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Augusta Country

Down on the Farm
Page 10

May 2001 Vol. 8, Issue 5

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

May 2001

Store ending 36-year-run in Middlebrook

Page 3

Auction to benefit victims of disasters

Page 2

DISASTER RESPONSE AUCTION
Our Faith And Deeds Are Putting His Word Into Action
BRETHREN SERVICE

May 18-19
Rockingham County
Fairgrounds

Take a trip to France

Page 6

Augusta County Library honors volunteers for service

Page 17

Bethlehem U.M.C. plans 150th anniversary celebration

Page 5

Waynesboro museum features Titanic exhibit

Page 9

Brethren plan two-day auction for disaster response

By NANCY SORRELLS

There's a passage in Hebrews that says, "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have." For the past nine years, members of the Shenandoah District Church of the Brethren have been taking that literally with their Disaster Response Auction at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. This year's ninth annual event will be May 18-19.

Catherine Lantz, assistant chairman for the 2001 Disaster Resonse Auction, proofreads *The Joy of Sharing*, a cookbook which will be offered for sale at the annual event.

The word auction doesn't do justice to this extravaganza which includes a golf tournament, Rubbermaid sale, meals, children's activities, stagecoach rides, a bake sale, plant sale and cookbook sales in addition to a livestock auction, and arts, crafts and homemade furniture auction, a children's silent auction, a quilt auction, and a new and used items auction.

Last year's event, which brought in nearly $150,000, put the cumulative total of the past eight auctions at $1,040,888.57. The disaster fund allocations go all over the world. In 2000, for instance, $65,000 stayed on the East Coast to help Hurricane Floyd victims, while $10,000 went to help in the aftermath of a Chinese earthquake, $25,000 provided relief after flooding in southern Africa, $25,000 was sent to help with a drought in Asia, and $10,000 went to fight AIDS in Africa.

In addition to the tried-and-true methods of raising money at the auction, each year sees the introduction of at least one new twist. This year there are two newcomers: *The Joy of Sharing* cookbook and the theme *baskets* auction.

The cookbook idea had its beginnings with the Waynesboro Church of the Brethren and Anita Heatwole. Soon the idea blossomed into a cookbook for the entire district which runs from Buena Vista to Winchester and from Charlottesville to Pocahontas, W.Va.

"We were going to do this cookbook over a period of two years, but the recipes started rolling in," Anita said. When it was all said and done, 75 of the 102 churches in the district contributed recipes. Some churches sent in one recipe, while others sent over 100.

When the recipes started arriving, Thelma Campbell and about seven others started typing... and typing... and typing. The result is an attractive cookbook in a red binder with category divisions. There are 1,396 recipes including 160 recipes for cakes, 100 for pies, 80 cookie recipes, 100 salads and even 60 recipes in the "This and That" category. The latter includes things like edible play dough, a bubble recipe and instructions for making baby wipes.

Many of the dividers in the book have silly little recipes like the one for marriage stew. Then there is the pea soup recipe: "Take one quart of water and one green pea. Simmer the liquid down to a pint. If the flavor is too strong, remove the pea."

Once the book was assembled, then the cookbook team had to proof over 400 pages of recipes before getting the 4,000 books printed. The cookbooks will be unveiled at 2 p.m. on the Friday of the auction at which time the first one will be sold. Anyone interested in purchasing a book need only look for the people in red. In keeping with the red color of the cookbook cover, all those at the cookbook sales table will have red shirts on. The cookbooks sell for $15 and $8 of each book will go toward disaster response.

The cookbook idea will provide a natural lead into the theme basket auction at 7 p.m. Friday night. Although the theme baskets will come in every shape, size and idea, the first one will feature a kitchen theme and was created by Anita. Instead of a basket, she found a miniature grocery cart which will be filled with a copy of *The Joy of Sharing* as well other kitchen gadgets like chip clips, a pot scrubber, a bash and chop tool and a timer. Other theme baskets will include a Mother's Day Basket and a cleaning supply basket.

The skills of area craftspeople will be highlighted at the auctions on Friday and Saturday. Making an annual appearance is the Unity Quilt which was a creation of the entire district and has each church represented on it. Each year the quilt is auctioned off and then kept for one year. Last year it went to Mt. Olivet Church. A number of other quilts will be auctioned off including a quilt made entirely of feed sacks and a hand-appliquéd Rose of Sharon quilt. Hand-crafted furniture from Ray Wakeman and Kenneth Hamrick will be among the auctioned items as will many examples of knitting, needlework, and carving.

No one should go hungry during the time they are on the fairgrounds. The Mill Creek Church is renowned for its apple dumplings and this year there are plans to make a giant apple dumpling in memory of the church work of E.B. Craun. District pastors will also be dipping homemade ice cream for

See *AUCTION*, page 12

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Brubeck Hardware ending 36-year-run in Middlebrook

By NANCY SORRELLS

MIDDLEBROOK — On the Saturday before Easter when Bill Brubeck closed and locked the door to his hardware store, the curtains came down on the end of an era. For 36 years Brubeck's Hardware has been serving the needs of customers from the village of Middlebrook and the surrounding countryside.

As late as Wednesday of the final week, local residents of this historic and rural part of Augusta County remained in denial about the store's closing. They stopped in as usual, chatting, getting a few snacks and buying the essential bit of hardware they needed without having to drive into Staunton or over to Stuarts Draft.

It's the same routine that the locals have been engaged in since 1965 when Bill first opened the doors to his hardware store. Customers from three decades ago would appreciate the continuity of the place. Not only are the proprietor and the building the same, but chances are they would find some comforting familiarity in the worn wooden counter with its deep gouges and scratches, in the old cash register that CAN'T scan in barcodes, and in the paper cutter and roll of brown paper for wrapping purchases.

Locals who appreciate the years of service should offer up their thanks to fate and Senator John Marsh, for both played a hand in the "Brubeck Era" of Middlebrook. Bill is actually not a Middlebrook native in the technical sense of the word. He was born and raised in Newport (Moffatts Creek Post Office) south of Middlebrook. Back in 1963 Bill was 29 years old and married to Sally. The young couple had a four-year-old son, Doug. Since graduating from Wilson High School in 1951, Bill had been working along as a technician for Staunton Typewriter where he specialized in the mechanics of adding machine repair.

Bill Brubeck stands at the cash register in his store.

What he really wanted, though, was a job with the United States Post Office. Back in those days, you had to be a patron of the post office that hired you. That meant that if he wanted to work for the Middlebrook Post Office, he had to live in Middlebrook. He applied for, but didn't get a rural delivery job, but he persevered and applied for the postmaster job in the village when it came open. Back then such jobs were political appointments and it was Senator Marsh who recommended him for the job based on the fact that he scored so high on the postal exam.

The year was 1963, which meant that John Kennedy appointed Bill. By the time the paperwork came through, however, Kennedy had been assassinated and Lyndon Johnson signed the appointment. Bill replaced Charlie Almarode as postmaster. Since the early days of the United States postal system, it was quite typical to have a post office located in a store. That way customers could ride into the village, conduct any business that needed tending to, purchase any supplies, and pick up their mail at the same time. It was one-stop shopping in the days before the megastores that dominate the scene today.

Bill Brubeck checks some of the stock at his store in Middlebrook. Brubeck Hardware has served the Middlebrook community for 36 years. Photos by Betty Jo Hamilton

The situation in Middlebrook was no different. The post office that now had Bill at the helm was located in Charlie Almarode's store. For a year and a couple months, Bill remained at that store which is just up the street from the present post office.

"I felt that I wanted to get out of his building, so Sally and I bought this building," said Bill of his move to the present post office/hardware store location. "We remodeled it and added the post office. The post office used to be here when Peyton Rusmiselle was the postmaster then it moved to Mr. Almarode's store when he was appointed and then I moved it back here when I was appointed."

In keeping with the tradition of linking a retail business with the post office, Bill decided that he wanted to open a store as well. Trouble was, he didn't know what kind of store he wanted to operate. "I decided that I wanted a store, and I didn't want to have a grocery store. I kind of liked the idea of a hardware store so that's what I did," he explained.

So how does one go out and start a hardware store from scratch? "I didn't go out and buy everything new to get started, that's for sure. The cash register, table and paper cutter came from Mr. Almarode's store. You just borrow a little bit of money and hope you make a little bit of money. You get things that you think people will need and when people start asking for stuff, then you add it to the inventory," he said.

The everyday needs of a farming community are so far flung that the inventory in Brubeck's Hardware has taken on a life of its own. Every nook and cranny, ceiling to floor, is filled with inventory, maybe 1,500 square feet of things people just might need. And, then, there's additional inventory stored off site. From garden seeds to watch bands, toy trucks to plumbing supplies, paint and tools, twine and staples, mailboxes and pocketknives, it's all there. Where else can you get an extra key made and buy a quart of Ruritan applebutter at the same time? "The things we sell go in cycles. There was one time when we sold a lot of ball gloves and a few sporting things, but we don't carry those anymore. There are certain things that people needed 20 years ago that they don't ask for anymore," he said.

Equally as amazing as the inventory is the fact that Bill can find exactly what the customer wants. "I just get used to where I put stuff," he said with a laugh. And while customers are waiting for him to locate a bolt or some glue, they might purchase a cold drink from the Dr Pepper floor cooler or a pack of crackers from the snack stand.

Make no bones about it, either; his store has plenty of business. In a typical two-hour stretch of time, Bill received inquiries either by phone or from customers stopping

See STORE, page 12

Veterans tell their stories to middle, high schoolers

By VERA HAILEY

It might be hard for today's middle and high school students to conceive, but two generations ago it was young people their age who were being sent off to fight in World War II. Two area residents recently told of their war experiences at a Staunton Library Teen Advisory Board program tailored for middle and high school students.

World War II veterans Richard Streb and Maury Hester spoke to the students about a variety of experiences in the Navy and Army Air Corps.

Streb, of Lexington, has authored the book *Life and Death Aboard the USS Essex* about his experiences in service on an aircraft carrier.

Streb told the group he joined the navy before he finished high school. "I got carried away by anger at the Japanese and Pearl Harbor," he said. Streb signed up for submarine school and was assigned to the USS Essex, the construction of which had just been completed.

The Essex was the newest, most modern carrier in the world at the time. When the new carrier arrived on the scene, the United *States was losing battles and many ships had been sunk. The navy looked to the Essex with great anxiety and a sense of hope.*

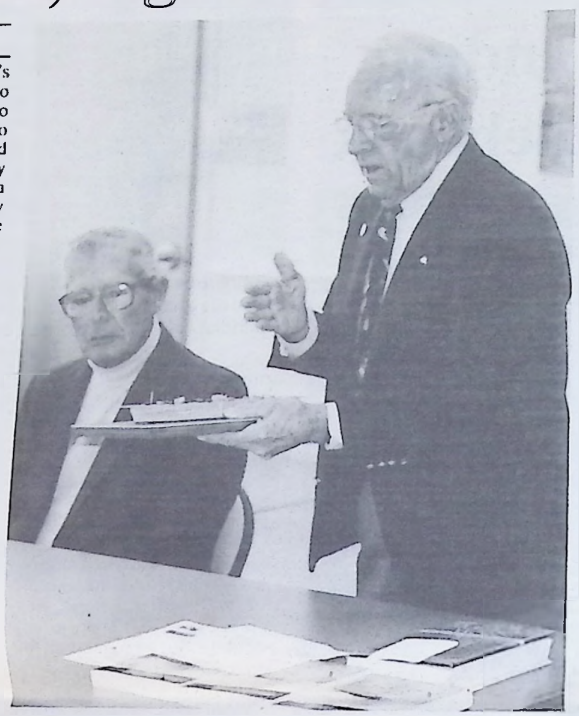
When Streb embarked, the intended destination was Europe. But new orders forced the ship to turn south. "We hoped it would fit through the canal or we would have to go all the way around the tip of South America." He recalled that they all had to take their watches off and have them kept in a safe place, as "they said something would happen to them that would make them stop when we went around." Thousands of watches were turned over for safekeeping.

The Essex just barely passed through the Panama Canal, with the ship knocking down the lights at the sides. Years later, Streb returned to the site with his wife and daughter. When he told a local man that he had been aboard the Essex, the man replied, "You were the scoundrels who came through and knocked all the lights down."

The Essex was in every major battle until the end of the war.

The Navy recommended Streb to Disney as a consultant for its film about Pearl Harbor that will be out in May 2001. Being part of the movie production in Texas was a new experience for him. He taught the writers what went on in the different parts of the ship.

"Being a plane pusher was the hardest job on the ship." They had to take a test, and the men who made the higher scores got the better jobs. A bad score resulted in the position of plane pusher, which involved being on deck and moving the planes. It was tough and dangerous. Two men were blown into the sea by exhaust. "One was chopped up and a second was saved by a destroyer."



Maury Hester, seated, and Richard Streb, both World War II veterans, told of their war experiences at a Staunton Library Teen Advisory Board program tailored for middle and high school students.

Photo by Vera Hailey

The picture on the front of his book, which Streb describes as, "One of the great photos of World War II," was taken as a Japanese kamikaze pilot was headed straight for the Essex. In another four seconds the plane would have hit the ship, which was full of high-octane gas and bombs.

The story of how the Essex was saved that day brought up the topic of what Streb called the blacklisting system. African Americans could not operate the guns. "From 1893 when there was a backlash or anti-black sentiment, they could only cook, serve food, be servants and make beds." He described the 100 African American sailors onbaorad as some of the nicest people he had ever met.

The Essex was in Okinawa, had lost men and was low on food. Seventy men had been killed and the remaining men were exhausted and could not move the planes fast enough. Two officers went to the captain and made the unheard-of-request to put a crew of 18 African-American men on the guns. The captain agreed that there was no other choice. When the crew started manning the guns, reports from other ships praised their efforts.

On the day the kamikaze plane was four seconds away from destroying the ship and killing everyone on board, it was an African American who shot it down and sent it crashing into the ocean.

Streb had recurring nightmares about that day and knew he had to do something to get over the painful memories of war. "I had to do something so I wrote about them." It took him 15 years to gather information for his book. Talking to shipmates and writing proved to be good therapy for him. He looks forward to attending the USS Essex reunion in Atlanta this year.

Hester also shared his war story with the library group. He was only 15 and living in Toledo, Ohio when WWII started. He will never for-

See *VETERANS*, page 9

The photograph

By JEAN H. BRYDGE

The old man limped into the shop where antiques filled each nook.
The light was dim and so he paused to get a closer look.
His cane was gripped with bony hand and his hair was snowy white.
His rumpled clothes were old and worn but his eyes were clear and bright.

He browsed a bit and slowly made his way into the hall.
There in a darkened corner hung a photo on the wall.
It was brown with age in a blackened frame with a quaintly crooked mat.
"Good Friends," it said, and as he gazed, he humbly tipped his hat.

It showed two lads with curly hair sitting on the front porch stair,
Their collie dog lay in between, tail wagging in the air.
A tear rolled down the old man's face, his trembling hand reached out.
He took the photo from the wall and slowly turned about.

The clerk realized his deep distress and said, "May I assist?"
He swallowed hard and said to her, "I'll take this photo, Miss.
"You see I fought in World War II on Iwo and on Guam,
"I also was imprisoned for three years in Vietnam.

"While I was gone in World War II, my Mom and Daddy died,
"And their things were sold at auction while my brother stood and cried.
"They sent him to an uncle's home to live and finish school.
"When I returned, he lived with me and we were pretty cool!

"I stayed in the military, saw Korea, Europe too,
"And, of course, my little brother thought the thing for him to do,
"Was to be a sergeant also. He too made it a career.
"We'd see each other when we could, at least once every year.

"In Nam they let me out of prison and I wanted quick to know
"In what lousy part of Vietnam I could find my brother, Joe.
"It was then they told me sadly that my brother, Joe, was dead -
"Some sniper's bullet ricocheted and struck him in the head."

