Jim Britt, Frank Wilt & Bob MacNeil
WSVA's Chatty Breakfast Club

Delmas Dean & EchoStarr
Country Music with a Conscience

Ed Clark
Striving to Direct the Future of Virginia's Wildlife

Waffle House
It's More Than a Restaurant, It's a Late Night Escape

Bucky Rexrode Turns Trash to Cash
This March, when we thought we'd seen the last of the cardinals playing in the season's temperamental snows, Mother Nature gave Valley residents a huge surprise. Snow — and lots of it. Snow blanketed the entire East Coast March 13, causing plenty of headaches: school cancellations, icy roads and scores of panicked shoppers rushing to grocery stores. But the blizzard also gave us a glimpse beyond ourselves, inspiring a rekindled wonder in nature's power.

Snow has an eye-opening quality that allows us to view unique aspects of our seemingly ordinary environs. Our everyday world becomes a marvel. Seeing mountain peaks veiled in a white blanket inspires childlike joy, and the sight of March daffodils muscling their way to the sun's warmth from underneath the melting drifts renew faith. In its pristine white way, the Blizzard of 1993, like every snowfall before it, possessed the magic power to make everything about the Valley seem new.

That's what CURIO tries to do for you. By putting people and places of the Valley in a new light, we aspire to arouse your curiosity. As a student adopting the Valley as my home for the last three years, I've found the area takes its novelty and charm for granted. So sit back and let our staff show you, as if we were a light sprinkling of snow, how graceful, well-intentioned, giving, candid, and prolific you and your neighbors can be. Read on to learn how these adjectives relate to you and those you know.

The first story in this, our fifteenth anniversary issue, profiles local country music singer Delmas Dean and his band EchoStarr. Country music, always a favorite in the Valley, has a new spotlight on the American music scene. Talking to Delmas Dean & EchoStarr about their commitment to charitable causes and seeing them perform helped us see why (page 2).

Regular CURIO readers know that environmentalism is one of the magazine's recurring themes, and this year we show you how one person's actions can and do make a difference. Our cover story introduces you to 10-year-old Bucky Rexrode, who collects over 300 pounds of aluminum cans each weekend. Many Harrisonburg residents and college students might know Bucky from his rounds but read on to understand why being a “can kid” can be such fun (page 10).

Bucky's thinking about the future and he's not alone. Ed Clark, the director of the Wildlife Center of Virginia in Weyers Cave, tells us about plans to open a new center north of Waynesboro next year. Clark's dedication to preserving the environment spans more than twenty years and affects us all (page 37).

You might have noticed that this magazine is a bit thinner than it has been in years past. In its 16 years, CURIO has never been published with such a small general staff, but we've worked hard together to fill the magazine with the high caliber of stories and photography you've come to expect of CURIO.

The snow has melted and newly thawed streams trickle through mountains where new buds prepare to blossom into hearty summer foliage. So pack away your snow boots and discover some of the people and places in CURIO. Plan a day trip to Walton's Mountain Museum in Schuyler, or pack your gear and go rock climbing at Seneca Rocks, W. Va. Or just sit back and enjoy the summer twilight over a romantic dinner at Ridge in Crozet. Or breathe in the local flavor of Waffle House or hear the area's charm in the banter of WSV's morning DJs Frank Wilt, Jim Britt and Bob MacNeil. Whatever you do, appreciate the wonder of this Valley and the people in it as we have learned to do through the process it has taken to bring CURIO to you.

Kate McFadden
EDITOR
Selh Weinberg
JMU sophomore Eric McCulley climbs
the wall of West Virginia's Seneca Rock. See CURIO writer Dan Krotz's
firsthand account of the perils and
pleasures of the sport on page 19.

On Our Cover
Bucky Rexrode, a 10-year-old from Harrisonburg,
who collects over 300 pounds of aluminum cans from
local residents and students each weekend, is featured on the cover
of CURIO this year. Lisa Manzo photographed Bucky sitting on
the truck he and his father use to
collect the week's cans.

On Their Toes or On Their Feet
Local children grow and develop through karate and ballet

To Harrisonburg with Hope
The Valley provides a new life for hundreds of Russian immigrants

Crossing Cultures
Dayton's Farmers Market mixes old and new for a shopping delight

Travel & Dining

Down a Country Road
Crozet's Ridge adds a Virginia twist to French and Italian cuisine

Rock, Rope & Sky
A personal account of rock climbing at Seneca Rocks, W.Va.

Counter Culture
Waffle House serves up more than coffee and pancakes at night

Building on Memories
The Waltons' home comes alive at Schuyler, Va. museum
His life could be a country song. Delmas Dean’s life includes a small Southern town, a close family, a hard labor job, a few good ole boys and a big heart.

In fact, his whole band shows they have big hearts. Dean and his Elkton-based band EchoStarr aren’t just an upstart group of musicians looking to make a buck on the weekend. Their dedication to helping others has made them one of the most popular country bands in the Shenandoah Valley.

“We like to help people,” says Dean, a 45-year-old man with a big bearded smile. “It makes you feel good. It gives a self-satisfaction that you’re accomplishing something. You get paid for it in your heart.”

In their four years as a contemporary country band, Delmas Dean & EchoStarr has played at numerous benefits to help community causes.

“All the guys are the type of people that would do all they could to help someone else,” says Dean’s girlfriend, Tammy Comer. “They’d think about someone else before they’d think about themselves.”

But Dean doesn’t commit his band to play for free without the agreement of the rest of the group. These other members include guitarist Tommy Simmons, 31; bass player Timmy Rinaca, 29; guitarist Rick Cash, 32; drummer Kevin Hinkle, 34; and sound technician Roger May, 32.

Benefiting the community

Lanier McDaniel got his birthday wish even before he blew out the candles. For his 40th birthday, the Harrisonburg resident, who has Down’s syndrome, received a special present from EchoStarr.

The party, held at Dayton’s Woodmen of the World Fellowship Hall on Nov. 15, 1992, brought more than 100 people together, including friends, family and 50 to 60 disabled people.

“[Delmas] just played his heart out just as if he was playing for a group of 2,000,” says Shirley Terry, McDaniel’s sister and the organizer for the event. “He could have just stood there and strummed his guitar and many of them wouldn’t have known the difference
but he didn't, he gave it his all."

McDaniel met Dean about a year earlier at a summer lawn party. Before he came to live with Terry, he never really listened to country music. Now he's a frequent listener and even met the Top 40/country group Sawyer Brown.

Terry laughs as she remembers what her brother told her. "He said, 'They're good, but I like Delmas Dean better.'"

Now, McDaniel goes to see the group whenever he can. "Everywhere they go they say there's my buddy and let's play a song for my buddy," Terry says about EchoStarr.

McDaniel wrote to the Daily News-Record to convey his gratitude for the donation of the band's time at his party. "You donated your time and talents for me . . . and that says something about the special kind of people you are . . . you have a way of making me feel important, a little more loved."

On May 1, EchoStarr will play a concert benefit to raise money for the expenses of a liver transplant operation. Although 20-month-old Ikey Frazier died only two weeks before the benefit, he had already had two operations, leaving his parents with many medical bills.

The May concert will be EchoStarr's second benefit for Ikey — the first, held on Jan. 19, 1992, at the Singers Glen Community and Recreation Center, raised more than $7,000 toward the $300,000 procedure.

Lucy Helmick, a Linville resident who calls herself EchoStarr's biggest fan and is the organizer of the benefit, admires the unity within the group. "They couldn't do anything without each other. They're like a family, just really, really close."

Helmick became involved in fund raising for Ikey through the little boy's grandmother, a Linville neighbor. "He fought to live literally every day of his life," Helmick says. She remembers the concern the band displayed toward the welfare of the infant.

"You could just hear it in their voices how much they cared — it was just amazing," Helmick says.

The road to EchoStarr
The band also cares for each other. Several of the members have known each other for many years.

Hinkle, who played with Dean in two other bands, says they've known each other almost all their lives. And as far back as either can recall, they have been singing.

I remember picking beans in the garden when I was 10 and singing 'Dream' by the Everley Brothers," Dean says.

Hinkle, the bearded father-like figure, replies with a laugh, "You were dreaming of getting out of that bean patch."

The musical ability in Dean's family helped inspire him. Dean can brag musical talent in his entire family.

His brother Franklin Dean and his father played especially important roles in influencing his music. In fact, Franklin and Delmas played together in Franklin Dean & the Band Masters.

"He didn't really teach me, but I picked what little I know up from him. I'd say my dad really influenced me. He used to sit around with the guitar and sing. And they still play and sing together at family gatherings."

"We may sing a hymn or two," Dean says. "I think everyone has been influenced by that type of music if they're a country-oriented person. I love the harmony in gospel music, I think that's the prettiest music there is."

Today, Dean shares his music with his six children and six grandchildren.

"I think they are pretty proud of me when it comes to my music. They're real close to me — they like coming to..."
THE JOINT STARTS JUMPING as Delmas Dean & EchoStarr crank up their country music for patrons of Chisholm's Lounge, above. COUNTRY CLAD, Bobby Pendelton and Donna Campbell enjoy EchoStarr's music, right.

lawn parties and listening to me."

Several of the other band members also have families — Hinkle and Cash both have two children and May has one child. When Simmons gets married on May 29, Rinaca and Dean will be the only single members.

None of the band has prior musical training or can read music. Helmick says that makes them more impressive in her eyes. "I think it's just natural talent because I don't think any of them has ever had a music lesson. You can tell there's something different."

Along with the three or four benefits they do each year, the band spends most of its time playing at clubs, lounges and lawn parties.

"We play about every weekend," Dean says. "We get a few weekends off occasionally and we appreciate that a lot. We have to work through the week, practice, play on the weekends — and the next thing you know the years fly by on you."

In Dean's earlier years, he traveled as far away as the Midwest. When he was with the bluegrass group, the Grass Reflection, he got an offer to stay in Alabama and record, but decided against it.

"Those were some of my better moments but I was starving to death," Dean remembers.

He has performed with five bands. Along with EchoStarr, Franklin Dean & the Band Masters and Grass Reflection, he has also been a part of the Blue Ridge Travelers and Southern Breeze.

Southern Breeze brought him together with several of the members
of EchoStarr. They performed around the state and won several battle of the bands contests.

The one problem EchoStarr has recurrently faced in personnel has been a keyboardist. After trying a number of different musicians the group finally found a keyboardist that stuck last year.

Carl “Carlos” Gregorich joined EchoStarr after hearing them open for Kitty Wells in Luray last summer. “He really liked what we were doing, more so than the band he was playing with,” Dean remembers.

With difficulty, Dean recalls the Dec. 15 car accident that took Gregorich’s life. The accident occurred just after one of EchoStarr’s practices - the band members were the last people to see him.

“It pulled us down a lot,” Dean says with a pause. “Everyone had taken to that guy. There was something special about him to me... It hit hard. I had a hard time dealing with it.”

EchoStarr regrouped and kept going though. Today, they have keyboardists who help them on a part-time basis.

The band had planned to record an album of their original work this summer. But with the loss of Gregorich, Dean isn’t sure if this will still happen.

“Comer would go to dance.

The lounge is usually standing room only. The order for the evening is boots and Budweiser and friends grouped around each table.

As the rest of the band take turns doing solos, more people fill the floor. After about three songs, Dean takes the floor, clad in a black shirt and pants.

The group plays covers by such popular country artists as Travis Tritt, Garth Brooks and Billy Ray Cyrus. In fact they’ve played so many “Achy Breaky Hearts” that they’ve grown weary of the popular line dance.

Dean breaks into “Trust You with my Heart,” and his clear, deep sound fills the room. He objects to praises concerning his own talent. Smiling with an unusual shyness, the blond-haired man credits the band for the smooth sound.

At one of their usual Tuesday night practices, he talks about the performance from the weekend before and the unity of sound. A pickup truck with the license plate ECHOSTR sits in the driveway of his white house just outside Elkton.

Inside a back room in Dean’s house, the band unloads all its equipment out of the trailer. With the amplifiers, microphones and instruments, the only room left is for the musicians and their harmonized sound.

“Everybody complements each other,” Dean says. “Everybody feels each other and I feel how everyone else is doing.”

Cash, who left the group for a short time and then returned, also feels the unity. “I guess I found a home,” the bandanna-clad man says about why he is still with EchoStarr.

