Rob Marsh: Country Doctor

Inside this issue
Jess’ Quick Lunch
Artist David Gill
Islamic Association of Shenandoah Valley
Curio, a magazine highlighting the Shenandoah Valley, is published each spring by students in the school of media arts and design at James Madison University. Curio is a non-profit organization supported by the school of media arts and design. Subscriptions are not available.

Curio
School of Media Arts and Design
James Madison University, MSC 4010
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
In for a quick lunch
A downtown landmark, Jess’ Quick Lunch serves up a lasting impression.

Call to prayer
The Islamic Association of Shenandoah Valley tells the story of building its mosque.

Lasting memories
Gitchell’s Studio captures the community through photography.

Historical and hip
Charlottesville offers travelers a variety of things to do.

Giving a dog a home
Rescuers save Jack Russell Terriers from unwilling owners.

In the paint
Award-winning watercolor artist David Gill fills canvases with color.

Footloose
Couples get into the swing of things with ballroom dancing lessons.

Dean of sports
Ehlers recounts life from high school basketball, to minor leagues and JMU athletics.

Out of the archives
Curio looks back through 25 years of memorable portraits.
CURIO STAFF

JEANINE GAJEWSKI
Jeanine Gajewski is a senior media arts and design major from Annapolis, Md., with a concentration in corporate communication and a minor in English. This year, she served as editor in chief of The Breeze. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in copy editing.

TRAVIS CLINGENPEEL
Travis Clingenpeel is a senior English major from Glendale, Az. He recently completed his third year on the editorial staff of JMU's student newspaper, The Breeze. He served as assistant Sports editor, Sports editor and managing editor. After graduation, he plans to pursue a career in journalism.

LEAH MCCOMBE
Leah McCombe is a senior media arts and design major from Richmond, Va. Her experiences include working at The Breeze as an advertising designer and two internships at Richmond ad agencies. She hopes to continue in the field of advertising as a graphic designer.

JESSICA TAYLOR
Jessica Taylor is a junior media arts and design and graphic design major from Yorktown, Va. She has worked for the Bluestone, JMU's award-winning yearbook, for two years, serving as a copy writer and copy director. Next year she will serve as the art director for The Breeze. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in publications.

DREW WILSON
Drew Wilson is a junior media arts and design major from Danville, Va. He recently completed his second year on the staff of JMU's student newspaper, The Breeze. After serving as assistant Sports editor and Sports editor, next year he will serve as the editor in chief. After graduation, he hopes to continue a career in sports journalism.

ELEANOR JONES
Eleanor Jones is a senior media arts and design major with a concentration in corporate communications from Fairfax, Va. Following her position as editor in chief of her high school magazine, she furthered her interest in journalism through Curio. After graduation she intends to pursue a career in advertising.

RACHELLE LACROIX
Rachelle Lacroix is a senior media arts and design major from Yorktown, Va. She served as photo editor of The Breeze this past year and is currently co-executive editor of Madison 101. After graduation she plans to go to London and someday join the Foreign Service.

NICOLE REYES
Nicole Reyes is a senior media arts and design major from Richmond, Va. She has served as marketing assistant at University Recreation for two years and is an active member in several of JMU's communication and media-related organizations. Nicole plans to pursue a career on the East Coast in advertising or design after graduation.

CHRISTOPHER LEONARD
Christopher Leonard is a senior media arts and design major concentrating in print journalism. He has written stories for The Breeze and the Daily News-Record in Harrisonburg and will pursue a career in sports journalism and broadcasting following graduation.

BRENNA WALTON
Brenna Walton is a senior media arts and design major concentrating in print journalism from Middletown, N.J. She served as the 2002-'03 Style editor of The Breeze and senior editor of Curio 2002. She plans to pursue a career in the magazine industry in New York City after graduation.

RASIKA WELANKIWAR
Rasika Welankiwar is a junior media arts and design major from Medfield, Mass., with a concentration in print journalism and a minor in art. After graduation, she plans to save money and move to California where she will pursue a career in journalism and finally get a puppy.

DAVID WENDELKEN & DONNA DUNN
Dr. David Wendelken is an associate professor of media arts and design who founded Curio in 1978 and has served as its only adviser until this year. Donna Dunn is a media arts and design instructor who served as Curio editor in 1994.
For all the change and growth the Shenandoah Valley has seen through the 25 years that Curio magazine has been in existence, this unique and vibrant area still retains its strong sense of community.

While drawing on the cultural and historical wealth of Washington, D.C. and the South, the Shenandoah Valley has a deep cultural and historical background of its own. Despite its expanding cities, the Valley has never lost its focus on the values integral to a small-town community.

The importance of family and friends, dependability of close neighbors, integrity in one’s personal life and business practices — these are all qualities that residents of the Valley hold dear. It is a snapshot of this unique Shenandoah community that Curio strives to deliver each year. In this, the 25th anniversary edition of Curio we highlighted individuals and groups who embody the ideal of community.

Small, family-owned businesses Red Front Supermarket, Gitchell’s Studio and Jess’ Quick Lunch have been hallmarks of the Valley for decades, thriving despite the onslaught of national chains. Rev. John Grace and Dr. Rob Marsh have dedicated their lives to serving their communities — one through prayer, the other through healing. And in the Islamic Association of the Shenandoah Valley, you’ll find a group etching out its own place in the community.

What we found in attempting to present as broad a representation of all the Valley has to offer is that no matter how different these groups and people may appear, through all of them runs a fundamental sense of their identities as members of the Valley community.

We could not have provided this glimpse of the Valley without the time and dedication of our editors, writers and photographers, as well as the guidance of our advisers Dr. David Wendelken and Donna Dunn.

And thank you to our devoted Curio readers for 25 years of support. We hope you enjoy this issue as much as those that came before.

Sincerely,

Travis Clingenpeel
Co-Executive Editor

Jeanine Gajewski
Co-Executive Editor
STICKING AROUND FOR A QUICK LUNCH

STORY BY BRAD RICHARDS PHOTOGRAPHY BY HANNA MARTINSON

With a simple menu of hot dogs and milkshakes, Jess’ Quick Lunch provides a quick and delicious meal in a fast-paced setting. A glimpse of Jess’ Quick Lunch. Looking in at the fast-paced grill, Alex Cruz (right) tops the hot dogs off with chili and cheese.
Quick Lunch

A Greek native left his home and set out for America on May 3, 1955. Two weeks later he reached the United States with just one American dollar in his pocket. That $1 eventually became the backbone of a long-standing tradition in downtown Harrisonburg — Jess’ Quick Lunch.
"Gus is a local celebrity. Whenever he walks down the street, people know that he is the owner of Jess'," JMU student manager, the basic food Jess' serves is the secret behind its success. It is consistently fast and delicious, Wood says.

The vinyl stool covers have seen many hungry regulars and intrigued travelers.

Fans of the Quick Lunch are not limited to the Valley. People have come from Alabama, Louisiana and Florida to chow down on the famous hot dogs.

Wood says she has served people who have ventured up from Florida stop at the Quick Lunch and order 50 or 60 hot dogs. "They pack them in a cooler, then get back in their car and keep on going," Wood says.

Floros has become a favorite for the customers, just like the food.

"Gus is a local celebrity. Whenever he walks down the street, people know that he is the owner of Jess'," JMU student

The Greek immigrant, Gus Floros, arrived 48 years ago and found a job working for his uncle George, then the owner of Jess' Quick Lunch. Floros says he earned $125 a month as an employee for his uncle. He put $20 away for rent, $5 toward laundry and attempted to save the rest.

One of many benefits Floros says he had working for his uncle was that food was easy to come by in a restaurant.

"I ate a lot of hot dogs," Floros says with a smirk and light-hearted chuckle while stacking soda cans into the refrigerator of the restaurant he now owns.

Downtown Harrisonburg has seen many businesses come and go over the years, but Jess' Quick Lunch on South Main Street has remained a lasting establishment as a quaint place to eat with a diner-like atmosphere. The long, stool-lined counter that lets customers seat themselves and order a hot dog with a soda has been the same as long as Floros can remember.

The light green formica diner counter welcomes hovering customers at all hours of operation.

The Quick Lunch is open 365 days a year, 9 a.m. until midnight. Floros says those hours have remained the same and so has the service. No matter the walk of life, if a passer-by is in the mood for something simple and cheap, Jess' will meet that need.

For just a few dollars, customers get quick, friendly service with a hot dog piled with onions and chili, a side of fries and a soda.

Customers agree that the atmosphere and food are just a few of the many perks of enjoying a meal at Jess'.

"Well, obviously I like the hot dogs, but the atmosphere at Jess' is classic," says JMU student Kristen Johns, a self-proclaimed hot dog authority. "You absolutely have to sit at the lunch counter. It's great. I love it."

The menu, which hangs illuminated above the grill and milkshake station, is highlighted by its famous chili-topped hot dogs. The Quick Lunch also offers burgers, various sandwiches, french fries, milkshakes, canned soda and numerous desserts.

According to Harrisonburg resident Cindy Wood, a Quick Lunch manager, the basic food Jess' serves is the secret behind its success. It is consistently fast and delicious, Wood says.

The vinyl stool covers have seen many hungry regulars and intrigued travelers.

Fans of the Quick Lunch are not limited to the Valley. People have come from Alabama, Louisiana and Florida to chow down on the famous hot dogs.

Wood says she has served people who have ventured up from Florida stop at the Quick Lunch and order 50 or 60 hot dogs. "They pack them in a cooler, then get back in their car and keep on going," Wood says.

Floros has become a favorite for the customers, just like the food.

"Gus is a local celebrity. Whenever he walks down the street, people know that he is the owner of Jess'," JMU student

The Greek immigrant, Gus Floros, arrived 48 years ago and found a job working for his uncle George, then the owner of Jess' Quick Lunch. Floros says he earned $125 a month as an employee for his uncle. He put $20 away for rent, $5 toward laundry and attempted to save the rest.

One of many benefits Floros says he had working for his uncle was that food was easy to come by in a restaurant.

"I ate a lot of hot dogs," Floros says with a smirk and light-hearted chuckle while stacking soda cans into the refrigerator of the restaurant he now owns.

Downtown Harrisonburg has seen many businesses come and go over the years, but Jess' Quick Lunch on South Main Street has remained a lasting establishment as a quaint place to eat with a diner-like atmosphere. The long, stool-lined counter that lets customers seat themselves and order a hot dog with a soda has been the same as long as Floros can remember.

The light green formica diner counter welcomes hovering customers at all hours of operation.

The Quick Lunch is open 365 days a year, 9 a.m. until midnight. Floros says those hours have remained the same and so has the service. No matter the walk of life, if a passer-by is in the mood for something simple and cheap, Jess' will meet that need.

For just a few dollars, customers get quick, friendly service with a hot dog piled with onions and chili, a side of fries and a soda.

Customers agree that the atmosphere and food are just a few of the many perks of enjoying a meal at Jess'.

"Well, obviously I like the hot dogs, but the atmosphere at Jess' is classic," says JMU student Kristen Johns, a self-proclaimed hot dog authority. "You absolutely have to sit at the lunch counter. It's great. I love it."

The menu, which hangs illuminated above the grill and milkshake station, is highlighted by its famous chili-topped hot dogs. The Quick Lunch also offers burgers, various sandwiches, french fries, milkshakes, canned soda and numerous desserts.

According to Harrisonburg resident Cindy Wood, a Quick Lunch manager, the basic food Jess' serves is the secret behind its success. It is consistently fast and delicious, Wood says.

The vinyl stool covers have seen many hungry regulars and intrigued travelers.

Fans of the Quick Lunch are not limited to the Valley. People have come from Alabama, Louisiana and Florida to chow down on the famous hot dogs.

Wood says she has served people who have ventured up from Florida stop at the Quick Lunch and order 50 or 60 hot dogs. "They pack them in a cooler, then get back in their car and keep on going," Wood says.

Floros has become a favorite for the customers, just like the food.

"Gus is a local celebrity. Whenever he walks down the street, people know that he is the owner of Jess'," JMU student
Sarah Crosby, a server, says.

Upon returning from a trip to Greece in 1962, Floros bought Jess' from his uncle and continued to supply the atmosphere for which Jess' is known.

The Quick Lunch has kept its business approach as simple as its menu despite changing technology. Every Wednesday the restaurant gets a delivery of chocolate and vanilla ice cream so servers can make their popular old-fashioned milkshakes. The uniqueness of serving crushed ice with canned soda is also something that the regular customers have come to expect.

Floros says he can remember only two days that the restaurant closed: once, in 1979, when the restaurant was damaged due to a fire, and in 2001 when his wife passed away.

According to Wood, after the fire in 1979, the existing dining room was added. The addition of the numerous tables and wooden booths lining the long, narrow dining room made Jess' capable of seating 150 people.

Floros says his two sons, George and John, both used to help run day-to-day activities of the business. Floros says they were trained for the jobs from a young age. They began to work the cash register and clean tables at 12 years old.

The simple, unassuming atmosphere has attracted many famous faces to Jess', including Sen. George Allen of Virginia. “He comes in [and] has his picture taken every time,” Wood says. “He gets back there (behind the counter, at the stove) and acts like he’s cooking hot dogs.”

James student Erin Greason, a server at Jess', says she thinks the interaction between the customers and employees is a unique characteristic that most restaurants do not offer.