The photograph held in his hand, he stroked so tenderly.
"This picture is the only thing that's left of Joe and me.
"That collie dog just loved us both, how we'd all romp and play,
"but," sadly, "then that was another time, that was another day."

The clerk wrapped the package gently as the old man sought to pay,
Then she smiled and looked him in the eye and said, "Put your cash away.
"I'll pay this from my pocket as my gift to you and Joe -
"Today our country's safe and free and you helped make it so."

"Why thank you, Miss," he softly spoke, "there are so few who care,
"forgive these tears because you see, you caught me unaware."
He hobbled through the doorway brushing teardrops from his eye
And as he disappeared from view, there was a rainbow in the sky! ---

Bethlehem U.M. celebrates 150 years

By NANCY SORRELLS

SWOOPE - From its place atop a hill near Swoope, Bethlehem United Methodist Church has a good view of the rolling farmland with the mountains on either side. Nearby are the historic spots of Trimble's Mill and the Glebe Cemetery. There is no doubt, however, that the little brick church has seen more than just a good view of Little North Mountain on the west and Sugar Loaf and the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east; it has also seen quite a bit of history.

Janet Knott, the church's pastor, admits that when she first came to the church in 1996 she was amazed at how far out in the country it seemed to be, but says that feeling has long ago disappeared. "People come here from Staunton and Churchville and from all around. It is the sweet spirit of this congregation that draws people and once they get here they don't mind traveling so far," she said.

The year 2001 is an important one for Bethlehem as the congregation enters its 150th year with the theme "Celebrating 150 years of service." There is plenty of history to look back on during the months ahead. The area where the church is located is known locally as Mizertown for the Mizer or Menger family, which settled here in the 18th century. In September 1800 a great preaching revival was held on the farm of Henry Menger near the spot of the present-day church. Two years later another "sacramental meeting" was held at the same place and it was said that people traveled up to 50 miles to attend. These revivals marked the beginning of a religious community in Mizertown.

Marydell Mizer and Beth Spitler look over some of Bethlehem United Methodist Church's records.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

Worship continued to be held at people's houses in the area for another three decades until about 1830 when Frederick Mizer deeded a tract of land to the community to be used as a school and ecumenical place of worship.

This meetinghouse was named Shiloh and it was used by the United Brethren Church and perhaps by a Lutheran group as well. Activity at the church was so high that circuit-riding preachers stopped by every two weeks instead of once a month.

By 1850 the United Brethren determined to build their own church nearby and call it Bethlehem. Worship continued at Shiloh until the new brick church was complete in 1851, 150 years ago. The cost of the building was $1,300; $26,000 in today's money.

Bethlehem United Methodist Church, near Trimble's Mill

In the 67 years that the plain brick building stood, it saw even more history. A Sabbath school was organized in 1853 and Jacob Shuey was chosen as superintendent. Helping him were W.H. Joseph, assistant; J.H. Yessler, secretary and librarian; and E. Swats the treasurer. The men were well organized and enlisted managers to scout the neighborhood for children not in other Sunday schools in order to recruit them for Bethlehem.

The first burial in the church's cemetery came on July 30, 1851 when 10-year-old William Yessler was laid to rest. Today well over 100 plots are filled in the graveyard. In recent years the cemetery was extended onto land given by Bill Shuey.

Although its location seems remote today, the road near the church was a much busier one a century or more ago. Civil War came to the Valley from 1861-1865 and Bethlehem was not untouched. A faded pencil message by a Confederate soldier camped nearby tells us that. "October 27, 1864, This night a detachment from Thomsons and Johnsons Battery Stuart Horse Infy. Repose in silence in this church - Though may the time not be far distant when church may be used as a place for worshiping God, and not a Camp for rude war. Said detachments are impressing horses for their respective companies."

The brick church served the community long after that war had come and gone. Under the pastorate of the Rev. George A. McGuire the present brick church was built on the same lot in 1917 for $7,320 ($112,000 in 2000). Many of the bricks from the old building were recycled in the new one. The building was dedicated on Sept. 21, 1918.

Because the new church stood further away from the cemetery, additional land was donated by Nannie Wayland. However she put an interesting stipulation in the deed - she reserved a shag bark hickory tree on the site for her own use. The tree, already monstrous in 1917, continued to have a special place in the hearts of the congregation until May 1979 when its size and old limbs became a danger to the building. When the 110-foot sylvan giant was felled, 215 rings were counted.

Through the 20th century and into the 21st, the church congregation and its related organizations have remained active. The Ladies Aid Society, for instance, donated $1 per month in the 1920s to keep the church warm with fires. Marydell Mizer joined the

See *SERVICES*, page 18

Church plans events to celebrate anniversary

Although people have been worshipping in the vicinity of Bethlehem Church since about 1800, this year marks the 150th anniversary of Bethlehem Church being on its present site. "Celebrating 150 years of Service," is the congregation's theme during its anniversary year and a number of special events are planned.

To kick off the year, the congregation had a special Valentine's dinner where the men served the women and sent each lady home with her own flower. March marked the annual bake sale mission project. The sale is special because it commemorates an important event that took place at Bethlehem on March 7, 1851. On that date the Virginia Annual Conference convened there and Bishop Glossbrenner took up the denomination's first-ever missionary offering. Bethlehem's annual March bake sale helps the congregation remember the giving spirit of that first missionary offering.

In April, Easter was celebrated with a sunrise service and a cantata presented by the Bethlehem Choir which has been revived under Janet Knott's guidance. May 20-22 at 7 p.m. marks the church's first revival since Knott took the helm, and in June there will be a hymn sing.

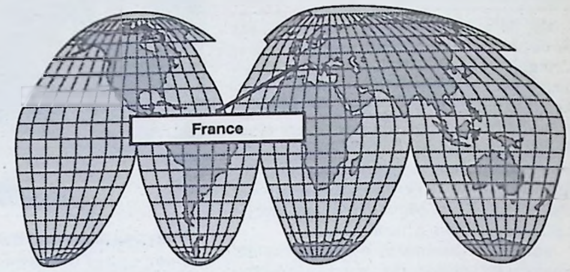
Vacation Bible School begins in July. The first VBS opened in 1986 with a dozen pupils and proved so popular that it closed with 35. It opened in 1987 with 35 participants and has been growing ever since according to several church members.

August 12 marks the Homecoming and a long list of special events are planned for that day in honor of the 150th year. Eight former pastors and many former congregational members, including pianist Marion "Ted" Miller, have been invited back. On Homecoming Sunday eight new stained glass windows depicting the life of Christ will be

See *EVENTS*, page 15

Notes from the road

In this issue, *Augusta Country* contributing writers Leslie Scheffel and Bob Reich takes us on a sumptuous journey to the southwest corner of France. And for this trip, berets are optional!!!



Cast aside everyday concerns by taking a trip through France

By LESLIE SCHEFFEL and BOB REICH

Our friends who sail or golf tell us it is impossible to entertain their everyday worries when doing these activities they love so dearly. They are transported by the sea or the links to a place of such pure happiness that the angst of nose-diving stocks or recalcitrant teenagers simply cannot enter their minds.

W know what they mean. We, too, have escaped daily worries and entered that zone of unadulterated pleasure. But, there are no sailboats or nine irons in this world — only a rental car, a map, a favorite traveling companion, and a very loose plan to explore some little corner of France. That's OUR magic formula and it works every time. When the plane lands my cares are left behind and we are the children we wer on the first day of summer vacation.

You say you can't get away right now? Bogged down by work, kids, winter "this-must-be-a-mistake" fuel bills? Then please, let us take you away with us. All we ask is that you find a quiet corner, a cozy chair and pour a little glass of something you love, (I'm partial to red wine, but if a cup of tea soothes your soul, so be it.) and read on. Oh, yes, and PLEASE unplug yourself from all the wonderful techno-trash that keeps you wired to the real world 24/7. Unless you are reading this while on duty in a cardiac care unit or a missile silo, you don't need that pager. So jettison all the junk and join us for a little drive around the Bordeaux-Aquitane, the Haute Pyrenees and Basque country. Food and wine, art and architecture, and very nice people. Allons y!

Our favorite café in St. Emilion -- the special was beef bourgignon

Landing in Bordeaux is absolutely painless. The Merignac airport is a little larger than Charlottesville, but not much. Certainly nothing like the frantic pace of Dulles or Charles de Gaulle. Retrieving our luggage and getting our rental car is a snap — we're on the road in less than half an hour. An easy 30-minute drive east and we arrive at our first destination, crawling our way through the narrow cobblestone streets of St. Emilion, the medieval walled town of the famous Bordeaux wine of the same name.

We park close to our hotel and are greeted with warm handshakes by the patron, who looks like a movie star, and remembers us from previous visits. Our room is small, but beautiful. We throw open the tall French windows and voila! In the little courtyard below are almond trees with frothy white flowers, cherry trees in three shades of pink, and beyond, acre upon acre of vines... St. Emilion vines.

We tramp through the streets to our favorite outdoor cafe to savor our first glass of the lovely red wine of the town. We can look up from our table and see the ancient Eglise Monolithe carved into the cliff side between the 9th and 12th centuries. After our wine, we can't resist walking up to the church to look down at the cafe, the red-tiled rooftops of the village, and the vineyards beyond. As we walk back to our auberge, we stop at each restaurant to read the menus posted outside so we can choose where we will have our dinner. It is a sublime task. In a quick stop at the guichet automatique (the ATM), I insert my Planters Bankcard and out pop French francs. Sometimes I really love progress.

Jetlag is rearing its ugly head, so we decide on an earlyish dinner, 8 p.m. Our restaurant has very low ceilings and stone walls, almost like a cave. Local people occupy several tables accompanied by exquisitely well-behaved dogs sleeping at their owner's feet. The food is delicious — a little paté, smooth as silk, my favorite salade chevre chaude (hot goat cheese salad), some escargots in garlicky butter that we soak up with the crusty bread, and lamb, perfectly grilled with herbes de Provence. And of course we share a bottle of St. Emilion. Around 11 p.m., back at the auberge, the long trip and the long dinner overtake us. We fall into bed and sleep like babes.

It's hard to believe it is the first week of March. We awaken to warm sunshine and bird songs and — amazingly — we are hungry again! So we stumble downstairs to the little dining room for a petit dejeuner that is quite a bit more than the usual.

A pot of mint tea for my dearest and cafe au lait for me. In addition to the usual croissants and baguette, (both so good I could weep), this magnificent breakfast includes pieces of buttery, yellow pound cake, exotic fruit, yogurt, freshly squeezed orange juice, and various confitures and honey for the breads. Somehow we manage to devour most of it, and take away the fresh fruit for a snack on the road.

Although this is not our first visit to St. Emilion (and surely not our last), we can't resist a little hike around town, to walk off our breakfast, do a little shopping, and admire the beauty of the old stone houses, the churches, and the ubiquitous memorial to the war dead.

Every town in France — and I mean EVERY town, towns so tiny, they make Churchville look downright built up — has a memorial to the war dead, the young men of their town, who were killed in WWI. A teeny little village the size

See *VISIT*, page 7

High in the fresh, crisp air of the majestic Haute Pyrenees -- this mountain range forms a natural boundary between France and Spain.

Photos by Reich Media

◦Visit

Continued from page 6

of Middlebrook will have a granite statue of a winged angel or a simple marble obelisk with the names of six or seven (that's a lot for a tiny village) young men, boys really, lost to the madness of war. I always look at these monuments and read every name. There it is the concrete (or marble or granite) evidence of the failure of human intelligence. Will we ever learn?

We finish our shopping having selected some wines that will be packed up and waiting at our hotel when we pass by here at the end of our journey. Breakfast digested, it's time to hit the road and think about lunch. Poking along at our own pace, we stop often to walk through an old churchyard, of which there are hundreds, take pictures, or have an espresso or a glass of wine.

When we reach Biarritz on the Atlantic coast, we call it a day and find a hotel on the water. I love the feel of a seaside resort in the off season. The locals aren't stressed; they're happy to see you, serve a meal, and sell a few souvenirs. Biarritz was once a very snazzy, very fashionable, summer destination for the royalty of Europe. And it still looks much the way it did at the turn of the century. Palm trees line the main boulevards, and the fancy old hotels still stand, although they have been converted to retirement condos. This is not a bad thing. It's nice to see the old folks walking their dogs along the beach. And I really like the slightly down-at-the-heels, shabby elegance of the place. There's a casino right out of a James Bond movie. I imagine the men in rusty old dinner jackets and women in frilly, outdated gowns. The reality is much more ordinary.

Walking along the beach is grand. To the southwest you see Spain, to the southeast the huge cragginess of the snow-capped Pyrenees poke through the clouds. Once again we check out the menus and select a restaurant for dinner. Of course, we choose a restaurant with a view of the sea and relish our meal of fresh fish and seafood. The dining room is filled with hauntingly beautiful Basque music; yup, we're here... Basque country. We are

The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain – or *Marilyn Monroe in Titanium*

Photo courtesy Guggenheim Museum

tempted to just spend the rest of our holiday right here, staring at the sea and resting. But we don't.

Today is the day that we drive into Spain to see the building I've been yearning to see since it opened in October 1997 — the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. The drive is a little longer than we expected, but it is an easy drive on superhighways. The courtesy of the other drivers is stunning. Everyone drives fast, fast, but the trucks keep to the right and drive more slowly than the cars. When a car or truck pulls out to pass, they do so and are immediately let back into the right lane. If someone is dawdling in the fast lane, a car will pull up close behind the dawdler who is instantly allowed into the right lane. No scary games, no rude gestures, no intimidation. Everyone seems to understand the rules of the road, trucks to the right, nobody threatening. Cool, very civilized.

When we arrive in Bilbao we try following signs that point to the Guggenheim, but somehow we can't find it. We follow a winding road to a hilltop and the National Police Headquarters. Due to the activities of ETA, the Basque separatist group, the guards inspect the undercarriage of our car, looking for bombs, as they do all cars approaching police headquarters. Then a stern looking policeman approaches our car. He speaks neither French nor English. (Basque is not an option.) We say Guggenheim, and he breaks into laughter at our ineptitude and directs us to the museum with elaborate hand gestures.

My heart is pounding as we arrive, there's a lump in my throat; I'm so excited I could burst into flames. The architecture critic for the New York Times, Herbert Muschamp, called this building "the reincarnation of Marilyn Monroe." I can see that — the swooping planes of titanium flip up and out. It brings to mind the famous, black and white shot of Marilyn Monroe standing over an air vent, her bright, white dress flying up around her, her hair that unreal platinum blonde — the museum is silvery and alive with an upswept kind of motion.

In reality, the architect, Canadian Frank Gehry, designed this building with Bilbao's history as a seaport in mind. From certain angles it looks exactly like a great silver ship run aground. From every angle it catches and reflects light, boggles the mind and makes one grateful that there are people who actually see and conceive this sort of thing. This was no small undertaking, and this building is truly astonishing. And of course, it has spawned a whole new school of design.

We visited a special exhibit sponsored by BMW called the Art of the Motorcycle, a display of about 75 motorcycles from the most primitive to big touring bikes. It was fun — stretching the term "art" a bit perhaps. The permanent collection was a little disappointing, a mere three of the 19 galleries. It certainly included many of the giants of modern art that you'd expect to find in a modern art museum. There was an Arp sculpture, some Kandinskys and Legers, a few Picassos and Rothkos, a couple of small Calder mobiles, but all of it had a slightly second-rate feel to it, as though the Guggenheim in New York had cleaned out the attic and shipped all the stuff they'd never show over to Bilbao. A building like this deserves a much better permanent collection, but I guess that will come with time.

After our long day, we zip back up the superhighway to France. Nothing against Spain, mind you, but France is our passion and obviously we muddle through in French a lot better than in Spanish.