EchoStarr has also proved it has a home in the Valley by contributing to the community. Like the country song by Paul Overstreet, “Heroes,” the band members show that “heroes come in every shape and size, making special sacrifices for others in their lives. No one gives them medals, the world don’t know their names. But in someone’s eyes, they’re heroes just the same.”

DONNA RAGSDALE, a native of Chatham, Va., is the managing editor of The Breeze. A mass communication and political science double major, she interned at The Danville Register and Bee last summer.
Frank Wilt, left, Bob MacNeil and Jim Britt have been providing news and humor for WSVA morning listeners for more than four years.
THREE MEN AND A MICROPHONE

WSVA's morning crew provides breakfast for your brain and funny bone

It's 7:44 a.m. in the studio of WSVA 550 AM radio, and the morning staff is busy gathering the top stories of the day. They are serious reporters on a mission to keep listeners on the cutting edge of the day's news.

Most of the time.

"Is it that bad? Come on, tell us," morning anchor Bob MacNeil says over the air, dying to know the day's "Donahue" topic.

"Sister's Eggs, Husband's Sperm — My Sister-in-law Had My Baby," assistant program director Frank Wilt reads back over the air, laughing.

"Just your average family get-together," adds sports director Jim Britt. "But somebody made egg salad for the party."

The WSVA morning crew wakes up the Shenandoah Valley with news, sports, weather, traffic reports and a sense of humor that sets them apart from any other station on the dial.

"The first guy I ever worked for in this business told me that if you don't have fun, you have no right to expect your listeners to," Britt says. "That's the big thing we bring. If you sound like you're having a good time, people want to be part of that."

From 5:30 to 9 a.m., veteran on-air personality MacNeil anchors the three-man information and comedy team. With Susan Hawthorne's local news updates twice an hour, and Homer Quann's farm reports, WSVA covers all the angles. But it's the off-the-cuff one-liners from MacNeil, Britt and Wilt that make mornings with WSVA different from the rest.

"They come for the basics — the news, the weather, the sports — those are the things they depend on," Britt says. "What we do better than anyone else is the package we dress it up in.

"There's an unpredictable nature to it. They tune in because they're not sure what's going to happen next."

At 40 minutes past the hour, the standard news format is put aside for a segment called "Stuff and Nonsense," 10 minutes of bizarre news items where MacNeil, Britt and Wilt are free to take shots at politicians, celebrities and, quite often, each other.

"I see here that the cartoon network will now begin being hooked up in cable systems throughout the country," Wilt reads over the air. "If that's the case, we may never see you outside of your living room, Jim."

"Probably true," Britt concedes.

Wilt says the personal jabs are all in good fun.

"We seem to have a niche that works well among us," he says. "Some people you could throw together in a studio and it may take awhile for them to let it flow naturally, so that you're not going to upset someone. But each of us knows when we're insulting each other that no one is taking it seriously."

MacNeil says each individual has carved his own role in the show.

"I'm kind of the straight man — the ring leader of this three-ring circus," he says.

"Frank's our beating boy. He's not very worldly, kind of small-townish."

And we constantly jab Jim about his weight. He's taken a lot off, but he got married and now he's getting some of it back because his wife is such a good cook."

Much of MacNeil, Wilt and Britt's humor comes from each morning's radio format. "Stuff and Nonsense" evolved from a feature called "Today in History." When MacNeil took over the mornings eight years ago, he found the historical events so trivial, he began making fun of them. He began referring to the segment as "stuff and nonsense," and a new daily feature was born.

"It works because the listeners don't know what we're going to take off on," MacNeil says. "It's very spontaneous."

When the morning news show ends at 9 a.m., MacNeil stays on to host "Candid Comment," an open forum for listeners to call in and talk about whatever is on their mind — within reason.

"It's usually one of three things — religion, sex or politics," MacNeil says. "But I don't get involved with the caller, I'm just a moderator. I want people to know that's their sounding board and they can call in and talk about whatever they want."

Almost whatever they want. Wilt was sitting in for MacNeil on "Candid Comment" one Friday morning and had to deny one caller.

"I want to talk about that preacher who's always calling in and talking about sex," the caller said. "He must have some sex problems of his own, because..."

"Thank you for your call," Wilt
jumped in, "and as always, we encourage you not to get personal with remarks about other callers."

Sometimes the topics aren't as hot as religion, sex or politics. Callers have made even the weather interesting to talk about.

"About three years ago, we had four snowstorms, right in a row," MacNeil remembers. "And this woman called 'Candid Comment' and told me that the reason they had all this snow was because of the men they put on the moon. There's never a dull moment.

You think you've seen or heard everything, and somebody comes up with something new."

MacNeil, 61, has seen a lot in the radio business. After graduating from the University of Buffalo's American Radio and Television Institute 35 years ago, MacNeil landed a job in Wilmington, N.C.

From there, he moved to Washington, D.C., as a television reporter and programmer. He made the move to radio in 1964, and has been there ever since.

MacNeil first started as the morning man at WSVA eight years ago, on an interim basis.

"But the new ratings came out and we had done very well," MacNeil remembers. "I was only going to do it for a while, but the boss said with ratings like that, there's no way I was getting out of it."

Now MacNeil says each year he turns down job offers from bigger stations. The small town atmosphere in the Shenandoah Valley, he says, is a refreshing change from fast-paced Washington, D.C.

"Here, you have a better rapport with your audience," MacNeil says in his velvet-smooth voice. "In Washington, you never get any feedback from your audience. In Harrisonburg, you get feedback every day. I get four or five phone calls every day about things that went on during the program. The cohesiveness between the listener and the person on the air is a lot better. Here, you feel like you're more a part of the community, a part of the people."

MacNeil helps build that cohesiveness through volunteer work in more than a half dozen volunteer organizations at any one time, including the Shenandoah Valley Travel Association, Virginia Mennonite Relief Group and the Harrisonburg Community Activities Center. He says volunteer work helps build his reputation in the community and draws new morning listeners.

"The company here keeps an eye on how much you're doing," he says. "And your pay is predicated on how much you do in the community, how much you get involved, how well you're known."

Britt has found his own way to make himself better known in the community — he's the play-by-play announcer for the James Madison University football team in the fall and men's basketball team in the winter.

The lure of covering college sports is what most attracted Britt to Harrisonburg, but after getting married three years ago, road trips take him away from his wife, Susan, and his children — Sean, 3, and Katherine, 1.

"I went to Maui with the team a couple years ago," he says. "And I've gone to Oklahoma, Florida, all the road trips. It's fun, but I miss the time with my family.

Sometimes, I can bring the kids along — this year they came with me to the [North Carolina trip]."

Despite the travel, the job has its up side. "I'm in a position a lot of people wish they had, in that they pay me to watch basketball games."

When Britt's family can't be with him on the road, they listen to him on the radio.

"My son can identify me [on the air]," he says. "He's a big sports fan. And he's picking up all the announcers' lingo. When we watch a game together, he'll ask me, 'Is there a timeout on the floor?'"

Britt also enjoys his role on the sunrise shift.

"It's the most vital part of the radio day," he says. "Once you get used to the hours and the pace at which you have to work during the day, it's fine. There's so much happening, and the energy level is up — it's probably the most rewarding part of the radio day."

Growing up along Maryland's Eastern Shore, Britt knew radio was his calling. As a high school sophomore, he approached the program director at a local radio station about a job.

"At first he told me he'd put me on and see how it works," Britt says. "After a month, he said, 'You sound pretty good.' By the time I was a senior, I had my own sports call-in show."

Britt stuck with radio through four years at Towson State University in Maryland, then landed a job in Cambridge, Md., where he got his first taste of morning radio. He was promot-

**THE OPPORTUNITY TO COVER Division I sports is what lured Britt to WSVA, above. He's an announcer for the JMU men's basketball team. RAIN OR SHINE, Wilt, a graduate of Broadway High School, gives weather reports four times an hour in the mornings, above right. THIRTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE BUSINESS and MacNeil still enjoys the immediacy of radio, lower right.**
ed to program director within six months, and stayed for four years before moving to WSVA.

Like Britt, Wilt got into the radio business at an early age. After graduating from the Valley's own Broadway High School in 1979, Wilt took a job at WBTX, a small station in Broadway before moving to Harrisonburg's country music station, WKCY.

Wilt worked in Woodstock for several years before coming to WSVA in March of 1989, the same year he married his wife, Serena.

"I love it here," says Wilt. "A lot of people leave the Valley, then they miss it and come back. There are so many people from New York and New Jersey that come here, love it and don't leave. The people are friendly, but it's more than that. I can't pinpoint one thing."

Wilt is the assistant program director at WSVA, which means he's responsible for all the on-air programming. But his duties are quite hands-on.

Aside from sitting in on "Stuff and Nonsense," Wilt handles WSVA weather reports four times an hour and fills in for MacNeil and Britt. He also hosts an interview show on Sundays called "Sunday Edition," a one-on-one talk with a prominent local figure.

"I love the entertaining part of it — making people happy. I also love conveying information to people and the immediacy of it. I love the ability to go on the air with a moment's notice and give people an update. That's something you can't do with a newspaper."

And with all the fun that goes on in WSVA's studio, the morning crew still takes its reporting seriously.

"Informing is the biggest thing," Wilt says. "This is a news/talk station, and the biggest thing we do is tell people what they want to know or need to know before they get on the road."

MacNeil agrees. "People were calling up 'Candid Comment' one time and talking about various stations they listen to," he says.

"A few people called up and said, 'We listen to you guys in the morning because you're always telling me something. You're not just playing jokes among yourselves — you're always telling me something.'"

But on WSVA's morning news/talk show, information and laughter are one and the same.

STEVE MIRANDA is a junior mass communication major from Trenton, N.J. He will spend his senior year as the sports editor of The Breeze.
While most children spend their weekends playing with friends, a freckled, brown-haired, 10-year-old Harrisonburg boy is running his own business.

Every Saturday and Sunday afternoon Bucky Rexrode rides from stop to stop in his father's gray Mazda pickup truck. When his father, Lynn Rexrode, slows down, Bucky jumps off the back of the truck, grabs his green trash can and sets out to collect aluminum cans from his customers.

What started as a three-stop chore five years ago has turned into a 700-stop can-collecting business for Bucky. His route now includes residential homes and college student apartment complexes, where some of the landlords have made special arrangements with Bucky. He has their permission to take every can he finds, but must also pick up any trash he sees on the grounds.

And while he’s picking up litter and recycling cans he’s also making friends.

“I know everybody,” Bucky says with a Southern accent as he collects cans in College Station one Saturday afternoon, “and everybody knows me.

“One day I was in the mall and a bunch of guys yelled, ‘Hey, you’re the can man.’”

But a desire to make friends wasn’t Bucky’s motivation for starting his can-collecting business.

“I told [my parents] I wanted a Nintendo game,” Bucky says, “and they told me they weren’t going to pay for it. So I started collecting cans, bottles and newspapers, but [newspapers and bottles] weren’t paying enough. It wasn’t worth it.

“One day I took them a truck full of newspapers and they gave me a dime,” he says with a big smile and a laugh. “I said, ‘Yeah man, stop the joke,’ and he said, ‘That’s all you get — a dime.’”

But Bucky makes a lot more than 10 cents for a truck full of aluminum cans.

After going door to door for 11 hours each weekend, Bucky will take anywhere from 300 to 400 pounds of aluminum cans to Reynolds Aluminum metal buyer Bill Armstrong and pocket about $100.

But during the summer months he takes in about 60 pounds every two weeks, Rexrode says. “It really depends on how many college students stay for summer school.”

Although the number of college students living in Harrisonburg affects Bucky’s income, they have little to do with his special relationship with Armstrong. Whether Bucky brings in one bag of cans or a truckload, he and Armstrong still tease each other and kid around at the 18-wheel truck where Armstrong works.

“My favorite part is selling to Bill,” Bucky says. “I got Bill out there to talk to. Out of all them out there he’s number one.”

And Armstrong speaks just as highly of his 10-year-old customer. “He’s a real hard-working boy. He’s a little more active than most kids — he wants to be doing something all the time.

“The way I see it,” Armstrong says, “if he wants something he goes after it. He’s got the drive to do anything.”

