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BY CARA ELLEN MODISETT ('96, '98M)

From country roads to rich local history to downtown nightlife, find out what's cool in and around the 'Burg. And, read alumni's Top 10 favorite parts of JMU and the Shenandoah Valley.

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History certainly isn't the only JMU major with a formidable capstone course. HIST 395 students may disagree. "The course beats them up a little bit," says history professor Chris Arndt, "but they come out knowing how to do research." The course earned a whole new reverence this year when the American Historical Association gave a nod to the JMU history department.

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M@adison

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CyberCity 2009

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Making historians

Vigorous class discussions, accessible professors and a challenging capstone course help JMU create well-prepared historians and researchers. PAGE 42

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What's happening at JMU? What's on your mind? Tell prospective students and alumni about your Madison Experience or share other JMU-related thoughts: www.facebook.com/jamesmadisonuniversity

VISIT JMU

Prospective students, JMU alumni, community members, JMU friends: Find it all here. The JMU events calendar, campus map, community news, area lodging and dining. Log on before you roll in to the 'Burg: www.jmu.edu/jmuweb/visitor/

ALSO: Follow @JMUNews on Twitter



What makes the Madison Experience unique? Virginia politico Levar Stoney ('04) and top scholar Josh Kelaher ('10) discuss all things JMU. PAGE 30



Study Abroad Alessandro Gentili (above) directs the JMU Semester in Florence program. PAGE 20

Community building

JMU students are helping education professor Mary Slade with community building in Welch, W.Va. PAGE 51



CYBERCITY PHOTOGRAPH BY KATHY LAM; HISTORY STUDENTS BY MICHAEL MIRIELLO ('09M); EXPRESSIONS BY DAVID LONNQUEST ('11); GENTILI BY JUDITH WELCH TRIP COURTESY OF MARY SLADE

Madison

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Madison is an official publication of James Madison University and is produced quarterly for alumni, parents of JMU students, faculty and staff members, and friends of the university. It is produced by the Division of University Advancement. Editorial and advertising offices: JMU, MSC 3610, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.

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Your letters and feedback

SUSTAINABLE INSPIRATION

I just received your digital magazine. I'm amazed and proud of everything that *Madison* is working on in the area of sustainability. I am now living in Corvallis, Ore., home to Oregon State University, where I received my master's degree. I have sent a copy of this JMU magazine to them for ideas and inspiration. I am a volunteer working as a part of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, a network of more than 140 organizations working together to accelerate the creation of a more sustainable community. With a great deal of community input and funding from the City of Corvallis, we have developed a Community Sustainability Action Plan with specific goals and actions that our government, schools and residents can use to move us toward increased sustainability. I am excited that JMU is taking a similar path! Keep up the good work.

BETTY HARRINGTON GRIFFITHS ('62)
Corvallis, Ore.

POSITIVE PURPLE PRIDE

I am honored to express my love of JMU. Two of my daughters are graduates — Classes of 2003 and 2008. I have never seen a university that engenders the positive, enthusiastic atmosphere that is everywhere on the JMU campus. The quality of education is evident from the success that its students achieve and the kind of people they become.

CYNTHIA M. ANDERSON ('03P, '08P)
Richmond, Va.

'I have never seen a university that engenders the positive, enthusiastic atmosphere that is everywhere on the JMU campus. The quality of education is evident from the success that its students achieve and the kind of people they become'

— CYNTHIA M. ANDERSON ('03P, '08P)



FOCUS ON GRADUATES

Seeing Paul Holland ('82) on the inside cover of your magazine [Summer 2009 issue] prompted me to write and tell you just how disappointed I was in his address at Spring Commencement in May. While his accomplishments are laudable, a graduation speech

should be focused on the graduates. I did not seem to be alone in my feelings based upon my conversations with several other JMU parents on graduation day. My son was in the graduating class, and I can tell you that I still hold James Madison University in very high regard.

ALAN MEYER ('09P)
Hillsborough, N.J.

GOOD JOB

The summer 2009 issue of *Madison* is beautiful. Excellent writing, engaging. Just wonderful.

GABRIELLA G. SWARTWOOD ('95)
Ringoes, N.J.

MISS SAVAGE DID GET IN THE WATER

I wanted to comment on your Professors You Love article about swimming instructor Dorothy Savage, "She never got in the water." [Summer 2009 issue, Page 46]. Miss Savage was my swimming instructor during my freshman year, 1947-48. On the first day of class, Miss Savage asked the students to form a large circle in the pool and hold hands. I was side by side with another freshman, Mary Upshur Mears, who could not swim. The girls beside us let go of our hands, and we started to sink. Fortunately, Miss Savage jumped in the pool and saved us! This business education major is thankful she DID get in the water.



Nancy Garth Small ('51)

NANCY GARTH SMALL ('51)
Waynesboro, Va.

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Madison, the magazine of James Madison University

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Cara Ellen Modisett ('96, '98M) is editor of the award-winning regional magazine *Blue Ridge Country*, a reporter/producer for WVTF public radio, and she has written the text for two books on the Blue Ridge Parkway. A Harrisonburg native, she graduated from JMU with degrees in English education and piano performance. She was a reporter and columnist for *The Breeze* and founding editor of *Fugue*, the JMU Honors Program arts journal. She lives in Roanoke with her husband, Phil Atkins, and their two cats and performs frequently as a classical pianist and chamber musician. She writes a blog, *RidgeLines*, at BlueRidgeCountry.com.



Bill Goodykoontz ('85) is the film critic for *The Arizona Republic*, in Phoenix, and chief film critic for Gannett. He lives in Chandler, Ariz., with his wife, Susan, four children and assorted rodent-type pets, as well as a parakeet. He details JMU writing professor Inman Majors' new book *The Millionaires* in the Mixed Media department on Page 53. Read his blog at goodyblog.azcentral.com, and follow him on Twitter @goodyk.

Carolyn Schellhorn Windmiller ('81), communications design director, has held numerous leadership positions within the university advancement division since joining the staff in 1989. In addition to her work on the magazine, she designs communications for JMU admissions, student recruitment and academic departments. She received an MVP Design Award for Outstanding Graphic Design for the College of Visual and Performing Arts pocket folder. An animal rescue advocate and Cat's Cradle supporter, she adopted her dog from the SPCA and her two cats came from feral colonies.



Frequent *Madison* contributor **Bill Gentry** has worked at JMU since 1996 in a variety of editing, writing and creative concept capacities. Currently marketing coordinator for student recruitment, Gentry works closely with the JMU Office of Admissions in its quest to spread the word about the Madison Experience. Spare-time activities include marathons, 50- and 100-mile races, and a consecutive-day running streak slated to hit 1,000 days on Nov. 15, 2009.

Michael Miriello ('09M) photographed students and professors in JMU's Department of History for the feature on Page 42. He graduated from JMU's College Student Personal Administration master's program. Miriello discovered photography while in graduate school and the rest is history. He has since opened his studio in Harrisonburg. View more of his photography at www.miriellophotography.com.