We arrive in St. Jean-de-Luz, drop our bags at the hotel, and head out for some shopping and the always-delightful search for dinner. St. Jean-de-Luz is a fishing village that has managed to retain much more of its Basque character than most other towns on the Cote Basque. Its wide boulevards are lined with the same plain trees that are everywhere in France and have that funny bark that looks like army camouflage. When we make our way down to the waterfront, we enter a warren of very narrow streets (pedestrians only) lined with shops full of traditional Basque wares.

The shop windows are full of beautiful linens embroidered with pictures of folk dancers, pottery in bright blues and yellows, espadrilles in every color, and the large, flat berets worn by every other man we see on the street. The epiceries and charcuteries are bursting with hams from neighboring Bayonne, thin, red, dried Espelette peppers (fire), and plump rounds of Iraty, the pungent, local cheese made from goat's milk.

Bordeaux windmill with corkscrew weathervane

Itxassou cherries, another Basque specialty, are stacked on shelves in the form of jams and liqueurs. The cherries (grown only in the nearby town of Itxassou) also fill one of the two traditional Gateaux Basques. The other is cream filled; both are delicious. Stout pyramids of these dark, red cherries, dipped in chocolate, share window space with trays of macaroons, a sugary confection first created for the wedding of Louis XIV and the Spanish princess, Maria Theresa in 1660 right here in St. Jean-de-Luz.

Before dinner we sit on a bench and watch the sun slip into the sea. As the light disappears, small fishing boats chug out for their nightly catch of sardines, bream, hake and perch, just as they have since prehistoric times.

All around us we hear the strange language and the street signs, shops, and restaurants have unpronounceable names full of the Xs, Ks, and Zs common to Euskera, the Basque language, which is related to no other European language. St. Ignatius Loyola was a Basque, as was Cervantes' character, Don Quixote.

It's a new day and we drive over the hills and leave the Atlantic coast behind. We are in the foothills of the Pyrenees and all is a carpet of green —softly rolling hills and pastureland in every direction, the green interrupted only by hundreds of wooly bundles munching away.

It's lunchtime when we arrive in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, and because it's such a warm, sunny day, we dine on the cafe's terrace overlooking the Nive River. The lunch special is a very large portion of the local specialty, Poulet Basquaise. Our waiter is a friendly, funny character. He jokes with us, answers our questions, and insists on serving me a slice of Gateau Basque despite my protests. I manage to eat it.

Surely the steep climb up crumbling stone steps to the Bishops' Prison cancels out the cake. This massive 13th century stone structure was the residence of the Pope of Avignon and served as a prison, complete with dungeon. Walking along the ramparts the view below is that of a typical Basque village with whitewashed buildings, red tile roofs, and red or green shutters.

We descend into the village and make our way through narrow streets lined with shops and homes. Each ancient wooden doorway has

See *PRISON*, page 16

The Pont de la Legende was hazardous for witches and princesses

Yesterday once more

Voices from the past

Growing up in the mountains near Sherando

EDITOR'S NOTE: Part of the following was included in the Augusta Heritage Book, published by the Augusta Genealogical Society in 1998. It gives a glimpse of life in rural Virginia in the early 1900s taken from journal entries recorded by Bessie Brydge Hailey.

By VERA HAILEY

Bessie Brydge Hailey attended Stuarts Draft High School, State Normal School in Harrisonburg and Dunsmore Business College in Staunton. She was a teacher at Laurel Hill School (within sight of her homeplace, near Sherando), Snead School (on Meadow Mountain), Cotopaxi (near Vesuvius), Rankin's School (near Rankin's Creek), Lyndhurst School (Lyndhurst) and Augusta Mennonite School (near Springdale Mennonite Church).

She was born near Sherando, Augusta County "on the cold, frosty morning" of Oct. 17, 1900 to Edward R. and Isabelle Henderson Brydge.

The following is excerpted from the 1977 journal reminisces of Bessie Brydge Hailey:

"My daddie had bought a piece of land up on the mountain and we all helped to plant corn and potatoes on most of it for the family use. We would take food and cook it outdoors, in a skillet, over a fire enclosed in a rock wall and we would sleep in the open under the moonlight in a wagon bed. This was some excitement for us. Probably five or six of the family would spend several days working with the crop several times during the summer. In the fall, we would help pick apples for ourselves and the neighbors, sometimes being paid fifty cents per day. While camping in the mountain, two of us were offered a quarter to cut down a tree with an ax. This we did and were paid twenty-five cents. As we passed by the little store on the mountain, we went in and bought a bottle of pop for each of us. This was hard work and not much pay.

In the summer of 1924, my sister Edna and I went to work at Western State Hospital for several months... In October of 1924, I taught at Rankin's School near Stuarts Draft, which was a two room school with seven grades. I taught the first four grades and Mrs. Nora Bocock taught the upper grades. The salary was sixty dollars per month, with a seven month term four hundred and twenty dollars for one session of school. Here is where I met the man I married in 1932. He came on the scene and offered to take Mrs. Nora Bocock and myself to Sherando School one evening where Mrs. Bocock was to take part in a debate. The topic was this: 'Who has the right here — the Indian or the white man?' The winning side was the Indian. We became good friends for years to come. I lived with Mrs. Bocock and her two girls in a little, one-room house near Rankin's School which belonged to Mr. Cliff Harris. We brought our food from home and stayed together from Monday until Friday evening and we would all go home for the weekend...

School closed in April and home I went again. In the meantime, on March 12, 1925, our family moved to Lyndhurst, Virginia, near Waynesboro, as Daddie owned a small farm there. That summer, my sister Edna and I decided to go to Dunsmore Business College. I wanted to take bookkeeping and Edna took stenographic. I had bought a car for $325.00 and we drove morning and evening to Staunton...

Tuition was $12.50 per month for each of us... We went to school from eight in the morning until four-thirty in the afternoon. I took penmanship and, of course, the first lesson was on learning to write the alphabet. I worked on this for three days before the penmanship teacher would pass my work. His name was Mr. John Eye.

In October of 1925, I again taught the lower grades at Rankin's School... I rode horseback some, drove my daddie's Ford car some and walked to school sometimes, which was about eight miles one way. I was paid the same salary as before — sixty dollars per month for seven months. Mrs. Nora Bocock was the principal and taught the upper grades.

Mr. F.M. Somerville, who was the Division Superintendent, would visit the school room once a year and you did not know when he was coming. Sometimes, he would teach a class of children and inform the teacher if he thought she was doing a good job. Once he called a class up front and there were two pupils in this particular class that just could not learn anything, so he said, 'What are you doing in this class?' The reply was that Miss Bessie told me to stay in this class, as he had been in this group for two years. I was embarrassed, as I did not know what to do with these pupils.

This session, I boarded at home and some of my brothers and sisters attended this same school for the winter months. The older boys had to work at the nursery and do farm work until it began to snow or get very cold, before they started to school.

By the spring of 1926, when school was out, I decided to look for some other work that would last for twelve months per year and not just seven. In the fall of 1925, a new factory had opened in Waynesboro by the name of Stehli Silks Corporation. I had a sister working at the plant and she needed transportation, so she could stay home, so I decided to apply for work, at least for the summer of 1926. My Teachers Certificate was in force for two more sessions and renewal for five more years if I attended one six week term of summer school at Harrisonburg or Charlottesville. I applied for work and, on Monday morning, June 21, 1926, I went to work to be trained how to be a five-B spinner for the sum of eight dollars for a fifty-five hour week. I stayed one week and on the next Monday morning, I went to work and told my instructor that this would be my last day, as I did not like all the noise and trying to tie threads together. Somehow, about ten o'clock that morning, the Superintendent sent for me to come to the office, as he had my application where I had been to Dunsmore Business College and the lady in his office was leaving with her husband to go to another state, as he had been transferred. After an interview, I did not go back to machines to work, but was hired for office work at the salary of fifteen dollars per week for fifty-five hours.

By the time for school sessions to begin in October 1926, my salary had been increased to eighteen dollars per week, with the promise that if I would remain, it would be increased at a later date. I decided to quit teaching and do bookkeeping and payroll work. I was the only one in the office so all hiring, telephoning, telegrams, correspondence, payroll, check of bills and forwarding to the New York office, among a lot of other jobs, were done by me until my sister, Edna, who was taking a stenographic course at Dunsmore Business College, finished and she was hired as a stenographer in the same office.

Time went on and I worked at this office, living with my parents at Lyndhurst, paying three dollars per week board until December of 1932. We washed clothes for the family in the evenings, ironed at nights, left for work every morning at six and worked ten hours a day, arriving home at six thirty. My brother, Paul, who was about eighteen years old, was working at the same place and he bought a closed-in van to haul passengers to the mill. He put a long bench on each side of the van and he could haul about fifteen people at a dollar a week. When work became slack, he was laid off for a while and I drove the van from Sherando to Waynesboro and hauled the passengers. This was a round trip of approximately sixteen miles per day...

The family which was composed of twelve people began to thin out and go different directions..." —

Dayton's Heritage Center hosts longrifle show

DAYTON — The second annual Virginia Contemporary Longrifle Association Show will be held from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., May 11-12 in the Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center at the corner of Bowman and High Streets in Dayton. The center is two miles south of Harrisonburg. Turn off Va. 42 onto Eberly Road and follow the signs to the Folk Art Center.

This year's show will include presentations by Wallace Gusler and Gary Brumfield of Colonial Williamsburg. At noon on Saturday, Gusler will speak on the early use of rifles, the evolution of the rifle culture, and frontiersmen on the frontier in the mid-18th century. Gusler is currently master of the gun shop at Colonial Williamsburg. At 2 p.m., also on Saturday, Brumfield will speak on hunting in 18th century Virginia, as well as the laws, game, and hide trade of the period. Brumfield worked in the CW gun shop and is currently an administrator for Colonial Williamsburg. Both gentlemen continue to research and share their

See *RIFLES*, page 9

Waynesboro museum displays Titanic memorabilia

By VERA HAILEY

WAYNESBORO — Steve Blair has been interested in sunken ship wrecks and underwater treasure diving for over 25 years. Being a member of a search and rescue diving team sparked his interest in hunting for hidden treasure. When he heard about the movie Titanic, he and his wife Carol stepped up their search for original artifacts and memorabilia. They realized that prices of anything associated with the ship would soon escalate out of reach.

Their collection of Titanic and White Star Line (the shipping company that owned the Titanic and other famous ocean liners) items is now on display at the Waynesboro Heritage Museum.

Most of the artifacts were acquired from other private collectors throughout the world, and most are priceless and irreplaceable. These are included in the exhibit: original newspapers with headlines that herald the first reports of the tragic news (including the *Rockingham Daily Record* and *The News Leader* from Staunton); a Richmond newspaper that gives information about a Virginia survivor and what happened to him after the sinking; photos; two rare White Star Line officer's coat buttons obtained from a private collection in England; an original china plate embossed with the White Star Line trademark; a stock certificate for 100 shares of White Star Line stock; diaries kept by passengers of the White Star Line; a recent picture of the youngest survivor of the Titanic disaster; a copy of the first book published about the wreck which was printed in 1912 and includes interior pictures of the Titanic as well as pictures of the crew.

An unusual piece of history is a collection of several pieces of original coal brought up from the wreckage. Stoker coal was used to fire the boilers that ran the massive engines and propellers. The coal was recovered during one of the first expeditions by the Titanic Research and Recovery expedition in 1994 by using the deep-diving submersible "Nautile."

For die-hard movie fans, the collection includes a replica of the blue heart pendant and a device that plays the theme from the movie.

"The tragedy of the Titanic will forever be in our hearts and minds. The exhibit is just a small way for my wife and me to pay respect to the hundreds who lost their lives and also to honor and remember the many brave crew and passengers who risked their own lives to help save others," Steve explains in a description of the exhibit.

Steve is employed by the Department of Juvenile Justice at the Shenandoah Juvenile Detention Center and is an outreach officer for the local juvenile and domestic relations courts. Carol is the director of the Office on Youth.

The Waynesboro Heritage Museum is located at the corner of Main Street and Wayne Avenue. The hours of operation are Thursday, 1-4 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. For information, contact the museum at 540/943-3943. —

Steve Blair holds two items from his collection of Titanic and White Star Line memorabilia now on display at the Waynesboro Heritage Museum. Photo by Vera Hailey

◦Rifles

Continued from page 8

understanding of colonial arms in 18th-century Virginia.

The Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center is designed with a farmstead theme which contains a museum store, genealogy library, and three exhibit halls. The growing folk art collection is housed in a permanent space, while temporary spaces display local exhibits as well as travelling exhibits.

From May 4 through June 3 there will be a special display, "Four Generations of Kentucky Long Rifles," in the museum. This will be a spectacular exhibit of the French and Indian War period to the present.

This show is sponsored by the Contemporary Longrifle Association, a non-profit organization committed to introducing the collectors of today to the artisans who fashion the works of art from yesteryear. The focus of this organization is the Kentucky long rifle and its accouterments made from the last half of the 20th century to the present. Come to form a working relationship with the artisan, or help to create that special rifle, powder horn, bag, etc. See some of the finest artisans working in the country today.

There is an admission fee of $5, which includes entrance to the Longrifle Show, the Kentucky Longrifle exhibit, and the museum's three exhibit halls.

Contact Mark Thomas at 540/867-5829 or e-mail mtgraver@aol.com for further information. —

◦Veterans

Continued from page 4

get where he was on Dec. 7 of that year. He and his father had been to church and went to a drug store where they saw a group of men crowded around the pharmacy counter listening to a radio. They assumed they were listening to a football game, but learned that the Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor. "At the age of 15 I thought the war would probably be over before I had a chance to get in it," Hester said.

At the time he signed up for the Army Air Corps he was a freshman in college. Army officials announced at an assembly that anyone who enlisted in the air corps flight service at age 17 would be sworn in and put on inactive reserve until they turned 18. They could therefore avoid the draft. Anyone drafted could not choose how they wanted to serve. At that time the air corps was part of the army.

Hester agreed to the early sign-on and when he turned 18 he was called for active duty. His flight training lasted 40 weeks. A physical at the end of flight school showed that he was nearly blind in one eye and could not serve as a pilot. But that was not the end of his flying. He went to radio school and became a radio operator on a bomber.

In the beginning of the war the air corps was part of a signal corps which primarily did artillery spotting. In the latter stages of the war it became a strong weapon against the enemy.

After training, Hester was assigned to a combat unit in Europe. When the war was almost over in Europe he was reassigned to the South Pacific where it was difficult to use land-based aircraft. A carrier could get close to the intended targets, so the air corps was called.

Hester's missions with the air corps were mainly medium- to high-level bombing runs. It was rare for them to run into Japanese aircraft. The navy had closer contact with the enemy as the air corps stayed at a high altitude.

They were assigned to obscure islands. "I remember Christmas Island in the Pacific. Its claim to fame was Eleanor Roosevelt landed there for a rest stop on her way to Australia to see the troops."

Hester was not involved in aerocombat, though he was ready. "I was still scared to death... anybody who said he wasn't frightened was not telling the truth."

While he was in Spokane, Wash., for a 30-day leave, military police with machine guns surrounded his barracks. The troops were put on a truck and transported to Seattle where they were put on board a ship. "We were ready for the real push to defeat Japan."

Before pulling away from the dock they heard whistles and horns and learned that the Japanese had surrendered. The war was over, but it would be awhile before the men could return home. "After 45 minutes of yelling there was deadly silence. Everybody was thinking, 'If the war is over, what are we doing on board ship ready to go to the Pacific?'"

The ship was unloaded and the men with the least amount of service, including Hester, were returned to the vessel. They were sent to Fort Lewis, Wash., to set up a rapid discharge separation center. All men were required to have a complete physical, an inventory of their personal effects and a check of their paperwork before they were given their final pay and a train ticket home.

