



JMU to get lion's share of funding

by Jessica Jenkins
managing editor

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia recommended that JMU get \$35.3 million for capital expansions and new buildings from the state.

That's over 46 percent of the \$76 million in funding approved by the council, and nearly all of the money is earmarked for the College of Integrated Science and Technology, said SCHEV spokesman Mike MacDowell.

"Basically the building projects put forward with council's recommendation were related to the college of the 21st century," MacDowell said.

For this reason, funding for expansion and renovation of Harrison Hall was denied, but the Council asked that the General Assembly set aside \$50 million for maintenance reserve funds, of which JMU would receive \$1.3 million, MacDowell said.

JMU also received approval from the council to raise student tuition and fees in order to fund building improvement and maintenance projects. The total hike amounted to \$55.8 million for the 1996-98 period.

The recommendations, made in a council meeting Tuesday in Staunton, will be up for discussion between all of the state colleges and universities and the council during the next month. In September, the council will issue a final capital budget, said JMU Media Relations Director Fred Hilton.

SCHEV page 2



KEVIN RUSCH/THE BREEZE

To the beat of a different drummer...

High school students from around the state practice at the JMU summer band camp.

CISAT construction faces delays

by Ed Gray
news editor

Construction on the first building of the College of Integrated Science and Technology, originally slated to be completed by the beginning of fall semester, has been delayed until late October, according to JMU's assistant vice president of resource planning and policy studies.

Dr. William Jackameit said delays in delivering the modules and water damage to some of them have

contributed in pushing back the completion date.

"Right now we are looking at a completion date and possible occupancy date of around the end of October," Jackameit said.

The building, which will house CISAT classrooms and faculty and administrative offices, consists of 50 separate modules which are being transported on large flatbed trucks from Manassas by Rhodenizer Construction, Inc. The modules will link together to

CISAT page 2

JMU hosts Russian Studies Academy

Americans welcome Russian exchange students

by Rachel Bunyard
news editor

Language is not a barrier at the Governor's Russian Studies Academy, where American and Russian students' gain a greater understanding of each other's language and culture.

The academy was established in 1987 and has been hosted by JMU ever since.

"Everyone here is like your surrogate family, they are so enthusiastic," said Jennie Blizzard, a rising

junior from Surry County High School.

"I've always loved languages," Blizzard said. "After this experience I need to talk to my [high school] administration to get them to see the need for a new language."

James Friel, a rising senior from Oakton High School in Fairfax, said, "We're all here because we are interested in the language."

The academy faculty has developed an intensive

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INSIDE

Natural attraction

Explore the wonders of Shenandoah National Park in the feature section/8



They're here!

Freshmen and parents alike are enjoying this year's orientation/3



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SCHEV

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Of the \$693 million requested by state colleges and universities, the council accepted 11 percent, or \$76 million, said Don Finley, SCHEV's associate director for finance and facilities. In contrast, JMU got 41 percent of the \$85.2 million requested for capital projects, Hilton said.

"We do look at the needs of the higher education system and if JMU got a larger share that's probably because they were ready to move into the buildings," MacDowell said.

Other schools "didn't need capital outlay as much as those getting ready to lay brick and mortar," he

said.

Since Virginia is expected to have an increase of more than 11,700 college students over the next three years, proposals that make room for new students were also a priority for state funding, and the CISAT program satisfies both requirements, MacDowell said.

Most of the money will be used in phase two of the construction, which includes dorms and "support" buildings for the campus, such as the dining hall, Hilton said.

The majority, \$23 million, will go to construction funds, and the rest will fall to planning or infrastructure, Hilton said.

"You'd always like to get everything you ask for, but considering the funds available, I think we're very pleased," Hilton said.

And Hilton said the university had expected the council to curb fees.

"The amount recommended was about what we expected," Hilton said.

MacDowell said the council had spoken with the universities and colleges about the lack of funding and plans to direct funding toward the college of the 21st century.

"This did not come as a surprise to any of the institutions," MacDowell said. "It's just a reality of state funding."

CISAT

CONTINUED from page 1

form a two story, 33,000-square-foot building, according to JMU chief engineer Jim Auckland.

Auckland said that as of last week, only about half of the modules had arrived at JMU. Of those, Auckland said "some units had more water damage than others."

Even though they were wrapped in plastic, the modules still accumulated moisture buildup from humidity, condensation and rain, partly because the first floor units are not waterproof, Auckland said. Most of the damage Auckland has seen involves warped ceiling tiles and damp floor tiles.