Bucky may have the drive, but all his father does is drive. “He does all the work basically,” Rexrode says, “unless he gets a bunch and needs help bringing them out.

“I work down by the truck and keep them from blowing off so we don’t get any tickets. I just tie [the bags] and throw them up.”

But before Rexrode has any work to
BUCKY COLLECTS over 300 pounds of aluminum each weekend.

"Any cans?"

Some of his customers have the cans waiting for him in a bag and all Bucky has to do is pick it up. But others still have the cans strewn around the apartment from the night before.

"I gotta clean them up from the tables," Bucky says, "they're all over the place."

But he admits he isn't always cleaning up cans while his father waits in the truck.

One place Bucky stops in Hunter's Ridge is James Madison University senior Sara Hammel's apartment. She said she and her housemates have heard cans being tossed around on their back patio.

"Sometimes we looked out and we saw a little kid picking things out of the bin," Hammel says. "One day he knocked on the door and said, 'Do ya'll have any cans in there that aren't out in the bin?"

"He comes in and he's not shy at all," Hammel says. "He talks like he should be in politics. He gets what he wants."

When Bucky is out on his can-collecting mission, he knows exactly where he has to go to gather his wealth. "He talks about collegiate things," Hammel says. "He asks about parties and what we do on the weekends. One time he said, 'I got a lot of cans from the building next door,' knowing there had been a party there the night before.

Sometimes when Bucky is busy chatting his father signals for him to hurry. "I blow the horn for him a lot of times," Rexrode says. A door opens a second later and Bucky reappears with his bin of cans.

But other times Dad is curious about what his son is doing besides collecting cans. "One day he was in there for 20 minutes and I got tired of waiting for him. I went in and saw him playing basketball. He had to make a basket before they'd give him the cans."

Bucky says, "I'm getting better. Now I make them on the first shot."

But sometimes, Rexrode doesn't have to go into the house or apartment to find out what's keeping his son. When it snows, cold hands and heavy boots aren't the only things slowing Bucky down.

"When it snowed, three, four, five guys in Hunter's Ridge all threw snowballs at me," Bucky says with his arms waving in excitement. "I had no defense. I didn't know they were going to do that."

But Bucky doesn't mind the snowballs, the cold weather or the long hours. "The more cans I get," he says, "the more money I get. I buy race cars and [baseball and basketball] cards. Anything I can make a buck on."

"I'll keep the cars for a couple of years. I never take them out of the box. And when the price is right, people can buy them."

"She'll tell ya," he says as he points across the room to his mom and laughs, "I'm a tight little thing."

WHAT STARTED AS A THREE-STOP CHORE is now a 700-stop can-collecting business.

do at the truck, Bucky has to do his part.

Without hesitation Bucky runs up the stairs and pounds on his customers' doors, and with a grin on his face says,
On Their Toes
OR
On Their Feet

Ballet & Karate keep local children leaping and learning

ARTICLE BY SHARON LOVERING

In a mirrored white dance studio, girls wearing black leotards, pink tights and peach pointe shoes warm up to classical music at ballet barres.

"Plie, releve," says their instructor, Nancy-Jo Parkin, as she walks around the room checking every girl's leg and foot positions, correcting a few children and praising others. Intense concentration shows on the young dancers' faces as they stretch leg muscles.

On the other side of Harrisonburg in another mirrored studio, students wearing white and black robes with orange belts practice mawashi geri — the roundhouse kick. "Ready?" asks Rodney Hicks, a blue belt. "Yes, sir!" yell about 15 voices.

Ballet and karate, two seemingly different activities, have much in common. Both give discipline, self-confidence and coordination to children who participate, according to their teachers and parents.

Sue Mowbray watches ballet and karate lessons often and recognizes the discipline they provide. Her daughter Shanna studies ballet, tap and jazz at That Dance Place, and her son Brandon takes karate at Halterman Karate Institute. "Without discipline they wouldn't be able to deal with school, deal with all the materials," she says. "I think discipline helps them get through the day."

Shanna, a 13-year-old seventh grader at John C. Myers Middle School in Broadway, has tapped for four years and jazzed for three years. She took ballet when she was younger, and began again last summer.

Shanna says she became interested in ballet when her friends who take dance with her began. "I just thought it looked neat... It keeps you in shape, and I just like dancing," she says.

But dance does have its difficulties. "You have to be flexible and able to pick things up fast," she says. To prepare for the recital held in June, "you have to work real hard."

Brandon, a 12-year-old sixth grader who boasts an orange belt, says karate also requires hard work. "It has its up and down sides," he says. "They work you a lot."

Mowbray says she thinks her son will appreciate the work later. It has taught him that he can't slack off and get things done, she says.

Brandon says the hardest parts of karate are kata — formal exercises — and techniques. But the parts he likes best are weapons and sparring exercises.

"They teach you how to deal with situations where a guy comes up to you with a
AN EXERCISE IN CONTROL. Michael Racca, right, Tasha Racca and Corey Shiflett practice a kata.

V — it gives give it,” Sharon Lowering

SCARVES IN HAND, Morgan Cook, Laura Cerveny and Caitlin McKeamey (front to back) prance.

knife,” Brandon says. “It hurts.”

He plans to continue in karate, and hopes to become a gold belt or blue belt.

Harold Halterman, owner of Halterman Karate Institute and a seventh degree black belt, says students have to focus on their actions and apply themselves 100 percent to attain the different levels of karate.

Dedication is also important.

“Karate is like a mirror — it gives back exactly what you give it,” Halterman says.

Mowbray says both children have gained discipline, an important part of life, from participating in these activities. Karate has taught Brandon that he has to be precise in his movements, and this carries over into everyday situations, she adds. He knows he can deal with situations without flying off the handle.

And dancing has given Shanna discipline to master the steps she needs to know, from the five foot positions to more advanced steps like sous-sus and staying en pointe. “Dance is a very exact learning tool,” Mowbray says.

The instructors who work with children at That Dance Place and Halterman Karate Institute play an integral part in this learning. Nancy-Jo Parkin works with the older dancers, and Pat Kennedy teaches the younger students and beginners at That Dance Place.

“I think they’re pretty evolved beings,” Kennedy says. “Children enjoy moving so much.” And motion is a big part of their lives — hopping, skipping, jumping and running. “How often do you see an adult skipping?” she asks.

Parkin says the best part of teaching children is “the energy they give you. It’s nice to empower children. [Dancing] gives them an ‘I can’ attitude.”

Kennedy says, “I tell my little ones that if they can get up on stage in front of 1,000 people, they can do anything they set their minds to.” When her
dancers start saying, “I can't,” she tells them to say instead, “I don't know how, but I'll try.”

Dr. Martha Ross, acting head of James Madison University's Department of Early and Middle Education, says that the statement is encouraging to her 4-year-old daughter Amanda, who is in the class.

“Actually, times kids say ‘I can't’ when they mean ‘I don't know how’ or ‘I'm a little scared,’” Ross says. “I'd rather have my child try than not.”

Dancing also gives children discipline, Parkin says, which carries over into all aspects of life. “They know that they can achieve something if they put their mind to it.” Knowing this, the kids are often willing to try something new and succeed with it too, she adds.

Kennedy especially remembers one of her earlier pupils. “One little girl told me, 'I'm going to dance 'til I get pointe shoes,'” she says. This dancer, 11-year-old Laura Baker, gets pointed satin slippers next year.

Though dancers don't go en pointe until age 12, ballet helps develop discipline, coordination, a positive attitude, inner strength, body awareness, rhythm and an appreciation of music, Parkin says. They learn to appreciate their bodies and what they can do.

Karate also builds self-confidence, discipline, coordination and a positive attitude.

Punches, blocks and kicks form the building blocks of karate maneuvers. These are “the vehicle to achieve more self-confidence, a positive attitude, discipline and coordination,” Halterman says.

He says he's found that the best way to develop a positive attitude is verbally. When students yell, “Yes, sir!” he says, “The next thing that happens is the mind starts thinking more positively.”

When the mind thinks positively, the body moves the same way. When students achieve, they realize, “Hey, I did this,” he says, emphasizing the “I.”

“When you see yourself achieving things, you have more self-confidence,” Halterman says.

The karate creed may create a positive attitude: “I come to you with only karate, empty hands. I have no weapons, but should I be forced to defend myself, my honor or my principles; should it be a matter of life or death, of right or wrong, then here are my weapons, my empty hands.”

The word “karate” means “empty hands.”

Halterman, a tall, muscular man with brown hair going gray, stands by this creed. If a student fights for the wrong reasons, the student is expelled.

“Martial arts taught in the proper way should improve humanity, not tear it down,” he says. Karate teaches “respect for oneself and other people.”

There are 10 levels of rank in karate up to black belt. Beginners wear white belts, intermediate students wear belts ranging in color from blue to purple, and advanced students wear brown belts.

Students who haven't reached the black belt level are referred to as “kyu,” meaning “boy” or “child,” Halterman says. Once a student has attained the first degree black belt, he is referred to as “dan,” meaning “man” or “adult.”

Students ages 5 to 70 take karate at his school. Halterman says the instructors teach children differently than they teach adults because a child is just developing balance and coordination, but an adult already has them. Children find this challenging.

The best part of teaching children is “seeing the changes in life,” Halterman says, “to see them, instead of being shy individuals, to get the confidence to go out and enjoy life. It's far better to participate in life than to be a spectator.”

He tells the story of a parent who recently brought a child in to learn karate. After one lesson, the kid had learned things that carried over to his behavior at home.

The student responded to his parents’ questions with “yes, sir” or “no, sir,” Halterman says. When the child's
parents asked him why he was doing this, “He told them, ‘Master Halterman said it’s what we should do.’”

When children with little self-confidence come in, Halterman says, they learn that they “can achieve like anyone else can.” This helps students develop more self-confidence and reach out for the first step themselves, he adds.

Rodney Hicks, a JMU senior, agrees that karate builds self-confidence. He began karate when he was 13 because, he says, “My mom made me start.” After a while, he realized that “This is for me!”

In karate, “You learn about yourself more than anything else, what you can do and what you can’t do,” Hicks says. “The more you learn about yourself, the more self-confident you are.”

The best part of karate for Hicks is the kids. “You learn just as much from them as they learn from you,” he says. “I think we’re role models for each other.”

Black belts serve as role models in karate and in academics. Success requires physical dedication as well as dedication to academics. To test for the black belt, students have to be on the honor roll. They bring in their report cards every six weeks for a grade check.

But martial arts change, he says, and many instructors haven’t kept up. “A lot of people who teach martial arts are still driving the Model T,” he says.

Model T or not, one thing that hasn’t changed is instructors’ aspirations for their students.

Parkin hopes her students are happy and “true to themselves.” Kennedy wants her students to “enjoy moving the rest of their lives,” and hopes that she and Parkin have fostered a love of dance in them.

Halterman hopes his students “live their life to the fullest and they’re a success at what they do. Hopefully what I’ve done is touch them in a positive way.

“Life is great if you live it, but you’ve got to take the first step.”

SHARON LOVERING has worked for The Breeze for two years. She is a senior mass communication major, graduating with honors. She hopes to work for a newspaper after graduation.
Take a trip

DOWN A COUNTRY ROAD

to find Provençal cooking with a Virginia flair

at Crozet's Ridge

ARTICLE BY KATIE MARCO  PHOTOGRAPHY BY LYNETTE CHEWNING

Down a long winding road, around the bend and under the railroad bridge sits Ridge, a cozy little restaurant that combines American, southern French and northern Italian cooking with a lot of personality.

Ridge, located seven miles west of Charlottesville and three miles from downtown Crozet, is in a simple structure covered in weathered wood, reminiscent of driftwood. It has housed a long history of restaurants including the Gallerie, a truck stop called Pop and Ethel's, and The Driftwood, a seafood restaurant.

"This building was a major force in the decisions we've made, it just lends itself to getting away," owner Keith VanYahres says. "It is right outside of Charlottesville, and that town is growing so fast that we get a lot of people who are trying to get out of town. We had been looking at the building for a while. It just goes really well with the food. The name of the restaurant hit us with the view of the building as you come over the hill from Charlottesville."

"Our customers love the wood-burning stove," waitress Christine Grady says. "It's a really cozy, quiet and unpretentious atmosphere."