He remembers that the men coming into the separation center had yellow skin. Malaria was a problem in the Pacific and they had been given medication that caused that side effect.

Part of his job was to interview them before their return to civilian life and document what aspects of their military service could be used to help them find civilian employment.

"We were there for the duration plus six months. The quicker we could get these guys out the quicker we would get out."

Reflecting on his war experiences, Hester said it was a time he would never forget. —

Market Animal Show is rite of spring

DOWN ON THE FARM

BY

BETTY JO HAMILTON

Down on the farm April is practically a foregone conclusion and we're thinking about the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show coming up the first week in May. This will be the 56th annual outing for the event which showcases local 4-H and FFA members and their livestock project work.

It's hard for me to believe that the Market Animal Show had just passed its mid-life when I was an exhibitor in that event. It seems like only yesterday that I was one of the young folks using these final days before the event to prepare my steers for the "big show."

• • • • • • • • • • • • •

"Y'all pick the ones you want."

My sister and I were sitting on top of the cattle truck racks looking down in the truck bed at four feeder calves. It was the first Saturday in November and we were weighing in the calves which would be our 4-H projects for the year. The calves would be fattened then compete in the 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show (then the Fat Stock Show) the following spring. Each person was allowed to exhibit two calves and my father was instructing my sister and me to select two of the four which would be registered in each of our names. By virtue of being the oldest, my sister had first choice of the lot. I had an eye on the calf I thought possessed the most promise for a show calf and hoped my sister would *not make it her selection. Her eyes fell on another which she picked as her first choice.* I quickly indicated my selection as the calf I had spotted and hoped to get. The remaining two calves were split between us. For the 180 days which were to follow the weigh-in, these calves would become tame, almost pets. This is how I came to know Pierre.

I was 16 and it would be my third year raising calves for the spring show. The two previous years our calves had been kept at one of the other farms because we had no suitable place to keep them near home. In those years, we went to the farm on Saturdays to work with the calves which were broke to halters, taught to lead and stand properly for judging. But this year the calves would be kept at home in a new shed and enclosed pen which my father had built in the summer. This put the calves about 15 paces from our back door and meant we could have daily contact with them.

The calf I had wanted to select fit the prototype of those judges had slapped on the rumps as winners at previous years' shows. The calf was tall and long, a rangy animal with plenty of room to grow. His back was straight and sloped from a high tailhead to broad shoulders. The calf's front legs were separated by a wide chest which would fill out with ample muscling. Although the calf's coloring — red with white face — would put him in competition with other Hereford calves, this calf was not purebred and his frame revealed a crossbred heritage. As typical as the calf's looks were, there was something about his eyes which seemed exotic and foreign. This trait earned him the name "Pierre" which denoted the calf's physical flare to be something other than ordinary. My other calf's name was "Ned," a plain name for a plain calf.

The calves my father had selected for us were some of those he raised on our farm. They were not the product of many years of careful and selective breeding. They were not of purebred registered cows and bulls with documented champion blood lines. They were simply the best of those we had available to us, the product of random and pragmatic breeding. Some of the calves which ours would compete against would be of the other variety. We knew there were those whose fathers would even pay a premium for calves which had been shown elsewhere. This was not considered exactly kosher but neither was it against the rules. Those of our peers who had these types of calves did not spend hours halter breaking the calves or training them to lead and stand properly. It had already been done for them. More often than not, one of these calves would win the show and pats on the back would go to the father of the child showing the animal. When a calf of the sort like ours won, pats on the back went to the child leading the calf out of the show ring.

Pierre and each of the other three calves weighed in with him averaged just over 600 pounds. They were all about nine months old and were the preferred age and weight to start on feed. Twice daily they would be given rolled corn, a protein supplement and all the hay they would eat. Since we mixed our own feed rather than buying a pre-mixed feed ration, we sent a sample of our feed to the agriculture college to be tested. The information returned to us showed whether the calves were being fed properly for the highest possible weight gain. This is the closest we have ever come to scientifically determining our farming practices.

From November through January the calves would be fed but bothered with little else. My father fed the calves in the mornings when my sister and I were busy getting ready for school. In the evenings just before supper, I would go out and give the calves their evening ration. The calves saw us twice a day, looked forward to their feed and became accustomed to our presence. Once Groundhog Day had come and gone, the calves were ready to progress to their next stage of preparedness for showing. The calves would need to be broken to halters in order to be shown.

In previous years and because the calves were not exposed enough to us, the breaking process had been difficult. Calves would be fitted with a rope halter then tied to a stout fence post. Regardless of how docile the animals happened to be, the calves would jerk and twist trying to rid themselves of the unfamiliar halters. It would be several weeks before the calves would submit to the halters and several more weeks before they could be led without trying to escape. More than once I had been dragged off across a field by a cantankerous calf. I knew the one cardinal rule of breaking a calf to lead — never let go of the rope. A calf which learned it could shake loose its trainer would do so every time rather than learn to be led properly. With the calves kept closer to us than they had been in previous years, I hoped the breaking process could be less traumatic for the calves and less dangerous for their trainers.

As weather permitted in February, I would, each day after school, go to the shed where the calves were kept. Some days I would take a radio and turn it on, familiarizing the calves with sounds other than those of the relative quiet of their surroundings. The calves would have to become accustomed to sounds and motions which resembled those of the crowds gathered around a show ring. The music therapy and my increased presence was the designated course of action to desensitize the calves to their eventual public display. Once the calves adjusted to the noise and my presence, they were ready for the next phase of the taming process.

Calves are curious by nature. Curious enough to sniff around and check out something unusual to them. I would place a bale of hay in their pen and then sit, very still, on the bale. It could take hours of consecutive days, but finally the calves could resist their curious impulses no longer. It was finally Pierre who took the lead and broke the ice. I was sitting on the bale one afternoon when Pierre approached slowly, tentatively. Eyeing me from head to foot and sniffing at the ground near my feet, he was trying to determine if I was a threat. I slowly moved my hand and stretched it out toward the calf. He stepped back hesitantly. Then telescoping his neck out to its fullest length, he deigned to sniff my hand. I sat statue-like and hoped he would continue his investigation. Satisfied with what he smelled, Pierre gingerly stuck out his thick rough tongue and began licking my hand. The natural salinity of my skin was enough to entice and tantalize him. Within a few days, each of the four calves would lick my hand, my face, my hat and consider my presence in their midst acceptable.

The calves would touch me but I had yet to touch them. This was the next step. When they tolerated my presence enough to stand around and lick at me, I used the opportunity to accustom them to my touch. As a dog likes to be scratched behind the ears and a cat under its chin, so too do cattle have a preference. Having watched cattle scratch themselves by rubbing against fence posts, I knew their necks and briskets to be particular areas of scratching preference. When the calves would stand and allow me to rub their necks, stretching upward in contentment, they were ready to accept a brush and curry comb for grooming. As they found the neck rubbing to be satisfactory, they also came to enjoy the afternoons I spent brushing and currying them. By mid-March, with only six weeks to show time, the calves were ready for their introduction to the halters.

Pierre had been the first to trust me so he was the first to be subjected to the halter. He was also the biggest of the calves so I wanted to start with the one I thought might prove most difficult. I was surprised, however, to find that none of the calves proved difficult. My hours of sitting with and grooming the calves paid off. When I gently slipped the halter over Pierre's head and tied him to one of the shed's supports, he showed no resistance. The others followed suit and were as content to stand tied up and be brushed as they had been unrestrained. Within two weeks I was leading the calves around their pen and teaching them how to stand. I was happy to work with all

See *PIERRE*, page 11

56th Market Animal Show slated for May 2-3

STAUNTON — The 56th annual 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show will be held May 2 and 3 at Staunton Union Stockyard on New Hope Road.

4-Hers and FFA members from across Augusta County will be exhibiting lambs, hogs and steers during the event which is sponsored each year by Augusta County Ruritan clubs and the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Chamber of Commerce. There are 190 steers, 217 lambs and 100 hogs pre-registered for this year's show. The Augusta show is the largest of its kind east of the Mississippi River.

Wednesday's events open with the show dedication at 2 p.m. Each year the show is dedicated to an individual who has been a long-time supporter of the event. The lamb show will begin immediately following the dedication and will be followed by the hog show.

Thursday's events will begin with the steer show at 9 a.m. In the event activities run late Wednesday, hog showmanship may take place before the steer show begins.

Grand Champions and Reserve Grand Champions will be selected from the lambs, hogs, and the steers. Exhibitors will also compete for $100 U.S. Savings Bonds for the top junior and senior showmanship effort in each species. Showmanship Savings Bonds are sponsored by *Augusta Country*.

The Market Animal Show culminates Thursday evening with the Parade of Champions beginning at 5 p.m. Sale of livestock will follow the parade. Area businesses and individuals support 4-H and FFA members by bidding on animals for sale. For information about participating as a buyer at this year's Market Animal Show, call the Augusta County Extension office at 245-5750. —

•Pierre

Continued from page 10

the calves, whether they belonged to me or my sister, and my tendency to gravitate toward the barn placed me there in most of my spare time. Having worked the calves toward docility, I was joined by my sister who helped carry out the final steps in the pre-show preparations.

Pierre did not disappoint me in his promise to become a good show calf. When led, he held his head high. When he stood, he kept his front legs together and positioned his back feet so that his body stretched to its fullest length. He kept his back straight and showed no sway even though his girth was extreme. It was as if he was born with a desire to show himself off.

One of the great things about the annual 4-H and FFA stock show was that it occurred on the first Wednesday and Thursday in May each year. This meant we were excused from school for two whole days. These were the two days during the year when my school-age peers most envied my farm-oriented life. Although it was six months of hard work, it was worth every minute to be free for two days of the state-imposed educational detention which, for me, seemed only a couple steps above that of life on an island penal colony.

Hogs and sheep as well as steers were exhibited at the show. All the animals were taken to the local stock yard ,which hosted the event each year, and weighed in early on the first day. We loaded our four steers and were at the yard by 7 a.m. in order to get a well-situated pen. We wanted one midway between a water source and the show ring and adjacent to friends of ours who were also showing calves. The show was our primary concern but we could also have fun in the process.

Sheep were shown on the afternoon of the show's first day. Although I never kept lambs for project work, for a number of years I assisted friends in exhibiting their lambs. This was in the days when exhibitors showed lambs in pens of three, so folks were always looking for stalwart helpers to exhibit lambs.

But other than getting our calves to the yard and weighing them in on the first day, we were free on this day to watch the other competitions or enjoy some ribald preoccupation with our consciences reminding us of the parameters of allowable behavior. Although we were old enough to be out of distance of our parents' discipline, we were well aware of the rights and wrongs of our conduct. These things we abided. We also knew we would be skinned alive and hung on the rail with the steer carcasses if our parents heard otherwise.

The second day of the show was the most important to us. By 6 a.m. we were at the stock yard. By 6:30 our calves were tied up at water spigots for their pre-show baths. The calves were washed from muzzle to tail switch, poll to hoof. No spot was left unscrubbed. Johnson's Baby Shampoo was the beauty aid of choice for this task. Prior to bringing the calves in for the show, the hair on their faces, bellies, tails and tailheads was shaved and trimmed in the appropriate manner for showing. Once washed, the Hereford calves' tails and faces were a creamy golden white. Their bodies were slick and copper shiny like a newly minted penny. Just prior to show time, the calves' tail switches would be teased out fully and sprayed stiff with Miss Clairol hair spray — extra hold, of course. The calves' hooves would be rubbed with saddle soap and buffed to a glossy shine. With the calves' appearances passing our critical inspection, we as the handlers and exhibitors necessitated pre-show grooming. For me, a new pair of blue jeans, a red gingham western style shirt and pointy-toed cowboy boots were donned. My sister selected similar garb. The cowboy boots were our first. My mother had finally consented to the boots when she decided our feet had stopped growing. "They'll ruin your feet," our mother had said when we had begged for them several years before.

Because of the number of Hereford calves being shown and the size of the show ring, the class was broken into two groups. My sister and I had a calf in each of the groups. Friends would stand ready with our calves for the second group's showing while we showed in the first group. The winners of the two groups would compete for top breed honors. The two top breed calves selected from a class would compete later in the afternoon for the show's grand champion and reserve grand champion titles.

There were no surprises for my sister and me in the first group. Our calves were groomed to perfection but we knew they were probably only a little better than average. We were pleased the calves placed in the middle of the group of 20. We were content with our calves' performances and each of us knew we had bigger and, I thought, better calves to be shown in the next group. When the judge was finished with the first group, we led our calves back the alley and handed over the lead straps to our friends who stood waiting for us with our other calves. There Pierre stood waiting for me. It was show time.

The group was called to enter the show ring. With mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers clamoring around the plank fence of the ring, 20 calves and their handlers paraded in a circle inside the ring. Whether it was the crowd which brought it out, I do not know. But when I led Pierre into the ring it was as if he sensed the moment was his. He was center stage.

I had never seen him hold his head so high or walk with so much confidence. His gait was a veritable strut. When he stood, it was as if at attention for the review in passing of a five-star general and the commander-in-chief. The judge ran his hand along Pierre's back when the calf stood and kept his eye on the calf as Pierre walked the circumference of the ring. As the calf's handler, I kept my eye peeled on the judge. When Pierre and I walked or stood, I spoke to him in low tones and rubbed his belly with the tip of my show stick. The judge kept looking at Pierre and I kept working to encourage Pierre to show himself off at his best.

When the judge had finished with the group, Pierre stood in second place. I was on air. When the two winners from the first group were brought back and judged against Pierre and his better, Pierre ended as reserve champion of the Hereford class. I was in heaven. As I led Pierre out of the ring, large lavender rosette in hand, the extension agent patted me on the back.

Pierre's reserve champion status qualified him for competition in the winners' circle for the show's grand champion and reserve grand champion. Pierre still strutted and stretched magnificently but I felt he stood little chance of winning over what I knew was the breed preferred by the judge. A black calf and a black-white face calf won the show's top awards. But I couldn't imagine being any happier than I was with Pierre's performance and achievement. Judged next to calves of special breeding and training, Pierre's story had been one of rags to riches.

The culmination of the 4-H project came the evening following the show. The Parade of Champions, of which Pierre and I were part, processed through the stock yard's sale ring. The point of the project was to raise a marketable animal which meant the steers were to be sold after the show. We knew this going into the project each of the six years my sister and I participated. It didn't make it any easier though when the time actually came to sell the steers. They would go to slaughter the next day.

I led Pierre in the sale ring to be sold, the rosette proudly displayed on his halter. The auctioneer blabbered out his calls for bids. I could not look at those assembled around the ring, some of whom were bidding on Pierre. When the bidding was over, I led Pierre out of the ring and back to his stall. As I changed his show halter to a rope one, I began crying. Pierre was no longer mine.

As it turned out, Pierre was spared an immediate demise. He was bought by the father of a Maryland girl who needed a calf for her county's 4-H exhibition. I wrote to her thanking her for purchasing the steer and asked to be notified of Pierre's accomplishments. Whether Pierre went on to greater heights I do not know. The girl never wrote me. Perhaps Pierre was no more than a calf in a stall to her. The girl's father had bought her a ready-made champion calf to show. But I had gotten the pat on the back for showing the calf and the effort it took to do so.

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There's something in the air this time of year that is unmistakable. For many people in Augusta County, the annual 4-H and FFA Market Animal Show and Sale is as much a rite of spring as birds building nests, apple trees blooming and peepers sounding off along the creek. For me and other young people who have participated through 55 years of Market Animal Shows, the event gives young people a chance to set their course and follow it to its end.