"At this point all of the units down here have not been entered," Auckland said. "A lot of the damage remains to be seen, but just from looking into the windows, it appears that the worst that we saw in some of the initial units is not so bad in most of the others, so that makes us feel better."

"The thing that has caused the greatest delay is the delivery route," he said. The units are transported from Manassas to Richmond and then over to Harrisonburg to avoid several bridges on Interstate 66 that the modules cannot fit under.

Auckland explained the trucks must be off of the interstate by 3 p.m. to avoid causing late-afternoon traffic problems.

"The trucks leave Manassas as early as they can in the morning and get here at the time they are supposed to be off the interstate," he said. "Once they are unloaded here, they drive

back to Manassas at night, but they can't get loaded up and turned around fast enough to arrive here by three the next day."

As a result, only about three trips can be made a week, as opposed to the planned five or six.

Once all of the snags have been ironed out, the next step will be to bring in a large crane to lay the units on the foundation, Auckland said. The modules are currently resting near the upper Convocation Center parking lot.

Until the building is complete, CISAT classes will be held in the biology village trailers. Those trailers will be moved, along with some of the trailers behind Anthony-Seeger Hall, to a site near the CISAT building once it is complete, Jackameit said.

Despite the projected late October completion date, computer science faculty who were supposed to move into the new structure for fall semester will remain in Burruss Hall until spring, Jackameit said. CISAT administrators will move into the new building because they do not have the conflicts with classes that the computer science department has, he said.

JMU signed a five-year, \$145,000-per-year lease with local developer Bill Neff, the owner of the building, according to a June 12 article in the *Daily News-Record*. Jackameit said Neff is transporting the modular building and erecting it at his own cost, and JMU will have the option to renew its lease after the first five years are up.



CRAIG NEWMAN/THE BREEZE

Splish, splash...

I was in SCUBA class...

A SCUBA class student emerges to reach for an underwater writing pad. The SCUBA class was offered this summer as a trial Kinesiology course.

Correction

In the July 1 edition of *The Breeze*, the graphic on page 8 listed UPB as the sponsor for the JMU Dinner Theatre. The Dinner Theatre is also sponsored by the JMU Theatre Department and JMU Food Services.

Corrections???

Call x6127



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business manager Michael Chu

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news editor Ed Gray
features editor Matt Schwabel

photo editor Kevin Rusch
ad designer Janet Driscoll
production manager Janet Driscoll

Flip DeLuca, Alan Neckowitz, David Wendelken advisers

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News

Moving in

Future JMU students come to campus to investigate college life

by Sean Murphy
staff writer

Just after the school year comes to an end and most students load up their cars and head home for the summer incoming freshman begin flooding onto campus.

Every incoming freshman is expected to attend a two-day orientation session before they begin their college career.

"I always wanted to go to JMU, so I'm just excited to be here," freshman Liz Blackwell said.

The first day students are given a tour of campus, introduced to members of the JMU community, take assessment tests, attend a dinner and skit and wrap up the evening with a dance.

Students meet with faculty advisors and register for classes on the second day.

Freshman Kendall Baltimore said, "Everyone seems to be real friendly."

"I have enjoyed everything this weekend except for the dance," Baltimore said. "It was real boring and I felt like I was back at an eighth grade sock hop."

And she wasn't alone in her disappointment with the dance.

"I thought the dance was boring, I couldn't wait to get out of there," freshman Mike Beitzel said.

Freshman Tracy Newell was warned in advance. "I skipped the dance because my sister told me it would be boring."

But the skit following the dinner—which gives incoming students a preview of college life and deals with safety issues, making friends, drug and alcohol decisions, and handling classes—received better reviews than did the dance.

"The skit was really good," Baltimore said. "It made me wonder about some problems."

Newell said, "The skit was funny, but it also made you think a lot."

This year the orientation program, which hosts about 260 students each session, has some new twists to it.

The transfer students attended the first session, allowing them to register for classes before they closed. In past years the transfers have been assigned to the last session of the summer.

Also this year the students stay in Village residence halls instead of Bluestone residence halls.

Both student government association president Josh Pringle and various faculty members speak to the freshmen and their parents at each session.

"I try to make the first experience these kids have at JMU an enjoyable one," said Pringle. "I want them to be

ORIENTATION page 5



KEVIN RUSCH/THE BREEZE

Sophomore orientation assistant Danielle Caffo guides a freshman and her family toward the library.

Minority students get jump on academic year

by A.C. Munzner
staff writer

Since 1983, the transition program at JMU has provided a head-start for incoming minority freshmen in their transition from high school to college.

