditions, and as the month progresses, do the following:

- Lime, fertilize, seed, and control weeds in your lawn.
- Fertilize evergreens, trees, and shrubs with a slow release fertilizer.
- Fertilize dormant fruit trees.

•Apply a slow release fertilizer to spring bulbs as the foliage emerges.

•Look for early weeds among flower beds and hoe them up.

•Prune crepe myrtles early in the month. Use sharp tools. Look at the outline and remove any crossed branches. Open up crotch angles.

Remove suckers at the base. Leave a multiple trunk of 3-5 strong branches.

•Prune roses once the buds swell. Major canes need cutting back 15-24 inches above a bud. Prune out dead wood and diseased stems.

•Review your garden for bare spots, lack of structure, and places that are overgrown.

•Check out the lawnmower. Is everything in working order?

•Sharpen tools with a file.

•Plant more hardy pansies.

•Plant early vegetables such as spinach, onion sets, asparagus, and rhubarb. Potatoes go in on St. Patrick's Day, March 17.

•Watch out for vernal witch hazel and winter jasmine which bloom very early in the season.

•Spray boxwoods with Cygon or Orthene in late March to prevent damage from leaf miner.

•Uncover protective screens (to combat wind damage) on an overcast day.

•Order seeds and summer stock.

•Don't remove mulch yet.

•Clip overgrown vines.

•Pot up small clumps of crocus or lily of the valley from the garden as they emerge and continue growing in a sunny window. —

•Judging

Continued from page 8

enough to earn a place on the state team as an alternate. Also on the squad were Evans Thompson of Willis and Joe Robinson of Ewing.

Although the winning team was created from that summer contest, all the boys had to return home and wait several months before heading off on a week-long trip to Kansas City in the fall. "When I won the state, Brumback told me that I needed \$25 spending money to go to Kansas City. Dad wouldn't give it to me so I got a job in Staunton at a soda fountain for \$8 a week and I worked there for three weeks. Then I went over to Waynesboro and got a job working at Crompton from 4 p.m. to 12. Once school started I went to high school there at Jack-

son Wilson and continued working at Crompton. I worked at Crompton from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., then I went to school from 10 to 3 and then back to work again," said Calvin.

That October in 1935 the livestock judging team gathered in Blacksburg for a few days of practice before heading west. "After we got to Christiansburg, we went out and judged as practice. Paul Swaffer was there. He was one of the best judges ever and he was an instructor of animal husbandry at Tech. If it wasn't right, then Paul Swaffer didn't say it. He was a nice fellow, but he wanted perfection," recalled R.W.

The trip west was by train, a first for the two Augusta boys. "I was 16 years old and had never ridden a train before," said R.W. "We rode all night and when we got off in

Cincinnati to eat breakfast, I couldn't stand up. I had gotten used to the train's motion. It took me a day or two after getting to Kansas City to get over it!"

"That was quite a trip! I was just 17 years old and it opened up a whole new world to me. We changed trains in Cincinnati and I thought that was big time," added Calvin.

The Virginia boys also got the shock of their lives when they saw the livestock they were asked to judge. "The first day the first class was hogs. I'll tell you I had never seen such big hogs in my life. I was dumbfounded. Livestock was so much different out west. There were three days of judging and we looked at beef, dairy, draft horses, hogs, sheep and had judging on meat identification," said Calvin.

"We saw hogs that looked like

hippopotamuses," said R.W. "I didn't know hogs got that big. Some were 1,000 pounds. A 500- or 600-pound hog around here had already eaten more feed than it was worth! I thought the horse races were the best: hackney ponies, saddle horses, the Budweiser team

with eight Clydesdales and some man had a 16-horse team, four abreast and four deep, and they could cut a figure eight around the judges' stand," he added.

Despite their initial shock at the differences in livestock, the Vir-

See HORSES, page 17

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Dream a little garden dream

I had such a vivid dream the other night. I dreamed that my daughter Emma and I were walking down the beach together. We both had our shoes off and she was squealing with delight when the water would wave in and touch her feet. As I always do when I visit the ocean, I felt the awe and wonder of it, along with the fear of it — especially as I watched my very small child teetering on the edge of sand and sea.

Being about seven months pregnant now, I can tell you that my dreams have gotten very strange and vivid, even more so than usual. I am one that almost always remembers my nighttime wanderings. In fact, I have written a couple of short stories about dreams that I have had. But when I am pregnant, dreams get even stranger. The other night, I dreamed that I was back at my townhome in Reston in the postage-stamp backyard we had magically transformed into a beautiful scentual garden. Even though I was sleeping, I woke up feeling as if I were smelling the lemon verbena, chocolate mint, lavender, and sage. And it was as if the pink of the yarrow and the bright purple of the Echinacea in that garden were more than a distant memory. It was closer now. I did not even have to close my eyes to see it. In my dream, I also saw the lilac bush we planted in the corner along the

Many of my memories with my husband center on the mountains we have hiked, the gardens we have tended, the herbs we grew, and where we purchased them. Each plant and herb holds a memory and tells a story for us.

fence. And it was in full bloom. We bought it during an excursion to Harper's Ferry, which is one of our favorite places.

Many of the other plants in our Reston garden came from a different nursery in Harper's Ferry. For my 30th birthday, my husband took me there and said, "Get what you want." I remember the older gentleman who owned the store telling me about feverfew and how good it is for migraines. "It tastes awful, but it does the trick." He was right, it did taste awful, and it worked on my headaches. What he did not mention is how beautiful the plant gets, with little white spiky flowers and beautifully-oblong leaves providing such an interesting texture in the garden.

One my favorite places to get herbs is the Goose Creek Annual Herb Fest at the Oatlands Plantation in Leesburg, usually the first weekend in May. Some of the best ven-

dors in the northeast are there and the Oatlands garden itself is open and is a work of art. Every herb I have bought there has been healthy and has given me many hours of joy, especially in my backyard Reston Garden.

It was such a small space that we were forced to be creative. My husband built raised beds all along the fence. They were about 2 1/2 to 3 feet wide. Then we decided to put flagstone down on what was left of the grass — there was not much and we thought it would be ridiculous to have to mow it. (And if you don't mow your grass in Reston, you can get a hefty fine.) We then placed a swing under the deck and spent many hours there, enjoying the garden, reading, writing, talking, and sometimes entertaining.

We sat among the herbs and all of the different scents and textures during many summer evenings and planned and dreamed of a future that included children and moving to the country. (And here we are — well, almost.)

For better or worse, those long, idling days are gone. Our dreams have come true — our focus has shifted to a rambunctious two-year-old, and a new baby on the way. Another kind of garden, if you will.

We look forward to teaching them about the earth and its many pleasures, including gardening and herbs. And we also look for-

ward to seeing all this through their eyes and making new discoveries with them in the Shenandoah Valley and wherever our lives take us. And now, as we settle more into our new lives here, we make new discoveries.

One of the places we happened upon since moving here is the Buffalo Springs Herb Farm, which has to be one of the most magical places I have ever been. Surrounded by the beauty of Raphine and its rocky fields and green hills, it sits perched between hills and water. Its garden is inspirational. So inspirational and peaceful that a good friend of mine is getting married there this summer. What a great way to start a life together — in the midst of all that beauty, creating memories.

Many of my memories with my husband center on the mountains we have hiked, the gardens we have tended, the herbs we grew, and where we purchased them. Each plant and herb holds a memory and tells a story for us.