Countless young folks have learned through the show that it's not the ribbon one receives when leaving the ring that tells the story of what it takes to complete livestock project work. Rather it is the experience of making the journey and seeing it through to its completion that is the reward. And we're thinking that's an awful lot like what it means to live life in general, down on the farm. —

Rain gardening scenic; enhances water quality

At a recent meeting of the Shenandoah chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society held on the campus of the Blue Ridge Community College, Karen Ertel introduced members to rain gardening. Karen is a Shenandoah Watershed forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry.

The concept of the rain garden in the landscape is to enhance water quality while creating a scenic feature. This idea was developed by the Maryland Department of Environmental Resources in Prince George's County. Plants and soils remove pollutants from storm water runoff.

What happens to rain water around your home or business? Do you have excess water sitting around with nowhere to go after a heavy rain? Do you have soil erosion problems?

Put nature to work and create a rain garden to manage storm water. This bioretention area is quite like a forest habitat. The forest floor with its layers of leaf litter soaks up the water and lets it slowly penetrate the soil. Thus, in our gardens, we need to imitate nature.

Our manmade rain garden, built in a low depression, intercepts stormwater runoff, which is full of pollutants from surrounding roads, sidewalks, and parking lots (paved areas) and from roofs. The excess water gathers in our depression. The water then percolates through the soil mixture and is recycled enabling plants to receive nutrients and chemicals. The "sheet flow" is slowed down, cleaned, and emerges as recharged groundwater.

How do you construct such a rain garden? Each site is unique and you must consider the size of your property, its topography, drainage, and amount of water usually received during a storm. The shape of the ponding area is not as important as choosing the right site — where excess water normally collects. The bioretention area should be 5 to 7 percent of the drainage site.

Plant a wide grass buffer strip to slow down the water flow. This should be a flat surface.

Build a ponding area for water to collect. This water will either evaporate or soak into the soil. The ponding depth should he 6 inches, which allows for adequate surface storage of water. However, the water must dissipate within four days to prevent the formation of a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other insects.

Use a good soil mix (20 percent leaf mulch, 30 percent topsoil, 50 percent sandy soil) to nurture your chosen plants. Clay particles in the soil will absorb hydrocarbons, heavy metals, and other pollutants.

Choose plants that will accept extremes of wet and dry conditions. Most riparian plant species do well in rain gardens. Select a variety of groundcovers, flowers, shrubs, and trees and remember to imitate the forest habitat with its natural diversity.

Cover the ponding area with shredded hardwood mulch, which removes harmful chemicals from the water. Hardwood mulch is very absorbent and does not float away.

For those of you with a large, wet garden, a boggy area, a problem garden, or large acreage, a rain garden might be an answer to your prayers. You can handle excess rainfall or wetland, you can enjoy a variety of native plants, and you can provide a habitat for wildlife.

Karen Ertel has helped construct such a garden on the grounds of Blue Ridge Community College, so *Augusta Country* readers have a model accessible for viewing. Prince George's County, Md., has published a Bioretention Handbook Manual. You can go on line to www.vanaturally.com or http://state.vipmet.org/dof or you can phone the Virginia Department of Forestry at (804) 977-6555. —