The six-week summer program provides an overview of campus life and academics at JMU and a chance for students to get oriented before their first semester in the fall.

The transition program is "handled through the Center for Multicultural Student Services and the admissions office for the most part," according to academic counselor Cheryl Plank. This year, 46 students are participating in the program.

The State Council for Higher Education in Virginia and JMU fund the program.

"Most of the funding comes from SCHEV," academic counselor Diane Strawbridge said. This year, JMU received top funding from SCHEV because of students' high G.P.A.'s and retention rate.

"This year all the students have been African-American," Strawbridge said. "But in the past we have had [other minorities]."

"The program is open to all minorities," Strawbridge said. "It just so happens that we have mainly African-Americans."

All students enrolled in the transition program take English 101 and one of three other courses offered in the areas of math, history and economics. The program also includes a field trip to Washington D.C. where the students tour museums and see a play.

"We want them to have a well-rounded experience and this trip provides a cultural experience," Strawbridge said.

"First and foremost is academics," Strawbridge said. "They have six credit hours and a GPA in the fall."

Strawbridge pointed out other advantages the students gain from the program.

"They also know their way around campus and have been in contact with other key service delivery areas, such as student activities and financial aid," Strawbridge said. "They know about the services as well as a person they can refer to later on."

"They also work through issues such as home sickness, and we want to make their transition as easy and as least traumatic as possible."

Stacie Jude, a senior majoring in speech pathology, has found the program useful.

"It's a great way to meet people," Jude said. "You have a feel for the campus and campus life. Some freshmen are a little jealous because you already know people."

Plank said, "The majority of the students are student-selected," Plank said. "They might have some areas of deficiency such as SAT scores, but they are strong academically and very strong in or very involved with extracurricular activities."

Many campus leaders, such as Patricia Southall, have emerged from the transition program. Southall the 1991-92 SGA president and was selected Miss Madison for Homecoming 1991. Earlier this month she was fourth runner-up in the Miss Virginia Pageant.

Plank said she would like to see a program available to all students.

"The only thing I would like to see is more students benefiting from a program like this," Plank said.

"Word is out," Plank said. "Students want the program. We don't have to sell it. The program sells itself."

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Clinton faces implied deadline on homosexual ban

WASHINGTON — As pressure mounts for Clinton to decide a new policy on gays in the military as soon as Thursday, his gay friends and supporters are anticipating the worse. Many activists are already plotting acts of civil disobedience, expecting Clinton to break his promise to lift the 50-year-old ban and adopt instead a policy that would still expel homosexuals from the armed forces.

But if the president pushes a policy with less than unanimous support from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he risks a nasty showdown in Congress, where conservative and moderate politicians have

threatened to write a ban on homosexuals into law.

But some gay activists worry that launching an aggressive, high-profile campaign now could make the administration even more unwilling to be seen responding to gay demands.

A senior Pentagon official said last week that Defense Secretary Les Aspin was prepared to give Clinton three choices for lifting the ban, all variations of an interim policy that Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has proposed as a permanent compromise.

Nonetheless, all the options would allow the Pentagon to discharge men and women who disclose their sexual status.

"It's pretty clear that if they're out of the closet, they're out of the military," the official said.

Although Clinton has never committed himself to making a decision by Thursday, he will be under pressure by the congressional calendar to act quickly. The Senate's endorsement of the interim policy — which came in February after Republicans lost a bid to write a homosexual ban into law — expires today.

— LA Times-Washington Post

Academy

CONTINUED from page 1

19-day program that includes separate curriculums for the American and Russian students. The course schedule consists of academic courses that range from foreign language to economics and includes other classes such as physical education, drama, folk dancing and chorus.

The students' weeks consist of a lot of 14-hour days — a typical day starts with breakfast at 7:50am and ends with lights out at 11:00pm.

"In our language class yesterday, we talked about our free time, and I said 'What free time?'" Friel said jokingly.

Blizzard said, "At first I complained about the schedule, but then I realized that there is a point to the schedule.

"It helps us learn about college life," Blizzard said.

But this rigorous schedule has helped the academy earn its notoriety.

"The Russian Academy has a good reputation," said Ruth Howse, an academy instructor of art, music and literature.

The student selection process for the academy is very competitive, with only one student being accepted from 45 different high schools in Virginia. And 11 Russian students from the entire country were qualified enough to be selected.

"The students are very bright," Neatrou said. "They're committed to learning and to the future. They want to make a difference in this world."