As you get the soil ready for the spring and begin to gather your own herbs and plants, remember that yes, it's important to know how to fertilize, what temperature to plant in, which plants like the sun and which don't. But it's also important to be mindful of the creation you are taking part in, the memories, the stories. And when it comes to your garden, dream a little and see where it takes you. —

Down to Earth

By
Mollie Bryan



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HEALTH CARE

Ag Week

Continued from page 9

plify tasks, increase yields and lower prices; in the 1960s, one farmer supplied food for about 25 people in the U.S. and abroad but by 1994, the number had increased to 129;

- for their spirit of innovation - always looking for new products and changes that increase the quality and add value to the products they produce;

- for valuing our land and water resources and for making their preservation and enhancement top priorities;

- for adapting to change - expanding to meet the demands of a global marketplace while still satisfying consumers' shifting tastes and desire for low fat, high nutrition products at home;

- for supplying Americans with an abundant and safe food supply at a low price enabling

U.S. consumers to spend about 9 percent of their income on food compared with approximately 21 percent in Japan, 27 percent in South Africa and 53 percent in India;

- for providing the basis for numerous products including medicines, cosmetics, printing supplies, fuel, lubricants, lumber, paints and sports equipment;

- for enduring; more than 500 Virginia farms — owned by the same families for one hundred years or more - have been recognized as Virginia Century Farms.

- The benefits of agriculture extend far and wide. What starts as the growing and harvesting of food and fiber, ends up with almost everything we eat, wear and use. It's time to thank our farmers for that.

For additional information about Virginia agriculture, click onto the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Web site at www.vdacs.state.va.us. —

Risky

Continued from page 11

Shiftet. "It affects everyone. What would happen if people in the city took a Sunday drive out in the country and found that there was no more country?" he queried.

Scala added that the true value of agriculture to Augusta County is in the open space, the clean air, the watershed protection and wildlife habitat, the scenic views that encourage tourism dollars and, most importantly, the quality of life for all of the area's residents. "It's difficult to put a price tag on the sense of well being that comes from the continuation of Valley traditions and hopeful expectations for future generations," she

explained. "When you consider all the positive impacts of agriculture, it becomes clear that agriculture is still very important to the economic health of Augusta County."

Despite the odds, the family farm is still alive and well in the area. Eighteen Augusta County farms have been recognized as Virginia Century Farms. Eligible farms must have been owned by the same family for at least 100 consecutive years and must be lived on or actually farmed by a descendant of the original owner. The farm must also gross over \$2,500 annually from the sale of farm products.

"It's hard to pass on the farm to the children, but I hope some day to be able to do that," Shiftet said. "Agriculture is very important and I'm proud to be a part of it." —

Schoolhouse News

RHS compiles impressive forensics record

By KIM MCCRAY

GREENVILLE — The last few years, the Riverheads Forensics team has dominated in its forensics meets. After the first three meets this year, it is fair to say that the pattern seems to be continuing.

The first meet was held Jan. 24 at Riverheads against Fort Defiance. The Riverheads team

had been preparing for the meet for quite some time, and looked forward to competition with a cross-county rival. The meet ended with a 49 to 31 victory for the Gladiators.

The second meet was held at Buffalo Gap, and Riverheads also proved victorious in this meet.

The greatest win thus far took place Feb. 7 at the county meet.

This is the third consecutive year Riverheads has won the meet against the four other county schools. For this achievement, the team was given a trophy. Individual winners at this meet were:

Prose: 3rd, Reva Danzig; 2nd, Rebecca Bolin

Poetry Interpretation: 2nd, Kim Davis

Duo Interpretation: 3rd, Kear-

sten Ruud/Julie Waltz
Serious Dramatic Interpretation: 3rd, Chris Shiflett; 2nd, Seth Kislek

Humorous Dramatic Interpretation: 2nd, Dominic Desmond

Extemporaneous Speaking: (Foreign): 1st, Turner Pittkin

Extemporaneous Speaking (Domestic): 3rd, Jordan Ward; 1st,

Adam Mulcahy
Oratory: 3rd, Sarah Payne
Storytelling: 1st, Katherine Caldwell

Spelling: 2nd, Jessica Feher

The next competition for the RHS forensics team will be the District Meet. With the team looking very promising, it is sure to be a successful meet. —

Fort students present *Bye Bye Birdie*

By SUE SIMMONS

FORT DEFIANCE — Had Conrad Birdie come along a few decades later, he too might starred in a music video. As it is, *Augusta Country* readers can catch the all-time favorite production of *Bye Bye Birdie* March 2-4 at Fort Defiance High School. More than 50 Fort Defiance fine arts students have been busy practicing this high-en-

ergy rock-n-roll musical.

Conrad Birdie (Joe Dimeo) is the biggest rock & roll star of the 60s ever to be drafted into the military service. Aspiring chemist and songwriter Albert Peterson (Ryan MacAllister) is convinced he can make his fortune and marry his girlfriend Rosie (Caitlin Kerry) if he gets Conrad on the Ed Sullivan show. The pop star would make his last appearance before

being drafted and symbolically kiss goodbye the country's womanhood represented by Kim McAfee (Emily Martin), a young lady chosen at random to carry the torch. Complicated to start with, things get trickier as everyone including Albert's clinging mother (Sarah Murphy) descend on the small town of Sweet Apple, Ohio, where Kim lives.

Songs include such classics What's the Matter with Kids Today, Bye Bye Birdie, the Telephone Song (Going Steady), and We love you Conrad. The curtain goes up at 7:30 p.m. March 2 and 3, and at 2:30 p.m. March 4. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$3 for students and may be purchased at the door or from any Fort Defiance drama student.

For information call 245-5050. —



Fort Defiance High School students Ryan McAllister and Wendy Ball rehearse a scene in the school's upcoming production of *Bye Bye Birdie*.

Photo by Sue Simmons

RHS yearbook staff busy with projects

By KIM MCCRAY

GREENVILLE — The Riverheads Yearbook Staff has been very busy at the onset of this

semester. Pages are continuously being made of course, but also yearbook staff members have been working on the winter sports brochure. The brochures are free and

can be picked up at Riverheads. Donations are welcome to help defray costs of printing and binding for the spring brochure. Elizabeth Cash and Holly Bunn are co-editors for the brochure. Many other yearbook members helped as well.

Also, the third literary magazine of the school year, *The Shield*, has been produced. The magazine is a compilation of both literary and artistic talents of RHS students. You can get your own literary magazine at the main office, or you can see any yearbook member. Donations are welcome to defray

future printing and binding costs.

Also at the beginning of January, staff members donated various items to be taken to Staunton's Valley Mission. This is the third time this school year that RHS students have given to the Mission. The total value of what was given was more than \$300.

It is plain to see that the Yearbook Staff is very busy, and with the upcoming bake sale and silent auction, this hectic schedule is sure to continue. —

Note to RHS students and parents

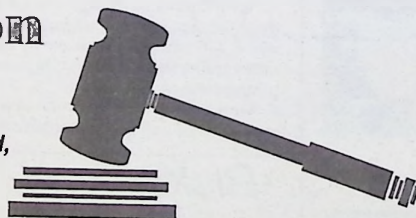
Now is the time to purchase your 2000-2001 Riverheads Yearbook! The Riverheads *Colosseum* is only \$34. What a bargain! Buy it now! You can mail the money to the school, or bring the money to Cherie Taylor's room, B110, in the mornings before school. Also, you can give your money to any yearbook staff member. Buy now, and get the best yearbook around! —

Silent Auction

April 5, 3:30-7 p.m.