Some suggestions for high-moisture tolerant plants

Herbaceous: Sweet flag, swamp milkweed, flat-top white aster, marsh marigold, white turtlehead, Eastern rosemallow, Turk's cap lily, cardinal flower, great blue lobelia, Virginia bluebells, monkeyflower, sundrops, broadleaf arrowhead, New York ironweed.
Ferns: Royal, cinnamon, southern lady fern, and evergreen wood fern.
Grasses, sedges, and reeds: Autumn bentgrass, bushy bluestem, game grass, woolgrass bulrush, soft rush, deer-tongue, broomsedge, sallow, and tussock sedge.
Shrubs: Common alder, black chokeberry, buttonbush, silky dogwood, common elderberry, and winterberry.
Small trees: Canada serviceberry, black willow, "heritage" birch.
Medium-large trees: Red maple, sweetgum, sycamore, white cedar, yellow birch.

~~~ Garden tips for May ~~~

In April, I mentioned that sage was the Herb of the Year. Traditionally the first week in May is National Herb Week. What better "thyme" than to give some "sage" facts.

Sage belongs in the salvia family and the name salveo in Latin means "to heal" or "I am well." *Salvia officinalis* is our common culinary sage but there are up to 900 species, most of which are medicinal or ornamental.

This hardy perennial in the mint family has a range of flower colors including white, pink, lavender, and blue. Its leaves vary from *green, silvery green, tricolor (pink/white/green), purple, and gold with many in combinations.*

Plant in light, well-drained soil in full sun. Keep on the dry side. Harvest the top, young leaves. Use in stuffing, mashed potatoes, salads, soups, and as an herbal tea.

Sage is a handsome landscaping plant alone, in the herb bed, or in planters. Do grow some this year!

Some tips this month are:

·Record what is happening in your garden calendar.
·Photograph your garden each month to review later.
·Clip back old, dead stems and branches. Even late-emerging crape myrtles should be showing signs of life by now.
·Trim up nandinas. Those exposed to winter winds will shed their leaves each spring. Those in sheltered places will retain their leaves. Cut major stems at different heights for better effect.
·Deadhead faded flowers. Keep a black container handy in your front and back gardens and own two pairs of scissors for convenience.
·Prune shrubs after they flower.
·Trim and open up old boxwoods. Use hand pruners. Do not shape into balls. Spray for leaf miner.
·Shape up needled evergreens such as yew, pine, and arborvitae.
·Pull up emerging weeds.
·Cut lawns high (1 1/2-2 inches) to shade the grass.
·Transplant seedlings of Lenten roses.
·Fill in bare spots (and to hide fading bulb foliage) with annuals and perennials. Water in.
·Plant warm-season bulbs and tubers such as all cannas, dahlias, gladioli, and arum lilies.
·Plant summer vegetables late in the month. The soil should have warmed up.
·Remulch flower beds once all weeds are removed, the soil is forked over, and all summer planting is finished.
·Visit local nurseries and select new shrubs and trees. Keep well watered.
·Watch out for eastern tent caterpillar webs (in the crooks of trees). Destroy or spray with Bt.
·Put out planters and hanging baskets later in the month.
·Restock your water garden with plants and fish.
·Fertilize and spray roses.
·Feed acid-loving plants with Holly-Tone.
·Feed shade trees and perennials.
·Work on garden construction projects.
·Clean gutters and downspouts. Clean out bird nesting boxes. Get your air conditioning unit serviced.
·Pick flowers early or late in the day. Not at mid-day.
·Visit botanical gardens and parks for ideas and inspiration. —

•Store

Continued from page 3

in, for green paint, fuses, plumbing supplies, an inner tube patch kit, plastic wood, and caulk, as well as the usual drinks and snacks. Half the sales were on credit to be settled up later.

One customer, John Sproul, added two 30-amp fuses, a drink and a snack cake to his credit account. "If I had to buy those two fuses in town they would have cost me $25," said John who lives just up the road. "I'm serious. By the time I would have taken the time to drive into Staunton, my time and the gas would have cost me that much. I always try to do most of my business here because I like the idea of keeping him here. I have a rule - never start a plumbing job unless Bill is open."

Convenience and customer service are what has kept the hardware store going all these years. "Places like Wal-Mart and Lowes make it tougher on smaller stores," said Bill. "So for places like us if we don't give the service, we don't get the money!"

Service from Brubeck's has meant essentially being open for 36 years straight - 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Although the store is only open Monday through Friday and half a day Saturday, Bill has never turned down an emergency call and many a time he has gone down to the store in the middle of the night to get a heating element for a water heater or some plumbing supplies.

"Usually those calls come when it's 20 degrees below zero and the pipes are frozen. And that is usually on Sunday morning or Christmas," Bill joked. Despite the circumstances, however, he has always cheerfully responded. "Anybody who has called, I have always come and tried to get what they needed. Sometimes it was only a bolt and sometimes it was some other bigger stuff. I just try to help in any way I

See *CUSTOMERS*, page 17

•Auction

Continued from page 2

customers and 100 gallons of oysters stand ready for the oyster and country ham dinner Friday night.

Two trailer loads of new Rubbermaid products donated by a Winchester company will be on sale during both days as well. Young and old alike will want to take a ride on Ray Martin's stagecoach that was made in the Mennonite community. There will also be free child care, a petting zoo, stories and puppet shows for the children.

As part of the fundraising each year, participants turn in the results of their "Sow and Grow" money. Each participant takes $10 home and sees how much money can be generated from that initial amount. The results are rolled back into the disaster response fund. One of the biggest success stories for Sow and Grow is that of Loretta Crickenberger and Barbara Grove. With their first $10 they bought flour and made rolls which they sold. Then they used that money to host a Thankful Thursday Meal. Then they made apple dumplings and sold them. They now have over $1,300!

Coordinating a multi-faceted event such as the Disaster Response Auction is not an easy task, but the enthusiastic work from all of the district churches has made the annual auction an overwhelming success. Chairing the committee (which meets every month year round) is Martha Byerly of the Moscow Church of the Brethren. Her assistant, who will assume the helm next year, is Catherine Lantz. For more information about the Disaster Response Auction, contact Martha at 540/350-2101. —

Chamomile good for body and soul

Down to Earth

By Mollie Bryan

Dioscorides, a Greek physician in the Roman army, prescribed chamomile for upset stomachs, jangled nerves, and kidney and liver diseases. Over 13 centuries before Dioscorides, the ancient Egyptians used chamomile in various ways — in garlands, tombs, and as a dye.

One of my favorite herbs is chamomile. I like the German variety which grows close to the ground and spreads quickly. Some people actually use it in their lawns instead of grass. The stems of this creeping herb root themselves as they spread, thus making a good lawn substitute. It can be sown by seeds or division. I imagine that the scent is wonderful in a chamomile yard. Chamomile has such a fresh, subtle, soothing scent.

Shakespeare's Falstaff said of chamomile "the more it is trodden on the faster it grows." Thousands trample the famous chamomile lawn at Buckingham Palace, with no ill effect to the herb. Chamomile covers garden seats and walkways, allowing people to enjoy its pleasant, refreshing scent as they stroll through the grounds.

Old-time gardeners called chamomile the "plant doctor," placing it near sick plants and growing paths of it through their herb gardens. They believed chamomile was especially good for cabbages, and if planted a yard away, for onions as well. To treat herbs suffering from transplant shock, some gardeners sprinkle a light mulch of fresh or dried chamomile flowers at the base of the plant and water with hot water.

My experience with it as a gardener is that it is easy to grow and provides interesting filler in the herb garden. Before gardening with it, my only knowledge of chamomile was the tea that my mom would give to me when I had an upset stomach. I did not really care for the flavor then, but it did help with my stomach. Evidently, it is a stomach remedy that has been used for thousands of years.

Dioscorides, a Greek physician in the Roman army, prescribed chamomile for upset stomachs, jangled nerves, and kidney and liver diseases. Over 13 centuries before Dioscorides, the ancient Egyptians used chamomile in various ways — in garlands, tombs, and as a dye.

The Anglo-Saxons associated chamomile with the gods, "never... fatally fell man since we to him maythen (chamomile) for medicine mixed up." Maythen was one of the nine sacred herbs given to the world by the god Woden, as listed in the Lacnunga, an ancient Anglo-Saxon manuscript.

Herbalists of the 17th and 18th centuries recommended that "to comfort the braine, smel to camomill." And, "all parts of this excellent plant are full of virtue." Seventeenth-century herbalist Nicholas Culpeper wrote, "bathing with a decoction of chamomile taketh away weariness, easeth pains, comforteth the sinews when overtrained, and mollifieth all swellings." Physicians of the 19th century prescribed it for digestive problems, malaria, typhus, and menstrual cramps.

I have been drinking a great deal of chamomile tea these days. Being 8 1/2 months pregnant, I have found that it really helps with indigestion and queasiness. It is one of the herbs that is safe for pregnancy and I find it very soothing. It is quite a treat in the evening when Emma has been put to bed to sit in front of the mind-numbing television and drink my chamomile teas with honey. It is the small things in life...

One of my favorite memories connected with chamomile is the day that my husband and I were tramping through Big Meadows Park near Paris, Va. It was one of those perfect weather days — not too cold or hot. The sky was picture-perfect blue with fluffy white clouds. And we had the whole day stretched before us so we took our time checking out the trees and plants along the trail. At the bottom of a hill next to a falling down barn I smelled the familiar apple scent of chamomile and looked down — we were walking on a bed of wild chamomile. For a moment, I felt as if I stepped across some threshold into the fairy world.

Nature will easily do that for you if you allow it. For me, there is no better connection to the universe than being outside in the garden, on a mountain trail, or walking along the shore. Being pregnant is kind of like that, too. Right now, I am feeling my "earth mamaness" down in my very roots. I am feeling a strong connection to the universal pool of life — even though pregnancy is a time fraught with physical and emotional discomfort, there is an underlying sense of peace and knowing.

It is another "fairy" threshold, if you will. A moment of magic and peace that I know won't last much longer. —

Don't delay. Renew today. See page 2 for details.

Schoolhouse News

Mentorship program helps students explore careers

I recently realized that as a high school senior I did an informal mentorship and didn't really know it! At Carl Junction High School (Carl Junction, Mo.), Mr. Cleveland was my general science/biology/chemistry/anatomy/physiology teacher. He was my idol —and mentor. I had him for science classes for all four years at my small high school, and I feel that he was an instrumental influence upon my decision to become a science teacher. He was serious, yet funny; he was traditional, yet creative; he was overworked, yet never showed it! He was my friend — my wise and faithful counselor in things scientific.

Since I knew his routine pretty well by my senior year, I helped him by setting up/assisting in labs and by grading and recording papers instead of going to a study hall. This also gave me an opportunity to have free run of the lab so I could continue my independent study. *This was a feeling of great freedom and responsibility for me. During my junior year, I had begun to help him AND my English/French teacher in somewhat the same way, but when my senior year came, I had to make a choice. That was a hard one, and I remember being out in the hall in tears consulting with both of them and my guidance counselor — trying to make a choice that would not hurt their feelings since both could use me. Little did I know that my decision to help Mr. Cleveland helped me make a professional decision that I've not regretted since.*

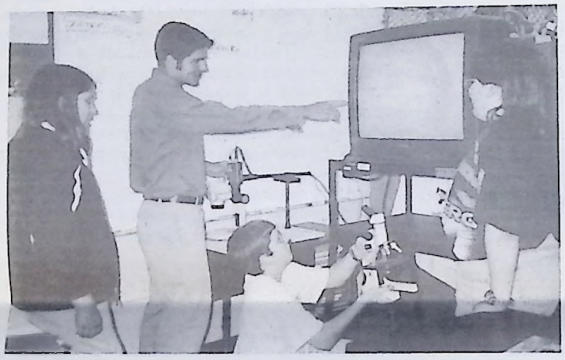
This semester I have a mentor student! On the first day of Kyle's time with me, I showed him Mr. Cleveland's picture that is on the first page of my class notebook that I keep on my desk. I have called Mr. Cleveland my hero — he was someone who believed in me and helped me make a professional decision. He was my mentor, even though at the time I didn't know the word or the concept. I hope that today's mentor students will connect with a professional like Bill Cleveland who can help them sample their profession of choice.

My mentor student, Kyle Fanfoni, is one of about 125 mentor students in Augusta County's Mentorship Program this year. The program began about 10 years ago as a hands-on vehicle for exposing high achieving and highly motivated students to a career. The program was developed when it was discovered that there was a segment (about 20 percent) of seniors who were highly motivated and needed an opportunity to get a taste of a career that they might be considering. The Shenandoah Valley Regional Governor's School provided an opportunity for those in the science/math fields, vo-tech school provided vocational opportunities, but there was not much for those other students in that 20 percent who were trying to make professional career choices. Maybe by getting a taste of a potential career they might pursue that career with enthusiasm, OR just maybe they could find out that the job they thought WAS for them just didn't fit them. Wouldn't it be great to try out a job field before tuition and time were spent preparing for it?

In Augusta County, the Tom Harris Mentorship Program is sponsored by the Valley Alliance for Education. The program is named for former DuPont plant manager and charter member of the Valley Alliance for Education, Tom Harris. Augusta County, Waynesboro and Staunton all have their own version of the program.

In Augusta County, seniors apply in their junior year and go through an application and interview process. Students are schooled in the fine art of completing an application, preparing a resume, dressing for the interviews, conducting themselves in an adult manner, and in general being professional in the workplace. Each application is accompanied by a writing sample, permission forms, and transcripts. Then interviews are conducted with Don Landes, Augusta County Schools' Mentorship Coordinator, a committee of Valley Alliance for Education and prospective mentors. Student qualities that the committee seeks are accountability, confidentiality, responsibility, initiative and a positive attitude.

Each mentor student spends about 150 hours with his mentor professional during the semester. This earns the student one credit per semester. Jobs might be routine, menial, or they might be on the front line in the job place. A lot of that depends on the mentor and the student. The mentor and the student work together to achieve the main goal of the mentorship program — to give students an opportunity to experience first hand what it is like to work in a chosen career occupation. If the student likes the mentorship field, he or she can pursue it after high-school. If not, it can be eliminated as a potential career and alternatives may be considered.



Fort Defiance High School senior and mentoring student, Kyle Fanfoni, prepares Stewart Middle School students Lauren Sheets, Chuckie Warr and Loretta Winegard for planaria lab using video microprojector. Photo by Betty Gatewood

Using their own transportation, students are able to be released from school one or two periods a day to go to mentorship. Sometimes due to distance traveled or the schedule of the mentor, concentrated mentoring might be done during the summer for whole days. Since its inception, Augusta County has had about 1,000 students participating in the mentorship program and about 100 participating mentors. It is best for the student to find his or her own mentor. If the mentor knows the student or his family, he/she might be more inclined to provide more opportunities and open more doors for the student. Mentors have an opportunity to share their field of expertise with some of the most talented students in the area. Mentoring firms are assured a consistent flow of new talent and ideas into their organizations. This bank of talent can be used for selecting summer internships and future employees. It is a "win-win" situation with benefits for both mentor and student.

Kyle prepared for his first real teaching lesson (mentor project) by planning an introduction, then lab for the week following spring break. I wanted to give him ownership to some subject material. Before his solo act, he had been doing some mini-lessons — going over tests, reviewing a lab, talking from my notes. He's also been willing and agreeable to grade papers, record papers, and set up labs. He has never balked at suggestions I've made — he has embraced them. His first solo assignment placed him "on stage" with his own material. It was an easy transition for him since he had become very much at ease with performing/presenting in front of an audience. His band, chorus and drama experiences at Fort Defiance High School have served him well. I hoped that Don Landes might come in for one of his site visits then. I have great confidence in Kyle's ability and I feel fortunate to have been part of his mentoring.

In addition to on-site observations by Mr. Landes, all mentor students do a short presentation on their mentorship that is geared toward how the mentorship benefited them.

See *MENTORING*, page 15

From the teacher's desk

By Betty Gatewood

Fort band, chorus performs with Disney Magic

By BETTY GATEWOOD

ORLANDO, Fla. — What a trip it was! Each spring the Fine Arts department takes a "big trip" that focuses on the performing arts. Any fine arts student can participate, and every four years the trip — "THE Big Trip" — is to experience the magic of Disney at Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

This year the Fort Defiance High School marching band and the choral group, called the Coeds, were invited to perform in Disney World during spring break. For months students have been anticipating the trip, doing fundraisers, paying their fees by installments, rehearsing, planning, and packing for the event. Our group numbered about 140 students and 40-some chaperones. I was extremely proud and excited because my daughter, Betsy, was performing in both groups. We were really pumped for the adventure.

The morning of Friday April 6, found us all packing four Greyhound buses with personal luggage, band uniforms and instruments. After getting final traveling tips, we were off about 10 a.m. 'Tis a LONG way to Orlando by bus - the bus travel was probably the most challenging and least favorite part of the trip. But we got there mid-day *Saturday and visited MGM Studios that afternoon. Learning about the behind-the-scenes of* movie making was an interactive activity that everyone enjoyed.

Sunday found us "cruising" on the cruise ship SeaEscape out of Fort Lauderdale. Being on a cruise was a great experience - the kids really had fun sunning, singing, dancing, dining. I brought my binoculars, but found no dolphins or pelagic birds to view. The real treat for me was the beautiful, blue mesmerizing water. I've never seen any water quite that blue.

Members of the Fort Defiance High School Marching Band process along the street at Disney World's *EPCOT Center. Fort's band and chorus traveled to Disney World over springbreak.* Photo by Betty Gatewood

The rest of the trip was in and around the Disney complex in Orlando and it focused on our performing. On Monday, the Magic Kingdom was our venue. The highlight of the day for many of us was watching the Coeds perform on the Cosmic Rays Café stage. Earlier in the day the group had been taken "underground Disney" to set up for their performance. Since the stage on which they were performing rose from below, they rehearsed and were taken through the maze of underground Disney in preparation for the performance. What a thrill it was to see them singing as the stage rose. They were magnificent. Solos by Caitlin Kerry, Ryan McCallister, and Michael Barnes were big hits with the audience. Tremendous and thunderous support from non-performing Fort students and staff made it a truly magical moment for all.

On Tuesday, the non-performers were dropped off at the entrance to EPCOT and the marching band continued on to "behind the scenes EPCOT." Getting the whole marching band uniformed, outfitted and instrument-ready is always quite a feat - a task taken on willingly by an amazing group of band boosters. Music "warm up" was really warm - in the 80-plus degree Florida sun, but right on schedule at 11:50 a.m. the gates in the United Kingdom area opened and the Marching Indians paraded by with ear-to-ear smiles. We were participating in Disney's Magic Music Days 2001; music was everywhere and OUR BAND was there. Quite a thrill for any band member, band parent, or Fort Defiance student. We marched from the United Kingdom past the EPCOT sphere and out one of the exit gates. Later in the day, the band emerged from behind the scenes to the exuberant cheers of friends and families. What a magical thrill for all.

On Wednesday, the Animal Kingdom part of Disney World was our destination. No Fort Defiance performances here, but other performances abounded like "Festival of the Lion King," "Tarzan Rocks," and the 3-D special effects show, "It's Tough to be a bug!" (Great fun and good PR for animals here too with the Conservation Station and mini-safari. More on this in another edition, perhaps.)

Of course we did the roller-coasters, the thrilling rides, the shows, the shopping, and so much more. But the highlights of the Disney trip were the performances of our talented students. The planning and dedication of the fine arts department staff (David Perry - choral music, Alan Shull - instrumental music, Susan Vass - drama, and Cheryl Richards - visual arts) enabled these students to experience the magic of Disney. I could see the twinkle in everyone's eyes during the performances, and I couldn't help but think that the Fort Defiance talent exhibited IN Disney this April might be talent AT Disney someday in the not-too-distant future... it just might be "the magic." —

•Events

Continued from page 5

dedicated. The windows were created at Raynal Studios in Natural Bridge.

On Aug. 25-26 the church will host an Old Fashioned Festival that will include games, homemade ice cream, costumes, and activities from days gone by. There will be a country store featuring homegrown vegetables and canned goods as well.

September will feature a hymn sing, the third of four during the year, and October will feature a silent auction and cake walk, one of the church's main fundraisers that netted over $1,000 last year. In November the congregation gathers for a Thanksgiving Eve service and in December there are Christmas celebrations and the final hymn sing of the year.

If you would like information about Bethlehem United Methodist Church, contact Rev. Janet Knott at 885-6479. —

•Mentoring

Continued from page 14