Associate academy director Karen Laslie said, "They're a very inquisitive and creative group."

One way the students express their creativity is also a means of escape from the class lectures.

"Students love chorus and folk dancing" Laslie said.

Folk dancing, which is taught by Anne Saretsky, and chorus give the students a deeper appreciation for the Russian culture and new Russian vocabulary, Neatrou said.

Blizzard said, "Anne deserves a lot of credit. It seems that no matter how bad we dance, she always says 'Good job.'"

But when the students weren't studying or dancing this Tuesday, they were doing a little bit of sight seeing in Washington, DC.

They toured the Smithsonian Mall, Lincoln and Vietnam Memorials, Hillwood Museum and St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church.

"One of the Orthodox Priests explains the symbolism of the icons," Ruth Howse said. The combination of American and Russian points of interest made the trip fun for both the Russian and American students.



KEVIN RUSCH/THE BREEZE

Joanne Gabbin, professor of English and director of the Honors Program, was one of 11 Virginia professors named "Outstanding Faculty" by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia in May. Each recipient received a crystal sculpture and a \$5,000 prize appropriated by the General Assembly and governor.

Orientation

CONTINUED from page 3

excited about coming to JMU."

Pringle said he has received a lot of positive feedback regarding orientation.

"I think orientation gives the kids a good view of JMU and hopefully it will get them even more excited about coming in the fall," Pringle said.

But Pringle isn't alone in his efforts to make JMU look appealing. The orientation assistants, who are hired at

the end of the previous school year, also aim to bring out the best in their school.

"I hope to show them that JMU is filled with friendly people," said orientation assistant Marrell Elam.

Orientation assistant Myung Lee said, "It feels good to give back to the university what I got as a freshman.

"I love working as an orientation assistant because there is never the same session twice."

Orientation assistant Jennifer Shakesby agreed each session is different.

"It has been enjoyable to meet the incoming class," Shakesby said.

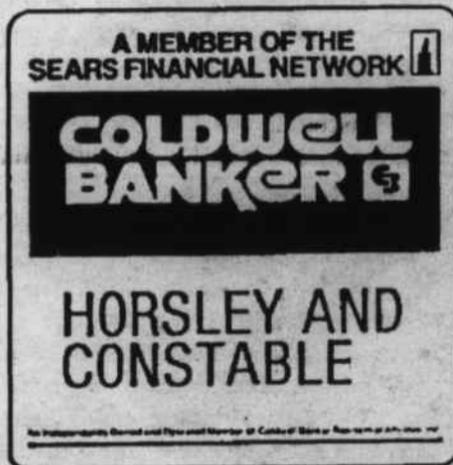
"The fresh new perspective that they bring makes each session interesting."

Director of Residence Life Jim McConnel said most parents are just as excited as their children about being at JMU.

"A lot of [the parents] will come up and say they have another son or daughter at another university and they complement us on our orientation programs and say it tends to be a real personable and thorough type of thing," McConnel said.

"I've been really pleased to be associated with orientation because it seems to be very significant as far as parents are concerned."

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Clinton calls for emergency aid for flood-damaged areas

DES MOINES, Iowa — President Clinton Wednesday toured the flood damage here and said he would ask Congress for nearly \$2.5 billion in emergency aid. He added that even more than that would probably be needed.

"It was awful," Clinton said after a 40-minute helicopter tour of the swollen Des Moines and Raccoon rivers. From the helicopter, the land looked like a series of lakes, with submerged houses, commercial buildings and railroad cars and a collapsed downtown bridge with abandoned automobiles scattered on areas still above water.

"I have seen whole towns flooded, I have seen massive amounts of farmland flooded, but I've never seen anything on this scale before," Clinton said later, visiting a water distribution center where people carrying empty plastic jugs lined up to get their two-gallon allotment and meet the president. The city has been without safe drinking water or running water since Sunday, when the water treatment plant was flooded.

Clinton had stopped in Davenport, Iowa, on his way to the economic summit in Tokyo and announced a \$1.2 billion aid package, of which \$100 million in crop insurance was available immediately.

Clinton said Wednesday he was increasing the package to \$2.48 billion, sent to Congress in the form of an emergency request, and administration officials indicated the damage could reach \$5 billion.

"This is a different sort of emergency than I saw 10 days ago ...," Clinton said. "It's gone beyond the flooding of farmland ... to the destruction of a lot of homes and business, and the public safety issue

here with the water."

Torrential rains worsened flooding Wednesday in four Midwestern states, wire services reported, and the tally of broken levees along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers continued to rise.