Riverheads High School, Room B110

Everyone is encouraged to come bid, and help support the Riverheads Yearbook Staff!



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today.

That three letter word!

I just love seventh graders. They are old enough to accept, then discuss mature concepts, and they are still young enough to be playful with me and my silliness. Sometimes teaching 7th graders life science is pretty easy because they already have a high interest for the topics of the 7th grade science SOLs: environmental science, cells, plants and animals. How could you not enjoy learning about the environment if it meant doing outside labs and field trips? How could you not enjoy learning about cells if you get to work with cool lab equipment like microscopes, beakers, and triple beam balances? And how could you not look forward to the study of plants and animals if it meant doing more microscope work AND those dissection labs?

One area in which my students have always tread with trepidation is when we use the word "sex." By this time in their middle school career, they have had family life class and have the basics from that class or from home. They want to think about it on their own, but they are embarrassed to discuss it with an adult. In class, I meet them on neutral territory because, even though I'm an adult and a parent, I'm not talking about it in the clinical way nor the moralistic way. I'm discussing it because it is part of life.

The first time I see blushing is early in the year when we talk about the two types of reproduction — asexual (without sex cells, i.e. one parent) or sexual (with egg and sperm, i.e. two parents). They are

so surprised that I even use or know the words! We work with the concepts and examples and in a few weeks they are able to use the words out loud without too much reluctance. Right now, I'm seeing this in our study of genetics. It is o.k. when we are talking about pea plant or guinea pig offspring, but when we begin to talk about human genetics, and sex-linked traits, they are hesitant. The father of one of my students this year is color-blind, and another male relative in his family is also color blind. He wanted to know why he wasn't color-blind. I asked him if his mother was color blind. As I expected, he said "no." We then did a couple of simple genetics problems working possible crosses with this sex-linked trait.

Here is a tutorial for those who studied this long ago and have forgotten the basics: Humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes. When seen in a super microscopic view, chromosomes resemble the letter X. Some are small, some large, but each can be matched up with its partner in a chromosome map called a karyotype. This map is often used to diagnose and detect genetic abnormalities. The 23rd pair is significant in its pairing and that determines the sex of the organism. Sex is determined at the time of conception. An XX pairing makes the offspring a female, a XY pairing makes the offspring a male. It's rather like flipping a coin. The male Y chromosome is smaller than the X and therefore

has less area on which to carry genetic material. Some of the traits are determined by the mother because the genes have no analog on the male chromosome to pair with. That space is essentially blank. Color blindness is a sex-linked trait and it is recessive, only showing if two genes are present for it. The genes for that trait in humans are on the X chromosomes of the 23rd pair. There is a higher chance for males to be color-blind than females since they have only one chromosome to carry the trait. Females must inherit the recessive gene for color-blindness from both parents on the XX chromosomes, and therefore have a better chance to not be color-blind.

For seventh graders to contemplate that they are what they are because of the union of an egg from their mother and a sperm from their father is almost too embarrassing. As my student said, "I don't want to go there." I treat it as a teachable moment, however. Despite a student's reluctance to think about his mother and father parenting him, he now understands the reason for more males to be color-blind than females. I used this as a springboard for getting them to think about other traits more common in males than females, and they came up with the obvious — baldness. "Can females be bald?" I asked. "Yes," they replied, "if both X chromosomes had the recessive trait." BINGO! Lesson accomplished!

Before we leave this discussion,



From the teacher's desk

By Betty Gatewood

here is a great opportunity to link history and science in genetics. Hemophilia, or "bleeder's disease," is a sex-linked trait, and its misunderstanding affected the ruling of Russia. "Free bleeders" lack the gene for producing platelets, a blood component needed for blood clotting. One of Queen Victoria's granddaughters, Princess Alexandra, was (unknowingly probably) a carrier for hemophilia. She married Russian Czar Nicholas II. Their heir to the throne, Alexis, was a hemophiliac. The monk Rasputin convinced the royal family that he could cure Alexis (NOT!) and had great control over Alexandra, the czar and therefore major decisions affecting the country. Rasputin's unpopular influence over the royal family may have led to the Russian Revolution in 1917. They had all heard about Anastasia - now they know the rest of the story.

Now that I've gotten my students over the initial embarrassment of talking about themselves in a personal way, they are prepped for our next study of human body systems. I relish the upcoming opportunities for bodily function discussions! We'll fill up Ziploc bags with water tinted with yellow food color-

ing and talk about the size and capacity of their bladders (a Breaka da Rules, a.k.a. Patsy Kislek idea) we'll dissect deer hearts and talk about valves and ventricles (a Duit Wong, a.k.a. George Savage idea), we'll dissect a sheep eye and look at the retina which has rods and cones cells for color, and black and white vision. I'll have them chew up a cracker and keep it in their mouths for FIVE minutes so they can taste the enzymatic reaction upon starch into sugar. It will be fun, somewhat graphic and... memorable???? I can only hope.

We were to finish genetics on a Monday. I had told my students "we're going to make babies on Monday." They laughed nervously and some of them said, "AIIIIII riiiiight!!!!" "I told them to bring a penny and in pairs they will flip coins to determine whether 17 different traits are dominant or recessive (heads = dominant, tails = recessive). They will then draw their offspring as a middle schooler using those traits in their portrait. But before we begin they have to — yes — determine the offspring's sex. "Nothing personal, guys and gals, it's just chance. SEX is just determined by a flip of a coin!" —

Production is the operative word at Fort Defiance H.S.

By SUE SIMMONS

FORT DEFIANCE — John Karaffa, vice President of Fort's Technology Student Association and sergeant-at-arms of the TSA Regional board, is busy producing a project for entry at the regional TSA competition to be held March 10 at Blue Ridge Community College.

Karaffa and several other club members are entering a music video in the broad range video

challenge. According to Karaffa, this is the first time for this particular contest. "The video must promote mathematics, science, technology or the arts," he explained. The video *Desperate Approach* is also the title of the video's theme song written by Karaffa. "It's the story of the band. But band members are played by other people."

The band itself will make only a brief appearance.

The band in question performs as Baltic Avenue. "We're eclectic," Karaffa explains. "Alternative to punk... anything." More went into producing the video than just writing and performing a song. In addition to writing a script that complemented the lyrics of the

song, the video had to cast, find locations, film and edited. Karaffa estimates they have spent 16 hours writing and taping the video. "We haven't started the computer editing yet," he said. "We had to approach local businesses, coordinate schedules, deal with commitments that fell through, and deal with weather conditions," Karaffa pointed out, adding that they filmed at Burger King, the Dixie Theater, and on Church Street in Staunton.

The finished video will be produced with equipment and software purchased by Fort's TSA and under the watchful eye of club sponsor, Bill Blough. Karaffa hastens to add that it is a group effort. "We have a production crew and a computer crew."

Asked what he has learned from his involvement in this project, Karaffa quickly responds, "I have a huge respect for Star Wars now. Our video is only 3 minutes and 32 seconds long. You never know what goes into a movie until you try to do it yourself." Someday Karaffa and his crew may win an Oscar, but right now they'd be happy to win the TSA regionals and go to the state competition. —

If you're interested Augusta County's technology talent, plan to visit the TSA Regional Competition March 10 at Blue Ridge Community College. If you'd like to catch Baltic Avenue live and in concert, check out the CoffeeHouse at Augusta Stone Church on March 17.