The Quick Lunch has earned its stripes for its food and service, but much of its success can be attributed to Floros’ determination to keep his restaurant running the way his customers expect.

“Gus is a great guy. He knows how to run a good business,” Greason says. “He likes things to work a certain way, and he has a respect for his employees.”

After many decades at its South Main Street location, Jess’ will be opening a second shop. Servers Johns and Wood say that soon will be leaving to start up Jess’ Quick Lunch No. 2, which will offer a drive-thru and fountain soft drinks.

The combination of good food, quick service and an easy-going atmosphere has done great things for the diner and keeps bringing customers back.

Jess' has shown durability by outlasting much of its competition during the last eight decades, and the future of the diner will rest on the long-standing values and service around which Floros has shaped his business.

BRAD RICHARDS is a junior media arts and design major from Falls Church, Va. After graduating, he plans to pursue a career in journalism.
A moment of devotion. Quiet Koranic recitation is an important aspect of the prayer ritual.
The Islamic Association of Shenandoah Valley builds a community around an "American mosque with American values"

In its more than four years of operation, the Islamic mosque for the Shenandoah Valley, located in Harrisonburg, has been an enduring and welcoming presence for Muslims looking for a place to perform their prayers and develop an authentic sense of religious community. Constructed in 1998 and opened to the community the following year, the cream-colored, single-level building has a history that dates back to the early 1980s and the development of a permanent Muslim community in Harrisonburg and the surrounding area.
Ehsan Ahmed, a native of Pakistan, is one of the founding fathers of the Harrisonburg mosque and its affiliated organization, the Islamic Association of Shenandoah Valley. When he arrived in the Valley in 1983, the Muslim community was merely a fraction of its current size of over 120 families. “During the ’80s we had 25 [Muslim] families living here,” Ahmed says.

While the possibility of a local mosque where Muslims could gather was merely a dream more than 20 years ago, the small Muslim community benefited from a good working relationship with the local Trinity Presbyterian Church. The church opened its facilities to local Muslims for Friday prayers and Islamic lessons for children on Saturdays and Sundays. “For almost nine years they were our link to the rest of the community,” Ahmed says.

But the time eventually came when dreams had to be forged into a concrete reality, and Ahmed, along with other local Muslims, founded the Islamic Association. “[Our] ultimate purpose was to build a mosque here and have a place to worship and get together,” he says.

Hope for a future mosque was fueled by the help of another religion. In 1995, as the Muslim community continued to grow, the association placed a bid on a portion of land for sale by the Victory Baptist Church. When the organization won the bid and the land was theirs, it was time to break ground.

“We collected some money but not enough to hire a contractor,” Ahmed says of the monetary contributions from the Muslim community. “All we needed was money just for the materials, and we tried to save as much of a labor cost as we could. So we built the place ourselves.”

Work began on the future community mosque in June 1998 with the help of numerous volunteers. The operation united the association with Muslims from local communities as well as those in Northern Virginia towns including Springfield. Some volunteers worked days. Others volunteered at night when they were off work, laying down the wooden foundation, solving safety situations and constructing the mosque’s prayer area and a multipurpose room for religious education, Ahmed says.

Though a brick wall around the wood foundation, a dome and a minaret are planned developments for the future, the mosque’s interiors were completed in June of 1999, and it was then that community Muslims, after waiting for more than 10 years, finally had their own place of worship.

But more than two years later the terrorist actions of Muslim fundamentalists on a calm Tuesday morning in September 2001 forced the world religion of Islam to wage a battle against religious misinterpretation. For the community of Muslims in the Shenandoah Valley, this battle was less arduous than might have been expected. But the mosque and the Muslim community made strong efforts to expose the local community to a peaceful representation of Islam.

One month after the attacks, the local Muslim community held a program to present the community with an informal group of lectures concerning the Islamic faith and its relationship with politics and the global community, Ahmed says. It was one of the only times the Islamic Association willingly opened a forum on religion and politics, something the organization usually prefers not to discuss because it detracts from the mission of presenting a peaceful religion, Ahmed says.

That autumn evening the association and the mosque prepared for a few straggling visitors wanting to know more about the Islamic faith. The event’s organizers set out a handful of plastic folding chairs in their recreation room but ended up playing host to a packed house. “The response was tremendous,”
Ahmed says, “Five hundred people [was] more than we anticipated.”

Ahmed says he remembers seeing two police cars in the parking lot that evening. He approached them expecting to be chastised about the crowded parking situation, only to find that the officers were not there on duty — they, too, were visiting the mosque to learn more about Islam.

As a result of that program, the association has opened the mosque during Friday prayers to visitors looking to expose themselves to an honest practice of Islam. “On a regular basis, every week we get some people,” Ahmed says. “We get lots of kids who come from [James Madison University], Eastern Mennonite University, Mary Baldwin College. We receive requests to speak at different churches, also. The last year and a half, response from the community has been very positive and very significant.”

JMU student Jon Anderson says he recently attended an open house at the mosque as a requisite for an Islam course. His visit centered on the search for knowledge on Islam in relation to contemporary politics and post-Sept. 11, 2001 life.

“One time visiting any service, any community religion ... there is no way you’re going to get an understanding of that faith,” Anderson says. “I’m asking questions. I’m looking for knowledge.”

Another student in JMU’s Islam course is Taylor Kennedy, a Christian who visited the mosque seeking an understanding of the religion and a chance to listen to Koranic recitation.

Despite a disappointment with the women’s restrictive religious garb and their separation from the men during prayer time, Kennedy suggests that other ununiformed Christians like her should take the time to visit the mosque.

“I think it would be well worth their time as long as they were really interested and respectful,” she says. “I felt like it broadened my horizons and challenged
Inside the Mosque

At 10 minutes to 1 p.m. they file through the open door in sporadic clusters to the squeaky soundtrack of wet sneakers, loafers and boots. Gathered together in the lobby, the individuals begin removing their footwear, men leaning one-handed against the wall, women sitting in gray folding chairs, children squirming on the floor as they untie their laces. With shoes stacked in families on the wooden shelf or placed alone in a far corner of the lobby, the floor becomes a collage of feet, most covered in white socks but some kept bare.

Quietly, the faithful leave their shoes behind and step into the prayer room where early arrivals sit cross-legged on the thick green carpeting, heads bent downward as if consumed by devout contemplation or everyday thoughts. The women and little girls with multicolored scarves covering their heads separate from the men and little boys, slipping behind a white curtained area in a corner of the prayer area and waiting, like the others, for the Friday afternoon prayer to begin.

This process continues for another 15 minutes: the continuous flow of faithful Muslims through the front doors, into the lobby and shoeless into the prayer room ringed in Arabic calligraphy representing the names of Allah.

At 1:10 p.m., Abdulrahman Hijazi, this afternoon's prayer leader, steps into a hollow niche in the wall at the front of the room and stands before the microphone, the black of his jacket accenting the dark strands of the beard on his round brown face. The gathered faithful sit in front of him, looking east where, across the Atlantic Ocean and in the Saudi Arabian city of Mecca, stands the Ka'aba — the cubed holy structure that every Muslim in the world must face during their five daily prayers.

A silence hangs like lace over the prayer room for a few seconds. Then, in Hijazi's deep and sonorous voice, the traditional Islamic "adhan," the call to prayer, resounds throughout the room, celebrating the greatness of Allah.

Then Hijazi speaks in a voice that fluctuates between a normal cadence and a high, forceful tone to emphasize something important. Today, he lectures on the need to understand and remain true to the Islamic faith.

"How can we know our mission if we cannot know Islam properly?" he asks those gathered before him, gesturing with his one free hand, the other holding the folded speech notes at his side. "[A false portrayal of Islam] is equal to lying on behalf of Allah. We've got to learn from history so we can be more productive."

Hijazi cries in a high voice, "We should not repeat the sad news again and again!"

"All that matters is what you have in your heart," he says.

Following the sermon is the traditional afternoon prayer. Hijazi wanders through the front row of men, urging them to arrange their standing bodies in a straight line and move closer together so that no space remains between two bodies. Behind the white curtain, the women follow the same instructions while their daughters move around them. The young children on both sides of the curtain are left to their own devices, some choosing to sit on the carpet, others imitating the posture of their parents, backs straight, hands clasped under their bellies.

The prayer itself is a strict orchestra- tion, composed of the recitation of specific "surahs" from the Koran. All at once men and women of all ages fall on their hands and knees to the floor, the straight lines bending and collapsing like stalks of wheat in a strong breeze. Foreheads resting on the plush carpet, they whisper religious recitations to themselves and the collective sound is like the rush of water over rocks in a small creek. Then the prayer continues with a return to the standing position followed by a repetition of the prostration and the whispered devotion.

After 10 minutes, the afternoon prayer nears its end. The crowd gathers back in the lobby to collect their shoes. Men and women slip into loafers and slippers while the kids once again squirm and struggle with the laces on their sneakers. The community chatter resumes — weekend plans, weather forecasts, congestion in the parking lot — as people slowly file out. Once the crowd fades, the lights go off in the prayer area and adjoining multipurpose room.

The last person out the door twists the key in the lock, checks it and slowly closes the mosque door. Then he, like the others before him, plods down the stairs toward his car, leaving the mosque behind, its insides still resonating with the warm devotion of a faithful community.

—ZAK SALIH
A modern studio with a family feel, Gitchell's Studio Camera Shop has served the Valley for more than 90 years by

Developing Memories

STORY BY JANELLE DIORIO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BETHANEE WILGOCKI

In its 94 years of business, Gitchell's Studio Camera Shop has made a name for itself in Harrisonburg. Located downtown on East Market Street, the small store is filled with memories. Plaques of local sports teams decorate the walls, along with portraits of families and weddings from years past. In the corner stands the store's antique camera, which symbolizes the history of the business. It sits in a wooden box about three feet high, with a "Please Do Not Touch" sign in front of it.
Brothers John and Frank Gitchell originally founded Gitchell’s Photo Shop in Charlottesville in 1907. In 1909, John and his wife, Allie, moved to Harrisonburg and opened another store. The current owner, Christa Gitchell, is the third generation of Gitchells, and her son, Jon, 19, also works at the store. Christa has been running Gitchell’s since 1986, taking over when her father was no longer able to run it due to his declining health. She was just 19 when she dropped out of nursing school to take care of her father.

Photographer Richard McCrary and his wife Judy, a lab technician, have been with Gitchell’s for 30 and 28 years, respectively. Christa Gitchell describes them as “just like family.”

James Madison University student Liz Workman has been working at Gitchell’s for about three years. She says she likes the laid-back, flexible work environment. “Since it is a family-owned business, the people who work here tend to stay for a while,” Workman says. “This helps us develop close relationships.”

Gitchell says Workman helps her keep it all together, and that Workman is wonderful with the kids and parents. “We have a lot of fun on the days we work together. I don’t know what I’d do without her,” Gitchell says.

As a well-established Harrisonburg business, Gitchell’s has many ties within the community. The honest and friendly staff know many of their customers by name. Many of the store’s customers have been going to Gitchell’s for years. Workman says;

“If I go anywhere in town... kids come up to me because they recognize me as the ‘picture lady.’”

Gitchell’s sponsors sports teams in the area and is involved with many local schools. Montevideo Middletown School has been a business partner with Gitchell’s for about 10 years, according to Gitchell. Every six weeks, Gitchell’s takes portraits of three outstanding students, which are then hung up on the school’s wall. Robert Scott, Montevideo’s principal, says Gitchell is great to work with. “Christa is very dependable with good, timely service, and she has great rapport with our students.”

Gitchell says she mainly shoots portraits of the sports teams. Gitchell shoots a total of 2,200 sports team photos each year, sometimes photographing over 1,000 kids in one day, including JMU’s football and basketball teams. Last year was the first year Gitchell photographed the JMU football team. “They were fun. We had a blast!” Gitchell says of the experience.
According to Gitchell, the studio photographs sports teams in Rockingham, Page, Augusta and Shenandoah counties and some areas in West Virginia.

Weddings are another big photography market for the store. Gitchell says she has taken pictures of children when they were in tee-ball, and then some 20 years later, took their wedding pictures.

Workman says, “To me, this represents the loyalty and personal touch of a small business.”

According to Gitchell, her most vivid experience involved a woman whose house had just burned down. Gitchell said she had been taking sports pictures of her 14-year-old son since he was in tee-ball. The woman lost all her son’s pictures in the fire, so she asked Gitchell if she still had any of the negatives. Gitchell says she went through everything and found every one of his pictures. She did a memory-mate and four wallets of each picture for the woman. When the woman came in to make her first payment, Gitchell gave all of the pictures to her for free. The woman broke down in tears and has sent Gitchell Christmas cards every year for the past six years. “It’s the most rewarding thing you can do for somebody,” Gitchell says.

Workman’s favorite part about working at Gitchell’s is constantly being around people, particularly young children. “Since I have been working here for a while, season after season and from sport to sport, the children, parents and I begin to recognize one another within the community,” she says.

Gitchell says her shop also does one-hour processing, passport photos, immigration photos, family portraits, slide processing and black-and-white processing. She says Gitchell’s sells just about anything needed for photography including cameras, lenses, film, tripods, carrying cases and picture frames. However, the store is trying to move away from cameras because “everything is going digital now and it’s hard to keep up with,” Gitchell says.