Slow-moving thunderstorms spared Des Moines, but dumped huge amounts of rain elsewhere. The National Weather Service said the rain was causing flash floods in parts of southern Iowa and Nebraska and northern Kansas and Missouri.

The flooding, which began more than a month ago, has been blamed for at least 21 deaths. About 6,500 National Guard troops were on duty in Iowa, Illinois and Missouri, where more than 30,000 people have been evacuated.

In Quincy, Ill., sandbag crews tried to save the only bridge connecting the state and Missouri for at least 100 miles in each direction. "This is just like a war zone," Quincy Mayor Chuck Scholz told the Associated Press.

"Coming in from where the levee broke last night, I saw two little girls ... no more than 8 and 10, standing there with shovels in their hands. I just about lost it."

Clinton plans to meet on Capital Hill Thursday with the congressional delegations of the affected states, and will fly to St. Louis on Saturday for another meeting. Clinton will bring several Cabinet members and officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to discuss how the different levels of government can be coordinated to deal with the disaster, and has invited governors, members of congress and top local officials.

The emergency request Clinton outlined Wednesday includes \$900 million for disaster payments to farmers for crop losses, \$800 million for FEMA's disaster relief fund, and funds to support \$300 million in low-interest disaster loans for home and business owners.

Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, D, touring the area with Clinton, called the request "totally inadequate," adding, "I can tell you right now we'll have that much in just crop losses alone." Harkin said he doubted that amount would cover losses in Iowa alone, and predicted the required amount would be "double or triple."

Five states — Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin — have been declared disasters and federal officials are reviewing damage in South Dakota, Kansas and Nebraska.

Office of Management and Budget director Leon Panetta said on the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour that he would not "be surprised" if flood damage could reach \$5 billion, but that the total can't be determined until the waters recede.

OMB associate director Christopher Edley said the \$2.48 billion requested by Clinton Wednesday "now far exceed the identifiable damage, the audited damage."

Clinton said he wanted "victims of this disaster" to "be treated just like the victims of Hurricane Andrew or Hugo ... This is a very profound problem."

— L.A. Times/Washington Post News Service

Millions of adult Americans not getting enough shut-eye

When it's time to get up in the morning, do you sink back under the covers and fall back asleep? Are you often too exhausted to get out of bed? Do you feel tired and lethargic throughout the day?

If so, experts say, you are among the millions of adult Americans who aren't getting enough sleep. Although not everyone needs the same nine hours that young people do, experts say grown-ups should get seven to eight hours of sleep a night.

"In our society, time is the ultimate commodity, and sleep is seen as a colossal waste of time. We stay up late to watch TV. We get up early to exercise. And research suggests that many Americans only get between six and seven hours of sleep a night," says David Dinges, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in Philadelphia.

If you're not getting enough sleep, says Dinges, you're likely to feel excessively tired in situations that are routine and even dull. "You'll look and feel sleepy in meetings and while driving a car," he says. Another way to see if you're sufficiently

rested is to watch your alarm clock. "If you're getting enough sleep, you should be able to awaken spontaneously some mornings, without needing to hear the alarm clock," says Timothy Roehrs, director of research at the Sleep Disorders and Research Center at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

Experts say most people try to pay off their "sleep debt" by sleeping late on weekends. But it's actually better to try going to bed a half hour earlier each night. "This cancels out sleepiness more efficiently, over time," says Dinges.

Sometimes, lack of sleep can indicate the existence of a more serious problem. According to the National Sleep Foundation, there are more than 70 sleep disorders, including insomnia, sleepwalking and night terrors, which affect a good night's rest.

If you have sleep-related questions, send a SASE to the National Sleep Foundation, 122 South Robertson Blvd., Third Floor, Los Angeles, Calif. 90048.

— L.A. Times/Washington Post News Service

U.S. troops join UN efforts to end conflict in Macedonia

SKOPJE, Macedonia — The main contingent of 300 U.S. troops landed here Monday, about as far from harm's way as it is possible to get in the war-torn Balkans but carrying a message that the conflict shall spread no further.

The troops chosen to deliver President Clinton's message symbolized movement from the Cold War to its tumultuous aftermath. The 196 U.S. infantry troops who landed here were from the Berlin brigade. For decades they guarded the Cold War flashpoint along the Berlin Wall. Here, they join the complex and frustrating U.N. peacekeeping mission along this country's embargoed borders.

It is the first time that U.S. combat troops will have served in the blue berets of U.N. peacekeeping forces.