John Karaffa, far left, Klaus Shmidheiser, and Tom Lewis, far right, perform during taping for the video *Desperate Approach* which will be Fort Defiance High School's entry in the Technology Student Association competition to be held March 10 at Blue Ridge Community College.

Photo by Sue Simmons

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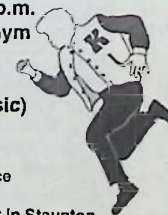
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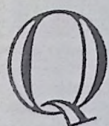
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D.A.S.H. on over to Riverheads to enjoy an evening of dining and dancing!



The Hitching Post

Some tips to deal with 'spooky' horses



Dear I. B.: Why do horses spook? My horse sometimes jumps at things and when he's frightened I can't ride him. I have to get off. How can I stop him from spooking at everything?

— f.s., Staunton

Horses spook for different reasons. Temperament, diet, stress, and the rider can all contribute to the problem. We can look at these things and then discuss ways to correct the problem.

A horse's temperament can have a lot to do with spooking. By nature horses are flight animals and their reaction to fear is to run. This makes the problem of spooking dangerous for most riders. Horses that bolt or run are difficult to control. Temperament is part personality and part emotional make up. Some horses are very sensitive to everything that happens to them. This can make them "high strung."

They are usually energetic and very responsive to rider commands. Then there are what you could call "sensible" horses. These horses handle problems with less emotional reactions and don't always lose their cool over little things. "Bomb proof" horses are the ones that don't react to anything. Cars, bikes, or horns don't affect them emotionally. "Bomb proof" horses are usually great beginner horses, but often have less potential and talent than the other types.

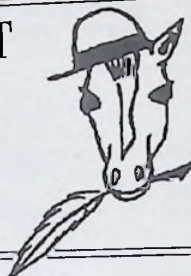
First you need to think about the temperament of your horse. If he is in the "high strung" group then you will need to remember that this

is part of his temperament and you will have to constantly work to keep him calm. If he is in the "sensible" group then we can look at other factors such as diet and rider to correct the problem. If he is "bomb proof" then you probably wouldn't be writing me about the problem.

Diet can contribute to the problem with high energy grain feeds. Horses that are ridden on a constant basis will use up more energy than horses that are not. What you are feeding your horse can give him extra energy. Cutting back on grain rations might help the problem. Grain products today have a great deal of vitamins and minerals packed into smaller amounts. It is very easy to overfeed your horse. If he is in good condition he can also have that extra energy in the form of "I feel great." Conditioning and fitness can make a horse "ready for anything." Quick responses and reflexes can often turn into a horse that seems like a "spooker," which brings me to my next thought — the rider.

The rider can have a great emotional impact on his horse's behavior. Riders who get frightened when horses react to situations can contribute to the problem. In a herd atmosphere, horses react in an empathic way. If one horse senses danger and feels fear, the other horses react too. This empathy is a wonderful asset in horsemanship with an emotion such as compassion, but with fear it makes the horse prepared for the flight reaction. The horse senses only the discomfort of fear and does not have the ability to discern the cause (in this

I.B. HOOFINIT
From
the
Horse's Mouth



case the rider is afraid of the horse's reaction). This lack of understanding between horse and rider causes the horse to seem spooky. This is why beginners who lack confidence in their horsemanship should steer away from "high strung" horses and work with the other two types.

In looking at solutions first look at your horse's temperament. In deciding what type he is you can approach the problem in different ways. "High strung" horses will need more discipline to be obedient to the rider in spite of emotions. I recommend a trainer for this type to help with a process called "sacking out" which exposes the horse to stimuli and decreases his reaction to it. You would also need to look at your own reactions. In try-

ing to maintain emotional control you might try changing your reactions to a more "protective" type emotion. This means instead of reacting in fear when your horse spooks you might try developing a protective approach. With a sensible type horse this might be all it takes. Developing a protective approach means you are willing to "go to battle" for your horse. The horse can sense your courage and will build trust in sticky situations.

Take it from the horse's mouth, emotional reactions are just that. When your horse is afraid you will have more control by maintaining your own emotional discipline. Stay objective, adopt a protective approach, and work to discipline the horse in spite of its fear. —



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Let's go on a bear hunt: A good story well told

By JEAN BRYDGE

Obern Massey could roll a cigarette slicker than anyone I had ever seen.

But that was not his real claim to fame.

"Mr. Obern," as everyone called him, was a country store proprietor in the Blue Ridge Mountain foothills and also the most fascinating storyteller for miles around. I occasionally accompanied Dad to the store after supper. Seated on benches around the old King heater were the neighborhood men discussing the happenings of this small mountain community. Sooner or later someone said, "Tell us a story, Mr. Obern."

One of the favorites was "The Bear" and I could hardly wait as Mr. Obern got himself situated to begin.

He slowly pulled a pack of cigarette papers from his shirt pocket and rolled a sheet around his finger. Next, he retrieved a bag of tobacco from his vest pocket. Meticulously pouring tobacco into the rolled paper, he drew the bag shut with his teeth, licked the edge of the paper, overlapped it, then twisted both ends. He struck a kitchen match on the heater, lit the cigarette and took a deep drag. Then he was ready for storytelling.

This story is about Tom and Ed. They was Jesse's boys, you know. Tom, thin as a sheet of

paper, and Ed who could lift a piano by himself. They wasn't much alike in any way but I reckon they loved each other.

Tom went off for more schoolin'. When he came home Thanksgiving, Ed wanted him to go bear hunting. Tom tried to squirm out of it but Ed wouldn't take "no" for an answer. Finally one cold morning, they set off with Thermoses of coffee, sandwiches, and shot guns. Now, Ed had just bought a Model T Ford with logging money and suggested they drive up the mountain wagon trail and start hunting at the top. Tom agreed because he didn't want to walk up that mountain.

Half way up, the radiator overheated and they had to get spring water. Dipping the last pail, Ed heard a noise and looked up into the eyes of a huge bear. His gun and Tom were both at the car. Slowly and carefully he backed away as the bear lumbered off through the brush.

Ed was pretty excited and wanted to follow that bear right then but Tom persuaded him to drive on up the mountain.

Well, by this time, Tom was cold and hungry and tired but Ed was just gettin' started. They had some coffee and started across the ridge. Shortly, there was a rustlin' in the trees and on the

other side of a clearing, a black bear reared up on his hind paws. Ed aimed his gun and the bear dropped on all fours just as he shot. Well, that bear took off like a race car on Saturday night. Ed was so disgusted, he yelled at



Tom "Why didn't you shoot?"

Tom dropped his head. "He looked so pretty I didn't have the heart to kill him!" "Dog it, if you don't beat all, Tom Thacker! We came huntin' to kill a bear and you tell me you can't kill one 'cause he's pretty. We might as well have stayed at home!" Ed said. Tom felt bad and handed Ed a sandwich. They ate in near silence 'cause Ed was still peeved.

He said, "We might as well go. We've scared everything for miles around." They piled their things in the Model T and started down the mountain with Ed driving. Their guns were in the front and Tom in the back with his hat pulled over his eyes.

With the car's top down, it was freezing but Tom wasn't about to complain. Suddenly the car lurched forward and Tom heard Ed mumbling.

"What's wrong, Ed?"

Tom yelled.

"We got no brakes!" Ed yelled back.

About that time, Tom felt a tremendous thump in the back seat, looked over and a half grown black bear had tumbled into the car when a limb broke. Well, Tom was so scared, he didn't know which was worse; sittin' beside the bear or hurtlin' down the mountain at breakneck speed with no brakes.