The winter dining room has a high barn-red booth with pillows tossed in the corners and honey-glazed Shaker style chairs.

Dried flowers and green hanging plants add a charming country accent.

American and French impressionist paintings decorate the walls, complementing the food and atmosphere. Wood racks of empty wine bottles on the back wall create the feeling of a wine cellar.

Before the restaurant opens each evening, the servers and VanYahres make sure everything is perfect for the arriving guests.

Soft jazz echoes through the dining room as they crank up the stove and turn down the lights.

A TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY POT-BELLIED STOVE warms the winter dining room. In the summer, guests sit in a bright dining room or on the patio.

"You come over that hill and bam, there it is with the Blue Ridge Mountains behind it, it's a gorgeous view," chef Melinda Goodin adds.

During the winter, the dining room centers around a turn-of-the-century pot-bellied stove.
The room warms with a pale yellow glow from the lights with basket shades hanging above reflecting on the white china and crystal decorating the nine tables in the winter dining room.

For the summer, the main dining area switches to a sunny room with bright green carpet and a latticed archway.

Windows run the length of the room, looking out on a picturesque view of a wide, lazy field to one side and a train track running high above the building on the other.

An Amtrak train runs by three or four times a week, but sometimes diners get to see something special up on the tracks.

"Greenbriar Hotel operates a copy of the Orient Express that goes by about twice a year," VanYahres says. "People love watching the train go by all lit up. You can even see the Tiffany lamps hanging in the windows. It's all very elegant."

On the warmest summer nights, a small outdoor patio seats up to 15 people to enjoy dinner and the summer breeze. "It's awesome outside in the summer," waiter Rob Oyler says. "You can come here in shorts or a tuxedo, it's a completely casual environment. More formal restaurants can become stale, but that won't happen here."

No matter how unique the building and location may be, the highlight of Ridge is its wine and food. "We make everything on premise," VanYahres says. "The menu is always changing, basically we serve whatever is in season and available.

"The wine list is always evolving," he adds, "but we usually keep between 80 and 100 kinds of wine all centered very much around the idea of what goes with the food. No one here is an expert on wine but we know our food real well, so we know what goes with it."

Ridge offers a different menu every week and sometimes twice a week, to assure the freshest food. The menu recently featured the following appetizers and starters: venison chili with corn muffin for $5, scallops sauté nicoise for $6, wild mushroom ravioli with Madeira cream sauce for $11 and marinated lobster salad with baby greens for $6. Entrees have included: blackened rib-eye with barbecue black beans and tomato salsa for $15 and veal T-bone with wild mushroom fricassee and roasted sage potatoes for $19.

Chef Frank Wean says if something sells well it remains on the menu for a while. Favorites include ravioli, veal, salmon and a classic pepper steak.

VanYahres, Goodin and Wean create everything on the menu together, and it doesn't leave the kitchen unless it meets their approval. "It's a total collaborative effort," Wean says. "If it wasn't for that, it wouldn't be so much fun."

The frequent menu changes help the chefs stay creative. "To keep it exciting, you have to change, it's like cooking at home," Goodin says. "We do a lot of research into the regional cooking styles of southern France and northern Italy, then we put our own twist on it."

"It's Provençal food with a down-home flair," Wean says. "There are certain ingredients in French and Italian food that people make differently around here, so we use the local methods for those ingredients."

Although the three chefs make the main dishes together, they are each responsible for their own kitchen duties.

Goodin is in charge of making two to three kinds of bread each day, turning out such treats as a crusty Cuban bread or an herb-filled focaccia loaf. She says it's her favorite part of the job.

"It better be," she adds with a laugh. "I have to do it every day."

Wean is responsible for the day's pasta, but he says salmon is his favorite dish to prepare. "It sells no matter how we make it. — it's very popular."

All the desserts, from a chocolate sweet potato cake with coffee ice cream and Grand Marnier fudge sauce at $5 to an apple spice cake with caramel ice cream and apple butter marmalade at $5, are made from scratch by VanYahres.

"See the ricotta ice cream with Pedro Ximenez sherry and citrus coulis there?" asks Wean. "Keith even made the ricotta cheese himself."

"We have people come in just for desserts, but we urge people to come in and just have a cup of coffee, we just want people to come in."

Even the coffee is made to order, specially ground and brewed for the guests. "We do something a little different at Ridge," VanYahres says. "All entrees have a different preparation, so they are all treated separately."

"We have a total dedication to detail right down the board. We won't serve a heavy garlic potato with a light salmon dish. It wouldn't complement each other. We could have up to eight different kinds of potatoes in one night."

Oyler says his customers have never complained about the time it takes to

Down a Country Road • 17
AN EXTENSIVE WINE LIST boasts more than 80 foreign, domestic and local selections. The casual atmosphere and experimental menu selections at Ridge differ significantly from the typical Southern dining tradition, but VanYahres says the restaurant has a high return of regulars.

Craig Redinger is one of those regulars. He first went to Ridge because it was the closest restaurant to his home, but he returns with his family or just his wife once a week for three reasons.

"The food is excellent, the service is excellent and the atmosphere is relaxed and unobtrusive," he says.

Jessica Nagel heard about the food at Ridge from a friend and decided to check the restaurant out because it was only 10 minutes from her home. She returns to Ridge every few weeks because, she says, "The food is innovative and the service is good. And besides, my husband loves the desserts."

Ridge opened in March of 1992, and its owner has high aspirations. "We want a regional reputation. Also, we want to do the absolute best that we can do," VanYahres says.

According to the regulars, the unique collaborative team at Ridge is close to meeting its goals.

"The staff is terrific, and it has a nice atmosphere and the food is good," Nagel says.

"It is really the combination of each element, the food, the service and the atmosphere that makes us go back," Redinger says. "If one of those elements were missing, customers wouldn't go back, but Ridge has it all."

Ridge is open Wednesday through Sunday, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. Reservations are accepted but are not required. Ridge facilities are available for private parties up to one hundred guests on Mondays and Tuesdays. Both smoking and non-smoking sections are available.

KATIE MARCO is a senior English major and mass communication minor graduating in May. The native of Saratoga, N.Y., has had internships with television and radio stations. She's looking for a career in television, radio or magazine production.

LYNETTE CHEWNING is a senior graduating in May with a bachelor of fine arts degree in photography and a minor in journalism. She will attend the University of Texas to continue studying photojournalism. Then, perhaps, the former Smithsonian intern will return to to the institution for a paid position.
The phone rings and pulls me from the dream. An emphatic voice, strangely familiar, raves about good weather and the sun, pauses to ask if I am still awake, then slaps me out of bed with an overly enthusiastic: “Seneca today!” Thoughts of sunwarmed spires, primitive sensations of muscle pulling on stone and the adrenalinized rush of airy stances hundreds of feet above the forest provide incentive.

My car starts without trouble — a good omen.

I pull in front of a squat brick house and honk. Ropes and clanking metal gear, with someone underneath, emerge. Gleaming rocks impatiently wait 80 miles to the west at Seneca Rocks, W. Va., while we load the car with equipment and a few scrounged oranges. After hurried goodbyes to blurry-eyed, “please-be-carefulling” roommates, we put the sun at our back and head west on Route 33.

George Bibbins, 23, pours me a mug of lukewarm coffee which I immediately spill. It is a careless, stomach-turning drive. Talk is charged with superlatives and interrupted by two-handed and sometimes full-bodied pantomimes of previous climbing adventures. As we hurtle into West Virginia, thoughts of the Shenandoah Valley’s Chimney Rock are replaced by Seneca’s striking pillars. Vistas appear from mountain passes, and then we plunge into haunted, claustrophobic hollows that echo with the car’s downshifts.

It appears abruptly, without road signs or the typical tourist fanfare. Seneca Rocks, all 250 feet of it, stands precariously above the valley like a slice of bread teetering on its end. From the little crossroads village, Mouth of Seneca, a distinct profile is seen: a thin blade of Tuscarora sandstone, split by a square notch known as the “gunsight” and then another thin blade. Windy, exposed and alpine in aura, the whole thing is shrouded in improbability and subtle, lurking fear. It should fall over. It should have long since crumbled to the ground. It definitely should not be climbed.

But it’s remarkably solid. Unusually strong quartz crystals bind the weaker sandstone together, creating a formation largely resistant to weathering. This solidness did not go unnoticed for very long. The Army trained there during World War II, preparing for the cliffs of Italy’s beachheads. Since then
climbers from across the nation have come to Seneca.

George and I park and toss gear, water and ropes into backpacks. He loses me as we poke through and around house-size boulders to the base of the cliff. I have two years of climbing experience on George, but he's quickly edging closer to my level in a meteoric display of natural ability or beginner's luck. Watching him nimbly scrambling up a sun-dappled slab, I imagine us cruising the legendary Japanese Couloir on Everest.

The present has its charm too. Red-tailed hawks ride lazy thermals high above. The morning sun is too warm — I peel off layers of cotton and wool, exposing frail human flesh to the harder-than-bone rock surrounding me. Far below a stream kicks up a steady, droning babble — good hiking music. Faint cries of climbers trying to communicate above the wind drift down from a particularly hairy climb named "Ecstasy." I remember being a novice and afraid on that same route two summers ago.

After a long approach hike we rest, drink and munch on a few melting candy bars. "High Test" looms above us. Dead vertical for 120 feet, the route offers a variety of climbing techniques. It starts with delicate face climbing, switches to an awkward left-leaning flake which turns into a steep corner and ends as a desperate finger crack. Classic.

We pull tools of the trade out of the packs: skin-tight shoes with sticky rubber soles, ingenious little wedges that conform to the shape of a crack, and scores of carabiners — metal clips used to attach the rope to whatever you choose to trust your life.

The pre-climb ritual continues. I tie a small bag of moisture-wicking gymnastic chalk around my waist. On the climb I will feverishly dip my hands into it, paranoid of the smallest drop of debilitating sweat. I strap on a harness and tie into a rope that is made to stretch under body weight — a fall is more comfortably held with a long, slow stop than an earth-shattering jolt. Then I stretch tight hamstrings and shoulders and retie shoes until they are too tight.

I begin to climb. The smell of sweat mixes with chalk and pine needles. The livid, rattlesnake-checkered rope attached to my harness runs through my few points of protection (nuts and those ingenious wedges, or camming units) and to the sure hands of George, my belayer. He will hold the rope if I fall.

I climb higher, stopping at large holds to rest and place protection. The ground falls behind. The sky opens up and accepts me. A power play develops between fear, control, fatigue and exhilaration. And there is always the silent trust between belayer and climber, broken by sparse, functional words which communicate so much: "slack, watch me here, good job."

Movement becomes fluid and unthinking. I shift my weight on tiny holds to find the most efficient stance. Fingers wedge into cracks. Toes are slotted into large openings and then twisted to produce perfect, secure foot-jams. Minutes slip by. I steadily climb higher.

Arms tighten, calf muscles begin to burn and quick gasps buy precious oxygen.

I arrive at the crux burdened with 100 feet of stiff climbing. The summit is four body lengths above me, tantalizing but impossibly far. I check my...
For the ascent, Dan sorts through his gear of carabiners, knowledge to use it is essential for any safe climbing adventure. The floor of the German Valley, the summit of the surrounding countryside, above. The necessary evil members to put total trust in their gear and expertise, right.

depleted assortment of gear and re-chalk my nervous hands.

The crux is hard, but not beyond my abilities. I find cracks to place my gear and the moves are tenuously connected by a thread of optimism. An absurdly big hold materializes amid a sea of thin edges — I latch onto it and swing myself onto the summit with the grace of a beached whale.

Awash in adrenalin, I anchor myself to the freaky, wind-blasted summit and belay George up the climb. He cruises up with the safety of a rope from above, cleaning out the gear I had placed on the lead. Minutes later his face appears strained and smiling. White chalk has somehow mixed into his black hair, turning it gray. Laughing, I picture him 40 years from now at some cliff still prowling around for a good climb.

We loll about on the summit, enjoying its extreme dose of other-worldliness — it is five feet wide with monstrous drops on both sides. The German Valley of West Virginia spreads out to the west and rolling, unnamed mountains fill the east. Adrenalin breaks down in my body. Vivid, pinprick sensations of fear and high energy give way to serenity. Only the present matters.