Gitchell’s develops all photos in its studio; nothing is sent elsewhere. All of the photos are processed in the upstairs of the store, Gitchell explains.

In regards to future plans for the store, Gitchell says she does not want it to expand. She owned a store in Staunton for 16 years, but she shut it down two years ago. “I was traveling back and forth so much. It was too crazy,” Gitchell says.

Gitchell does not yet know if her son will take over the business because he may be going into the U.S. Marines. “I always hoped one of my boys would ... but I want him to be happy in whatever he does. It will be his choice,” Gitchell says.

For now, Gitchell says running a state-of-the-art studio with a family feel has helped her capture lasting memories. “If I go anywhere in town, like the mall, kids come up to me because they recognize me as the ‘picture lady,’” Gitchell says.

JANELLE DIORIO is a senior media arts and design major from Whitesboro, N.Y. After graduation she plans to pursue a career in journalism.
Big heart in a small

STORY BY TRAVIS CLINGENPEEL PHOTOGRAPHY BY RACHELLE LACROIX

A full schedule. Dr. Rob Marsh (right) sometimes sees as many as 35 patients a day at his bustling Middlebrook Family Practice.
A former special forces flight surgeon serves Augusta County residents as their community doctor

As Dr. John “Rob” Marsh leans forward on the railing, the door opens slowly, just a few inches as if coaxed by a slight breeze. There is no light inside the stone and mortar house as Marsh steps sideways into the foyer.

His eyes adjusting to the dark, Marsh steps over piles of newspapers and empty frozen dinner trays that have doubled as cat food dishes. The patient, an 87-year old woman, inches slowly toward the living room on her walker.

“How you doin’ young lady?” Marsh asks, following the elderly woman clad in a pink bathrobe spotted with cigarette burns. She reaches the only source of light apparent on the first floor, a single floor lamp in the living room.

Marsh follows her to the couch, into the light where he looks nothing like the average doctor. Instead of a shirt and tie, he is wearing a blue plaid button-up shirt and wrinkled green khakis with hiking boots. His angular face tightens into concentration as he studies the woman’s medication.

“So this white one isn’t working for you?” Marsh asks, to which the hunched patient answers by shaking her head “no.”

Marsh decides to increase her pain medication and helps her decipher some paperwork from the Department of Motor Vehicles. A few minutes later, back in his truck, Marsh is grimacing at the condition in which he found her and her husband.
“With all that trash it would take just a spark to send that whole place up,” he says. “We need to get them out of there.”

Marsh is a family physician in Middlebrook, a small Augusta County town of 300 nestled on Route 252 among the hills south of Staunton. It lies along one street, is divided by one stop sign and has just one doctor.

While medical care used to be difficult to come by, things began to fall in place for the people of this rural community six years ago when the University of Virginia decided to establish a satellite clinic in Augusta County. The administration of the UVa. medical school wanted to expose its students to the practice of rural medicine. At the time, Marsh had just retired from the Army after 20 years of service as a special forces flight surgeon and was looking to open a practice in the Shenandoah Valley. Marsh and the university decided that Middlebrook was a good fit, and the humble clinic of Middlebrook Family Medicine opened in 1996. It now exists as a small, narrow-walled facility that belies the fury of activity it sees every week.

“They really like the idea of having a physician nearby,” Marsh says. “It also helps that I live there — people realize that I have an invested interest in this community as well.”

One cannot have a conversation with Marsh about rural medicine, teaching, faith or his military experience without broaching the topic of community. It permeates every aspect of his life and he extols its virtues religiously.

“When you move into a rural area, you can’t just practice,” he says of rural medicine. “You need to get invested in the community.”

Dr. Greg Saathoff, a psychiatrist and Marsh’s colleague, says that his devotion to community is unparalleled. “Before I knew Rob I didn’t know it was possible for someone to live out a commitment the way he does,” Saathoff says, “for someone to actually engage in care and concern for the community like he does.”

In what little time Marsh does not devote to his practice, he is an elder at his local church and a member of Middlebrook’s all-volunteer fire department.

The country doctor
But neither his work with physicians nor spiritual conflagrations can detract from the focus of Marsh’s life — the practice and teaching of rural medicine. With the sense of intimacy that comes when a physician’s patients are also his neighbors comes added benefit and responsibility.

“I like that aspect of really knowing all of my patients. I consider most of them my friends,” Marsh says. “You need to treat the whole person.”

When Marsh interviews a patient, the conversation flows from health concerns to how a person’s house fared in the last storm that rolled across the Valley. Marsh also uses this knowledge to his professional advantage, asking an elderly woman how many chickens she has in order to check her mental clarity, according to third-year UVa. medical student Marsha Haley.

Saathoff says, “When you know your patients that well, they will trust you with information that they might not provide to someone who is more marginal in their lives.”

But the closeness between doctor...
and patient that tight-knit communities like Middlebrook provide comes with a downside, as a physician heavily involved in a community takes more of a risk personally, according to Marsh.

“It’s hard to see your patients die,” Marsh says as he backs out of the driveway of a man in the final stages of lung cancer. “You want to be there for them, but it’s hard. It’s part of the life process. It’s still draining when you watch someone you know closely die — morally you feel more responsibility for them.”

What becomes apparent as one tours the hills of Augusta County with Marsh is that his familiarity with his patients comes not from a professional desire, but from the personal one that drives Marsh to be, as he says, a “people person.” This enthusiasm for people and their stories is never more evident than when he is performing house calls.

“I don’t see any of this as a chore,” he says, pulling onto the front lawn of a large stone house. The two dirt ruts that served as the driveway end on the lawn. “I really enjoy this ... It lets me get out and drive a little bit.”

Marsh stuffs his stethoscope in his jacket pocket and bounds up the front steps. “This house was built sometime right after the Revolutionary War,” Marsh says. When he gets no response at the door, Marsh turns over an empty planter on the porch, shifts a rock from its resting place on the first step and sweeps through the bushes. “They used to keep a key around here somewhere,” he says.

Stepping into the patient’s environment is something not seen much in modern medicine, and Marsh considers it an invaluable tool in his practice. “It lets you see how they live,” Marsh says. “If you never did house calls, you wouldn’t know what’s going on.”

From the month-long clerkship that he served in Middlebrook, third-year UVA medical student Brad Weaver remembers house calls being made on both emergency and routine bases, whether it be to suture a cut on an elderly man who fell or giving immunizations to those who couldn’t travel to the clinic.

This variety in Marsh’s practice is a common thread among rural physicians, because the limited accessibility of health care gives rise to a wider spectrum of concerns. “That’s something that I like about family medicine — the diversity,” Marsh says. “You never know what you’re going to see next.”

Another effect of this, Weaver says, is that rural physicians are forced to be a “jack-of-all-trades,” and must have the ability to improvise when necessary.

Saathoff says, “In rural medicine you have to be prepared to do more with less. You have to be even more concerned with the many needs of your patients and sometimes fill the role of many specialists.”

Even with one physician being able to serve as a number of different specialties, patients in rural communities often struggle with the high cost of medical care. Marsh says it is the physician’s responsibility to help his patients afford health care.

“You’ve got to do what’s right for the patient, but if you can do it a little cheaper that’s great,” he says.

To assist with the skyrocketing cost of health care, Marsh says he tries to prescribe generic instead of brand-name drugs and only orders tests when he deems them absolutely necessary in order to keep doctor’s bills down.
“[Marsh] is as selfless a physician as I have ever known.”

Marsh also “does a lot of pro-bono work for people with no insurance,” Weaver says. “He wasn't going to decline anyone from getting health care. I can't think of anyone who does that anymore.”

It is all part of a personal philosophy that seems, without fail, to put the community's needs before his own.

“This is as selfless a physician as I have ever known,” Saathoff says. “I know this sounds like a facile statement, but it is true in his case.”

Marsh handles all praise with his trademark modesty, making graceful attempts to deflect acclaim. Saathoff says this humility is just part of his focus on patients and their needs. “This is a guy who very rarely talks about himself,” Saathoff says. “You hear the word, ‘we,’ you don’t hear the word, ‘I.’”

When asked about the sacrifices he makes for his patients and students, Marsh is quick to recognize his wife, Barbara, and four children, ages 4 to 10, as making a sacrifice greater than his. “The hardest part for me is to balance the family side,” he says. “If there was a drawback to this, I’d say I’d like more time with my family.”

Marsh and his family live on a historic working farm outside Middlebrook. Dating back to the 19th-century, the Marsh farm on weekends is dedicated to myriad chores. Driving through a warm February afternoon, Marsh boasts of his 10-year-old son Adam preparing a group of pigs and sheep for an upcoming market animal show.

“There are physicians who have gentleman's farms,” Saathoff says. “For someone as busy as [Marsh] is, that’s what you might expect. This is a guy who rolls up his sleeves as a professional and in his personal life.”

Teaching the ‘art of medicine’

When Marsh enlisted the help of the UVa. medical school in opening his Middlebrook clinic, he rolled up his sleeves for more than work with patients. The university counts on him to expose its students to the life of a country doctor.

“We want them to have experience working in the context of the medical community,” says Dr. Karen Maughan, UVa. director of family practice clerkship. “I think he also invites the students to see ... how you live in the area as a physician.”

After two years of classroom instruction, UVa. medical students work with doctors in the community. Students spend one month at a time shadowing doctors in different specialties, but in Middlebrook, they do much more than watching.

Whereas in most clerkships students observe doctors working, Marsh puts his students in a room with patients where it is their responsibility to conduct the primary interview and formulate a diagnosis, according to Weaver. From there, Marsh talks to the students outside about their findings before going into the room to treat the patient personally.

Marsh says this hands-on approach is the best way to learn what he calls, “the art of medicine.” “It's easier to learn by getting in and taking charge with the patients,” he says. “Medicine is best learned like an apprenticeship.”

Every student that Marsh takes under his wing plays a role on the health care team in Middlebrook. Students have responded to their experiences with rave reviews, awarding Marsh the 2000 Dean’s Award for Teaching, the medical school's highest honor for its faculty.

“He can make almost any student want to be a rural family doctor,” Maughan says. “They love their experience with him. He probably takes more students than any other preceptor every year, and he is by far our highest-rated preceptor.”

For a rural family physician and former special forces flight surgeon, one might wonder where Marsh’s passion for teaching comes from. Marsh
suggests he is just passing the torch. “I was so lucky to have some great teachers when I was at the University (of Virginia),” he says. “I would still enjoy my practice if I didn’t have a student, but I really do love to teach.”

Marsh’s devotion to his community suggests a sense of a higher obligation. His voice mellows into veneration as he says, “My faith helps me through the things I see day to day. The Lord has given me the talents to do what I do. This is why he saved my life almost 10 years ago now, and this is the purpose he has given me.”

A world away

A decade ago, Marsh lived in a completely different world than he does now. Instead of treating Middlebrook’s farmers and aging residents, he was treating some of the U.S. military’s most elite soldiers. As a flight surgeon for Delta — an Army special forces unit shrouded in secrecy — Marsh served in combat zones ranging from Iraq in the Gulf War to Somalia in Operation Restore Hope.

His self-effacing and warm demeanor may overshadow the fact that Marsh is one of the most highly-decorated flight surgeons alive. During his 20-year career in the military, Marsh was awarded the Legion of Merit, the Purple Heart, two bronze stars, the Department of Defense Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Meritorious Service Medal. All of these are conspicuously missing from an office where the walls are covered with memorabilia from his days with Delta.

“I didn’t want this to be an, ‘I love me’ wall,” Marsh says, standing between plaques thanking him for his service in Delta and 4-H ribbons he won showing the livestock he raises on his farm. “It’s more of a conversation starter. I had all these plaques and things piled up in boxes, and this wall just gave me a place to put them.”

As a sophomore at UVa. in 1976, Marsh says he could not decide what he wanted to do with his life. Needing a focus for his energies, Marsh left school and enlisted in the Army, entering a 20-month training program that took him from basic training all the way into the special forces.

It was then, in the Army, that Marsh had his first encounter with medicine. “They really wanted medics [in the special forces],” he says. “They were taking them off the street.”

After two years as a special forces medic, Marsh returned to UVa. in 1978 to complete his degree, remaining on special forces reserves. Upon graduating, he entered Eastern Virginia Medical School’s accelerated three-year program. Soon after, while stationed at Fort Eustis, Va., Marsh was recruited into Delta. “It’s the best job in the Army,” he says. “You can be seeing patients at 3 o’clock, something happens and a few hours later you’re loading a C-141 (cargo plane), taking off to the other side of the world. I really like the adrenaline rush that came with that.”

While a flight surgeon is responsible for the care of the unit’s soldiers and pilots, the duty for which Marsh most distinguished himself was his care for soldiers’ families.

“He realized that one of the ways to increase the morale and keep the group cohesive would be to allay their concerns about their family,” says Saathoff, a former Army reservist himself. “Those changes are ones that are still in existence today. By virtue of his time and service the philosophy has changed and matured.”

Marsh says the changes he implemented — longer clinic hours, hiring more staff and being on-call to put a focus on family care — were just part of his desire to do what he was trained for. “I was trained to be a doctor,” he says. “I didn’t just want to see a bunch of healthy soldiers all the time. I wanted to see some patients.”