Tom yelled up to Ed, "There's a bear in the car! Can't you use the handbrake?"

In a response, Ed held the lever which operated the handbrake up in the air.

Tom knew there was no use talkin' and tried to grab his hat as it soared up the mountain.

The car kept picking up speed 'til it felt like they was flyin'. Even the bear looked scared. He

couldn't get out and Tom couldn't get out so they stayed in the same seat.

Mr. Obern slapped his knee and laughed out loud as he said, "I bet that bear never had a ride in a car before!"

Ed hit a rock and the car slewed to one side but finally straightened itself out. Tom knew absolutely they were going to be killed. About three quarters of the way down the mountain, he remembered the pond at the bottom. If they survived this wagon trail, they were going in the pond.

"Hey, Ed. Remember the pond?!" Tom screamed.

"Yeah, that's our only hope!"

After what seemed years, the Model T plunged into the pond at top speed. Water sprayed everywhere and started coming up in the seats. The bear gave a growl and crawled over the back of the car. The last they saw of him he was loping toward the other side of the valley.

Ed and Tom got their guns and sloshed their way to shore. Drenched to the skin, their teeth chattered as they shivered violently.

Ed said, "You wait and I'll go get Mr. Collins' horses to pull the car out."

Tom shook his head fiercely. His face looked like whitewash. His hand trembled as he waved it and said, "No, no. Don't do that for me. I think I'll just walk home. It's not but six or eight miles." —

•Horses

Continued from page 12

ginia boys represented their state well. The three-person team of Calvin, Evans, and Joe placed seventh in the U.S. in draft horse judging and Joe finished fourth individually. In the overall judging the team finished 16th out of 35 states. In the meat judging the team of Calvin, Evans, and Moffett finished 13th in the nation, the highest a Virginia team had ever placed.

But it was R.W. who surprised everyone by taking first in the nation in the livestock showmanship contest. Although tops in the United States is something to be proud of, to hear R.W. tell it you would think it was an accidental honor. "They'd been having trouble getting somebody to show

the animals for the judges to judge. They tried different people, including the alternates, but everybody would get tired of holding the animal and just walk off. Then they decided to make a contest out of it. I showed a horse, a sheep and a steer. I tried to show them as best I could. Of course they were all trained animals," he remembered.

When the national FFA contests were complete, the Virginia team still had one more thrill in store. On the way back the delegation stopped at the Swift & Company meat packers and dined with the company president. "To see that stockyard in Chicago was an education," said R.W. "I will never forget a trip like that."

For both Calvin and R.W. their participation in vocational agricul-

ture, FFA, and livestock judging was more than something fun to do. Their experiences and particularly their trips to Kansas City opened up a much bigger world and set them on the right course for their future.

"It opened up a whole new world to me. As a result of winning the judging contest I was able to get a job at Crompton and I worked one year and saved enough money to go to Dunsmore Business College for a year and then I went to U.Va. and got a B.S. in commerce," said Calvin. That work ethic that he cultivated to earn money for his FFA trip has carried him through life. "I had three or four jobs at U.Va. I worked in the bursar's office and was the assistant to the lady who made student loans. I sold tickets at ball games, I was an agent to take students around and show them boarding houses, I was the representative of the cleaning company in the dorm I lived in and on Saturdays I worked at a shoe store."

After graduation, Calvin joined the marines on Dec. 7, 1942 and made it a career. He saw action in WWII and did three tours in the Pacific and one in the Caribbean. He retired as a major in 1963 and went into the real estate business.

While in the marines he was able to apply some of life's lessons that he learned back in Augusta County

on the farm. "I knew how to maneuver over terrain while the city dudes didn't know how to manage. The experience on the farm was invaluable. The physical training I got on the farm and what we did on the farm gave me the stamina," he said.

Calvin recalls that during his whole marine career he longed to come back to Augusta County. And now he has, at least part time. He spends much of his time in California, but he also has a house in Staunton and divides his time between the two.

Although R.W.'s life path didn't follow the same course as Calvin's, he still points to that high school agriculture experience as directing the outcome. R.W. actually made a second trip back to Kansas City, in 1937, this time to receive the American Farmer's Degree. He was only the second young man in Augusta County to receive this national honor, the first was Bill Brooks, also of Stuarts Draft.

"To get the American Farmer Degree you had to keep good books on your projects. And you had to have a good ag instructor to help get all the forms filled out. I had T.J. Horn. He was the one responsible for it. He found out what I had to do and helped me get it all done. They gave the degree to me but really he should have gotten it. If he hadn't left after that year then

Jim Williams in Greenville would have gotten it the next year but Jim didn't have the instructor to help him through the process," R.W. said.

R.W. was a veteran traveler on his second trip to Kansas City the two trips helped raise the level of his expectations for life after high school. He graduated in a class of 11 from Stuarts Draft in 1937. In the fall of that year he enrolled in Dunsmore Business College.

"I was there three months and by spring I had all of that place I wanted. They would fire up the coal stoves and the wind would blow and it would get so smoky with the coal smoke that you couldn't see to tell who was sitting across the room!" he said with a smile.

Frustrated with his situation, he went to a local agricultural instructor and asked for help. The teacher took R.W. with him to an FFA convention and that inspired him to enroll at VPI. "I borrowed \$550 and didn't quite spend that much the first year."

The fall of 1938 found R.W. at VPI preparing for a career as an agricultural teacher. Life at Tech was different than it is now. Nearly all the students were required to be a part of the cadet corps which was Army ROTC. When they graduated they were commissioned as

See TEACHER, page 19

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Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin



February 2001

Dear Maude,

One has to admit that however you look at it, January and February are not necessarily the best months of the year. My friend Mary used to say that she hated February. One winter it got to her so much that she went out and collected an armload of dead tree branches. She made lots of brightly colored tissue paper flowers which she stapled all over the branches and decorated the entire apartment. It really did help!

At least the month of January is welcome, as it gives us all time to recover from the holidays, make resolutions, (which of course we don't even plan to keep, but we make them anyway.) But then comes February. All of the really good post holiday sales are over. Those resolutions have all been thrown in the trashcan. It is still dark when we get home from work and the faces of the subway riders have taken on a blank look. All of the excitement is over. Usually there are a few parties to keep us going, but this year after all of the inaugural functions were over, things got really quiet. To make matters worse, my friend Jimmy, who comes up with a good party often, got transferred to Texas. No parties, no new clothes — I don't even have a good excuse to go shopping now! Valentine's Day tries to cheer us up, and sometimes does for a day or two, but then as we try to cross one of these Washington streets the wind nearly blows us down, while totally destroying our brand new hairdo. Oh, indeed, it is time for spring!

To make matters worse, the boss is in one of his "I-need-more-clients" moods. When this happens, he has all of us on the lookout for anything that Congress might be talking about doing something that would affect anyone he

knows. Finding that out is not as easy as one would like it to be. The newspapers print what they think is the most newsworthy, not necessarily the most billable. What used to be simple is not so anymore. With the Senate split 50/50, we cannot concentrate on one political party. Everyone has to be taken into consideration. So we end up visiting old friends (with the hope of meeting the new staff members as well,) on the various member and committee staffs and treating them to an inexpensive lunch. There is always the hope of picking up a bit of inside information. Off we go, with money from the petty cash box, to meet someone we talked into lunch or an after work drink. Even this sounds easier than it really is.