"I congratulate you on your blue berets," Brig. Gen. Finn Saermark-Thomsen, the Danish U.N. Commander told Lt. Col. Walter L. Holton, commander of the task force, Company C of the 502nd Infantry Battalion. "You have been commissioned here as peacekeepers," the general said, "which is different from your normal duties as combat

soldiers

Holton said he was under the operational command of the general. The specific rules of engagement for the troops were not publicized, but Holton said that in case of conflict, "we would protect ourselves, report to (U.N. headquarters) in Zagreb (Croatia) and New York and withdraw."

That seemed to match Clinton's assertion a month ago that the operation would be "a very limited thing — no combat but an attempt to limit conflict."

The Americans join the 700 Norwegians, Swedes and Finns who make up the Nordic Battalion, which has monitored the Macedonian borders with Albania, Kosovo and Serbia since February.

As Thomsen puts it, the mandate of the U.N. force here is to "monitor, observe and report." It is not to interfere.

The United Nations economic and military embargo theoretically precludes everything but food and medical supplies from coming in or going out of Macedonia.

— L.A. Times/Washington Post News Service

A Natural Attraction: SHENANDOAH NATIONAL

Morning mist hovers over large golden fields of grain and green fields of young corn, subduing their hues as I head out Route 33 towards the Blue Ridge Mountains. The mountains are almost lost in the blue haze that gave them their name. They look more like jagged tears revealing a darker blue beyond the sky. Today I'm interested in a 75 mile stretch straddling the crest of the Blue Ridge, only a portion of the greater Appalachian Mountain chain it is a part of. This area, varying in width from less than 1 mile at some points to about 13 miles in others, defines the borders of Shenandoah National Park.

A park is born

The park was officially dedicated July 3, 1936, 11 years after Congress approved its creation. Congress did not approve federal funds for the purchase of park land though, so money was raised through the efforts of the non-profit Shenandoah National Park

Association, and through the appropriation of state money. The park was bought piece by piece, and today the total park area covers 195,000 acres.

The creation of the park displaced more than 1,300 families from the mountains in what Darwin Lambert, author of *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, calls a "blanket condemnation". Some of these families were eager to accept the money they were offered for their land and leave, but most were against giving up their land. Everything from angry letters to legal action was tried, but these families were fighting a statewide goal, and a growing national eagerness to establish the park. This national attention was in part spurred by President Hoover's establishment of a fishing camp in the area.

Early in 1928 the Virginia General Assembly passed the Public Park Condemnation Act, allowing all condemned park tracts in one county to be grouped in one court case, cutting down the number of court cases from thousands to just eight. Virginia's



Ranger Mara Meisel carefully handles a barred owl at Skyland Amphitheater. The owl is part of Shenandoah National Park's "Birds of Prey" program, and is on loan from the Virginia Wildlife Center.



Ranger Gerald Roe leads a guided walking tour. The history of the park is discussed during the hour long hike, as we

highest court later confirmed the legality of this land condemnation, and eventually the parks jagged outline took shape.

Standing with a walking tour group at an elevated point in one corner of Big Meadows, looking out on 150 acres of green and amber meadow surrounded by forest, I'm told by Ranger Gerald Roe that Shenandoah National Park is a recycled park. Before it was purchased, much of the park land was a patchwork of farmland and pastures. The forests that had once covered the mountains had been cleared away. Under the protection of the National Parks Service, the land began recovery toward a primitive forest. Only about 60 years old, the forest has reached the

intermediate stage.

One member of the group, a child about 300 yards away, alerts the rest. Fingers point in various directions as they excitedly search for the doe. No! Not there! Spotting the doe brings a sense of satisfaction to the group. It is not uncommon, especially in the meadow, abundant and excellent source of food. The meadow will bring between 15-20 deer a year. This nightly site of the parks forming stage has become extinct in the past. Hunting and attacks by

AL PARK

Story by *Matt Schwabel* • Photographs by *Craig Newman*



our through Big Meadows. The history of the meadow as well as the meadows importance to local wildlife.

of the group spots a doe and 10 yards away, and quickly fingers start pointing as it is suddenly given. "Over there, next to that one, the other bush." This brings a certain sense of excitement to the group, even though deer are abundant with wild berries, is an important food for the deer, and dusk brings 15-30 deer to the meadow to feed. The site was nonexistent during the 1950s. Deer populations had declined in the area through over-hunting by wild dogs, and had to be

re-introduced in 1934.