George grows restless. The sun is beginning to drop and other climbs await. He re-checks the anchors, re-checks his harness and rappels out of sight. I wait until he is on the ground and reluctantly follow.

The day rolls on. We achieve a deeply felt groove: moving up and down, safely and efficiently. Time is marked by the clink of carabiners and sudden sparks of bravery.

We choose climbs that are progressively easier as the shadows lengthen and our hands fail to grasp small holds. George gets in a good lead on a short, tricky route called “Frosted Flake.” I flail on the strenuous “Streptococcus.” A sort of delirium sets in. Time to quit.

We trundle down the trail oblivious of loose rocks and branches that fade into the twilight. Darkness nips at our heels as we reach the car. Seneca Rocks is fading fast — its timeless pull holds us briefly as its pillars glow in the remnants of the sun.

I throw George the keys and crawl into the passenger seat. Before we have gone five miles I lapse back into the dream.

DAN KROTZ has been climbing for three years. The English major will graduate in May and work as a climbing guide at Seneca Rocks through October. After that, who knows?

SETH WEINBERG, a senior communication major from Cherry Hill, N.J. plans to use his creativity in an advertising career.
Edna Frederikson’s unique view of love and nature
comes from a lifetime of experience

THE EYE OF THE POET

Scattered about the crowded sun
room are hundreds of volumes of
poetry and prose, the musty scent
indicating their age. The living room
beyond is warm and cozy, with an
appealing soft velvety wine-colored
sofa flanked by end tables, across from
the piano.

Dr. Edna Frederikson
enters the living room
with firm steps that slight-
ly disguise her limp. Her
graying hair, softly
brushed just below the
ears, lacks the stiffness of
hairspray. Wearing little
make-up, a smart suit and
a large silver necklace,
the 89-year-old woman
looks younger than her
years. Her smile emanates
warmth and kindness, and
her wrinkles signify expe-
rience and wisdom.

The accomplished poet
and author has earned her
wrinkles. She has climbed
the ladder of success and
reached the top with the
publication of her works.

She first gained recog-
nition for her writing in
1928 when, while obtain-
ing her doctorate at the
University of Kansas, she
placed first in the school’s
notable Carruth Poetry
Contest.

A Harrisonburg resi-
dent since 1931, she
taught at Madison
College for nine years
before leaving to concen-
trate on writing. She has
received seven residence
fellowships at prestigious
writers’ colonies and written for publi-
cation a novel, various articles, short
stories, verse and book reviews, and a
collection of poems.

Her most recent achievement was
the publication of four previously
unpublished poems in the May/June
1992 issue of Ms. magazine. Her novel,
“Three Parts Earth,” is her most suc-
cessful endeavor.

“This is my book,” she states with
dignity as she displays an
old paperback, apologizing
for its aged condition. In
1974, Popular Library’s
first printing of the book
yielded 93,000 soft-cover
copies.

A young red-haired girl
with freckles and an inno-
cent, shy smile graces the
cover of the book. “Her
expression is fetching,”
reminds the author, indi-
cating pleasure in the pub-
lisher’s efforts. Next,
Frederikson pulls out her
collection of poetry,
“Never Tomorrow.” A
smile reflects the satisfac-
tion she has in this work
as well. She admits, how-
ever, that some of her ear-
lier endeavors have been
less than exceptional.

Frederikson remembers
a story she abandoned in
the sixth grade because
she realized that, aside
from good descriptions, it
had no real substance. She
didn’t get serious about
her writing until much
later. The Carruth Poetry
Contest prize was the cat-
ylist to her career.

“I was overwhelmed,”
she says, recalling her sur-
prise over winning first
prize in the contest in
1928. "I only expected to tie for second at best." Frederikson's inspiration for the winning poem "Epitaph" was an editorial in the Kansas Emporia Gazette written by famed publisher William Allen White in memory of his deceased daughter, Mary. White, seeing Frederikson's poem some time later, wrote her to say how much it had touched him and his wife. By the time Frederikson won second place in the contest the next year, she was hooked on poetry.

Despite her success with her poems, Frederikson did not devote herself completely to writing during this time. She finished graduate school and then taught at Kansas State University for the summer.

In 1931, her husband of eight years, Otto Frovin Frederikson, accepted a position teaching history at Madison College in Harrisonburg. "It was the midst of the Depression, jobs were scarce and we were so pleased when he was offered one," she says. Madison College honored him in 1964 by naming a residence hall after him. In 1932 Frederikson herself began teaching English at Madison.

"Teaching was very demanding, but I enjoyed interaction with my girls," she says.

Each of her two freshman English classes consisted of 35 girls. She initiated and taught the school's first journalism course. Frederikson says she was stimulated by her contact with the gifted students.

According to Jane Sites Hawkins, a former student of Frederikson's, the feeling was mutual. "She was the best teacher I ever had," the Harrisonburg resident says. "She instilled a love of reading and criticism. We were able to read a book and get everything out of it."

The link between Frederikson's commitment to teaching and writing was her appreciation of the value of communication. She saw teaching as communicating, and each student was important. She conveyed her sincerity to her class, as Hawkins confirms.

"She had an air about her, a presence," Hawkins says. "She inspired us all. Miz Freddy, she was excited about writing and language, and she certainly did impart that."

Frederikson's communication skills define and enhance her writing. Her honesty and sensitivity appeal to the reader's soul. "The basic aim of writing is communication," she says with conviction. Frederikson has most visibly achieved her goal with the publication of her works.

Frederikson says "Glory Has Gone with the Sun" is her favorite of the "Never Tomorrow" poems because the sentiment expressed is distinctly from the heart. The poem is about the loss of love, and how the heart stores hurt forever. She expresses this sorrowful sentiment in just eight lines, and their impact lasts.

In class, Frederikson did not use any of her own writings, preferring works by such masters as Ellen Glasgow, Willa Cather and Katherine Anne Porter.

Frederikson's major inspiration as a writer was Robert Nathan, an author whom she admired so much that she wrote him asking if she could send him some of her work.

"He was a stunning writer. I tried to emulate not so much his style as his sincerity," she says, adding, "He was meticulous about his correspondence." The two became close literary friends through letters.

After reading Frederikson's work, Nathan wrote, "Please sit down quietly for two years and write a novel. Cut out every word of over three and most
words of over two syllables. Pour out everything into it. Then let me see it." She took his advice and began writing her novel.

Frederikson compares her characters in "Three Parts Earth" to John Steinbeck's characters in "The Grapes of Wrath." "I wanted to tell the truth about it, not just to entertain," she says.

She avoids conventional plot writing style. "The plot is there, in the material. I just have to find it," she says of her own technique. She does a lot of probing, she says, as Southern novelist William Faulkner did in his novels. "I tried to get inside these people ... to take a segment of experience and explore it for its meaning."

The reader can identify with the frustration and the vulnerability of heroine Delphie Doud in "Three Parts Earth." Young Delphie's spirit comes from within, from some small part of everyone. Daily News-Record columnist Nancy Bondurant Jones attests to this belief heartily.

"The way she has of getting to the inner child," is the quality of Frederikson's writing that Jones says she likes best. "She terrifies you with what's happening, makes you care. She's a storyteller."

"The way she strings words together makes it effective," Jones says. "There's a marvelous honesty. 'Three Parts Earth' is so starkly honest, so grim, you know it has to be based on her life."

The writing process for "Three Parts Earth" involved three stages. The author began in the 1940s, deciding to write about people she knew during her childhood in the South. Frederikson says her first attempt was unsatisfactory because she was treating the material too lightly. She showed the second draft to Nathan and Katherine Anne Porter for constructive criticism.

Advice from famous literary friends was not difficult to obtain. She met Porter through author Eudora Welty, whom she met at the Breadloaf Writer's Conference in 1940. Frederikson's many invitations to prestigious conferences provided her with valuable opportunities to meet other authors.

After she consulted Porter and

THE HIDEAWAY "BARN" on Ash Tree Lane was Frederikson's private work studio. There she could dedicate herself completely to writing.

Nathan, Frederikson revised the novel once more. She cut the material, making it simpler and more straightforward. "It wasn't so much that I changed the material," she reflects. "The material was right, it was just far too long." Frederikson's confidence in herself shines through in such remarks. She believed in herself, in such a secure manner, without conceit, through the struggles of publication.

It was more difficult getting her prose published than her poetry, remembers the author, because she put so much more of her heart into her novel. But the struggle was worthwhile. "I worked so hard ... that I was relieved when I finally made it," she says.

To see her book in stores gave "a great feeling of satisfaction," Frederikson reveals with a smile. "I suppose a little pride as well, but mostly satisfaction. The book wasn't pushed particularly, it just sold itself."

The author says she had "the most amazing feeling of joy," when she first saw her book on public display. To think that, "37,000 people were willing to spend money for my book! I loved every one of them!" The book eventually sold a total of 40,000 copies, including about 2,000 hard-cover copies that were published in 1972 by Threshold Books.

Frederikson showed her appreciation for her readers by answering all of her
fan mail. “Those letters gave me a tremendous sense of having communicated,” she says. She had achieved her goal.

Despite the satisfaction she derives from writing and teaching, the author acknowledges that people can’t learn everything from books. “Life is more than a book,” she states. “I believe that to see the world is an enlargement of your understanding.”

She boasts extensive world travel with her husband. “My favorite place is definitely London. I’m a devotee of the theater, and London has the best theater in the world.”

She still travels to London occasionally, but since her husband died in 1973, the only extended trip she has taken was to China in 1979.

“My husband was keen on China,” she remembers, “but we never went together. So I made the trip after he died because I knew he’d want me to go there.”

Frederikson says she has a strong spiritual sense, explaining, “I see love in life situations,” rather than romantic ones as she once did. Now she is more open-minded.

Her evolution as a writer has followed a similar route to this change in spirituality. A friend once told Frederikson that in the beginning her poetry was essentially Victorian, and now it has taken a gargantuan leap to the ultra-contemporary.

All of Frederikson’s early work rhymed, but now, the poet says, “I am more independent, individual. I make up my own patterns. I do not conform.”

She is currently working on finishing a volume of poetry.

Frederikson is thrilled her poetry is reaching more people through the nationally distributed May/June 1992 issue of Ms. magazine. She asserts that she is interested in women’s issues, but is more concerned with the human race as a whole.

Her objective in the magazine selection including “Nocturne,” “Without Health, You Have Nothing” and “Edna,” was to depict the reality of aging. “Unless you tell it as it is,” she says, “there is no joy in accomplishment.”

Frederikson reiterates her goal in her writing: “The purpose, the end, of writing is communication. Once you’ve got that you’ve succeeded.” Without a doubt, Edna Frederikson has succeeded.

Senior CARRIE DESMOND will graduate in May with a bachelor’s degree in English and a minor in French. She has two years of editorial experience with the Bluestone and anticipates a career in photojournalism with a travel magazine.
COUNTER CULTURE

Waffle House is as much about people & good times as scattered and smothered hash browns

ARTICLE BY KATE McFADDEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY Lynette Chewning

"You're a virgin?" the woman asks the young man.
"Well — I guess you could say that, but it's something I hope you'll help me cure. What would you suggest?"
"It depends on what you like. Are you the traditional sort of guy?" she asks in a twangy mountain accent.
"I'm the basic bacon and eggs man."
"Well then, for you, my sweet Waffle House virgin, I suggest a large orange juice, a pecan waffle and an order of hash browns, scattered and smothered," she says, slapping him on the back. "Will that do ya good?"
"That will do me just fine," he says with a hungry look in his eye.

Waffle House waitress Kathy Hornick says "Waffle House virgins" are hard to come by among college students in Harrisonburg, so she makes sure to give the ones she sees a run for their bacon.
"I see so many kids night after night, so it's fun to kind of hassle the ones who are new to the scene here," she says, smiling widely. "You can spot the virgins in a minute — they take more than a minute to order."

"I see so many kids night after night, so it's fun to kind of hassle the ones who are new to the scene here," she says, smiling widely. "You can spot the virgins in a minute — they take more than a minute to order."

Washington and Lee University senior Chris Smith was one such Waffle House virgin who was made the butt of the waitress' jokes. Smith took a few extra minutes to order, tipping Hornick off that he was new to the culinary delights of the restaurant's laminated Technicolor menu. "I was stammering over the smothered and covered and she was there smiling, and I couldn't hide it. I just wasn't as smooth as the JMU kids who come here every night."