Everyone on the Hill still is trying to get settled. Even though not every Member's office is moved in the once-every-two-year shuffle, there are enough that are moved to make it necessary for all of us to relearn our way around. If the person you are to meet is in an office, which has been moved from one House office building to another, and you forget when you tell the taxi driver your proper destination until he delivers you to the wrong place, then you are faced with two options. One, you could ask him to turn around and take you to the other location, which is not recommended, since Washington taxi drivers charge by the zone and are not particularly happy, or civil, when you take up more of their time than they think is necessary. Two, you could just go ahead and get out of the cab and walk to the proper building — and there goes the hair again in the winter wind! (I wonder if the boss would pay for a repair job out of that petty cash box?)

While the Washington property owners begin to plant and replant pansies wherever they can, hoping to encour-

age spring to arrive, we continue to make these encouraged office social calls and to keep up with what is being done and said by the members of the House and Senate, as well as by the President. In the past, this was easier than it is now. Things are just a bit different that usual with the new administration, however.

"Did you hear what the President said this morning?" says a colleague.

Your reply is likely to be, "...I'm not sure..."

In this city, we get accustomed to saying only "the President," but this year one has to be specific. Which one? Poor President Bush, smiling and waving, does not get the attention he should. Those cameras are all off chasing a really broadly smiling and waving former president, who still seems to be stealing the show. It must be some strange form of addiction, which afflicts newsmen and politicians. No matter what he does, it appears to be news. Mr. Clinton will never lead a quiet life! Perhaps the press simply realizes that in this dreary late winter-time, we need a little entertainment.

It really does seem like such a long time since winter began, but just as I was beginning to despair that the dreary days would never end, I went out into the small yard behind the apartment building to put my trash out for collection. There, nestled between the concrete and a battered old brick stood a little bunch of bright yellow early crocus in full bloom. It revived my spirits immensely. I think that tomorrow I shall take a long lunch hour and go buy myself a new spring outfit! That certainly ought to cheer me up!

Tell everyone at home that I send my love,
LuLu

Migratory hawks stop over in Augusta country

By MARK GATEWOOD

Winter should be called The Season When Hawks Sit by the Road. One evening I counted five along I-81 between Staunton and Verona: big, impassive red-tails just sitting there enjoying that ample leisure that's part of the life of a big predator.

It's not really leisure, though. Some hawks hunt on the wing, but the red-tail hunts from a perch, using its famously fine eyesight to locate mice and, occasionally, other larger prey, in the grass below. And there's the topic of this month's investigation: hawk-eyes.

As a group, birds get more information about their surroundings from their eyesight than from any of their other senses. Investigate the skull of most any bird and you'll find more space devoted to the eyeballs than to the brain. Or, to put it another way, consider this: in a starling and a human, the head is about one-tenth of the total body weight. The ratio of eye weight to head weight in man is less than one percent; in the starling, the eyes are about 15 percent of the weight of the head.

The size of the eye isn't the only thing that contributes to the hawk's fine sense of sight. The eyeball has

some special features that make for acute vision. The bird's retina, the inner lining of the back of the eyeball, consists of light receptors called rods and cones — just like our eyes. But in the bird's retina, rods and cones are more numerous and tightly packed than in any other vertebrate. This makes possible a fine-grained, detailed image. In hawks, the lens is located relatively far from the retina. This enlarges the image which is cast on the retina the same way a telescope enlarges the image cast on our eye.

Not every animal out there has eyes in the front of its head as we do. Two eyes, facing forward, give an overlapping field of view which helps us to determine distance and depth. (To fully appreciate the ben-

efits of so-called binocular vision, cover one eye some time when you're driving in heavy traffic — but not for long! You'll see what I mean.) The ability to detect distance and depth is an obvious plus to a bird that may have to drop 30 feet out of a tree and grab a three-inch-long mouse in six-inch-tall grass. Hawks, owls and some other birds whose eyes face forward seem to have binocular vision, though the neural "wiring" between the eyeball and the brain suggests that it may not work exactly like ours does. Contrast this with a bird with side-facing eyes like a chicken. That goofy-looking head-bobbing that chickens do is simply a means of looking at an object from two different angles in order

to triangulate on its exact location before pecking at it.

Looking back over that last paragraph, I realize that I've been a bit unfair to the poultry interests. Many, many species of birds bob their heads in order to determine the distance of objects. The two-dollar term for it is "parallax localization." It looks cute when you see sandpipers at the beach doing it; when a chicken does it, it looks stupid. I guess it's our culture.

The red-tailed hawks are common year-round residents here. But they also migrate and the apparent increase in roadside birds is from migrants wintering with us. They will begin nesting as early as March, laying only two to four eggs.

I'm sure you all have heard the

call of the red-tail. It's a hoarse "kee-urr," something between a whistle and a shriek, and it's a proud, fierce, predatory call usually given while soaring overhead. Blue jays do a good job of mimicking it, for no other apparent reason than that jays will be jays. Humans can mimic it, too, with a low, slurred between-the-teeth whistle. It's a fun way to freak out a rabbit or a groundhog.

Some of those roadside birds will be heading back north soon, leaving favored perches to the locals. I wish them well, migrants and residents alike. It's been kind of a long winter and I'm grateful to them for livening the landscape of Augusta country for awhile. —

•Youngsters

Continued from page 11

one that wasn't smoothly run with the students — not the adults — the students taking the responsibility for conducting the program and providing leadership for the event.

I speculate that these FFA members have a lot of good support behind them with their instruc-

tors and parents. But they sure carry it off well. And I don't think it's all smoke and mirrors.

Right now the ag shop at Riverheads High School has a tractor of mine they have torn completely apart. Well, they didn't do it to be spiteful or anything. I wanted it torn apart. They have torn it apart, are fixing all the malfunctioning parts and are putting it back

together again. When they're done, I'll have close to a new tractor for probably half the cost of what it would have taken to achieve the same result from a commercial dealer. I hope what they'll get out of the process is some valuable hands-on experience with mechanics. After they leave the RHS ag program, these students may never touch another spark plug or radia-

tor hose in their lives. But they will have had the experience of taking on a project and seeing it through from its beginning to a successful end. And, the last time I checked, that's what life is all about.

There is only one complaint I have about FFA students. Whenever they see me they call me — I'm shuddering. A chill is running

See CHILL, page 19

VFW honors essayists

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — Seventh and eighth grade student essayists were honored recently at a pizza party hosted by VFW Post 2216. The students were all winners or participants in the VFW Youth Essay Competition which had posed the following question to the young writers: "What does it mean to be patriotic?"



STOLTZFUS

Sixty-two students from three area schools submitted entries. Of those, Simon Stoltzfus, a seventh grader at Beverley Manor Middle School, took top honors with his first-place finish for Post 2216. In addition, the young Stoltzfus captured first-place honors in district competition and third-place honors in the state contest.

Taking second place for the post was Grace Christian eighth grader Jessica Kinder, while her classmate at Grace, Andrew Knopp, captured third place. Finishing fourth in the post competition was Beverley Manor student Rachel Dillard.

Handing out the awards was VFW Auxiliary representative Frances Hall. Also on hand to give awards was Eugene Chavez of VFW Post 10826. "I'd like to thank each and every one of the teachers who put this into the schools and gave the students a chance to write.



KINDER



KNOPP



WARD



DOVE

This kind of essay makes the students stop and think. A lot of effort has gone into this and we had some quality entries," he said.