Peregrine falcons are the latest animals to be re-introduced into the park. By the 1970's, the entire peregrine falcon population east of the Mississippi had become extinct, largely as a result of pesticide ingestion. Through a joint effort by the Park and the College of William and Mary, 34 falcons have been raised and released into the wild, hopefully to return to the Park and nest when mature.

Of all that the park has to offer, the Skyline drive is probably the most well known. Construction began in 1931 under the supervision of the National Parks Service and the Bureau of Public Roads, and was completed in 1939 at a

cost of \$5 million. Each year over 2 million people visit Shenandoah National Park, and all spend at least a portion of their time on this road that winds through shadowy canopies of trees and past vistas encompassing the private farms that border the park, the valley stretching below, and still more mountains running the length of the horizon. These views are similar to those seen by President Hoover, a major proponent of the drive. In 1930, while riding horseback through Big Meadow with Horace Albright, then director of the National Parks Service, he said, "I think that everybody ought to have a chance to get the views from here. I think they're the greatest in the world."

I don't know if they are truly the greatest in the world, I haven't seen most of the world yet, but I would agree that they are beautiful views. It's these views that have continually brought me back to the park over the past three years since I've moved to the valley. And it's these views that have brought Maria Rojzman back from Baltimore every year for the past 22 years. It is her husband Marcello's second year of coming when I speak to them. For Marcello coming to the park is an escape, a time to get away from the phones and from paying bills. Maria describes it as something deeper, a tradition. Her family started coming to the park for an inexpensive vacation

when she was 5. The next year she saw her first bear. She tells me that back then everyone at her campsite was drawn together into a little community because of the bears that would come in the evening to pick through the trash. A mix of fear and fascination binded everyone together. Some of that has been lost with the disappearance of this great creature. She hasn't seen any this trip, though they apparently just missed seeing one on Stony Man Mt. "There

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Father, son, and grandson look on as Ranger Mara Meisel answers their questions after the "Birds of Prey" program at the Skyland Amphitheater.

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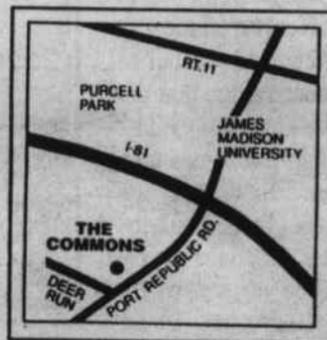
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were definitely more animals then," she says of her earlier visits, but it's apparent in talking with her that her enjoyment of the park hasn't diminished any.

For Allan Butcher and his wife from Hong Kong, who are spending six weeks traveling down to Georgia, it is their first visit to these mountains. It is also a chance to see what he had read about in a *Reader's Digest Travel Guide of North America*. So far the park has far exceeded his expectations. "These mountains are equal to anything I've seen out west," he says, and I tend to believe him. I met both the Rojzman's and the Butcher's on a guided hike through Big Meadows, just one of many programs held throughout the park.

As I sit on a wooden bench, I listen to ranger Mara Meisel as she discusses raptors, or "birds of prey." She asks the crowd of about 60 campers and tourists to name all the raptors they can think of, and I'm tempted to yell out velociraptor, the long extinct dinosaur brought back to screen life by Steven Spielberg.

The raptors Meisel is discussing are very much alive, although some of them border precariously on extinction themselves. Smoke drifts through the outdoor amphitheater at Skyland as Meisel walks through the rows of benches with a barred owl perched on her arm. The morning sun diffuses through the large pines surrounding the amphitheater and the smoke and mist in the air gently lights the owl as Meisel points out it's disproportionately large eyes. She explains the barred owl's eyes are specially designed for night hunting. After returning the barred owl to its cage she pulls out a Red Tail Hawk, who is soon hangs upside down flapping its wings furiously, apparently unhappy to be on display. With its wings extended, Meisel takes the opportunity to point out the Hawk's left wing is shorter than its right wing by several inches, the result of a gunshot wound. Both the hawk and the owl displayed in the "Birds of Prey" program are incapable of extended flight and are on loan to the park from the Virginia Wildlife Center.