Most James Madison University students make ritual pilgrimages to the 24-hour restaurant on East Market Street several times before graduating. They come for waffles, eggs, sausage, grits, bacon, steaks, hot chocolate and coffee. Student cars can be seen parked under the black-and-gold neon Waffle House sign nightly as their hungry owners seek relaxing breaks from studying, partying or life in general — and the reliably good food and friendly service the Waffle House provides.

"My friends and I keep going back to see Ravenna," says JMU junior Logan Ellington. "We love Ravenna, she is the Waffle House."

Harrisonburg resident Ravenna Layman has been a waitress all of her life. "Waitress work is all the work I've ever known . . . it gets into your system," she says.

Layman thinks it's the mix of people that comes in during the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. shift that keeps her up to see the sunrise four nights each week. "You just see a different class of people during the shift."

"You've got the older people during the day and they can drag you down, but at night you've got old and young alike — but they're all young at heart, or what would they be doing eating hash browns at 3 a.m." she says straightening her cap. "We get some crackerjacks, I'll tell you that."

Layman calls Doc, a 40-year-old Dayton bachelor who slides into a Waffle House booth three or four times a week, the ringleader of the local "crackerjacks." He carouses in after an evening at Fargo's and starts bantering with Hornick. They swap jokes about Dan Quayle as she refills his cup.

"I keep coming back because they tell me their jokes and listen to mine," the blond man says between puffs on his cigarette. "I like this place. The crowd is always the same, ready to talk and happy."

David Clements of Elkton says the Waffle House "has always been a great place to stop," as he wipes his beard. "I like to see people from out-of-state traveling, people working different hours and the students. You get to talk to all of them here and they're all friendly and that makes a difference."
THE LIGHTS of the East Market Street Waffle House draw local residents, students and travelers to the predictable, yet tasty breakfast fare within.

THE TECHNICOLOR LAMINATED MENU boasts hash browns smothered, covered, chunked, scattered or diced for diners like JMU senior Katherine Archer.

JMU junior Susan Ford thinks the acceptance people feel at Waffle House makes it unique. "I have never felt uncomfortable there," says the young woman with a shaved head and a nose ring. "There's no scene there — it's regular people — locals, students, truckers. It doesn't have all of the pretensions that a lot of places have. It's just the eating scene."

Layman thinks it's JMU students like Ford and Ellington that give Waffle House the special aura that attracts so many late-night patrons. "JMU is this shift. I don't know what I'd do if the kids were not here," she says. "They keep you in touch with what's going on. We do get some ornery ones, but we love the kids in general. They're my favorite part of the job."

Students file steadily into the restaurant from 11 p.m. until 3 a.m., always choosing the private booths if at all possible, Layman notes. The high-backed booths serve as a buffer to the huge fluorescent lights, the noisy exchange of orders over the sound of the grill and the medley of jukebox music.

Layman says that students usually arrive in small groups to eat and hang out. "I like it that way because I can chat with them. Those little devils make you wonder how they tick, coming in at three and four in the morning and going like a little June bug. It's such a shame to watch all that energy going to waste."

Mix in a weekend party and young Waffle House customers entertain as well as eat, Hornick says. "They're fun. They have a reputation in this town, but they don't deserve it. Sure they can be rowdy, but they're still good people."

"That jukebox is the source of a lot of laughs once the clock hits midnight on the weekends," Hornick says, pointing to the lighted machine.

"You should hear some of those kids sing and dance, and, ah, drop their pants," she says. Hornick, savvy to graveyard shift shenanigans, has been mooned several times and now doesn't think twice about how to react. "It's just part of the job, like saying 'Good morning' to everyone who comes in."

Learning Waffle House language is also part of the job. Layman takes an order, turns toward the short-order cook and shouts out a cryptic message over the hiss of bacon sizzling on the grill. "Waffle on two out like one, order over light to the side."

She explains that the behind-the-counter lingo is "just the Waffle House way," and minutes later serves up two waffles and a side order of over-easy fried eggs and sets pitchers of blueberry and maple syrup in front of a customer.

"It's a slow night tonight for a Thursday, but it's still early," she says as the hands on the clock hover high.

"This is the only shift I like. I am not a morning person. When the sun comes up it's time for me to go to bed."

To JMU junior Matt Schwabel the interesting array of customers and the step away from reality is only part of what brings people to Waffle House. "There is a whole Waffle House experience, and to understand it, you must partake of it," he says. "But I think it has to do with the women with bright smiling faces at one in the morning. They're always here with that 'good morning.'"

"They really keep some special people here," Clements adds. Then he adds, joking with Hornick about his bill, "You keep writing those dollar signs down I might be washing the floor tonight."

If Layman has her way she'll be refilling coffee cups and making change for the jukebox for those who venture through the swinging doors late at night for quite some time. "I'll probably be working here until I'm old enough to retire," she guesses. "It's hard work but I love it, and right now I can't imagine having to get up with the sun. I'd rather stay up with the students and the rest of this crowd. They keep me young."

Junior KATE MCFADDEN is editor of CURIO and has held editorial positions at The Breeze for two years. In the fall this mass communication major/English minor will study abroad in Italy.
Hundreds of Russians immigrate to the Valley to begin a new life

To Harrisonburg With Hope

Nadezhda Mazur sits in a barren room on the second floor of the Campbell Street house which is home to the Virginia Council of Churches Refugee Resettlement Program. Her coarse brown hair is swept up at the nape, a dramatic contrast to her simple red sweater and blue denim skirt.

She pauses to converse in Russian with a woman seated in front of a computer beside her. It is late in the afternoon, and as part of her job with the program, Nadezhda is helping a compatriot learn English.

Nadezhda is one of approximately 500 citizens of the former Soviet Union to come to Harrisonburg and Rockingham County through Church World Service. The service’s goal is to resettle anyone accepted into the United States Refugee Program, which is administered by the U.S. State Department.

Once accepted into the program, each person or family is sponsored by an American church and congregation and brought to the United States. According to Rev. Joseph S. Roberson, program coordinator of the Refugee Resettlement Program, the first Russian family came to Harrisonburg in June 1989.

In Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, the Mennonite, Church of the Brethren, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist and Southern Baptist denominations have all been sponsors.

“Our goal is to help people who are in trouble and need a new place to live,” Roberson says. “We give them a good start in the United States so that they can become self-sufficient and get on their way.”

He adds that although the sponsoring churches help with finances and settlement, once in America the emigres are not bound to any congregation or denomination. The sponsoring church is, however, responsible for offering financial support for 90 days. After the first month the families gradually assume responsibility for the bills.

“The church is also responsible for getting initial employment and finding housing,” Roberson adds.

To make this a reality, the Resettlement Program maintains contact with local employers to find jobs for newly resettled families and works with them to develop new jobs.

“Employers in the area like to hire [the Russian emigres], because they are hard-working and dependable,” says...
George Fletcher, pastor of West Side Baptist Church.

The poultry industry is a popular place of employment among refugees. Approximately 30 former refugees are employed as line workers with Rocco Turkeys, Inc. in Dayton.

"They are wonderful employees," says Sonia Mongold, Rocco's human resource specialist. "They are very warm, friendly and cooperative folks," she adds.

Vitaliy and Anna Konovalchik, former Belorussian refugees who came to the United States in November 1990, are both employed with Wampler-Longacre. In Russia, Anna worked for a local department store, which was a hard job to acquire.

"In Russia, you must train for a very long time for a job," she says. "Here, [employers] take you from the street."

Church World Service defines refugees as "people who are forced to flee their homes, leaving behind all that they have known for an uncertain future... In their homelands, refugees may have feared persecution by repressive governments due to their political or religious views."

This April, Nadezhda Mazur will have lived in Harrisonburg for three years, but she remembers well what she, her husband and two children went through before arriving in the United States.

"We rode on a bus with other refugees to Czechoslovakia," she says, her voice cracking slightly. "Then we waited for a train to Vienna. We stayed in Vienna for two weeks, while we waited for some documents. After that, we stayed in Italy for four and a half months while we waited for a ticket and a sponsor."

Fletcher understands the persecution several of the refugees have endured.

His church sponsored the Klopot family, who initially worshiped secretly in the woods near their home in Brest, Russia before gaining more freedom and acquiring a warehouse, which they turned into a Baptist church. Ivan Klopot was one of the pastors.

When the Klopoths arrived in Harrisonburg on Dec. 12, 1992, all 11 family members were welcomed into the Russian Baptist community, whose meeting place is West Side Baptist Church. Shortly after arriving, Ivan was designated as the pastor of the Russian Baptist Church, as it is now called.

To date, its congregation has surpassed 100 and continues to grow.

Fletcher says, "They are a very close-knit group, as they share a lot in common: they're from the former Soviet Union, they're Christians and they're here in the United States on the basis of persecution. It's really remarkable to see that after what they've endured, they have a deep commitment to Christ."

Every Sunday afternoon, well before the designated 3 p.m. worship time, cars begin to pull into West Side Baptist's parking lot on West Wolfe Street.

Worship begins with a group prayer and then the children are dismissed to the basement for Sunday school. In the sanctuary, the adults stand individually to read and discuss scripture while in the basement, the children are taught in different age groups.

Both activities have elements similar to most American services, including singing hymns and studying scripture. One of the few defining characteristics is that the congregation worships in Russian.

But outside of this close and accepting church community many refugees, including Nadezhda, must work to assimilate into American culture by overcoming the English language barrier.

According to Dr. Elizabeth Neatrour of James Madison University's Foreign Languages and Literatures Department, Russian is not the native language of many refugees. In fact, the majority of emigrants from the former Soviet Union are Ukrainian or Belorussian.

Nateour has been called upon to translate several times, and although she speaks Russian, the immigrants can understand her.

Most of her translating has been done in hospitals, and she recalls one specific incident vividly.

On New Year's Eve 1991, a Russian man suffered a heart attack and she was called to Rockingham Memorial Hospital to translate. At the same time, his granddaughter was brought...
into the emergency room for treatment. She had arrived at Dulles International Airport in Northern Virginia that very same day, and her grandfather did not know she was in the United States, let alone the same hospital.

"It was like a Pasternak novel," Neatrour remembers. "I was interpreting for the entire family. Not only did I have to ask what his reactions were and explain what the doctors were doing, but I also had to explain modern technology, such as a heart monitor. In the emergency room there was only room for two people, but sometimes there were as many as 10 family members."

The man was eventually taken to Charlottesville for further treatment, and the family thanked Neatrour for her help.

"It was a very special privilege for me, and a very memorable New Year's Eve as well," she says.

Some of Neatrour's students translate for immigrants as well. Beth Skolnicki, a senior Russian major at JMU, works with children through a tutoring program offered by Rockingham County.

Skolnicki tutored two Russian boys at Mt. Clinton Elementary School. Her first student was a kindergartner named Igor, whom she worked with during the other students' nap time.

"He could talk with me and get out his frustrations that he couldn't express in the classroom," she says.

"At times it was difficult, like when he would go out on a tangent and I couldn't understand all of his Ukrainian. At times, though, when he was enjoying telling a story, I'd let him tell it," she adds, smiling.

Skolnicki's second student was Sergey. She became an active part of his assimilation into American schools, following him to music and gym class, acting as a classroom liaison. Sergey was excited about learning and was less self-conscious than Igor, she recalls.

"It's easier for the younger students to learn, because their minds are more flexible," Skolnicki notes. "In the fifth grade, for example, they are old enough to be embarrassed, and they know that they are different. But for the most part, I've found ... they do better than American students. They are bright and they are assimilating well."

Older emigres, including Nadezhda and the Konovalchiks, are also assimilating by learning English.

Their classroom is at the Dayton Learning Center, where every Tuesday and Thursday evening the English as a Second Language program's highest level class meets.

The class-
AMIDST DAILY REMINDERS of a foreign land, pastor Ivan Klopot intently listens to a reading from the Russian Bible at West Side Baptist Church.