In the Gulf War in 1991, Marsh was deployed in Iraq with Delta and...
“It can be difficult. You want to get the wounded back, but you have to wait.”

When American troops moved to recover the downed crews, the firefight that ensued with Somali militia was the most fierce by American troops since the Vietnam War. The conflict would ultimately end in 18 Americans being killed and more than 70 wounded.

On that Sunday afternoon and evening in Mogadishu, Marsh attended to more than 60 combat casualties. Treating so many wounded and realizing that because the special forces community operates like a small town, he wanted to practice medicine in a small community when he left the Army. With this in mind, Marsh took leave from Delta to do a family medicine rotation at UVA.

Marsh’s plans took a backseat as he completed his rotation in 1993 — just a few weeks later he was dispatched to Somalia with Delta as part of Task Force Ranger in Operation Restore Hope. Six weeks of uneventful deployment passed for Marsh until Oct. 3, 1993, when a Task Force Ranger mission to capture two top lieutenants of warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid went wrong as two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were shot down.

Marsh was on base at the time, preparing for potential casualties when the call came over the radio that a helicopter was down. “We were ready at that point, so nothing changed,” Marsh says. Losing several of his Delta soldiers, he says, was the most trying experience of his military career.

“The negative aspect of Delta is no one rotates like in other units, so when you see them hurt or killed, it takes more out of you,” Marsh says. “They’re a friend, you know their wife and family.”

It was three days later, on the night of Oct. 6, that Marsh himself became a combat casualty. He was participating in an informal staff meeting on the tarmac when a mortar fired from within the city landed just a few feet away. To his left, Sgt. Matt Rierson was killed instantly, and Marsh was thrown back onto the tarmac, shrapnel tearing into his abdomen and legs.

“I remember a bright flash of light and I remember sound,” he says. “I remember feeling hurt, the feeling of being pushed away, and at first I thought someone had set off a grenade.”

When he was stabilized and treated for shock, Marsh demanded the wounded be brought to his side so he could direct their treatment from his stretcher.

“There were some decisions to be made, who to triage first,” he says. “There was nothing wrong with my brain, so I told them to do some things.”

Initially, Marsh refused to be evacuated before what he considered to be more seriously-injured soldiers. Upon returning to the United States from an Army hospital in Germany and undergoing a stressful rehabilitation, Marsh decided he would be unable to return to Delta.

“My injuries prevented me from doing the things I wanted to do,” he says. “I would’ve been a liability.”

But while the injuries stripped him of his ability to serve in the Army, Marsh says it gave him important insight into the patients he treats every day. “Being a patient myself had a huge impact on me,” he says. “Having chest tubes, getting blood drawn and all, this stuff that I’ve put my patients through, has given me greater respect for their situation.”

Instead of dealing with combat casualties, Marsh is happy to be fighting farming injuries and head colds. The residents that seek treatment in Middlebrook see their doctor, not the soldier who was awarded the helicopter rotor that hangs above his office door as thanks from his Delta unit.

In fact in Middlebrook, little was known about Marsh’s military service and honors until a recent string of articles in The Washington Post and on CNN. But despite national media attention, Marsh is still more likely to have his son’s pigs and sheep on display than the medals that collect dust in boxes in his truck and home.

“He doesn’t talk about his military experience very much,” Weaver says. “He’s all about being a doctor now.”

TRAVIS CLINGENPEELE is a senior English major from Glendale, Az. After graduation, he plans on pursuing a career in journalism.
On the Front Lines

In the battle with chain superstores, Red Front Supermarket succeeds with personal service and simple values

STORY BY LISA FREEDMAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY RACHELLE LACROIX

The clock winds over to 7 a.m., and a manager walks over to the glass doors to unlock them. David Garber picks up his daily paper, tucks it under his arm and runs his hand through his white hair. He straightens his khaki-colored vest and starts his routine walk around the store. The sparkling wax coating on the tile floor leads the way as Garber walks up and down each aisle. He straightens the items on the shelf; even if they looked good before, he wants them to look perfect now. Garber passes by each station in the store and double checks that an employee is ready to help the customers. This morning is no different than any other morning at Red Front Supermarket.
Garber is an old pro at this routine by now. Since April 30, 1959, Garber has shared his mornings with Red Front. In addition to his 45 years with the store, the Garber family has been in the grocery business since Garber’s father opened a country store in Clover Hill in 1905. In 1952 the family moved to Harrisonburg where they opened a new grocery store on West Market Street. After a few years they closed this store to open a larger one on Chicago Avenue, the store known as the Red Front Supermarket.

"... We can make decisions based on the customers instead of waiting for a guy behind a desk to tell us."

This small family business has managed to survive 45 years in the market. To this day customers make the same walk up from Chicago Avenue that they made when they were children. The glass doors open for them and the sound of squeaky shopping cart wheels and soft leather-bottom shoes welcome them. Garber is still the owner and regularly makes his morning checks, only his participation in the store’s operations has grown smaller. Despite his age, Garber prides himself for his ability to stay active in the store, “I still make myself available and I am always part of the process for any major change,” Garber says. To fill in Garber’s shoes is Eugene Wenger, from Lancaster, Penn.

For more than 40 years, Wenger has worked for Red Front, the last 30 spent running the business for Garber. The experience Wenger says he gained through working with Garber has given him the ability to handle the business and make decisions that Garber would have wanted.

Running this business is not a small task. Deliveries are made to the store every day — either meat, produce or other products — and the loading dock always seems to be busy. The products then need to be unloaded, prepared and put out to sell. At the same time deliveries are being made, the parking lot is packed and the aisles are overflowing with customers filling their carts from the time the store opens at 7 a.m. until it closes at 10 p.m.

It takes a unique store to be able to compete with surrounding supermarkets that seem to be taking over the community. Red Front uses its unique qualities to keep its customers coming back regularly.

Bill Hellmick has been doing business with the Garbers since his family came to town and opened a store on West Market Street in 1952. He says it is important to have family-owned stores and maintain the feeling of community. “You have to continue to support the local stores,” he explains. “Chain stores can rob you of that feeling.” One shopper says she has been shopping at Red Front since...
she was a child and has not been to a major chain in years. Others say that it is the low prices that lure them in. Red Front buys its products in bulk, then gets them ready to sell at a cheaper price. Garber says that although Red Front does not advertise “everyday low prices,” it will compete with everyday low prices.

Many customers say they shop at Red Front because it carries unique cooking items that can only be found at a specialty foods store. These items lure in local shoppers who cannot take time to drive to a large city. Gilma Hinton has been making her way to Harrisonburg from Dayton to shop at Red Front for over 25 years. She says she goes there “because they have good prices, good food and a good atmosphere.”

The atmosphere is exactly what Wenger believes makes Red Front distinctive. “Many of the employees have been here for a major number of years,” Wenger says. The employees’ experience and dedication to their jobs make Red Front a great place to work and shop. Wenger explains that because most Red Front shoppers are returning customers, the store gets a good feel for its clientele.

“We know what we are doing, and we can make decisions based on the customers instead of waiting for some guy behind a desk to tell us,” Wenger says. This personal attitude is prevalent the moment customers walk into Red Front and each cashier looks up at them with a smile. The friendly faces, the fresh products, good prices and the feel for the customers’ needs is not something that is easily delivered by large chain stores.

Over the years, Red Front has beaten out many competitors. Red Front has seen the chain store Safeway clear off its shelves and shut down. Other stores, such as Mick or Mack, also were forced to close. Wenger says he believes that Red Front has been so successful because it stands out from its competitors. “The fact that we are unique causes the fact that we are still in existence,” Wenger says.

However, Red Front has not seen success all throughout its history. Garber looks at a picture of an old car and sighs. “At one point I fell on the verge of bankruptcy,” he says. Garber explains that the store on West Market Street used to be credit and delivery. Customers would select their food, and
the store would deliver it and charge the customer's account. When Garber decided to use cash — a system to which surrounding stores had already switched — customers protested. During these times most customers had been used to the credit system. Those customers that did prefer to use cash preferred to do their business with a larger chain store.

The struggling owner realized that he needed to bring customers back right away. Garber had an idea; he bought a car for $300, and for a month, he advertised that Red Front would be giving away the car, filled with groceries. "The day we did the giveaway, you couldn't get into the parking lot," Garber says. From that day on the business grew and continued to grow to what it is today.

With this kind of accomplishment, Red Front has had to grow physically in order to do so.
so financially. The store now stands four times larger than when it originally opened in 1959. Since its grand opening, there have been several additions, according to Garber. After just one addition in 1969 the store doubled in size. In 1984, an entire floor was added above the store to serve as offices so that all the behind-the-scenes work could be done on the site. A year later, the front was expanded to create more shelving space. Just five years ago, Red Front underwent a major renovation so that it would become “bigger, more up to date and more appealing to the customers,” Wenger says. This final renovation made the store the size it is now. All these transformations were done while the store remained open.

The store now stands two stories tall over a busy parking lot. Customers are welcomed by automatic glass doors decorated with flyers notifying them of upcoming community events. Floor-to-ceiling windows make the entrance way a bright place to pick up a cart and get the customer in the friendly Red Front spirit. Once inside, 14 aisles of groceries wait to be picked through by the local shoppers. Many customers agree that this family business is equipped to compete with any other chain grocery store.

Red Front has taken advantage of its small business appeal by sponsoring events that a larger chain store would not be able to. In the early ‘80s, Red Front held a free pancake breakfast. “All you had to do was show up and we would feed you free pancakes,” Wenger says. Red Front also allows local groups to run the Dr. Pepper Hot Dog Stand. The group gets to keep 45 percent of the profits, giving Red Front a chance to make some extra business while helping out members of the community.

While Red Front’s business is booming, Wenger says he is beginning to see the importance of appealing to the younger members of the community. In an attempt to do this, Red Front began a TV campaign last October featuring the slogan, “Life is what you make it.” After all, that is the motto the Garber family goes by, and Red Front offers products that they believe will contribute to what one makes out of life.

With the help of the community and the dedicated employees at Red Front, Garber plans to keep the store open as long as possible. “I have had many opportunities to put it on the market. I just have no desire to sell it,” he says.

Right now, the store is in good hands with Wenger, but he says that when he retires, his grandson, John, will be waiting in the wings. John Garber is a James Madison University graduate and has been learning the business of Red Front for years. While Garber believes that his grandson will do good things for the store, he also feels that the store will continue to thrive on its own. “We have specialties which I think will bode us well in the future.”

LISA FREEDMAN is a sophomore media arts and design major from Edgewater Park, N.J. After graduation, she would like to work as an editor for a magazine.
Ask any fifth grader in the early 1960s who his hero was, and you might receive an enthusiastic vote for baseball greats such as Mickey Mantle or Yogi Berra. But for Rev. John Grace, however, the election of John F. Kennedy as president in 1960 introduced a new type of hero — the activist.

While athletes were on the forefront of heroic achievement to most boys of the day, Kennedy's involvement in service initiatives such as the Peace Corps and the Special Olympic inspired the young Grace to seek out a life of service and do, as he says, "something significant." His long face gracefully accepting the wave of childhood sentiment, the current James Madison University campus Catholic minister quotes Kennedy's famous line, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," as fuel for his growing fire to serve. "That was huge to a fifth grader," Grace remembers, adjusting the small dark
frame glasses on his thin nose.

Grace, now in his 14th year at JMU, directs the Catholic Campus Ministry, a student-led religious organization that serves the spiritual needs of the JMU Catholic community through weekly Mass, faith education, community service and social activities. Embracing the “challenge of a living faith in a loving God,” Grace says the CCM community “encourages the development of faith by integrating faith and real life.”

Nestled in an armchair in his South Main Street CCM office, Grace reflects on how he came to JMU in 1989. After his ordination 10 years earlier, Grace served in Catholic churches throughout Virginia, including Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Lynchburg.

Grace says he enjoys the stability that a parish community can create over years of consistent growth, as opposed to a campus community that, as he puts it, “is in a constant state of change and renewal.” A heavy laugh interrupts his low voice as he recalls that he had to be asked three times before he finally agreed to replace Rev. Bill Lafratta, who began the Catholic Campus Ministry 14 years prior.

“At first I had no interest; I enjoyed the parish so much,” Grace explains.

Grace says Lafratta had taken note of Grace’s involvement with successfully developing a Catholic ministry at Lynchburg College during the late ‘80s. It also did not hurt that Lafratta had other ties to Grace.

“He was a priest in one of the parishes I was in when I was a little kid. I actually was an altar boy for him,” Grace says, his fingers grazing his forehead, generously coated with a sweep of white hair.

Born into a military family in New York City, Grace was like most children of the 1950s as he played big brother to younger siblings, participated in Boy Scouts, played baseball and, like most young Catholic boys, participated in Mass as an altar boy.

“A lot of my friends were servers—we had a great time,” Grace says. “The best thing in Catholic school if you were an altar boy was if you had to serve a funeral during 10 o’clock math class.”

All kidding aside, Grace says his experiences as an altar boy were pivotal in his spiritual development.

“It was an exciting time to be involved in the Mass. Everything was changing within the Catholic Church,” he says, referring to the switch from Mass conducted in Latin to Mass conducted in English. “It was very alive, and I became very impressed with that.”