Chavez gave awards to his post winners from Stewart Middle School: Lindsay Mohler, first; Anne Ward, second; and Laura Dove, third.

All of the participants in the contest were given certificates that honored each student for being "an outstanding young spokesman of the future." Also honored were the three essay judges Tom and Becky Park and Fred Ohlinger, Beverley Manor principal Bill Lobb, Grace Christian teacher Debbie Summers, and BMMS teachers Beverley Wise and Scarlett Kiser.

Kiser was singled out by the post as being special for having encouraged her students' involvement in a number of veteran and VFW-related activities including the Buddy Poppy fundraising and the "adoption" of veterans in Veteran Admin-

istration homes by her students. This year she was honored as the VFW teacher of the year for Post 2216, as regional teacher of the year for District 11, and as the top VFW teacher of the year in the entire state of Virginia. Now she is in the running for the national VFW teacher of the year. —



VFW auxiliary member Frances Hall, right, congratulates Beverley Manor Middle School teacher Scarlett Kiser for being selected VFW's Virginia teacher of the year.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

Show what it means to be patriotic

By LINDSAY MOHLER

When I think of being patriotic my first thoughts are of our men and women in our armed forces. This is because so many have risked and given their lives so that we can be free. We can show our patriotism by honoring our veterans and flying our flag on their holidays.

Although most people think of serving in our armed forces as being patriotic, there are other ways to serve our country as well. One of the most overlooked ways of showing our patriotism, as well as one of the easiest, is to participate in the election process by voting in every election. As the result of the presidential election of 2000 has shown, every vote really does count.

While it is important to show patriotism by voting, it is also necessary to have volunteers to help conduct the election. Volunteers can act as election officials, or by volunteering to work for the party or candidate of their choice.

Our patriotism does not stop with serving our country or getting involved in the election process. We can also show our love of our coun-

try by simply obeying the law. While we show love of our country by being obedient to laws, we should also be ready to work to change the laws we view as not right, unjust, or unfair.

While we show our patriotism by getting involved in the election of qualified people for public office, the job does not stop there. We need to show our love of our country by getting to know our elected representatives and urging them to promote good government. Elected officials need to know our view on topics that are important to us.

Very few of us will represent our country as elected officials at the state or national level. We can show our love of country by serving at the local level on the many boards and commissions that are available.

Patriotism means more than just living in our county, it means loving our country. We show our love not only with what we say and our willingness to serve our country, but eagerness to serve as well. —

Additional VFW winning essays were unavailable for publication in this issue. Other essays will be published in future issues.

°Chill

Continued from page 18

up my spine — they call me... Ms. Hamilton. It makes me feel about 103 years old. But I guess that's my problem and not theirs.

With the right kind of science, the right kind of land (and enough of it), the right kind of money (and enough of it) and the right kind of people, we're thinking the future of farming looks right promising down on the farm. —

°Teacher

Continued from page 17

second lieutenants. Students were not allowed to have cars although they could get a special permit to bring a car in over a dance weekend. "If you were caught with an

illegal car then you got kicked out of school," he recalled.

All told, R.W.'s four years at VPI cost him a little less than \$2,400 and he kept track of every nickel he spent. "It didn't grow on trees back then either," he said of the expenses. "The first thing I did when I got out of VPI was pay back what I had borrowed."

By the time he graduated from school, the nation was in the midst of war. "I remember the day the Japs hit Pearl Harbor. We were out on the field throwing a football around. I went to the barracks and heard and I knew right then that I wouldn't be teaching school when I got out of Tech. I graduated in 1942 and I had 15 days to report to the service," R.W. remembered.

He reported to Fort Monroe, took his physical and readied to be shipped out, but a paper snafu meant that his unit stayed put for nearly two weeks. To pass the time the army determined that the new recruits would receive one of the 15 shots they were required to have each day until they left. They got

through shot No 12 when their orders were found and they were sent to Fort Benning, Ga. Unfortunately, the group's papers were again lost so they wound up having the 15 shots all over again.

When combat infantry training was complete, R.W. and five others were assigned to Fort Lewis in Washington State. The six went home to Virginia, piled into two automobiles and drove across country. The cars got separated and didn't connect until Idaho. Then things went awry again. R.W.'s car was carrying all the pistols and the dress woofs for the six men. His group stopped to do some duck hunting while the others went on to report for duty. The others were hopping mad when they realized R.W.'s group had yet to arrive with their sidearms or dress clothes and they were required to report in the same uniforms they had been wearing the entire trip!

It wasn't long before Lt. Moffett was in the South Pacific where he spent time at New Guinea, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines

and Japan. When an artillery shell exploded 10 feet from him he wound up with shrapnel in his back and arm and a purple heart.

He finally came home from the war a captain in January 1946. "I just came home, but I didn't know what I was going to do," he recalled. "Dad had struggled on in the war and I started helping him on the farm," he said of the farm across the road from Chapel Hill where he now lives in Mint Spring. "We worked back and forth between the two farms. My dad had gotten a tractor during the war. It was the only tractor on both of these farms, 600 acres, for several years. Before that all the power we had to work in the fields was horses. We did have a big International Titan tractor that ran the belts which ground the feed and filled the silo with ensilage and sawed wood."

Milking cows was the one part of farming that R.W. never thought he'd do. Although his dad had milked a few cows they had also raised sheep. Then in 1946 Mrs. Churchman, who lived at Chapel Hill, owned half a dairy herd that R.W. offered to help with. His fate was sealed. He milked cows from 1946 until 1976 and then put two herds together and continued with the milking operations on the

Chapel Hill Farm until 1994.

In the meantime, Mrs. Churchman's daughter had grown up during the war and she caught R.W.'s eye. The two were married in 1948 and more than 50 years later they are comfortably settled in at Chapel Hill. In the winter when things get slow on the farm, R.W. putters in his woodworking shop where he has turned out such beauties as black walnut grandfather clocks and drop-leaf tables.

Over the years, farming has changed tremendously noted R.W. Back when he was in high school, one third of the crop farmers put in was wheat and most of the field work was done with horse power. These days development crowds in on the farmlands of Augusta County and the farmer is becoming an endangered species.

Despite the changes, it's a life he has enjoyed and one that would not have happened in exactly the same way if it wasn't for FFA and a couple of inspiring trips to Kansas City. "If it hadn't been for FFA and T.J. Horn, I probably would never have gone to VPI. At that time there just wasn't any money to do something like that," he said with a shrug. "I would have stayed home and been drafted in the army and who knows what would have happened." —

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Appearing Nightly

Time to renew?
See page 2

Coen brothers frame South with *O Brother*

Hannah's mom and dad met Tim and Cartha Smith in the Bijou parking lot. The Smiths had just seen *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and they were still laughing. The next Sunday Sue and Delmar Botkin praised and recommended it. Hannah called in the middle of the week, "Mom, you have to go see it."

Ignoring the blind prophet's warning to fast-talking Ulysses McGill, "the treasure you seek shall not be the treasure you find" Hannah's mom marched off to the Bijou hoping for a treasure.

The opening credits of Joel and Ethan Coen's (*Blood Simple*, *Fargo*, *Raising Arizona*) latest movie gives writing credit to Homer and his *Odyssey*. If you are a Coen brothers' fan, you know things are not always as they seem.