Conferences with the mentor also factor into the evaluation/grade for the student, but the audio/visual presentation, done in professional attire, will be "the test." It will be practice for real life, and that's what the mentorship program is all about.

Sometimes a career choice occurs and the student can't wait to get through college so he or she can assume that profession. Sometimes another revelation occurs that enables the student to rethink his choice and go on to something else before time and money are spent preparing for that career. What a lesson to be learned! The mentorship program allows "trial runs" on careers. Mentoring opportunities range from learning the classroom to assisting at a zoo to shadowing doctors/surgeons to learning the manufacturing routine or law enforcement to disciplining oneself to produce poetry/prose during mentoring hours. The opportunities are as varied as the participants. In interviewing some of Augusta County's mentorship students, I heard nothing but praise for the program. It provides a necessary component in the process of maturing and deciding on their futures. Kyle, who is also a mentor student for Larry Correll band director at SMS, recently said, "It helps college-bound seniors decide what they want to do with their lives."

As mentoring seniors taste their mentor's careers they are deciding what career will fit for them. Regardless of the outcome of their experience, the mentoring process is valuable as a vehicle for career decision making. Whether the outcome of Kyle's mentoring with me is similar to my mentoring with Mr. Cleveland is irrelevant. The point is that there has been exposure to a possible career and Kyle has been able to experience my work place and the work involved. Only then can he and other mentorship students make the decisions necessary for them and THAT is the purpose of the mentorship program. —

Time to renew? See page 2

The Hitching Post

Lateral, longitudinal training promote strength, flexibility

Q **Dear I. B.: My instructor is working with me and my horse on lateral and longitudinal training. Could you explain more about the benefits?**

—LV. Dooms

Lateral and Longitudinal training are two important exercises in the training of any horse. Both require a great deal of coordination and timing for the rider to get the best performance out of the horse. I'll explain the movements of each form of exercise and describe the benefits to the horse.

Longitudinal training is the lengthening and shortening of the stride of the horse. Asking the horse to extend the stride through seat and leg means the horse must "reach" farther with each step. Collection asks the horse to "compress" and take smaller steps although the animation and rhythm is still intact. One can see this in a higher level dressage exercise such as the piaffer and passage.

Horses benefit from longitudinal training in a couple of ways. First of all, the horse develops physically. As an athlete, extension and collection work different muscle groups and help with balance and control of the horse. Riders have found horses to improve in coordination, grace, and rhythm.

Secondly, the horse benefits mentally. The exercise increases a horse's obedience to the aids. Collection increases the horse's tolerance for "pressure" and rider control. Riders can ask more from the horse over time as the exercises become more difficult.

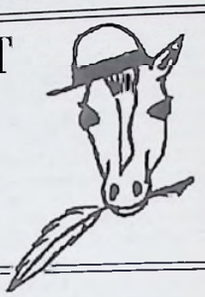
Another benefit is relaxation. The movements work toward harmony between horse and rider which relaxes the horse. This is important for performance and, once again, obedience.

In lateral training the movements get a little more complicated because of the coordination of the rider's aids. These are "side to side" movements and ask the horse to move off leg, seat, and indirect rein aids. Riders must improve their timing and coordination between aids to accomplish the movements successfully. Movements include simple exercises such as leg yielding to more complicated ones such as the half-pass, shoulder-in, and pirouettes. The benefits to the horse physically are the increase in agility and suppleness. Riders will find that the horse responds with less resistance when more supple.

Stiffness and resistance often are related in a physical sense. What can seem like disobedience can be discomfort from lack of agility. Take a horse that bends easily to the right, but not to the left. The rider can do some lateral work to "stretch" the horse's individual sides. After the horse improves physically, riders will find that they resist less to more demanding work in circles, turning, and other basic side movements. Another benefit is the responsiveness associated with lateral training. The aids become more fine tuned and the horse is influenced with softer cues. The rhythm and harmony between rider and horse increases as they begin to work as one.

Longitudinal and lateral work are important parts of a horse's training. One way of understanding it is to think about a weight builder. Putting on muscle can cause bulk and strength, but in today's athletic world it is not enough. Adding the agility exercises to increase grace, timing, and coordination are also important. Take it from the Horse's Mouth, taking the time to learn these movements will give the "ballet" to your ride that adds beauty, rhythm, and harmony. It is beautiful to watch and is a worthwhile accomplishment! —

I.B. HOOFINIT From the Horse's Mouth



I.B. Hoofinit is a fictitious horse character developed by Chris Marrs as a service to teach horse care. Questions to I.B. Hoofinit may be submitted to P.O. Box 136, Greenville, Va. 24440. Questions become the property of Chris Marrs, and answers are subject to editor approval. Information provided in this column is meant to be taken as general advice. Each horse, rider, owner, and situation reflects different problems. I.B.'s answers are meant to be informative and enjoyable, but not binding. Common sense in any situation is a must.

•Prison

Continued from page 7

a Basque cross carved into the lintel, and many have dates — 1500s, 1600s. We buy a couple of beautifully painted bowls for ourselves and T-shirts for nieces and nephews.

The days are flying by and we've made a dent in the Pyrenees. We stop at a cafe for a glass of wine and some serious map study and decide tomorrow we will drive to Narbonne on the Mediterranean. Tonight we will stay in Sauveterre-de-Bearn, in the region that brought us sauce Bearnaise. Once again, we are fortunate to blunder onto a hotel with history.

The Hotel du Vieux Pont (Hotel of the Old Bridge) is perched on the bank of the swiftly flowing Gave d'Oloron river. High above is a ruined castle and the fortifications of old Sauveterre. The owners of the hotel, Paul and Sandie, are a friendly English couple who used to work in London's Fleet Street before coming to France to live their dream.

Beside the hotel are the remains of the old Pont de la Legende. The legend stems from 1178 when Princess Sancie was accused of having murdered her baby. Her fate was submitted to the judgement of God. Her brother, the King of Navarre, ordered her bound hand and foot and thrown from the bridge into the river. When she floated safely to the bank, her innocence was recognized. Many other women "tested" in this manner were not so lucky. Ah, the good old days.

Early the next morning we say good bye to Paul and Sandie, promising to return, then start our long drive east to the sea. And it is a long drive. But, when we arrive at Narbonne plage, the sight of the beautiful Mediterranean makes us glad we came. This is very much a summer town, and most hotels and restaurants are closed. But we find a room overlooking the beach, go out for pizza (far different from the American version), and return after dark to watch the movie "Twister" in French with the soothing sound of the waves coming in the window.

We're in short sleeves as we walk on the beach in the morning. The sun reflecting off the sea is hot. Rocky breakfronts jut out in the water, the big boulders covered with thousands of periwinkles. We drive south along the coast arriving in Perpignan around lunchtime.

In Perpignan, the Mediterranean is just east, the Pyrenees west, and the Spanish border a little to the south. The strong Catalan influence is evident in the food, art and architecture. Moorish arches and mosaics are everywhere on buildings and in textiles. Pimentos, garlic, rosemary, and olive oil perfume the chicken and fish specialties, and Catalan flan is a more common dessert than chocolate mousse. The Maitre Rey Collection at the Rigaud Museum is a fine collection of modern art, strongly represented by Picasso, Dali, Miro and other Spanish painters.

We walk off our Catalonian lunch in the galleries of the Rigaud and along the avenues of palm trees and head southwest on a zig zaggy, cliffside climb back into the Pyrenees. The drive is a little scary, but the view around each zig and zag is spectacular. By the time we drive across a little bridge into the old walled town of Mont Louis, it is much colder. The smell of the sea has vanished, replaced by crisp clean air. We are thousands of feet above sea level.

The owners of our hotel, a mother and daughter, welcome us sweetly and encourage us to have dinner at 8 in their upstairs dining room. We work up an appetite by wandering the parapets and browsing in the antique shops for which this town is known.

The dining room in the Hotel Lou Roubaillou is made cozy by a fire in the large fireplace at one end of the room. It is furnished beautifully (not surprisingly) with lovely antiques. Dinner is off to a great start with a taste of local charcuterie and

See *HOTEL*, page 17

'Friends' thank volunteers

By VERA HAILEY

FISHERSVILLE — Augusta County Library volunteers were honored at a reception in April given by the Friends of the Library.

Director Barbara Burdette thanked the volunteers and stressed what an important contribution they make at ACL.

Albert Ullrich of the Friends of the Library handed out mugs in recognition of those who give their time to make the library a better place. "We want to recognize everybody. the most impressive thing about volunteers is that they do a lot of work and brighten the day of everyone, clients and staff," Ulrich said.

According to Diantha McCauley, the library's assistant director, volunteers assist in a wide range of areas, including cataloging books, telling stories and shelving. Volunteers also shelf-read, cover books, file, catalog audiovisual materials, help at the reference and circulation desks, relocate books, landscape, prepare storytime materials and present children's programs at area daycare centers.

Wanda Edwards was recognized for 10 years of service at the Deerfield Library Station. In 1991 one classroom in the former Deerfield Elementary School was converted to library use. "I love to read," Ms. Edwards said. "When they talked about putting a station in Deerfield I talked a neighbor into volunteering with me." The neighbor quit but Ms. Edwards, a Western State employee, has been working two hours a week ever since.

Jeanne Rapp of Weyers Cave was honored for five years of volunteering at the main library.

Joyce Overton has been involved in providing service at the Craigsville Library Station for 20 years.

Volunteer Mary Jane Sellers has been checking out books weekly to her seniors group in Churchville for more than 20 years. She has been keeping alive an interest in books for many who have discovered the joys of large print and books on tape.

Augusta County Administrator Pat Coffield, left, and Barbara Burdette, director of the Augusta County Library, congratulate Jeanne Rapp, center, for her service as a volunteer at the library. Photo by Vera Hailey

The library employed Barrie Kendrick of Waynesboro as a clerk/typist for 17 years. Upon retiring she started volunteering her time and now donates six hours a week.

The Friends of the Library newsletter for April recognized John Hensley who "exemplifies the dedication of our volunteers." He single-handedly moved 10,500 books in the course of one week!

The newsletter featured Mozelle Howell, who has been making a contribution to ACL for over 13 years. During her years of service she has worked the circulation desks, shelved books and covered over 30,000 books. According to Reference Librarian Barbara Olsen, Mrs. Howell has extended the life of thousands of library treasures through her conscientious and meticulous care. Mrs. Howell is also known for her work in the Reading Garden and for providing flower arrangements for special events. She is affectionately known as "The Flower Lady."

Last spring the library asked for volunteers to visit area daycare centers and to take a library presence to the children and their caregivers. They now have a very active and enthusiastic Volunteer Storytime Troupe. The volunteers visit their adopted centers monthly to present storytimes that include books, fingerplays and a puppet or flannel-magnet board story.

In December the Children's Department received a Youth Services Grant to finance the Troupe. The funding will allow the purchase of more supplies and deposit book collections. They have a waiting list of daycare centers desiring the service and hope to expand in the fall. More volunteers are needed for this project.

For information on volunteer opportunities at the library contact Volunteer Coordinator Laura Killingsworth at 540/885-3961 or 540/949-6354. —

The old among the new -- the harbor at St. Jean de Luz

•Hotel

Continued from page 16

a slice of a savory tart filled with regional ham and some of the most flavorful mushrooms I've had anywhere. The same mushrooms are in the sauce on our veal. Madame delights in our appreciation of her wonderful cooking. We finish with local cheeses served with a fig confiture. What a splendid combination of tastes.

In the morning when I open the windows everything is covered with frost. A collie races around the corner with a croissant in his mouth and stops long enough for me to snap his picture. After last night's memorable dinner we need no convincing to sit down to breakfast here. As with dinner, everything Madame serves comes with a story. Placing portly glass jars in front of us, she tells us of the organic dairy farmer down the road who makes this yogurt. Smooth and delicious, the yogurt is sweetened with honey and is definitely not low fat. We leave well fed, utterly charmed, and provisioned with a couple jars of yogurt that Madame insists we accept. We promise to return.

We continue the wiggly climb up the Pyrenees stopping every few minutes to photograph the mountains. By noon, we've made it to the tiny country of Andorra at an altitude of 7,000 feet. As we tuck into our grilled chicken and light Spanish wine, we watch people ski and toboggan on the rocky slopes. We browse the shop windows, but it's mostly duty-free upscale boutiques — Rolex watches, perfumes, fancy cameras — nothing to tempt us. The trip downhill is easier than the one had been going up.

That afternoon we have a once-in-a-lifetime experience when we witness the prehistoric cave paintings at La Grotte de Niaux. The two of us are alone with the guide as we hike, flashlights in hand, a mile deep into the cave. Sometimes the path is narrow and we squeeze between boulders. At others we enter tall caverns. Out of breath at the very end of this mile-long trek, we enter the final cavern and shine our lights on images painted 13,000 years ago. Surprisingly realistic, these pictures of deer and bison were painted using iron and manganese oxides. Unlike Lascaux, where visitors are only permitted to view reproductions, we are looking at the actual pictures painted by these unknown people so many thousands of years ago. We are silent on the return hike, not solely from the effort.

See *HIKE*, page 20

•Customers

Continued from page 12

can if somebody has a breakdown."

Probably the most frequent "emergency customers" are the farmers of this rural area who don't want to waste half a day driving into town for a 68-cent bolt. "Farmers in the area are my best and most frequent customers. They need everything from seed corn to baler twine. There are a few less farmers here than when I started, but most are still running their farms or their families are still running the farms," noted Bill.

A lot of those farmers are also in the habit of stopping by the hardware store long about mid-morning. "A good many of the fellows come here in the morning and take a break. They get a drink and keep up with the goings on," he added.

"Goings on" is, of course, the male term for gossip, but having a community network has not been a bad thing over the years. "People know when somebody's sick and needs an extra hand and what needs to be done," said Bill. "I will miss seeing the people all the time."

When he retired as postmaster in October 1992, he just retreated a few feet away to the hardware store, but now he won't be in the center of the Middlebrook community on a regular basis. It will take some getting used to, both from the local people's standpoint and from Bill's standpoint.

"Back when I started we knew everybody. People didn't move in and out as much as they do now. I miss being in the post office sometimes. I knew everybody who lived in Middlebrook. I will miss that same thing here in the store. I will miss the people," he said. In those 36 years, he hasn't missed a day of opening the store and post office, although there were a few times that he had to walk from his home at the edge of the village. He even remembers times during blizzards that farmers had to come to the village to pick up mail and supplies on their tractors.

Bill's community service goes far beyond the decades behind the postal counter and in the hardware store. He has more than 50 years in the Middlebrook Volunteer Fire Department, and nearly 50 years as a member of Bethel Presbyterian Church and of the Middlebrook Ruritan Club. It's likely that the service won't stop. Even though the doors of the hardware store will be closed, he will still have an inventory and he won't turn down an emergency call in the middle of the night.

"I'm not going anywhere. I will still be around. But I have a lot of tinkering jobs around the house that I'd like to do and Sally and I can enjoy doing some things together. We also have a granddaughter whom we'd like to see more often. I have always worked Saturdays, so now I'd like to go to some auctions or just work around the house."

Reflecting back on his years at the heart of the village, he probably wouldn't have chosen any other path for his life to take. "I'd like to think I've been of some service to the community. It's been an interesting 36 years." —

Country Crossroads

Reflecting pool reflections

By Roberta Hamlin

April 2001

Dear Maude,

It is always so good to hear from you and about life at home and realize the difference between there and the city. Your letters help me to remember why sometimes I get so distressed with life here in our Nation's Capital.

The early part of the month here was really very beautiful, however, true to custom, the cherry blossoms did not bloom properly for the Cherry Blossom Parade. They seldom do. I felt sorry for those lovely young women representing their home states, having to ride in the gray rain that Saturday. To add to the grayness, those cherry blossoms simply refused to burst into bloom, and do what they might, the members of Congress could not make them open. They can legislate all they want, but they cannot legislate those trees into bloom!

By the weekend after the festival, however, the trees had exploded into full bloom. A friend and I had been invited to brunch over in the Virginia suburbs, and drove through town (the shortest route) to get there. As we went along we saw a few of those lovely pink magnolias at their peak, which put us in a very happy mood. Then we came across a bit of congestion, in which there were all these very, very shiny, black, new, expensive automobiles milling about one of the downtown buildings. Next appeared one of those highly scrubbed government types with the little curly wire coming out of his shirt collar and going into his ear. "Someone very important is here for something," we said to each other, and then began to discuss the possibility that those scrubbed young men were maybe some sort of high tech machine, and that one of their wires had simply escaped. In the midst of all this theorizing, we were surprised to turn into Constitution Avenue and find the cherry trees in such a full display. Working right in the middle of the city we tend to get a false sense of season, for the small planters one finds around the office buildings seem to come to life before those in other areas do.

And in our rather festive Sunday morning mood, we ask, "What really is the season of spring all about? Is it time for a lot of rhetoric?" Perhaps it is all that hot air to which the planters are exposed which create erratic blooming. All sorts of important things are said on cell phones out there on the street. After all, why have those expensive phones if one cannot be seen talking on them? The appearance of importance is always a factor to deal with here. One needs to be seen, and, if at all possible, heard making all these important deals.

On any particular spring day, we can be sitting at our desks musing about our weekend plans when the telephone rings. It is the boss calling from a meeting on the hill.

"Any messages?" he asks. You tell him there are none.

"Did that important call come in from the West Coast?" comes the next question. You wonder what in the world he is talking about since you did not know of anyone out there who had been expected to telephone. Then it hits you - he is standing there with a bunch of his cronies, having this IMPORTANT call with his office, to check on all of those IMPORTANT things that simply have to be taken care of. Three pansies in the little landscaped pot beside him burst into bloom from the warm breeze that comes by them.

One wonders if this warm weather rhetoric is some kind of springtime mating ritual between those on the legislative side of things and the power brokers. Oh, how impressive it sounds as one important person struts his fine finance committee feathers, hoping that a huge fluff of soft money will come quickly before that silly McCain takes it away.

So the little planted pots and plots just bloom away in front of all the buildings, and accomplish something in my favor as well. They give my budget a break, for who can worry about brightly flowered frocks with all this profusion of color about? I might start out on a lunchtime excursion, with one color of skirt in mind, but by the time I get to the store, and have gone past all those batches of red and yellow tulips and pink flowering trees and purple pansies, I have forgotten exactly what it was I needed.

And, as I said earlier, my friend and I were surprised that Sunday morning to see those cherry blossoms so beautifully in bloom. The ones around our office lost their petals weeks ago. The sight that morning was absolutely beautiful. Around the Tidal Basin there was a misty fog with the sun shining through it. The solid masses of pale pink were so impressive that we found a place to park the car in between two school buses that had just minutes before been filled with young students on their spring break. The students were happily chatting away and seemed to be so excited about the prospect of their day in Washington and all of the monuments and museums. Such innocent enthusiasm put us in a very good mood as we got out of the car and took a walk among the trees. Such a morning as that makes one completely forget all of the craziness that usually has to be dealt with on a daily basis. It was wonderful and it was refreshing!

Give my love to everyone at home and tell them I wish I was there so I could pick a huge bunch of violets!

LuLu

Trailing arbutus offers first sight, smell of spring

By MARK GATEWOOD

It's a rite of spring for My Wife the Biology Teacher: she has to smell the first blossom of trailing arbutus. I've gotten used to this, but it can be startling for the uninitiated. Here's what I mean.