In addition to his experiences inside the Catholic Church itself, Grace says his parents also cultivated his blooming love for church and service. “It was a collective experience on every level, including my parents taking religion seriously, and enjoying it. I got a lot of healthy, balanced religion and love.”

Perhaps even more influential, Grace says, were his undergraduate years at Southern Indiana’s Saint Meinrad College. Armed with the Kennedy-inspired banner cry of “change the world,” Grace credits those years as being the final push to pursue a lifelong commitment to God. “The whole motivation of that time was to go do something,” he says. “Make things happen—but do it together.”

Describing himself and his college friends as “aggressive,” Grace says they wasted no time in developing lasting programs to benefit others in their area. As freshmen, their first big project was creating the first Special Olympics for Southern Indiana. “No one at that time was really pushing special education,” he says. “We wanted to change that.”

Shifting gears to an even larger project, Grace and his friends expanded a pre-existing campus service organization into a full-service nonprofit corporation of social action. Dubbing it Cooperative Action for Community Development, Inc., they raised funds to create programs to serve the college’s five surrounding counties. Among others, they created tutoring programs to fight illiteracy among the poor and trade-skills programs for at-risk young adults.

Upon graduating with a history degree in 1974, Grace joined his family in Hawaii, where his father was stationed at a Marine air station in

“As the motivational of that time was to go do something. Make things happen—but do it together.”
Kaneohe on the island of Oahu. While driving trucks and working in military warehouses at the base, the 22-year-old assisted civilian workers involved in labor and wage disputes. The labor abuse charges that he filed against the management were so convincing that the National Labor Relations Board conducted an investigation into the base’s civilian employment practices, resulting in pay raises for the majority of workers involved.

Despite his demotion for being a “troublemaker,” Grace says the situation helped him crystallize the connection between hope and Christianity.

“Christianity offers hope,” Grace says. “Whatever we’re going through, it isn’t the end of the story and people need to know that.”

The experience also revealed the role of a priest “as a very significant role in impacting for good — for all people, not just Christians.”

Having decided to dedicate his life to promoting justice and hope, Grace returned to Saint Meinrad and enrolled in its School of Theology. He would commit his life to serving God through serving others.

“The force of [Grace’s] personality is terrific.
What he says is so simple, so clear.”

His family and friends, he says, were very supportive of his decision. “Ministry was a call to serve,” he says. “It wasn’t about removing yourself from the world; it was about taking the faith and putting it into action.”

While in seminary, Grace was exposed to various components of theology including social action, human justice and a lively sense of worship. The latter proved to be beneficial, as CCM members cite Grace’s exciting and engaging delivery of his homilies, or sermons, and Scripture as reasons why he stands out among other church leaders.

“He’s one of the most gifted homilists I’ve ever encountered,” says CCM Associate Campus Minister and 1996 JMU alumnus Kevin Kostic. “Compared to your typical celebrant, he does seem to have an emotional energy that others may lack.”

JMU student and CCM Student Campus Minister Matt Morrell adds, “He has a gift of taking very big, abstract ideas and translating them into simple ones without trivializing the message.”

Holly Watts, director of special events at Harrisonburg’s public radio station WMRA, has attended Mass at JMU regularly for several years. “I like the energy of the Mass here,” she says. “It’s terrific.”

Attending Mass at JMU regularly for several years, Watts says Grace has a talent for creating a lively atmosphere. “He can build the energy,” she says. “I think that’s his gift — he’s right on.”

JMU math instructor Virginia Galgano says, “The force of his personality is terrific. What he says is so simple, so clear. He’s good at communicating what’s important and what’s not important.”

Despite apparent praise, Grace claims that he did not receive the highest marks in his seminary homily course. “I was too abstract and theoretical,” he says, comparing his style then to “delivering a paper.”

With his homily difficulties now a thing of the past, Mass participants say Grace’s energetic and unambiguous style allows him to relate to a variety of communities.

“He has the ability to see where students are, whether they are Roman Catholic or non-Catholic and connect to their needs,” says CCM faculty advisor and history professor Michael Galgano. Involved with CCM since 1984, Michael Galgano says Grace “from the very start has been eager to build bridges between JMU and the outside community.”

Kostic adds, “He has a strong sens...
Beyond serving CCM members, Grace says he extends his services to non-Catholics as well. Whether leading pre-game prayer as the football team’s chaplain, participating in political discussion panels about the war in Iraq, or advising the Theta Chi social fraternity, he says his role is “to be present to people as they might need me in order to build the common good of the whole [JMU] community.”

Grace’s willingness to help others serves as an inspirational example to students and shows them that selfless, kind acts are a way of bearing one’s relationship with God to others. The end result, says Grace, is a “dynamic faith.”

JMU student Frank Smith, who recently applied to join the Peace Corps, says Grace’s example sparks the desire to serve well beyond students’ years at JMU. “[Grace] really challenges students to put their faith in action — to implement everything he teaches us during Mass,” he says.

Virginia Galgano says she is consistently impressed with the number of students that continue to live out their faith in service-related fields after college and calls CCM a “hotbed” for future service workers. “That’s the atmosphere here. You’re taught it and people get it,” she says.

Since arriving at JMU, Grace says he has also seen CCM grow into an organization that continually serves not only the Harrisonburg community, but beyond the borders of Virginia as well. In 1992, the group created JMU’s first Alternative Spring Break trip, a week dedicated to service during the spring semester vacation. The success of the first trip, which assisted a food bank in Kentucky, resulted in branching out internationally.

Seeing students realize and embrace the connection between their actions and their faith makes it all worthwhile, Grace says. Once students understand the link, “they can’t go back,” he says. “Realization pushes your faith forward.”

According to Grace, these moments of understanding help him appreciate the perspective of JMU students. “They have serious issues and problems that they’re negotiating,” he says. “People are coming of age in college and that’s what college is all about. I’ve become more passionate about the idea of making sure that students get the best experience they can out of college. The joy of staying here is that you literally see people growing up right before your eyes.”

“Once students understand the link, they can’t go back,” he says. “Realization pushes your faith forward.” According to Grace, these moments of understanding help him appreciate the perspective of JMU students. “They have serious issues and problems that they’re negotiating,” he says. “People are coming of age in college and that’s what college is all about. I’ve become more passionate about the idea of making sure that students get the best experience they can out of college.”

Why is action so important to John Grace? Smiling warmly, he says, “Life isn’t about what I’m going to do in the future; it’s about what I am doing now. And the better I do today, the more my future, the more everyone’s future is shaped by that — we all win.”

RACHELLE LACROIX is a senior media arts and design major, minoring in theater. A former military brat, she hopes to continue her travels internationally after graduation.
Charlottesville: WHERE HISTORICAL MEETS HIP

STORY BY MAUREEN MCCLAIN AND LEIGH ANNE GIBLIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLE REYES AND MAUREEN MCCLAIN

The perfect blend of historical charm and contemporary style harmonizes within the city of Charlottesville. From the historical home of Thomas Jefferson to the trendy coffee shops of the Downtown Mall, Charlottesville spans the ages.

Located just under an hour southeast of Harrisonburg, Charlottesville is a convenient spot for a weekend escape. The tree-trimmed, winding roads and scenic stops on Afton Mountain make the drive pass quickly on a sunny day.

Through an act passed by the General Assembly in 1762, a small town off of "Three-Notch Road," — at the time the main route between the Shenandoah Valley and Richmond — was born. This new town was named "Charlottesville" after Queen Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the young bride of King George III of England. The town blossomed during the 19th century as a popular business and social community.

In 1888 Charlottesville became an official city, and many of the post-Civil War buildings remain focal points for the area today. Court Square and Historic Downtown are the central legal and business districts, respectively. The Main Street business region underwent constructive facelifts in 1976 to build the earliest blocks of a pedestrian mall, which were expanded even further in 1980 and again in 1985. This area is now known as the Historic Downtown Mall.

This mall, along with many other sights and shops, guarantees anyone visiting Charlottesville a unique experience.

UNIVERSITY GROUNDS

"[The University of Virginia] has a particular feel to it that distinguishes it from other Virginia colleges. It has a history and sense of honor that cannot be found elsewhere," UVa. student Cate Oliver says. "Plus, UVa. was based on an entirely different idea of an academical village at the time it was founded. It was to be a place of student self governance within the university."

Thomas Jefferson founded the university in 1819. His innovative idea to create an academic community where students and faculty lived and worked in close proximity was the basis for the design of the university grounds. He foresaw the domed Rotunda as the architectural and academic heart of his community of scholars or what he termed the "academical village."

Jefferson's university brought together all of his interests: education, architecture and gardening. The rectangular green space, called the Lawn, is flanked by two parallel rows of buildings — the Pavilions — that are connected by colonnaded walkways and upperclassmen rooms. These prestigious and highly coveted rooms on the Lawn are given to outstanding members in their fourth year of school.

The Rotunda, located at the north end of the Lawn, is the focal point of the academical village and the signature landmark of UVa. It is a half-scale interpretation of the Parthenon in Rome. The Rotunda was destroyed by a fire in 1895 and rebuilt in a modified style. In 1976, it
Stores like Thomas Kinkade art gallery, Blue Whale Books and the Market Street Gift Shop line the streets of Charlottesville's Downtown Mall. The pedestrian mall was created in the 1970s when Main Street was closed to automobile traffic.
A statue of Thomas Jefferson guards the front entrance to UVa.'s most well-known building, the Rotunda (below). The view of the university grounds from an upstairs Rotunda window exhibits the impressive architecture of the town (bottom).

was restored to Jefferson's original design.

Some buildings on the grounds are marked with a white “Z,” “IMP” or a cryptic “7” and symbols. “The symbols in front of the Jefferson statue in front of the Rotunda were painted by members of secret societies,” Oliver says. “No one knows who’s a member unless they are in it ... the societies are really mysterious.”

The Gardens are located on both sides of the Lawn, behind the Pavilions. The Garden Club of Virginia restored the gardens between 1948 and 1963 using the concepts and plans that Jefferson would have envisioned when he wrote, “[Gardens] would afford the quiet retirement so friendly to study.”

“Jefferson’s ideal garden combined pleasure, utility and a place for thought and study,” states the Thomas Jefferson’s Academical Village brochure.

Behind the Gardens are the Ranges, which are rows of rooms that house graduate students. Within the Ranges are three hotels that originally were used as student dining rooms but are now offices and meeting rooms. West Range No. 13 is preserved as the Edgar Allan Poe room because this is where he lived during his undergraduate years before being expelled. A plaque on the door marks Woodrow Wilson's old room, No. 31. UVa. is the alma mater to other prominent names such as Senators Robert and Edward Kennedy, John Warner, Charles Robb and George Allen and governors including James Gilmore. News journalist Katie Couric is an alumna, too.

Free, student-led tours of the UVa. Rotunda and Lawn run daily at 10 and 11 a.m. and at 2, 3 and 4 p.m. They meet at the Rotunda entrance facing the lawn. For more information on the university and grounds call (434) 924-1019 or go to www.virginia.edu.

THE CORNER

“The best place to hang out and meet up with friends, any day or any time, is ‘the Corner,’” says UVa. graduate student Dana Harmeyer. “It’s got all the ‘collegy’ restaurants and shops and is located right across from the entrance to the grounds and by the Rotunda.”

The Corner, a five-block area of shops and eateries frequented by the college crowd, is located on and around University Corner, also known as University Avenue, near the Rotunda and UVa. Hospital.

“...”

The phrase “the Corner” was first used in the early 1900s by university students to refer to the sparse collection of stores and businesses by the entrance to the grounds. It is now further developed into a collection of student shops, bookstores, cafes and night spots. The Corner has been dubbed “the center of student life at the university,” according to the UVa. Guide to the Grounds brochure. During the week, “the Corner is always bustling, but it is especially active at noon. Faculty and staff adjourn there for lunch, where they mingle with students.”

Surrounding restaurants offer anything the palate might crave. Amigos is home to quality Mexican food and giant “Texas margaritas” — margaritas with a Tequila shot on top. “They’re really good, but my advice? Don’t have more than two of these,” Harmeyer says with a laugh.

For a healthy sandwich lunch, Take It Away is a quick pit stop. Those with a steel stomach might want to try the infamous White Spot’s meaty concoction. “Everyone needs to try a Gus Burger once in their life,” Harmeyer says. “It’s this big, greasy burger with a fried egg on top — it’s what they’re known for.”
THE VIRGINIAN

Dining at the Virginian is the perfect complement to a classic Charlottesville visit. The Virginian's owner, Andy McClure, boasts that his restaurant and bar is the oldest in Charlottesville and has remained open on the Corner since 1923. The walls of the eatery are lined with photographs from the Virginian's history. The dark wood paneling and slim entryway lead to a classical brassy bar and 14 cozy, dimly lit booths.

"The original owners conceded that this was to remain a 'college bar,' primarily catering to local UVa. students," McClure says. This decision was tested during the years when the most popular extracurricular pastime was ruled illegal. "When all the other restaurants on the Corner shut down during prohibition, we turned into a soda shop and kept our doors open," he says. The eatery remains popular among alumni who frequently return to the Virginian while in town for visits and special events. "On (football) game days we do a ton of business," McClure says.