Ulysses Everett McGill (George Clooney — *Three Kings*) engineers an escape from a Mississippi chain gang by promising Delmar (Tim Blake Nelson — *Thin Red Line*) and Pete (John Turturro — *Quiz Show*, *Miller's Crossing*) a share of a treasure hidden in his cabin. The

treasure is of course bogus; Ulysses really wants to get home in time to stop his wife Penny (Holly Hunter — *The Piano*, *Living Out Loud*) from remarrying. As the three set off, they meet the blind man and hear his perplexing prophecy.

Along the way they meet Tommy Johnson (Chris Thomas King — a real life bluesman) who has just sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for becoming a guitar playing man. When they ask him why he sold his soul, Tommy responds, "Well, I wasn't usin' it." The four stumble into a recording studio where they pass themselves off as "The Soggy Bottom Boys" and "sing into a can" for \$10 apiece. Gleeful at the easy money they've just made, the trio continues their quest; what they don't know is that their song becomes a runaway hit throughout the South.

What follows is a series of obstacles and adventures of epic proportion that includes Lotus-eaters, the Cyclops, the Sirens (sung by Emmylou Harris, Alison Krauss and Gillian Welch) as well as the

Ku Klux Klan, Baby-face Nelson, assorted Mississippi politicians, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. As is their habit — Minnesotans did not take kindly to the Coen brothers' "Oh yah! You bet! Diddy try the chicken fricassee" portrayal in *Fargo* — the Coens poke ungentle fun at the South.

O Brother is filled with Southern stereotypes and archetypes. Politicians are either fat or crooked or both; women are either lusty or cranky or both; men are either hicks or hucksters or both.

George Clooney, whose comic timing is flawless, plays a character who is obsessed with finding Dapper Dan pomade for his hair, sleeps in a Ruth Buzzi hair net, and, when challenged by one of the other cons for leadership of the trio, offers a quick response, "I just figured it should be the one with the capacity for abstract thought."

Turturro, a Coen brothers regular, plays Pete, an angry man who dreams of becoming a maitre d' in a fancy restaurant. Nelson, as the dimwitted Delmar, does some of

the funniest stuff in the movie when he is convinced that Pete has been turned into a toad. Holly Hunter turns in a vintage performance as Ulysses' long-suffering wife who is ready to throw him over for a "bona fide" suitor.

Any movie recommended three times in one week inevitably cannot live up to its press. It will inspire you to re-read the *Odyssey* or at least dust off your Cliff notes. *O Brother* left me a little off kilter, but most Coen brothers' movies do that. Still, it isn't the best they've done. It isn't the treasure you seek.

So, what's the treasure you find? The music.

T-Bone Burnett has composed a soundtrack that will knock you out of your shoes. You will not rest until you possess it. It is a magnificent collection of classic blues, spirituals, old-timey work songs performed by a constellation of traditionalist artists. James Carter, the Carter family, Alison Krauss, Emmylou Harris, and Chris Thomas King. Ralph Stanley's rendition of "Oh Death"



Hannah's mom, Sue Simmonns

is worth the price of admission.

O Brother, Where Art Thou? is, on the surface, a quirky, loopy movie yet one that is probably far richer and more serious than it at first appears. I recommend it. Unlike some Coen brothers' productions it contains nothing very objectionable and the music is great. It's a good movie to warm a cold March night. Hannah's mom gives *O Brother* three bananas. The movie is rated PG-13 for some swearing and violence (a bull gets shot and a cow gets hit by a Model T). —

•RHS

Continued from page 7
and placed second in the nation.

In December, 1,300 boxes of citrus fruit arrived and were delivered to customers to complete the fundraising program for the year.

During February and March the public speaking contest will be held with competitions in prepared and extemporaneous public speaking. Jonathan Coleman will represent the chapter in senior extemporaneous, Cole Heizer in senior prepared, and Garrett Irvine in junior prepared.

Feb. 19-26 was National FFA Week during which time the chap-

ter joined in celebration by conducting numerous activities including a tractor day, a cookout, farm animal show, hay stacking contest, and much more. The parliamentary procedure contest was held at the end of the month.

A program called "Food For America" will be presented at the Riverheads Elementary school career day during the month of April. This gives youth a hands-on look at agriculture in today's world.

A dairy judging contest, the Market Animal Show, and a livestock judging contest dominate the month of May. The chapter also holds its annual parent-member

awards banquet in May. During June a selected group of members will attend the State FFA Convention held at Virginia Tech.

Officers for the year are Jason Mclwee, president; Amanda Hemp and Jonathan Coleman, co-vice presidents; Bryan Shomo and Carrie Brown, co-secretaries; Stephanie Branch and Frank Dull, co-treasurers; Aaron Root and Erin Lowry, co-reporters; Cole Heizer and Jason Shultz, co-sentinels; Sarah Huntley and Jeremy Arehart, co-historians; Justin Fravel, student adviser; Ashley Keaton, director; and Eugene Mclwee, advisor. —

•Draft

Continued from page 7
log roll, pulp wood toss, two man cross-cut, water pump accuracy, and bow saw competitions. Stuarts Draft finished seventh.

The federation forestry contest was held Oct. 3, 2000 at Stuarts Draft. Stuarts Draft placed first in the contest. Nathan Allison was high individual in the contest. SDHS then went to Central to represent the Augusta FFA Federation, where the team placed second. Nathan Allison was also high individual in this contest.

Four members from the Stuarts Draft FFA attended The 73rd National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky., Oct. 22-28, 2000. The members were Erika Brooks, Michael Harmon, Jon Smith, and Nathan Allison. They took part in many con-

vention activities such as The PALS Program, sessions, and workshops.

During the month of November SDHS conducted its annual fundraising activity. The citrus sales have always been the main fundraiser for the chapter.

For National FFA Week, Feb. 19-26, the chapter planned activities which included trash pick-up, movie night, 3-on-3 basketball tournament, faculty chili feast, and a womanless beauty pageant.

The chapter is also practicing and preparing for the envirothon contest. The contest will take place in April. The envirothon is a contest that tests students knowledge in the fields related to natural resources.

The Stuarts Draft FFA enjoyed a very exciting and productive first semester. The members are looking forward to an even better second semester. —

•Buildings

Continued from page 7
ings are a greenhouse, an animal lab, and a mechanics lab. On Jan. 22, the chapter held an appreciation banquet for all those who helped

with the construction and the chapter officers prepared the meal.

Currently junior and senior teams are preparing for the parliamentary procedure contest. Buffalo Gap FFA plans for the rest of the year include FFA Week and Food

for America. The activities planned for FFA Week include a freshman picnic Monday, a Haystacking Contest Tuesday; a breakfast prepared by FFA members Wednesday, ag Olympics Thursday, and blue and gold day Friday. —

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.



March 3, 1980 — A coastal storm produced 25 inches of snow at Elizabeth City, N.C., and 30 inches at Cape Hatteras, N.C. At Miami, Fla., the mercury dipped to 32 degrees.

March 6, 1954 — Florida received its greatest modern-day snowfall of record, with 4.0 inches at the Milton Experimental Station. Pensacola, Fla., equalled its 24-hour record with 2.1 inches of snow.

March 14, 1960 — Northern Georgia was between snowstorms. Gainesville, Ga., received 17



inches of snow during the month, and reported at least a trace of snow on the ground 22 days in March. Snow was on roofs in Hartwell, Ga., from the 2nd to the 29th.

March 22, 1954 — Six- to 10-inch rains caused the Chicago River to overflow its banks.

March 27, 1890 — An outbreak of tornadoes occurred in the Ohio Valley. One of the tornadoes struck Louisville, Ky., killing 78 persons and causing \$4 million damage. —

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

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