OF THE APPROXIMATELY 500 Russians who have moved to Harrisonburg through Church World Service, most emigrated from the Ukraine or Belarus.
CROSSING CULTURES

Mennonite tradition meets modern

Just three miles south of Harrisonburg among the open fields and dairy farms stands a long, yellow warehouse surrounded by a parking lot full of Buicks, Bonnevilles, bicycles and buggies—not Volkswagen buggies, but horse-drawn buggies. The building is an attraction for visitors to the area, and a weekly stop for local Mennonites known as the Dayton Farmers Market.

The market opened on June 1, 1987, and since then has served over 78,000 people a year, says Paige Will, a market organizer.

"The building was vacant because there was a grocery store there that went bankrupt," Will says. "We wanted to do something with the space."

An area merchant suggested Will and the other two organizers, Steve Bird and Ron Williams, form a farmers market like the one in Lancaster, Pa.

"We had less than 10 shops at the beginning ... we needed an anchor shop to attract people and that was Wampler-Longacre," Will says. "As we could, we added new shops, always looking for diversification."

Besides having six food shops and a restaurant, the market has 13 specialty shops including a hat outlet, toy store, book store, china shop, antique store, and a sports card and floral shop.

It's common to see Mennonite families traveling in their carriages pulled by sleek horses trotting alongside the road. As cars race by, the buggies veer into the Farmers Market. The drivers of the buggies do not try to compete with the modern vehicles. The men dressed in plaid shirts, dungarees and black hats know that when they arrive at the market, there will be a parking space just for them—a hitching post.

According to Mary Grace Mallow, assistant manager of Orens Corner, the market's hat outlet, the Farmers Market is visited regularly by the Mennonite community because it's close to their homes and hitching posts are available.

"A lot of places don't have horse and buggies, because there's nowhere to tie them, plus they cause a problem in the city because someone has to clean up after them," she says, peeking from beneath the brim of her bonnet.

The smell of cinnamon greets customers at the entrance and stays with them as they wander from shop to shop. In the middle of the warehouse is Huyard's Country Kitchen.

"The food is great," says Oscar Landis, of West Virginia, as he wipes a trace of macaroni off his mouth. "It hits the spot better than those fast food joints."

Above the tables sits a diorama titled "Southern Living," created by David Huyard, a Harrisonburg resident and owner of the restaurant.

The scene depicts Dayton. In one corner there is a white church with a tall, slender steeple and a preacher standing in front of it. On the opposite side there is a log cabin with a family playing various musical instruments on the front porch. Between the cabin and the church stands a twisted tree covered with orange and gold foliage, a water wheel and an aquarium with bright yellow fish swimming from side to side.

Beside the "Southern Living" display stands a wildlife exhibit with wild turkeys and deer. Harrisonburg resident Kevin Graves says he thinks the artwork sets the market apart from other stores. "I like the scenery and the people who run the stores. The displays take your mind off shopping."

Harrisonburg resident Betty...
Forkovitch agrees. "I come here to shop all of the time and I bring all of my out-of-town friends with me."

But the market's intrigue also extends outside of the Harrisonburg area. "This place is wonderful, it's very clean and has a variety of foods," says Anna Mae Ortgies from Warrenton, who was visiting the store for the first time. "I heard about the market on the radio and had to come down and check it out for myself."

Mary Lew Fitzsimmons, from California, says the market is "just phenomenal. I'd come all the way back from California just to shop here."

Fitzsimmons tells how she has been searching for pear butter for 50 years and couldn't find any until she visited the market. "I'm so excited, I bought pear butter that I've been looking for since I left Harrisonburg years ago." Fitzsimmons tells how her mother used to make pear butter, adding that she hadn't had any since she graduated from college in the 1940s.

James Madison University junior Nolan Morris was impressed with the market and its vendors. "They have everything from 19th century books to 20th century art."

Morris reminisces about the time he was searching for a pumpkin pie recipe because he didn't want to throw out the inside of his Halloween jack-o-lantern. He asked a Country Village Bake Shop employee and she stopped working to call her mother for a recipe. "I stood there while this lady took down a recipe for me — it was great."

But having large numbers of area residents and students shop regularly at the Farmers Market is not too surprising to the market's merchants. "The merchandise we have to offer — local produce ... and fresh meat — is what attracts many people," says Jane Remson of For All Seasons produce shop, as she adjusts bunches of plum-colored grapes and mounds of red potatoes.

"It's not as much a shopping trip as it is an experience. There's something for everyone."

Matthew Carpenter

Gloria Showalter, a clerk at the Country Village Bake Shop, says the community atmosphere draws people to the market.

"I have lots of people call and want to know if it's the Mennonite market, and once I explain to them that it's the place that many Mennonites shop, they come because of that."

Shoppers keep coming back. "The same ones who were coming up five years ago are still coming back," says J. O. Gardner, an employee of Country Chimes, a store that sells clocks, pottery, mailboxes and afghans.

"I think it's because they don't feel penned up like they do in a mall, and we don't have junk shops like all of them malls do," he says.

The tall, lanky man scratches his hair as he tells of how pleased he is with the reception he and the other employees have received. "We don't have a lot of advertisements — mostly literature distributed by the Chamber of Commerce, but we get lots of people — many repeats and that makes us happy." Gardner says the only bad thing about the market is its lack of parking space, especially on Saturdays.

"It's not as much a shopping trip as it is an experience," says JMU senior Matthew Carpenter. "There's something here for everyone."

The market is open Thursdays, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Fridays, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Michael Keatts graduates in May with a mass communication major and political science minor. This year the Richmond native served as one of the news editors of The Breeze. Last summer he worked as a staff writer for the weekly Powhatan Today.

FRESH PRODUCE, CRAFTS & COLLECTIBLES are all found at the market. Tom Corbin buys bananas at For All Seasons from Jane Remson.
SMALLER THAN ITS TELEVISION REPLICA, the original Hamner homestead is steps from the museum.

Walton's Mountain Museum in Schuyler brings community together

ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MEREDITH PARRY

"You know, Thomas Wolfe 'couldn't go home again' because of the things he'd written. But I can go home and do, because I've written with affection about our life together," wrote Earl Hamner Jr.

Quoted on the inside leaf of the Walton's Mountain Museum brochure, Hamner immortalized his childhood during the Great Depression in the novel Spencer's Mountain. The novel was made into a movie that became the basis of the "The Waltons," the well-loved CBS series which ran from 1972 to 1981.

Now everyone can go home to Walton's Mountain. The fictional place is based on Hamner's hometown, Schuyler, a village of 400, located about 25 miles south of Charlottesville in Nelson County.

Walton's Mountain Museum, located at the Schuyler Community Center, faithfully re-creates sets from the television show and displays both Hamner's and the show's numerous awards. The museum's conception and creation are true community efforts by the residents of Schuyler and Nelson County.

Schuyler is nestled among the Blue Ridge Mountains. The road into the village is easily missed. Just after the turn, which is the only road in and out of the village, there's a long-abandoned bridge underpass. The bridge no longer remains — only 20-foot walls jutting straight up on both sides. It's like entering a private place, yet it is as friendly as they come.

"They're the most beautiful people I've ever met," Bill Luhrs says of the residents of Schuyler. Luhrs, who moved to the village from Long Island, N.Y., three years ago, currently serves as the museum's director. "I love the principles they have here. . . . One lady told me one time, 'If you come to visit, we'll visit, and if you come to fight, we'll fight.' That's pretty clean and decisive."

Walton's Mountain Museum is a culmination of a dream held by the Schuyler residents, Luhrs says. About three years ago, Schuyler Elementary School, which the Hamners attended
and which had served the community for almost 75 years, closed down.

Woody Greenberg, a four-year member of the Nelson County Board of Supervisors, was sympathetic to Schuyler because the school had been the center of the village's social activity. He arranged for the village to use the school building, and the Schuyler Community Center was born. The SCC began to sponsor activities like aerobics, children's play groups and dances and opened a library in one of the old classrooms. But because the SCC sponsored these events for free, operational costs had to be met.

"I got to thinking about the cost of operating the building," Greenberg says. "I was trying to think of a way to raise money, aside from dances and bake sales."

Aware that many people visit Schuyler to see the Waltons'/Hamners' homeplace, Greenberg thought about using part of the building as a Waltons museum. He suggested opening a gift shop that replicated Ike Godsey's, the country store on the show, and John Boy's room, which could also celebrate the real John Boy, Earl Hamner.

Greenberg applied for a state grant from the Center on Rural Development and received $30,000. The SCC and the Nelson County Board of Supervisors each contributed $5,000.

In addition, Greenberg donated $1,000 of studio production time at Lynchburg College, where he is head of the department of communication. He created the video shown at the museum which includes recent interviews with Hamner and the show's actors.

Once finances were available for the museum, work got under way. Luhrs and Fred Wray, a Schuyler native who recently retired in the area, led the effort. They were joined by many volunteers along the way.

Wray called Lorimar, the company which produced the television series, to obtain the sets, only to find out that they had been destroyed by fire. So Wray enlisted the help of another Schuyler native, Robert Brent Hall, who owns a Charlottesville interior design business.

"It had been so long since I'd seen the series," Hall says. "I recorded the show off the Family Channel, the cable television channel, and watched it over and over. What I tried to create was a representation of the sets adapting to the amount of space we had and the budget they gave me."

For six months, Hall scoured antique shops, junk shops and flea markets in the area in search of 1930s-period furnishings and accessories.

"It almost became an obsession," he says. "There was so much to be done and not a lot of time."

Hall was able to re-create Ike Godsey's store, John Boy's room, the Waltons' kitchen and their living room. The re-creations are housed in old classrooms and the exhibit doors still have room numbers on them.

The living room has an overstuffed floral sofa and matching chairs which bring back memories of family togetherness on the show. The Philco radio on the table came from New York, one of a few items not found in the state. Arranged near it are chairs, suggesting regular listening. The organ, one of the museum's few donated items, came to Schuyler over 100 years ago with a Pennsylvania woman who married locally. A copy of "Grit Paper," a general-interest magazine of the period, is also in the living room.

"I was fascinated when Earl gave his talk [at the museum's opening]," Hall says. "He said that the only thing his father read was 'Grit Paper.'"

Entering the kitchen provides visitors with a step back in time. An old-style stove and icebox are accented by once-common gadgets and utensils, but appear strange in a world of microwaves and processed foods. The big dining table is flanked with long
Ike Godsey's store is a combination of old and new products, shelved to blend together. Old is everything from canned goods to fabric, available at a general store in "The Waltons" era. New is the collection of locally produced crafts and gift items.

Some of Hamner's possessions accent John Boy's room, including a pair of glasses and a hairbrush. Suspender pants and a straw hat hanging from the closet door and the poised typewriter give a personal touch to the room.

Next to the typing desk is a display case holding "Waltons" memorabilia including old scripts, lunch boxes, dolls, books and magazines. Hamner's high school diploma and Emmy award are the highlights of the case. The hallway leading into the room is covered with Hamner's honorary diplomas and pictures of the family and their television counterparts.

Hall, still on the lookout for period items, is glad to have been part of the museum's birth. "I had not been back to Schuyler for years aside from an occasional funeral or what have you. It was a lot of fun to go back and see old friends and to meet new ones."

After a year or so of planning and six months of preparation, the museum had its grand opening Oct. 24, 1992. Mark Glickman, Wintergreen Resort's director of public relations and marketing, handled the event's publicity. Major newspapers, magazines and television shows from all over the world covered it, he says.

"The timing was perfect," Glickman remembers. "Family values became a big issue in the presidential race. Everyone was talking about the Walton family coming together."

Most of the television actors from the show came to Schuyler and met their real-life counterparts for the first time, Glickman says. The Walton and Hamner families were joined by 5,500 fans from all over the world.

Schuyler native Valda Mulkey, who volunteered at the opening and oversees the museum's day-to-day operations, says that despite the crowds everyone seemed to have a good time.

"One lady said we seemed a little disorganized," Mulkey recalls. "I told her, 'Well, we've never done anything like this before.'"

"It was beautiful," Luhrs says. "We didn't have one unhappy incident. I attribute that to the people who were here. The kind of people who grew up with 'The Waltons,' so to speak."

Frannie Mann, a big fan of the show, read an article about the museum's grand opening a week before the event. "I told my husband, 'I've got to get there even if I have to walk,'" she says.

Mann, her husband and three children made the trip to Schuyler from Rochester, N.Y., the following weekend. The celebration wasn't supposed to start until the afternoon but they arrived at 6 a.m., she says.