McClure has found success in keeping to a budget-friendly, sandwich-based menu and nightly drink specials. "You don't see many doctors and lawyers coming in for $2 rails," he says with a smile. The menu is reasonably priced with hearty sandwiches for around $6 and dinner entrees between $10 and $15. The Virginian, located at 1521 University Ave., is open from 11 to 2 a.m. and can be contacted at (434) 984-4667.

MONTICELLO

Thomas Jefferson called his home Monticello, or "little mountain," in his "Essay in Architecture." Third president of the United States and author of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson loved to travel. His work was influenced by the Roman and French architecture he observed while abroad.

Monticello stands as a remarkable integration of Jefferson's love of classical architecture and modern style, built and rebuilt over the span of 40 years of his life. The different rooms in his home are testament to his love of worldly architecture. The entrance hall is styled in Ionic order with frieze temple ornaments. The parlor, where the family's socializing took place, is in Corinthian order while the guest bedroom where James and Dolley Madison stayed is styled in an octagon-shaped, Tuscan fashion.

Monticello rests on a 5,000-acre plantation that was once home to not only Jefferson and his family, but also a community of workers — black and white, enslaved and free. The goods produced at Monticello included crops, livestock, nails, barrels, cloths and carriages. Jefferson and his workers also built the main house, much of the furniture and also tended the lavish gardens.

"The gardens at Monticello are breath-taking," Oliver says. "The amount of color and variety of flowers are amazing, especially in the spring and even well into summer."

Today, Monticello is the only house in the United States on the United Nations' World Heritage list of international treasures.

Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., March through October, and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for the rest of the year. Call (434) 984-9822 or go to www.monticello.org for more information.

DOWNTOWN MALL

Joining the historical significance of Monticello with the upscale trend of a big city, the Downtown Mall of Charlottesville brings together people of different backgrounds to enjoy the ahead-of-its-time project that began almost three decades ago.

This eclectic pedestrian mall is the result of a controversial decision made in the 1970s to close down Main Street to automobile traffic and repave the streets with brick, according to www.cvilledowntown.org/mall, the Charlottesville Downtown Founda-
tion's Web site. Because of this decision, the foundation stated, one of the most remarkable and vital main streets in America was created.

As the weather begins to warm up, tourists and residents of Charlottesville alike come out to stroll through some of the 120 shops and 30 restaurants, each of which are listed with directions at www.cvilledowntown.org/dining for dining listings and www.cvilledowntown.org/shop for store listings. There are several ice cream and sweet shops, but there is also a constant display of afternoon joggers and stroller-pushing mothers passing one another on the familiar red-bricked walk.

Lining Main Street is a collection of buildings true to the Jeffersonian-style of red brick and white columns. Between these post-Civil War buildings, which have been made into shops, galleries and eateries, stand large shade trees glowing with delicate white lights that lend a sense of romanticism to the area. Park benches and fountains are sprinkled among the foliage along with wrought-iron tables for outdoor dining.

So if wanting to take a romantic night stroll with a loved one, relax on a park bench with a book from one of the several bookstores or enjoy a sundae from the Hardware Store Restaurant, the historic Downtown Mall of Charlottesville is the place for it.

Friday evenings from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. during April until early October, rain or shine, performers from all over the country entertain an ever-growing crowd with a variety of music provided by the Fridays After Five concert series.

For the past 15 years, crowds have come bearing blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy this outdoor event with family and friends. Bringing in about 150,000 people each season to Fridays After Five, the Charlottesville Downtown Foundation makes enough revenue to “donate an annual $35,000 to local charitable organizations, plus fund the majority of the Charlottesville Downtown Foundation’s non-revenue generating events,” according to its Web site, www.cvilledowntown.org.

The 2003 line-up boasts 24 shows, with a majority of performances by local and regional acts. The Dave Matthews Band performed there in 1992 before becoming a household name, and Eddie Money recently performed as this season’s mystery guest, bringing in 13,000 people and claiming the record for attendance at Fridays After Five, according to www.fridaysafter5.com.

A list of acts performing in the open-air amphitheater and directions are on the Web site, as well as all of the information on weather and the background of Fridays After Five.

For more information on the businesses, festivals, events and history of the Downtown Mall, go to www.cvilledowntown.org or www.charlottesville-tourism.org.

THE HARDWARE STORE

The dining scene in downtown Charlottesville is quite varied, but for plenty of charm and choices with an interesting history, the place to go is not your typical restaurant. Since its opening in 1976, the Hardware Store Restaurant has created a dining experience unlike anything else in the area.

According to the Charlottesville and Albemarle County Convention and Visitors Bureau site www.charlottesville-tourism.org, the Hardware Store building is home also to a candy store called the Sweet Shoppe owned by the Rockford Corporation that also owns the restaurant. There, chocolates from all over the world, like Joseph Schmidt Confections of San Francisco, are sold.

Along with the candy store, private individuals have set up their own businesses in the century-old building. These shops include an art gallery, bookstore and jewelry shop, which carries engagement rings up to $10,000, according to Stan Epstein, president of the Rockford Corporation.

“Tired taste is wonderful; they have wonderful designs,” he says. “People come from all over the world to shop here.”

The original Hardware Store sold hammers and nails, along with sporting goods, plumbing and roofing supplies, kitchenware and dynamite. The restaurant wanted to continue the trend of supplying a diversity of options for the customers, Epstein says. However, along with variety, the original store was a hangout during the early part of the 19th century, for people to “shop, talk business or just meet friends and enjoy a
The back entrance of the Old Hardware Store faces the Downtown Mall. Offering a wide range of tasty meals, the restaurant is a must-see spot for visitors to Charlottesville.

Epstein has a particular interest in keeping the Hardware Store unchanged through the decades to preserve the old fashioned feel. “This is the Old Hardware, and we want to keep it the Old Hardware,” he says. “We make our changes to the menu, but we keep everything else the same.”

Hardware Store, located at 316 E. Main Street on the Downtown Mall, can be contacted at (800) 426-6001.

LITTLEJOHN’S

“If you eat at only one place in Charlottesville, you have to try a Littlejohn’s sandwich,” Oliver says. A trip to Charlottesville would not be complete without a stop by the Corner to grab a famous deli sandwich from Littlejohn’s New York Delicatessen. Littlejohn’s is a 24-hour deli that is a favorite among locals and students alike. The wood-paneled walls hold photographs of famous New York spots like the Trump Tower, Broadway and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. The friendly, apron-clad sandwich makers smile patiently as customers read over the many choices on the chalkboard. With close to 30 combinations, it may take a while.

Since 1976, Littlejohn’s has been open around the clock and receives a notable amount of late-night business from university students sleepily walking home from the library or, on weekends, stopping in on their crawl home from one of the many bars on the Corner.

“My favorite sandwich is the ‘Wild Turkey,’ but the most popular is probably ‘Five Easy Pieces,’” Oliver says. The “Wild Turkey” is turkey breast, bacon, tomatoes and melted muenster cheese with herb mayonnaise on toasted wheat, while “Five Easy Pieces” consists of ham, turkey, bacon, cole slaw and melted muenster cheese with thousand island dressing and herb mayonnaise on grilled pumpernickel.

The restaurant serves hot and cold sandwiches, submissibles, bagels and deli staples like egg salad and desserts. Almost all selections are under $5.

Littlejohn’s, located at 1427 University Ave., can be contacted at (804) 977-0588.

Coming a long way from its historical roots, an air of classic prestige remains woven throughout everything that is Charlottesville. From football celebrations at the Virginian and Old Hardware Store, to straw hat and sun-dressed-shoppers at the Downtown Mall and the Corner, Charlottesville incorporates the new with the old and the young with the seasoned complementing one another to form a city unlike most.

So whether spending an afternoon, or making it a weekend trip, Charlottesville is a town that will fill up its visitors’ time with a variety of sights to see and events to attend. A melting pot for students, professionals, trends and history, this Virginian town will leave a lasting impression on all who experience it.

MAUREEN MCCLAIN is a senior from Panama City, Fla., and after graduation will pursue a career in travel or health writing.

LEIGH ANNE GIBLIN is a senior English and media arts and design major from Virginia Beach, Va. She plans to pursue work in magazine production or event planning.
A small dog with floppy black ears and brown patches around his eyes waits outside the Clark County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The white fur down the center of his forehead leads to a sign around his neck reading, “Bad Dog.” Like many of the dogs that fill the cages of the Clark County SPCA, Zip just has been abandoned by his owners. Many times, Jack Russell Terriers like Zip are frequent guests of the facility.

At Cryder’s home, Zip has the chance to meet five Jack Russells, three of which are either current or former foster dogs like himself.

“They all have a personality of their own,” Russell Rescue volunteer Nickee Randolph says. “They’ll make you laugh every day.”

Rocky is the largest of the pack, nicknamed “King of the Roost” by the Cryders for his size, smooth coat and charisma. Competing for the crown through barks and growls is Max, the second largest dog, whose rough coat corresponds with his tough nature.

In contrast is Minnie, one of the smaller dogs, who gets so excited when visitors are around she loses control of her bladder. Honey, named for her cream-colored coat and sweet demeanor, shies away from visitors, preferring to hide behind the couch. Lastly, there is Lucky, named for the circumstances that brought him and Honey to Russell Rescue’s attention.

According to Cryder and Randolph, Honey and Lucky were rescued from the home of a dog collector. This past February, Franklin County Shelter...
tacted Russell Rescue after confiscating 44 dogs from a woman's home in Rocky Mount. She had been compulsively collecting dogs of all kinds without providing them with proper care. The dogs were found tied to anything available, including trees and cars. They also were breeding and running around her house in dirty conditions. On Feb. 13, Russell Rescue was called to see if any of the dogs looked like Jack Russells, and five of them did, including Honey and Lucky.

This situation was an unusual case for Russell Rescue, according to Cryder and Randolph. Typically, the rescued Jack Russells have been abandoned by owners who do not understand their complex personalities and history. According to True Grit, the national magazine of the Jack Russell Terrier Club of America, during the 1800s their namesake, Rev. John Russell, was a prominent hunting figure. He bred his dogs to assist him in the hunt by chasing quarry. The Jack Russell Terrier Club of America Web site describes some of their instinctive hunter traits as the desire to follow scents, work underground, navigate through the woods and dig holes.

"If there's a hole, they're going to try to go into it," Randolph says.

**The traits and skills that make them excellent hunting dogs ... are often interpreted as bad habits ...**

"The traits and skills that make them excellent hunting dogs ... are often interpreted as bad habits that cause people to give them up," the Web site states. Hence the "Bad Dog" sign Zip adorned when his owners abandoned him.

"A lot of people don't bother to research," Cryder says.

Once owners decide they can no longer keep their Jack Russell, the next stop for the feisty terrier is usually a shelter or pound. According to the Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA Web site, animals with collars are kept at the shelter for 12 days and those without collars are kept for seven days. Lost pets are not necessarily put up for adoption once the time limit has passed, and according to the site's statistics, in 2000, 53 percent of the dogs at the shelter were euthanized. Russell Rescue asks shelters to notify volunteers before any Jack Russells are put down.

"Some shelters are really good about calling the rescue organizations, but some aren't," Cryder says. The Franklin County shelter, for example, was very prompt about calling Russell Rescue following the dog collector incident.

Cryder, who began volunteering in the spring of 1999, became interested in animal rescue when she attended a horse race in Kentucky and started talking to Greyhound rescue volunteers at the event. Because Cryder already owned Max and Minnie, she could not foster for Greyhound rescue because
she heard Greyhounds do not get along with smaller dogs. Still intrigued by animal rescue, she did some research and discovered that there are rescue operations for almost every dog breed, including Jack Russells. This past fall she has extended her volunteer work to fostering and processing applications of potential adopters.

A member of the same hunting club as Cryder, Randolph became involved in Russell Rescue this past summer when Cryder asked her to watch a Jack Russell for a week.

“It’s all her fault,” Randolph jokes of how she got hooked on Jack Russells.

Now she participates in Russell Rescue as a foster mom. In this role, Randolph says she is responsible for taking care of the dogs’ medical needs, for which she is reimbursed by Russell Rescue. She also cares for the dogs’ general needs, such as food, exercise and housebreaking.

Since joining Russell Rescue, Randolph has adopted three dogs. At first, her fellow volunteers became worried that she did not believe in adopting out.

“I adopted in more than I adopted out,” Randolph says of her first couple months as a foster mom.

But eventually she learned to say goodbye to the dogs she fostered, seeing them off to new homes screened by Cryder. The qualifications Cryder looks for in potential owners include having ample space to exercise the dog, no children under the age of 6, no cats and no more than eight hours during the day that the dog will be left alone.

Once these qualifications are met, the applicant must visit the Jack Russell they are applying to adopt, Cryder says. The volunteer who is fostering the Jack Russell then decides if the dog and the applicant have good chemistry. But even after the most intensive screening, sometimes arrangements still do not work out, Cryder says.

For instance, Rocky was placed under Cryder’s foster care after she received a call from the Rockbridge SPCA. Soon after his arrival, Cryder began processing the applications of people who wanted to adopt him, all the while falling in love with him herself, she recalls.

Although she did not want to give him up, she relented and found a family that fit all of the qualifications to own a Jack Russell. When Rocky’s adoptive family came to pick him up, Cryder remembers saying, “If you don’t like it there, you can come back.” Even after a family adopts a Jack Russell, if the arrangement does not work out later on, they can bring the dog back to Russell Rescue.