We were taking a late March walk up the Madison Run fire road with Susan Thacker, one of the Biology Teacher's co-workers at school. I spotted a few blooms on a trailing arbutus by the side of the road. "I've got to smell it!" my wife cried, and down she went on her stomach in the gravel with her elbows in the ditch, nose to nose with the flower. Really, there's no other way to do it, because trailing arbutus is a low, ground-hugging plant. Susan declined the gravel belly flop, but I gave it a try. I needed to get a photograph, anyway. I stuck my nose over the tiny bloom and,

sure enough, there was a delicate fragrance that I can only describe as "flowery."

Trailing arbutus is widespread throughout the mountains wherever there's sandy, acid soil. It is, in fact, found throughout the state but because of its selective habitat needs, it's regarded as a rare plant. It's visible year-round as a mat of thumb-sized evergreen leaves. In April and May, it puts out clusters of quarter-inch white-to-pinkish flowers. Trailing arbutus belongs to the Heath family, a group of acid-loving, generally evergreen broad-leafed plants including the blueberries, cranberries, rhododendrons and mountain laurel.

Trailing arbutus is the Virginia Native Plant Society's 2001 Wildflower of the Year. Each year the Society profiles a different native plant in a colorful and fact-filled pamphlet to which I refer you for more fact and folklore on this lovely plant. You can get a copy from the Virginia Native Plant Society, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, Va. 22620.

The Wildflower of the Year pamphlets always have good advice for wildflower gardeners and the advice for those interested in growing trailing arbutus is "Hands off!" Because of its habitat needs, trailing arbutus is nearly impossible to grow in cultivation. Even plants offered for sale by a nursery are likely to have been dug from the wild and will not live. It's better to enjoy this one on its home territory — even if you don't want to do a belly flop to enjoy the scent.

We found several patches of trailing arbutus on our walk. Only that first one, on a sunny, south-facing road bank, had dared to bloom yet. Further up the road we found moss pink, a Madison Run stalwart that we can usually count on for early blooms. It too showed only a few hesitant blossoms. Everything seemed held back by the cold.

The only thing we found blooming with any enthusiasm was a little European transplant called colt's-foot. The bright yellow flowers are easily taken for dandelions, but on closer inspection you'll find no leaves at the base of the flower stalk Colts-foot's leaves come up after the flowers have gone by. Colt's-foot thrives on roadsides and rocky stream beds and blooms as early as February. Since we were into smells on this walk, we did a gravel belly flop to sample the colt's-foot and found another subtle, flowery smell under the thin March sun.

It's not totally out of line to be thinking about trailing arbutus in May because one of its common names is Mayflower, a name apparently given by early New England settlers grateful to see its bloom at winter's end. For us, it's more of an April flower. But occasionally, on a sunny site, trailing arbutus may liven up a late March ramble as the first sign of spring. And if you get close enough, it's your first scent of spring. —

◦Services

Continued from page 5

church in 1955 when she married a local man. Back then, she remembers, church services were held twice a month on Sunday nights. It wasn't until 1964 that it was decided to hold Sunday services at 9:30 a.m., a practice which continues to the present day.

Amazingly, Mizer notes that the church is better attended now than it was in the 1950s. New people come and decide to stay. There are now 81 members because 10 new members were added on Palm Sunday. One person who has been a part of the church her entire life is Judy (Maddox) McIlwee who began playing the piano one Sunday in 1967 when she was just a child.

"I remember that Mrs. Annie Miller the pianist, invited her up and she started playing. The first song she played was `Son of my Soul,'" said Mizer of Judy's longtime dedication to the church.

Although Bethlehem started as United Brethren, the denomination merged with the Evangelical Church in 1946 to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church. That group then merged with the Methodists in 1964 to become the United Methodist Church.

Mission work is important to today's congregation which has a monthly mission project as well as a special Blessings Offering every Sunday that goes to support two missions and an evangelist. Extra funds from the Vacation Bible School are used for special needs projects within the community.

"We want to keep growing. We're ambassadors of Christ and we want to keep going out in the community and showing them that we have our eyes on Christ and we still follow him," said Rev. Knott. —

Model ship portrays grim business of slave trade

By NANCY SORRELLS

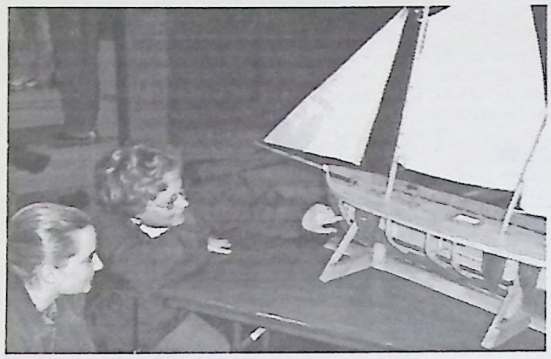
STAUNTON — It was a grim business without a happy ending, but the slave trade is still a part of history that must be told according to Joseph Goldenberg, an American history professor at Virginia State University in Petersburg.

In order to better tell the story, Dr. Goldenberg built a ship 75 feet long and 18 feet wide and anchored it in Staunton for three days in March. His vessel, although not seaworthy, uses canvas and plywood laid out like an early 19th-century slave trader in order to help audiences better visualize the subject. For him, the canvas deck of the ship becomes the launchpad into the subject of dealing in human cargo.

More than 460 people, ranging in age from second graders to adults, experienced Goldenberg's ship through a series of programs that included two public presentations in the evening and a number of school programs. The programs were co-sponsored by the Augusta County Historical Society and Stuart Hall, and the ship was set up in Stuart Hall's new gymnasium.

Talking from his ship and using a 6-foot freestanding map and model ship to illustrate his points, Gol-denberg explained that the Portuguese were *responsible for beginning the African slave trade in the early 1400s. "They* were looking for translators and then in the 1440s they brought several hundred *Africans to Europe,"* he said.

This launched an ethical debate about the humanity of the dark-skinned Africans. After considerable discussions, Europeans concluded that the Africans were indeed human and Europeans were therefore saving the Africans' pagan souls by making them slaves and introducing them to Christianity. Ironically, the Africans came to an opposite conclusion. They believed that these light-skinned strangers could not possibly be human because of their odd and inhumane behavior and so began using poison arrows against them — something that was never done against other humans.



Kathryn Rawley, left, and Angie Rawley look at a slave ship model showing a cross section of the space below decks where 200 slaves were forced to stay at night.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

By the mid-1500s, demand for slaves primarily came from the New World in the West Indies where labor was needed but also where the native populations had been almost totally decimated. Most of the slaves imported to the Americas actually came to Brazil and the West Indies, not North America.

"In the 18th century, the slave trade was a legal trade and was conducted in big merchant ships. These ships were very strong vessels, like big boxes, that could withstand being turned upside down. The survival rate of slaves on these ships was very high," Goldenberg said.

No one is sure how many slaves were shipped from the Old World to the New World through the mid-19th century, but conservative estimates put the number at 10 million! "Probably three million more never made it to the ships in Africa," said Goldenberg.

Slaves who survived the voyage, however, had nothing to be thankful for. In the West Indies and Brazil they were starved and worked to death in a matter of a few years. "It was cheaper to import new people than to feed them adequately," said Goldenberg of the inhumane conditions on the sugar plantations in that part of the world. "There was an extraordinary death rate."

By about 1800, the British and United States had abolished the African slave trade, which forced the slave merchants "underground." Soon idle navies, particularly the English, began hunting down illegal slave traders with a vengeance just for the military kudos and potential promotions that could be had.

To counteract this, slavers changed the design of their ships. These new vessels were "speed machines," like the model one in Staunton, according to Goldenberg. The ships had bigger and more sails, and were of lighter construction. "At full speed they could go 12 miles an hour, but they were also more likely to twist and have their seams open up in a storm and then they would sink," he said.

The emphasis on speed caused a major compromise in safety, he added. Supporting ribs in the ship's hull were removed, decks were stripped bare of weight, and ships were lower in the water, often only three feet above the ocean's waves.

"These ships were death traps," he explained. "But the profits were so great and the return so good that it didn't matter if you lost a couple of ships. These were throwaway vessels."

Many of the vessels were built in the Maryland and Virginia Chesapeake region where generations of shipbuilders knew how to build fast ships and knew what techniques to employ to achieve the slavers' desired results.

Although the death rate on board the vessels was surprisingly low, there are no statistics to tell us how many ships disappeared at sea. Because the trade was illegal, official records were not kept and many ships kept two or three sets of papers on hand in order to change identity whenever necessary to elude the law.

But if the authorities got within visual range of a slave ship, there was no denying that vessel's purpose. Because of the large numbers of people packed on such tiny ships, sanitation was minimal. It was said that one could smell a slave ship even before one sighted it.

Humans and water to survive constituted the main weight on these vessels. Incredibly, a ship the size of the one Goldenberg stood on carried a minimum of 200 slaves and 25 crewmen, but at times 400 slaves were squeezed into every possible space.

Most of the slaves were healthy adults in their late teens or early twenties. Children and older adults were unprofitable because they rarely survived the voyage. The slaves were loaded on board in Africa. All the men were stripped and chained together in pairs. During the voyage, slaves were brought on deck each morning and spent the day in the hot sun. Every day they were brought on deck, washed, fed a bowl of porridge and given a quart of water or less to drink. In the afternoon they were given a second meal of porridge, taken below decks and fastened together.

The time spent in the oxygen-deprived space below deck must have been living hell. People were forced to lie on their sides on freshly sawn boards 18 inches wide. There was less than three feet of head room. "Remember that the men were naked and as they lay on those boards and as the ship rocked, they must have received splinters in their sides. If they had to relieve themselves during the night, they did it while lying there," Goldenberg said in describing the horrendous conditions on board ship.

The slaves' journey across the Atlantic is called the Middle Pas-

See *SHIP*, page 20

Shenandoah Valley families is topic of historical society's spring meeting

The settlers of the Shenandoah Valley came from a variety of cultures and backgrounds, but the families that put down roots on the frontier shared many traits and characteristics as well. Additionally, those who settled in the Lower Valley, around present-day Winchester, and those who settled the Upper Valley, around Staunton, had a network of connections that tied them together.

Those families and those stories will be the topic of research historian Leila Boyer's program at the spring meeting of the Augusta County Historical Society May 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Government Center in Verona. "The Families of Glen Burnie - A Shenandoah Valley Legacy," will focus on how the new Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester will interpret those Valley stories.

"I intend to share the story of the Wood and Glass families from their arrival in the Shenandoah Valley in the 1730s until the time their descendant, Julian Wood Glass, Jr. set in motion the Glass-Glen Burnie Foundation. The foundation was initially responsible for opening the Wood and Glass family homeplace, Glen Burnie, as an historic house museum in 1997," said Boyer. "The site was that chosen in the 18th century by James Wood who surveyed parts of Orange County and then Frederick and Augusta counties. Later he became clerk of court for Frederick County when it was formed, and is credited with founding Winchester," she added.

Most recently the foundation has announced the details of a major undertaking: the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (MSV), which will interpret three centuries of Shenandoah Valley history. Groundbreaking is scheduled for late this summer or early fall with the grand opening to be in the fall of 2003. The MSV will be located on the grounds of Glen Burnie Historic House and Gardens.

Boyer has been a consultant with the foundation in Winchester for the past four years. Boyer's talk, which will include slides and plenty of animation, will focus on how the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley will interpret the many Valley stories and families, not just the history of the more prominent families like the Wood and Glass families. "My presentation to the Augusta County Historical Society will show how the Wood and Glass families were like so many others in the Shenandoah Valley. Through the generosity of Julian Wood Glass, Jr. and the founding of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, we hope to be able to share many such stories with visitors to the Valley," Boyer said.

Also delivering a short presentation that evening will be Frances Crawford, director of development for the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. She plans to tell the audience of the museum's inception, its progress and its plans for the future.

The Augusta County Historical Society's spring meeting is free and open to the public. Those who come early may want to view the permanent display of county historical information and photographs located in the hallway of the Government Center. Refreshments will follow the program. ---

Sneak a healthy dose of family fun with *Spy Kids*

A movie review by Hannah's mom, Sue Simmons

Hannah's mom just hates it when people constantly complain that "they" don't make family movies anymore, yet when pure family entertainment comes along, those same people don't appreciate it.

Case-in-point: *Spy Kids*.

Written, directed and produced by Robert Rodriguez, the man who gave meaning to the term "bloody excess" with *The Faculty, Desperado* and *From Dusk to Dawn*, this not-too-slick, charming little film has a hidden message. Carmen (Alexa Vega — *Twister, Ghosts of Mississippi*) and Juni (Daryl Sabara — TV's *Roswell*) Cortez think their parents are the most uncool people alive. Carmen skips school and Juni retreats into a fantasy world when he isn't agonizing over his warts.

What they don't know is that their parents — Ingrid (Carla Gugino — *Michael, Troop Beverly Hills*) and Gregorio (Antonio Banderas — *Desperado, Mask of Zorro, Evita*) are spies who came in from the cold. Adversaries in the espionage war, the two fell in love and married, giving up the spy game for "consulting."

When master spies start disappearing, however, the two are called back for one final mission. Because they are rusty, they are immediately foiled and captured by the dastardly Fegan Floop (Alan Cummings — *Emma, Circle of Friends*), a popular kid's television show host, and his diabolical sidekick Alexander Minion (Tony Shalhoub — *Gattica, Primary Colors*). The two are producing an army of robot kids — spy kids — to sell to Mr. Lisp (Robert Patrick — *All the Pretty Horses, The Faculty*, TV's *The X-Files*) who wants to use them for world domination.

When the kids find out their folks are spies — "They can't be spies! They're not cool enough!"— they realize that they will have to save their parents. Shuffled off to a safe house by their Uncle (who isn't really their uncle) Felix Gumm (Cheech Marin — *Tin Cup, Desperado, Troop Beverly Hills*), they narrowly escape capture by Mrs. Gadenko (Teri Hatcher — *Secrets of 007, Since You've Been Gone*, TV's *Lois and Clark*). On the run, they enlist the aid of their Uncle Izzy (Danny Trejo — *Desperado, From Dusk to Dawn*), who produces Machete Espionage gadgets for both sides. After loading up on gadgets that will dazzle you, the kids head for Floop's castle. The final showdown is part James Bond/The Avengers/Indiana Jones, and part Saturday morning cartoons.

In too many family movies, the kids are all cloyingly cute or unbearably obnoxious or both and the adults either stupid or ogres or both. Rodriguez avoids this. The two kids definitely steal the show but its because they act like kids — arguing, fighting, calling each other names — but deep down they like each other. Vega and Sabara steal the show from a cast of real stars like Banderas, Cummings, Hatcher, and even George Clooney in a cameo performance.

The adults aren't misfits either. Best of all, the family isn't an upper middle class white family but a Latino family that looks perfectly natural and functional. Banderos seems to do his best in family movies like *Zorro* and *Spy Kids*. He has good comic timing but not as good as Cummings, Shalhoub and Hatcher who are really funny.

Spy Kids offers an upbeat story about kids using their brains to do something big. It pokes fun at spy genre films yet doesn't parody them. What little violence there is in the film is so unscary it cannot really be called violence. The film doesn't take itself too seriously, which only adds to its charm. Parents can drop their kids off at the Bijou or go with them. There's plenty of witty dialogue to keep you chuckling. The movie is short and sweet at an hour-and-twenty-minutes. Best of all, there is a message about the importance of family that is loud and clear without being preachy.

Don't sit around lamenting the dearth and death of family entertainment when you can go enjoy some. Hannah's mom gives *Spy Kids* four bananas. Rated PG for mild violence (I guess the censors need to earn their money for something. The only bad word is "shitake mushrooms.") —

◦Hike

Continued from page 17

The memory of The Grotto sticks with us as we make our way out of the Pyrenees and turn north toward the Bordeaux region. We stop in Condom (yup, that's where they come from) at Le Logis des Cordeliers, a *hotel we discovered 10 years ago. Amazingly, it's changed from a roach-infested dive into a nicely* landscaped two-star hotel with swimming pool. Typical of the French attitude toward pets, there is a blanket tucked away in the closet that is reserved for cat and dog guests.

At no time have we been turned away from a hotel because we didn't have a reservation, though we often arrive after dark. And hotel prices *have ranged from $35 to $50 during the off-season, never more than what one would pay for a motel room in* Staunton. We have fantastic luck finding comfortable hotels and fine restaurants, or perhaps it is because the French will not tolerate bad service (yes, we've found a few).

In the morning we visit Larressingle, a charming 13th century fortified village of Gascony. Within its walls are two acres of medieval streets, dozens of houses, a church, and a castle. This little find is typical of the French countryside. Around every turn in the road, it seems, there's a piece of history — a chateau, the ruins of a 10th century monastery, a 14th century city gate, a castle. In this region of France, the landscape is littered with the remnants of war where Protestant fought Catholic, English fought French, and Pope fought Pope.

We return to our home base Back in St. Emilion. We discover that the town has established a museum of regional pottery in the caves that were once used entirely to store the thousands and thousands of bottles of wine produced locally each year. While many bottles remain, the caves now contain examples of 3,000 years of pottery. Deep underground we stroll from ancient ceramic cauldrons to fancy ornamental bottles of the 17th century. Outside in the warmth once again, we view an exhibit of contemporary sculpture. The courtyard is filled with the aroma of flowering rosemary bushes.

Finally, it is time to start thinking ahead to the trip home. Few thoughts of Virginia have intruded on our visit. Instead, we have wonderful memories to take home (in addition to a few souvenirs), memories that we can bring back for a lifetime. It's funny what we remember — the marvelous omelet at the Herb Farm, the steak and French fries (distinctly French) at the restaurant of the old abby, the local foie gras, the cheeses, the pic-nic sur l'herbe, and, of course, the wine of Bordeaux.

Although we seem to go from one restaurant to another, food is not our only lasting memory. At home amid life's daily travails, our thoughts often transport us back through the centuries to experience the remarkable culture that has given us so much beauty. Our visit has only taken us to this tiny corner of France. There is much yet left to discover (and to visit again) during future trips, and, at off-season prices, anyone can do it. —

◦Ship

Continued from page 19

sage. The minimum length of time for this journey was three weeks although weather conditions could turn the trip into six or nine weeks. The ankle restraints were kept on until about a week remained in the trip. At that time they were removed in hopes that the open sores they created would heal before the slaves were sold.

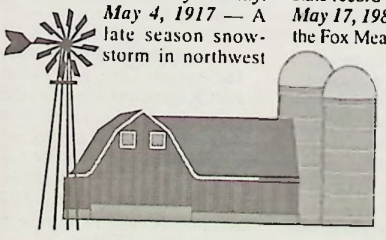
Goldenberg said historians estimate that a million slaves made this journey to the Americas after the trade was declared illegal. Even after the international trade was outlawed, trade was still allowed between Virginia and points within the Americas. Such was the case of the Creole which departed Richmond in 1841 bound for New Orleans with a cargo of 135 slaves. The ship becalmed in the Bahamas where the slaves successfully mutinied and sailed into the harbor.

"The story of the Creole deserves a lot of attention," said Goldenberg who has studied cases and papers involving the maritime slave trade for a number of years. When he constructed his "teaching ship" Goldenberg decided to name it the Creole after those famous mutineers.

The story of the Creole passengers and of the millions of other unnamed men and women who lived and died on the Middle Passage is a sad one, but it is a lesson of history that demands learning if for no other reason than it should never be repeated. —

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.



May 4, 1917 — A late season snowstorm in northwest Texas produced up to eight inches of snow in Potter County and Armstrong County.

May 10, 1966 — Morning lows of 21 degrees at Bloomington-Normal, Ill., and Aurora Ill., established a state record for the month of May.

May 17, 1983 — A golfer playing the Fox Meadows Course in Memphis, Tenn., was struck by a bolt of lightning that went through his neck, down his spine, came out a pocket containing his keys, and went into a nearby tree. Miraculously, he survived!

May 22, 1987 — A powerful tornado virtually wiped the small southwest Texas community of Saragosa off the map. The twister destroyed 85 percent of the structures in the town killing 30 persons and injuring 121 others in the town of population 183. The tornado hurled trucks and autos through adobe and wood- frame homes, with some vehicles blown 500 feet. —

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