It is programs like these that educate park visitors, and help to deepen the experience through knowledge about the surroundings. Ranger Marsha McCabe, Assistant Central District Interpreter, says the programs currently offered are just of fraction of what was once offered. Increased costs and reduced funding have forced the National Parks Service to cut back on interpretive and educational programs. Lack of funding also caused the closure of two campgrounds and historic Camp



A couple enjoys the unobstructed view from the peak of Bearfence Mountain as dusk approaches. (Top)— A deer grazes in Big Meadows, a common sight towards the end of the day. (Bottom left)— A visitor to Shenandoah National Park points out the deer she has spotted to Ranger Gerald Roe during a guided walking tour of Big Meadows. (Bottom right)



Hoover, the delayed opening of two more campgrounds as well as two visitor centers, and reduced trail maintenance. Twenty-one permanent park positions were also left vacant to help offset increased costs. These financial problems are not easily remedied, as the park cannot count on a specific amount of funding from entrance fee collection. All fees collected by the park are remitted to the U.S. Treasury. Some fees collected by the park are returned to the park by Congressional appropriation, some go to other parks, and some fees do not go to any parks. Certain programs can

be continued by special funding, above the Park base funding. However, these funds are usually restricted and can be used only for selected projects.

In writing this story, I have witnessed the effect that the Park has on people. A plaque at the entrance to the Big Meadows visitors center contains a quote from Harry Byrd, Jr. "There is something in the mountains that brings to one a contentment and peace of mind that give to every mountain lover a happiness that should be treasured." Is this what draws 2 million people a year to this

park alone? This question runs through my mind as I sit on the rocky peak of Bearfence, the valley sprawling beneath me, slowly being overtaken by shadows as the sun descends behind mountains and clouds on the horizon. I feel the peace of mind that Harry Byrd, Jr. spoke of, but perhaps people's reasons for coming here are even simpler than that. I think back to Maria Rajzman when she told me, "some people have condo's at the beach. For me, I like hitting Shenandoah Park."



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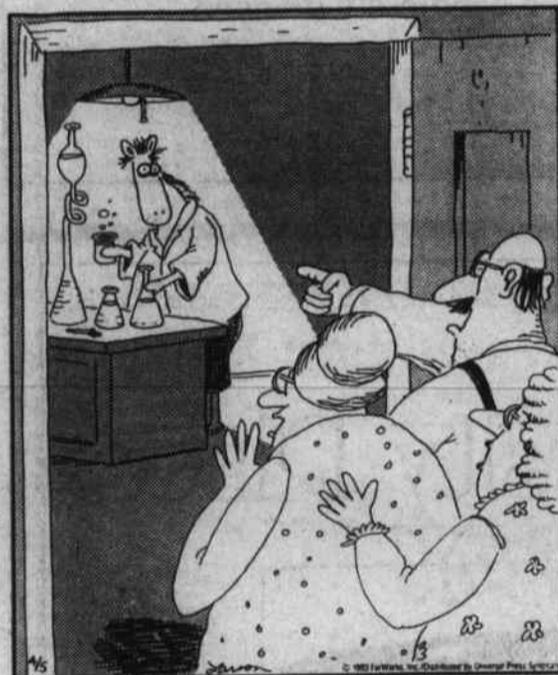
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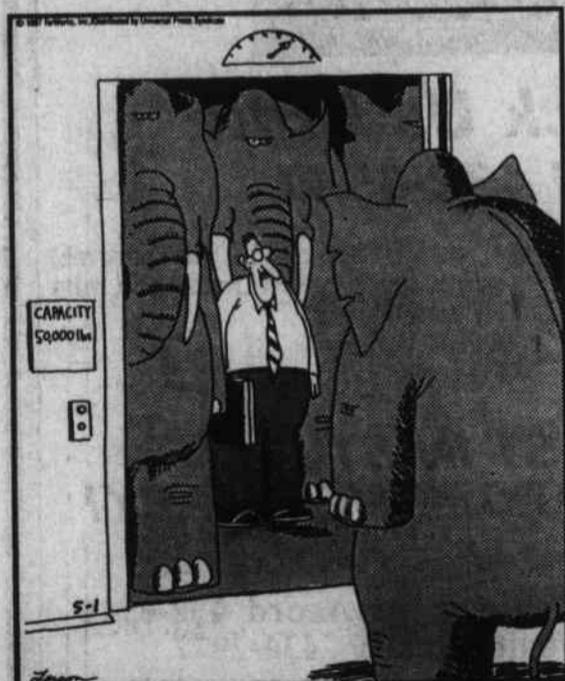
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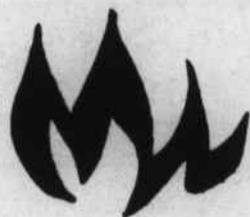
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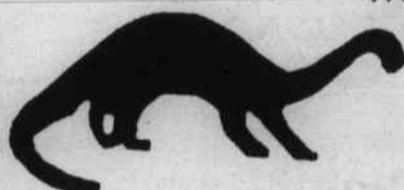
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