As luck would have it, Rocky was returned to Cryder after a couple of months. Since then he has been adopted by the Cryders, bringing their Jack Russell total to three. To keep their terriers well-exercised and happy, they have built a dog walk and a teeter totter to assist in agility training. During this activity, dogs navigate through a maze of obstacles, competing for speed and accuracy, explains the Jack Russell Terrier Club of America Web site.

“They get exercise. You get exercise,” says Cryder’s husband John, “and it helps build a strong relationship with the dog.”

Some of the other activities Jack Russells can participate in, as described by the Jack Russell Terrier Club of America Web site, are the “Go-to-Ground” and “Racing.” The Go-To-Ground trial event is designed to simulate and test a Jack Russell’s ability to hunt and work underground.
As for racing, the Web site says that there are two types — flat and hurdles. A Jack Russell Club of America sanctioned track must be a minimum of 150 feet long, and is a straight course with a starting box at one end and a stack of straw or hay bales with a hole in the middle — the finish line — at the other.

A lure, usually a piece of scented fur, is attached to a piece of string that is pulled along by a lure machine, the Web site explains. The dogs are also muzzled for their safety and the safety of their catchers, and the first dog to cross the finish line is the winner.

By involving her dogs in these activities and placing rescued Jack Russells in the care of people who truly understand them, Cryder follows through with the Jack Russell Terrier Club of America motto: “Preserve, Protect and Work.”

But there is also a more personal reason for Cryder’s continued volunteering. A retired teacher from James Madison University’s school of music, Cryder says with a satisfied look, “I think it’s the teacher in me. I enjoy seeing a dog’s potential and watching them grow.”

RASIKI WELANKIWAR is a junior media arts and design major and art minor who plans on pursuing a career in journalism after graduation.
Artist David Gill drives northbound on Interstate 95 from Richmond on a rainy Wednesday night in March. The faint sound of classic rock can be heard from his van’s radio. Gill, a 1976 graduate of then-Madison College, is heading toward a friend’s house in Northern Virginia to bunk up for the night before getting up at 5 a.m., when he will leave for an art show in Philadelphia, Pa. Gill’s watercolor paintings will be among many artists’ works featured at the show.
“It was easy for me to draw. I think (for) any artist, it’s easier to look at things.”

“I just hope I can make it there around eight o’clock because otherwise I’ll have to set all of my own stuff up,” Gill says with a small laugh. “I don’t mind a little work, but it’s always nice to take it easy on yourself.”

For the 48-year-old husband and father of two, though, there rarely is a break in the work. Gill says he often finds himself in situations similar to this one, traveling to one of his 29 yearly shows all over the East Coast for three to five days at a time attempting to help support his family. He says that while the experiences often leave him missing his family and friends, he would not trade what he does for anything in the world.

According to Gill, there is no such thing as a typical day for him. While one day he can find himself on the road working on up to four or five paintings at the same time for an upcoming show, in his down time, Gill says he just likes to spend the day relaxing at home.

Although Gill’s life appears to be about as hectic as one can get, one look at his studio, located on the second floor of a small house on Richmond’s West End, reveals even more about his personality. “I have to warn you,” the 6-foot-2-inch Gill says with a smile and a thick Southern accent, “what you’re about to see ain’t pretty.”

Gill, who is “dressed down” according to his standards — wearing a purple James Madison University wind jacket, an old pair of gray sweat pants and a worn out pair of scuffed white Nike tennis shoes — grimaces slightly as he leads the tour of his tiny work area. The space consists of a cluttered desk filled with everything from old bills to the day’s newspaper, as well as a small, unmade bed for late nights. Pictures of old friends and relatives line his walls, while a compact disc rack with albums by Sheryl Crow and Bruce Springsteen sits on a small table next to his bed.

After pondering briefly, a look of satisfaction fills Gill’s face when he finally decides upon the proper adjective to describe what, according to him, is the equivalent of a second home.

“Well, here’s my mess,” Gill says proudly as he clears off his desk to make room for a painting he has been working on. “I know it’s not much, but it’s where I get my work done.”

That, however, seems to be the way Gill has always done things — on the fly. Gill says growing up he always knew he wanted to draw, and his parents always encouraged his art aspirations. He says that from the time he was young he had a knack for simply seeing things and putting them down on paper, no matter the time or the place.

“I was doodling and my mother, she kept a little drawing book you know, from like fifth grade that I com-
"A nice little touch." Gill says the cat "Paws in the Music" (left) was loosely based on his own cat.

A quintessential element in many of Gill's paintings, luster, can be found in the silver of "Silver and Fruit" (below).

"prised," Gill says. "It was easy for me to draw. I think (for) any artist, it's easier to look at things. You're somehow able to break down how to look at something."

Gill adds that he enjoys painting more peaceful, simple scenarios such as outdoor porches, dinner tables or living rooms because, he says, "There are enough bad things going on in the world right now. I just want people to be able to feel relaxed when they look at my paintings. I'm a feel-good kind of guy."

Examples of his "feel-good" style, Gill says, are best exemplified in paintings such as 2001's "Cafe Biltmore," in which a restaurant in South Florida's Biltmore Hotel is portrayed, and 1996's "Paws in the Music," a work showing a black house cat lying lazily on steps leading into a luxurious piano room.

"I like the contrast and the taste for detail in 'Cafe Biltmore,'" Gill says. "The wicker chairs in the front with the orange lighted window in the background is real nice."

While Gill says he usually draws out the scenes as they are in real life before he begins painting, he also says he frequently adds elements to some paintings, for example, the type of cat in "Paws."

"In ['Paws'], I actually based that on my cat," Gill says, "I just added a little white to the tips of his whiskers and stuff. I thought he'd be a nice little touch."

Gill adds that one of his favorite paintings over the years has been 1989's "Peppers and Tomatoes," in which a tomato plant sits on a window sill in between a flower plant on the left and a pepper plant on the right. Gill says he enjoys the sim-
plicity of the painting more than anything else.

"It's definitely a 'less-is-more' kind of thing," Gill says. "There's a lot less going on in the picture, but I think that makes it stronger."

As for influences, Gill says he really had none in the realm of his artwork. Gill adds that he simply took a liking to drawing and painting in general throughout his youth and that it ended up continuing all the way into adulthood.

Growing up in the Gill household, though, also meant participating in athletics, according to Gill. With two older brothers — Bob, now 53 and Tom, now 51 — known for playing varsity sports at Washington & Lee High School in Arlington, Gill talks of his athletic experiences simply as if he were the next in a long line of athletes.

"All of us played sports," Gill says. "I was just 'little Gill.' I never really had a first name. People would say to me, 'oh you're just another one of those Gill boys that always play sports.'"

Gill's love for both art and sports continued when he was accepted to then-Madison College in 1972. While at Madison, Gill majored in art education, at that time not knowing whether or not he wanted to teach full time and also played basketball. A former forward for the Dukes, Gill recalls that although he played mostly as a junior varsity player, his time in practice did play a big part in helping prepare more-skilled players such as current JMU men's basketball coach and former teammate Sherman Dillard.

"I was part of what was called the 'gold Indians' by (former assistant coach) Mike Fratello in practice," Gill
I would say that [Gill’s] probably the most successful art student to come out of JMU ...”

says. “We were the scrubs, the practice players. Everybody would run to somebody but Sherman, so I had to go guard his butt.”

Dillard, though, says from what he remembers, Gill was a talented athlete and a hard-nosed player.

“I always thought David was so much bigger and stronger, so I had to be smarter and out finesse him,” Dillard says. “He was a competitor.”

Gill also remembers trying to balance his basketball life with his life as an artist.

“I had two groups of friends,” Gill says. “I had my art friends and I had my jock friends. It was funny too, because my basketball buddies would always just have to talk to me right when I was in the middle of class. But it was fun.”

After college, Gill taught art at Lancaster High School. Gill casually refers to teaching as “something to pay the bills,” because he says creating art was really what he wanted to be doing.

“I knew when I was teaching that going to shows is what I wanted to do and I was going to do whatever I had to do to do that,” Gill says. “I knew that’s where I belonged.”

Gill adds, “It’s all part of the game. It would always be safer to go work at another job and get steady money, but it’s not as fulfilling. I think I’d be a pretty miserable person if I wasn’t able to do these things all the time.”

Jerry Coulter, one of Gill’s former art professors at JMU, says he remembers Gill being a very idea-oriented artist. Examples of this can be found in past works such as his painting entitled “JMU Marching Royal Dukes,” created in 1991. As well as his dedication to the Leeolou Center entitled “JMU — Then and Now,” created in 2001. Both paintings, according to Gill, were a combination of pictures he had seen and scenarios he had come up with. “David was self-taught in a sense that if he had an idea he stuck with it,” Coulter says. “He wasn’t interested in different points of view or different approaches.”

Coulter adds that he thought Gill had the potential to be a successful artist coming out of college, but that his success would hinge on a number of different factors.

“I kind of knew (realistic) imagery could be popular, but whether or not he would be successful depended on things coming together, and I think they did. I would say that he’s probably the most successful art student to come out of JMU in terms of making a living out of his art.”

It is a statement with which Gill says he agrees. While Gill is thankful for the more than 150 awards he has received throughout his career, including the Ronald A. Carrier Alumni Achievement Award in 1991, he also says he believes his greatest accomplishment is making a living out of what he loves most.

“That award was a great accomplishment,” Gill says. “I don’t know if I’ve been as successful as some of the other recipients of that award, but I’m very thankful I received it.

“I mostly felt accomplished, though, when I got [the Carrier Award],” Gill adds. “I just felt very good that I was being recognized for doing something in the art field, for making it as a full-time artist.”

Glenda Rooney, associate vice president of University Relations at JMU and a longtime friend of Gill’s, says she got to know Gill through her work with JMU’s Art Auction, which takes place every three years. Gill says he was especially pleased with his participation in the Art Auction this year.

On top of the world. Artist David Gill says he enjoys the work he does and “would not trade it for anything in the world.” Gill’s schedule takes him to about 30 art shows each year.
A decorated artist. Gill receives his Ronald A. Carrier Alumni Achievement award at halftime of a JMU football game in 1991 (left). Gill has been the recipient of more than 150 awards throughout his career.

because of the record amount of money raised.

"We raised over $67,000 this year and all of that money goes for art scholarships," Gill says. "I was just glad to be a part of that effort."

Rooney laughs as she remembers a story about Gill, whom she was first introduced to in 1987.

"There are some people that you get to know very quickly, and I immediately liked David," Rooney says. "It was so cute, I remember on a Saturday morning of a football game he brought the ("JMU Marching Royal Dukes") painting and he was going to hang it at the house. He'd never been in our house and when I saw him later that afternoon he said, 'I want to apologize, but you had some pizza in your kitchen, and I just made myself quite at home and ate some of it.'

'I've teased him about it ever since," Rooney says, "but that's the type of friendship I have with him. I might not talk to him for months, but I can get along with him the second I see him again."

According to Gill, that estimation of his personality hits the nail on the head.

"I could hold a conversation with a telephone pole if you let me," Gill says. "I can really get along with anyone."

Gill's social nature comes in handy considering the amount of time he spends on the road each year.

"Going to these art shows you see a lot of the same people, but you meet a lot of new people at the same time," Gill says. "It's all like one big community though. It has to be for me."

DAN BOWMAN is a senior media arts and design major. After graduation, he will work as the sports editor for the Culpeper Citizen.
The Dayton Learning Center plays host to couples seeking to sharpen their ballroom dancing skills.
A dance instructor steps up to the microphone as dozens of couples in casual clothes amble around the gymnasium, helping themselves to refreshments and stopping momentarily to catch their breath between songs. It is Saturday night, and a handful of the adult community is gathered for a bi-weekly ballroom dance event at the Dayton Learning Center.

"Now it's time for the part some of you love and some of you hate — the mixer," dance instructor Margo Kwolek says as dismayed groans and delighted laughs from the crowd blend with the music. Initial apprehensions dispel once the style of dance is announced. It is a waltz — a favorite among the dancers here tonight.

"Women on one side, men on the other," Kwolek says. The dancers form two lines across from each other and the mixer begins. They smile and come together as they are matched up at the front of the line. The new couples waltz their way across the floor before getting in line to be matched up again.

Kwolek stands behind the stereo system and grins as she looks on. She has been ballroom dancing for eight years and is president of the Shenandoah chapter of the United States Amateur Ballroom Dance Association. The association is a nonprofit, nation-wide organization for the support and promotion of ballroom dancing. According to its Web site, the association coordinates and endorses recreational ballroom dance for people of all ages to enjoy. With about 150 chapters nation wide, the association also organizes national and international amateur ballroom dance events.

As each song plays and a new dance is announced, more and more couples step onto the dance floor, proving the Ballroom Dance Association's mission a success in the Shenandoah Valley. By the third song, the floor is packed with dancing feet and smiling faces.

"We try to welcome new people, introduce them to each other, make them feel comfortable with each other," Kwolek says, "We try to have fun."

Although she is busy substituting for the program's founder, Karen Calloway, Kwolek somehow manages to dance a few songs with her partner.