"I'll sit here all day if I have to," Mann recalls thinking.

"I had the most wonderful day," she says. "You don't often get to be part of something that special."

Mann's enthusiasm for the museum endured after she returned home. She made a replica of the Waltons' house out of plastic canvas and yarn. Mann donated it and has made kits of her design which can now be purchased at the museum.

She says, "I'd do anything to help them."

Mann is not alone. Including opening day, more than 10,000 people visited the museum in its first month before it closed for winter.

About 300 visitors attended the museum's reopening the weekend of March 6. There has been a steady trickle of visitors ever since, Mulkey says.

For Schuyler, the museum is more than a celebration of "The Waltons," Luhrs says. It's the lifeline for the SCC and employs 10 local people.

Long-term plans include the creation of a newsletter for those interested in Schuyler and the museum's activities, annual reunions for the Waltons and the Hamners, and the establishment of a scholarship fund, Luhrs says.

"It's been an incredible, incredible experience. The emotions that we went through, the terrible pressures," he says. "People did things here that they never dreamed they could do."

Directions to Waltons Mountain Museum: Take Interstate 64 east to Charlottesville and follow U.S. Route 29 south to state Route 6 going east. After turning right on Route 800 into Schuyler, follow the signs to the museum.

MEREDITH PARRY graduated in December with a degree in anthropology and communication. Currently, she is working locally and contemplating her next move.
ANSWERING THE CALL OF THE WILD

Ed Clark rolls up his sleeves and wrestles bureaucrats and ignorance to help Virginia’s wildlife

Article By Dan Krotz  Photography by Lisa Manzo
Ed Clark fidgets restlessly as he puts the finishing touches on a history test. It has been a long week of classes at Bridgewater College. Thoughts of studies fade to a quiet wooded spot he knows is waiting for him behind Todd Lake in the George Washington National Forest. After handing in the test, he hurries outside and savors the stirring spring air.

Six months have passed since he last fished and roamed the isolated patch of land west of Bridgewater. Images of swaying pines and animals scurrying for cover under the nearest log quicken his pace. He jumps onto his trusty bike and pedals toward the abrupt rise of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Somewhere in that tangle of ravines and ridges is a pristine lake where only the split-second splash of a fish or the chirp of a songbird would dare break the silence.

One hour later he stands before a clear-cut. Not one tree stands and not one animal stirs. Fresh stumps and the carnivorous track of the bulldozer mar his paradise. He is angry.

But he's also inspired.

Twenty years later Clark sits behind a cluttered desk in a cramped, noisy trailer that is part of the ever-growing, always busy Wildlife Center of Virginia in Weyers Cave. Above the din of typing and talking, and amid the almost touchable energy of volunteerism and practiced idealism that drives the center, Clark reflects on that pivotal experience years ago.

"I felt personally violated," he says. "But I did not know who to be mad at because I did not know enough about the decision-making processes that affected the resources I cared so much about."

Today he does know enough about that once elusive decision-making process — he has become part of it. As co-founder and director of the Wildlife Center and host of the successful "Virginia Outdoors" public television show, Clark is firmly entrenched in the battle to save Virginia’s environment.

Lean and conservatively dressed, the youthful 42-year-old looks up with clear, intelligent eyes. Words charged with heartfelt conviction come easily.

"Certain animals stick out in your mind," he says. "Seeing a bald eagle released into the wild is something you don’t soon forget."

Helping stricken animals also has its ugly side. "The first time you have an animal die in your hands because somebody has shot it — it's a very intense feeling," he laments. "You learn the depths of bitterness. It's so thoughtless and needless that that type of problem can and does occur with regularity.

"Most of the injuries are human-caused," Clark adds. "They result from car collisions and deliberate wounds such as gunshots. Last year we treated over 2,300 animals. Over two-thirds of these animals are birds, with the majority of the rest being mammals such as squirrels and rabbits."

But there is more to the center than birds, opossums and turtles fighting for a new lease on life. "We have brought together a soft heart with a hard science and a cutting edge," Clark says. "Students from two-thirds of the country’s veterinary schools come to the center to study wildlife medicine."

Those doctors now practice in more than 20 states.

The Wildlife Center also brings its conservation message to the public. "In 10 years our education staff gave formal programs to over 300,000 children and 100,000 adults," Clark says.

Nowhere else in the country is there a combination of veterinary medicine, environmental education and conservation activism under one roof, he says. But behind this dynamism and pioneer spirit lies the need for money — money that is hard to come by.

"One of the biggest obstacles, of course, is funding," Clark says. "We are funded entirely by private contribution."

His money worries are understandable.

"We now have a budget that is over $400,000 a year, we have 15 staff mem-
bers, and we are building a $1 million facility and will be running a $3 million facility,” Clark continues. “That makes us a fairly substantial business.”

Business. The word seems out of place — it can’t possibly be applied to two trailers, cages and the devoted volunteers who give their time and sweat to Virginia’s wildlife. But money seeps into the equation and contaminates this idealists’ sanctuary.

“I didn’t get into the environmental movement to run a business. I got in to save the world, and now instead of getting to go out and lobby and help wildlife I spend my time worrying about budgets and insurance.”

Money worries or not, Clark was destined to play a significant role in the environment. As soon as he could walk, he explored the fields and woods near his Flint Hill, Va., home.

“I grew up from the time I could get out hunting and fishing and running the hills, so an affinity for nature goes back to the time when I was very young.”

Working as a nature instructor in summer camps and frequent trips into the Blue Ridge Mountains during college bolstered his love for nature. After graduating in 1973, Clark traded a backpack for a suit and became an activist in environmental policy. He worked as an assistant director of the Washington, D.C.-based grass roots organization, Environmental Task Force.

“I got started in conservation activism in 1977 and have been active ever since,” Clark says. “I’ve been at it 15 years, working professionally since 1978.”

But it wasn’t until 1982 that he, his wife, Nancy, and Dr. Stuart Porter and his wife, Terry decided to start the Wildlife Center. The foursome came up with the idea in October of 1982. They rented a horse barn from Nancy’s parents five miles north of Waynesboro and set up shop.

“One of the reasons we got off to such a good start at the Wildlife Center was I had experience implementing plans,” Clark says. “We were in gear and moving fast when most organizations are trying to think of a name.”

In 1985 the Wildlife Center’s barn was no longer available for rent. The local Ruritan Club offered the fledgling operation the Weyers Cave land for a 10-year lease. They moved and continued to treat wildlife.

Clark did not expect what followed. In 1987, he was asked by producers at the local public television station, WVPT, to host “Virginia Outdoors,” an outdoor recreation and natural resource-focused program. His reputation as an avid environmentalist and his openness with the media had caught their attention.

“We tape host segments from various locations all over Virginia,” Clark says. “One week we’ll be out in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay in a boat and the next week we’ll be at the top of the highest mountain in Virginia with a backpack.”

He has recorded 22 shows so far. They air at various times of the week on Virginia's public TV stations. Clark's love of Virginia's forests and wildlife cannot be contained in the Wildlife Center and a TV show. Politicians in the state legislature are affected by his grass-roots message.

“Up until 1989, no wild animal in Virginia was protected by law unless they were specifically protected [game animals, endangered species]. But the non-game animals, the vast majority, the lizards, salamanders, snakes and turtles had no protection at all.”

With this in mind, Clark went to Richmond to help these vitally important yet often overlooked animals.

“We went to the General Assembly and had a bill introduced which redefines what constitutes protected animals,” he remembers. “Now it is against the law to buy or sell any native animals in Virginia without a permit.”

And sometimes even a little effort can go a long way. “This past fall I was asked by the Ancient Forest Protection Coalition to see if I could encourage Jim Olin, who was our past congress-
man in the 6th District, to introduce a certain one-sentence amendment [aimed at preserving ancient forests] in a piece of legislation," Clark recalls.

Though Olin agreed to the amendment, the bill did not pass. But often success comes from the simple act of trying. Olin's effort was strategically important because the strongly worded conservation amendment broke a logjam, and enabled the impasse on protecting ancient forests to move ahead, Clark says. The failed bill paved the way for future legislation.

"The legislation that ended up passing protected literally millions of acres of ancient forest, and that might not have happened had it not been for one phone call and one sentence in a piece of legislation," he says.

Because of the important role Clark played in the conservation of Virginia's ancient forest, he received a framed copy of the legislation from the Ancient Forest Coalition. It was signed by every member of the coalition — some of the most well-known and influential environmentalists in the United States.

"I didn't really think I had done anything," Clark says. "But they thought the small act really made a difference."

He is quick to dodge praise. Although he was named the Conservation Educator of the Year in Virginia, named to the 500 environmental achievers list by the U.S. committee for the United Nations and nominated by Daughters of the American Revolution for a conservation medal, Clark remains humble.

"The recognition is really nice," he admits. "But you can't do it for that, because generally if you do anything worthwhile it's a team effort."

Thankfully he is not alone. "We have a very dedicated staff," Clark says. "Everybody is committed and has a drive to see things happen."

Dr. Stuart Porter, Clark's technical right-hand man at the Wildlife Center and one of the nation's leading authorities on wildlife medicine, eyes an X-ray in the adjoining trailer. He and Clark have been with the center since its beginning.

"People are used to looking at wildlife in terms of population — hunters want an abundance of game animals. But here at the center we give attention to the individual animal," the bearded veterinarian says.

"And the Wildlife Center wouldn't be where it is today without Ed's talents of working with the media and legislation."

Porter tells of Clark's persistence in striving to restrict the insecticide granular carbafuren, which used to kill one million birds each year. Partially due to Clark's efforts, the pesticide will be phased out by 1994.

"Ed played an integral behind-the-scenes role in the restriction. He helped get the information to the legislation process and encouraged people to make a stand."

The soft-spoken Porter adds a touch of pride to his voice and says, "Many people would have been very happy to do nothing — but Ed wouldn't give up. He sure is a scrappy fighter."

Clark confidently eyes the future with the same fervor that he did when he was a college student at Bridgewater. "We are going to get a chance to bring together the idealism of the '60s with the power of the '90s," he says enthusiastically. "I'm extremely optimistic about the future."

Only now he's armed with the seasoned wisdom and "scrappiness" of time spent in the bureaucracy of Washington, D.C., hours spent worrying over the too-small budget and the joy of watching the center expand.

He points to a building model tucked in the corner of his office as a clue to a future project — the new Wildlife Center of Virginia.

"The first month we were open in '82 we treated five patients and had a staff of one part-time person. In May of '92 we treated 500 patients with a staff of 15. We've grown to the point where we just can't do this from a trailer."

And the Weyers Cave lease expires in 1995. It is time to move. The new hospital, scheduled to open in 1994, will be built on a 13-acre site adjoining the George Washington National Forest five miles north of Waynesboro.

"The facility will be a teaching and research hospital — one of the very few of its kind in the world," Clark says. "It will enable us to double the veterinarian training program. It's not unthinkable that we could have graduates of our program practicing in most states within a year."

Clark's boyhood traipses through Virginia's hills have turned into calculated, thoughtful strategies to save the animals and environment that make up those hills.

"There is an old quote by John Donne: 'Nobody makes such a big mistake as the person who does nothing because he can only do a little,'" Clark quotes, his usually animated voice growing serious. "That is a very important phrase because you never know how one small act will translate into something significant."

His "one small act" spans 15 years of committed environmentalism.

PATIENTLY WAITING FOR HEALTH. These great horned owls are just two of more than 2,300 animals treated a year at Weyers Cave.
Congratulations to the winners of these 1992 competitions

In the national contest sponsored by the Society for Collegiate Journalists: First place, General Interest Magazine, CURIO; First, Sports Feature, Tom Speiss; Second, Overall Excellence of Newspapers, The Breeze; Second, News Story, Kate McPadden.

In regional competition sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists: First, Non-fiction Magazine Writing, Robyn Davis; First, Editorial Writing, Christy Mumford; First, Newspaper Feature Writing, Robyn Davis; First, Sports Photography, Mike Heffner; Second, Best All-Around Magazine, CURIO; Third, Newspaper Column Writing, Grant Jerding; Third, Non-fiction Magazine Writing, Meredith Parry.

In national competition sponsored by the Associated Collegiate Press: Second, Best of Show Competition—Tabloid Newspapers, The Breeze.
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