Calloway is the reason these events are held every other Saturday night. In September 1981, Calloway first discovered ballroom dance while counseling a summer youth camp. "One of the electives we had that summer at camp was a dance class," she says. "I just fell in love with it. It was a spectacular thing. It was just exquisite. It gave me goose bumps."

As she recalls her first encounter with ballroom dancing, Calloway's eyes light up with excitement.

Trained in American and International styles of ballroom dance, Calloway spent two years competing as an amateur before becoming a professional in 1984, she says.

Calloway started her dance program, Dancing With Karen, in 1990 as a way to earn money while her husband attended college. She started teaching ballroom dance at Dance & Co., Harrisonburg's local ballet, tap and jazz studio, she says.

"I was already a dance teacher, but I was just looking for some extra work," Calloway says. She says she never expected it to catch on the way it did.

After her husband graduated, they moved to Richmond, she says. She left the area and, consequently, her lessons. "My students got kind of whiny because there was no one teaching dance lessons."

Thanks to the persistence of her students, Calloway started to commute from Richmond to teach lessons once a month at Dance & Co. Soon after that, she gained access to the Dayton Learning Center gymnasium. "It's a lovely, big gym. And when you ballroom dance, you want a big floor," she says. "You can't do it on a small floor."

Calloway would come to
Harrisonburg on the first and third Saturday nights of every month to teach. Because she was able to obtain space in the gymnasium, she held dances in addition to the lessons. Those initial dances provided the foundation for those now held at the Dayton Learning Center.

"I came Friday night and held lessons," she says. Galloway would teach and hold a social dance on Saturday nights. "It turned out to be a nice, comprehensive little program. People could take dance lessons, and then they'd have a place to come dance."

Dancing with Karen is a wide-ranging dance program, indulging in ballroom, Latin and swing dance instruction. "We start out at the beginning. You learn first how to dance with a partner. You learn the basic figures of all the dances," Calloway says.

The schedule is still relatively the same, with lessons on Fridays and dances on Saturdays. The lessons offered on Friday nights rotate through the different dances taught and start with beginners at 6:30 p.m. and end with intermediate or advanced at 8:30 p.m. The dances held in the Dayton Learning Center start with beginner lessons and end with a social dance event.

Calloway invites all ages and levels to the dance events and estimates there are about 100 dancers who attend the lessons and dances.

Two of her students, Nick Sica, of Luray and his dance partner, Vallie Richards, of Elkton, have been dancing together for 12 years. Since finding Dancing with Karen in 1991, they would not dream of stopping. "Music, exercise and being with people — it's a winning combination," Sica says.

"And where can you put your arm around a woman without being slapped? The dance floor," he jokes. Richards says, "It's a wonderful place to dance."

The Dayton Learning Center offers an ideal environment for ballroom dance because the sprung floor offers dancers resiliency; the acoustics in the ceiling absorb excess echoing from the music. "Any echo confuses you, and you don't know what beat you're on," Sica says.

Sica says he likes coming to Dancing with Karen because the program offers instruction of a variety of dances and "encourages people to dance by announcing the style of dance when a song comes on. It makes you feel at ease."
Calloway understands her dancers' need for a mixture of styles. “We rotate through the dances here so that you have an opportunity to learn some ballroom, some Latin,” she says. “You have a wide variety of dances that you can learn when you come.” According to its brochure, Dancing With Karen teaches waltz, fox trot, tango, salsa, cha-cha and East and West Coast swing, to name a few.

Dancing with Karen appeals to all levels of dancers, from beginners to advanced students. For example, Jim and Bonnie Bourie compete as amateurs in American and International ballroom dance styles. According to Bourie, one of the differences between International and American ballroom dance is the formal attire required of International dancing.

Jim Bourie says of dancing in a competition, “It’s exhausting, but it’s a lot of fun.”

The Bouries dance in Baltimore, Md., Washington D.C., Northern Virginia and Roanoke. They have won six first-place medals, three second-place medals and one third-place medal at the North American Championships in D.C. But they still find time to come down to the Dayton Learning Center to dance socially.

“There are a lot of young people out there,” Jim Bourie says. “It’s nice to see.”

Calloway says, “It seems that no matter how much you advertise that you have it, everybody looks at you and says, ‘Oh, I had no idea that they did this.’ People really don’t even know we exist. There are a lot of people who don’t dance in any way, shape or form, but there are people who probably would if they knew it was available.

“It really has caught on over a period of time,” she says. “There’s not much here in Harrisonburg. I’m the only consistent teacher here.”

Looking to the future, Calloway remains passionate about what she does. “It’s my hope within the next couple of years to have a full-time studio running,” she says. “It is my vision to be a part of a dance center in the Harrisonburg area, where people can come in and learn all kinds of dancing. And I think that will happen sometime in the next two or three years.

“I love dancing,” Calloway says. “It is my goal to provide quality instruction that everyone can afford. May we never let the joy of dancing or the custom of practicing social graces disappear from our lives.”

For more information about lessons and social dances provided by Dancing With Karen, visit www.dancingwithkaren.com or call (540) 432-1003.

LEIGH DIVERIS is a junior theater and media arts and design major from Manorville, N.Y. After graduation she hopes to work in theater.

Don and Ruth Barstow are one of the many couples who take part in Dancing with Karen.
Happy to Greet

Edelweiss Restaurant in Staunton brings a touch of the Black Forest to the Blue Ridge Mountains

STORY BY BETHANEE WILGOCKI PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY LYON AND BETHANEE WILGOCKI

As patrons approach the door of a giant log cabin in Staunton the air smells sweet with the aroma of home-cooked meals luring them inside. Upon entering this restaurant the customer is whisked away by the sounds of accordions, guitars, laughter and singing, across the Atlantic Ocean to the lands that rest along the Rhine River. By visiting Edelweiss Restaurant, customers are able to experience the real feel of Germany.

Within these wooden walls customers are greeted by the smiling face of their host who seats them at a candlelit table in view of the musicians who stand in the middle of the room belting out the lyrics of the song “Que Sera, Sera” in German. A few employees buzz from table to table taking orders, clearing dishes and checking in on their customers.

Each table has an imported cream-colored Austrian tablecloth with red, blue and orange stitching bordering the edges. Tapestries depicting forests and animals hang on the walls, and on the ceiling are wagon-wheel lanterns adding a rustic ambience to the warmly lit room. All that is left to add is the flavor of authentic German cuisine and the atmosphere is complete.

Edelweiss, located just off Route 11 on Route 230, is a little bit of Germany brought to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Owned by Ingrid Moore and her husband Walter, Edelweiss has been filling visitors’ stomachs with authentic German cuisine from the Black Forest region since 1981.

Ingrid Moore came to the United States in 1964, from Karlsrhue, Germany. She says she brought with her a love for cooking and a piece of her home country. In 1980, she moved to Virginia.

“It (Virginia) reminded me of Germany,” Moore says. “Near the Black Forest the mountains are about the same height as here, except here you have the mixed forest.”

This setting is the perfect place for Moore to bring real German flavor to the surrounding areas. Housing her restaurant in a log cabin adds rural charm characteristic of the Black Forest region. She chose the name for her restaurant based on the first movie she saw when she came to the United States, “The Sound of Music.” Thinking that people would be familiar with the name, she named her restaurant Edelweiss.

“In Germany you don’t give your name to a restaurant; it always has a flower or animal name,” Moore says. From the sounds of accordions and guitars to the authentic Austrian tablecloths, Moore did her best to make it as much like “home” as possible.

Thinking back to her first memories of cooking, Moore says, “I started baking at about 9. For my brother’s
You

Selweiss Restaurant

Selweiss Restaurant
Home Cooked Food
Walter and Ingrid Moore show off the Bavarian-style clothing of their homeland (below). The “Edelweiss Boys” have been playing at the restaurant for almost 15 years (bottom left). On a typical Friday night, Ingrid Moore's regulars gather for food and friendship, joining hands and singing old German drinking songs (bottom right).

Moore admits that the first year Edelweiss was open was a scary time for her. She says she remembers sitting in the unfinished room upstairs on a pile of wood making up her menu. “I should’ve kept it (the menu); it was scribble on a piece of paper,” she says laughing.

Unsure of how the area would react to the new European dining establishment, Moore says she chose the items on her menu very carefully. She selected only foods that she thought would appeal to “American taste buds.”

“In the beginning they (Shenandoah Valley customers) thought it was spicy food,” Moore says. “German food is not spicy. I cook with herbs.”

But once people got a taste the word spread like wildfire that there was a new flavor in town worth trying. Moore says she began getting customers from as far as New York, Pennsylvania and Florida. “I even have my snowbirds,” Moore says, speaking of customers who travel often. “They make detours. I’m very happy about it too; it’s why I like what I’m doing.”

Moore says most of her regular customers are from the Richmond and Washington, D.C. areas.

Moore’s husband, Walter, mainly helps out as a waiter, but also is in charge of ordering the beer, wine and tablecloths sold in the restaurant.

“Being a waiter is my favorite job here,” Walter Moore says. “You get to meet a lot of interesting people.”

Serving at Edelweiss is quite a change from his last job as a middle
school math teacher. Now, Walter Moore says his biggest aggravations are the lag period between shipments of beer. With a selection of more than 30 brands of imported beer, it easily can become frustrating to keep a steady inventory, according to Walter Moore.

“It’s very difficult to keep up with this kind of selection,” Walter Moore says.

Not being much of a beer drinker himself, Moore says his favorite beverage is Stewart’s Ginger Beer. However, he says he has no trouble choosing the brews for Edelweiss’s selection.

“Well, basically I rely on the customers’ requests and tastes,” he says. “A lot of [customers] are surprised that we have this kind of selection.”

He is also in charge of ordering the tablecloths. Imported from his homeland of Austria, these tablecloths are available for sale with prices ranging from $70 to $100 for the larger ones.

“People like the quality of our tablecloths,” he says. “These are pretty and you can’t get this type of fabric in the States.”

The emphasis on quality atmosphere complements the quality of Ingrid Moore’s mouth-watering cooking. Her menu offers a wide variety of flavor like “thinly sliced pork fillet prepared with spices, breaded and pan fried until golden brown (wiener schnitzel),” and “a delightful marinated sweet & sour beef roast served with gravy and two potato dumplings (sauerbraten).” There are even options for fish and steak lovers as well, such as boneless rib-eye steak and fillet of cod. With every meal comes an array of sides, which are all served “family-style,” meaning they come out in bowls that serve everyone at the table, giving the real feel of German dining.

Continuing to work hard through the week, the Moores’ busiest nights are Friday and Saturday.

“I think they come for the atmosphere. They don’t have to come all dressed up,” Ingrid Moore says. “If they call and ask what’s the dress code, I say casual.”

Friday is what she likes to call “German Night.” Moore says she feels it cannot get any more German than when her friends get together to make music.

“German night” started when Ingrid Moore’s friend Karl Protal came in Friday nights to play his accordion almost nine years ago. Eventually other friends of Ingrid Moore’s started showing up to play, and before long they had a group playing every Friday night.

“They call themselves the Edelweiss Boys,” she says smiling. “The ‘older’ Edelweiss boys (reflecting on their ages), but the Edelweiss Boys.”

Ingrid Moore says the gathering of friends and the making of music is true to the bona fide German atmosphere. She likes for her customers to have an enjoyable experience, which sometimes involves doing the “chicken dance.” Joking about keeping in shape solely to do the chicken dance, Moore says she feels that involving her customers heightens the dining pleasure.

“People have more fun when they get with it. We don’t think of it as making fools of ourselves,” Moore says.

By Sunday, Moore says she is ready to wind down, tired from chicken dancing, so she closes the restaurant on Mondays.

Despite their busy schedules, the Moores occasionally do have the opportunity to travel to Germany and Austria, and Moore says she feels right at home once she arrives.

The two spend their vacations catching up with relatives and learning about all the changes that have occurred since they have been gone. When they left, the Berlin Wall still stood dividing the country in two. Ingrid Moore says it is a different Germany now.

“Now we’re outsiders, even though I still have an accent,” Ingrid Moore says. “For Germany, I’m an American.”

But no matter what others may think, Moore says she feels that she never left Germany and has not let go of what she knows to be home. Surveying the dining room of her restaurant, Moore says, “I brought Germany. I have it. I still have it, in a way.”

When asked about whether or not she has any hopes of expanding, Moore says she does not have any.

“I’m not 25 any more. If somebody else wants to one of these days,” she says with a shrug, “but I like it just big enough for me.”

Ingrid Moore says that if Edelweiss were to become any bigger, it would lose its original German quality and atmosphere.

“People who come here want Germany,” Moore says. “They say it’s Germany, exactly like it.”

Bethanee Wilgocki is a junior double majoring in SMAD and Spanish. She would like to work on a bilingual publication as a photographer and writer.
Dean Ehlers: the team builder

From minor league fields to the Convocation Center, JMU’s first athletic director is a man for all seasons

STORY BY CHRISTOPHER LEONARD PHOTOGRAPHY BY RACHELLE LACROIX

Among the Bluestones, residence halls and parking lots of James Madison University stand concrete testaments to an era of athletic excellence. Long since replaced as the school’s newest structures, Bridgeforth Stadium and the Convocation Center do not stand out as clearly as they once did. But the legacy of Dean Ehlers, the man who helped build the stadiums and the teams that would compete in them, stands as firmly entrenched today as when he retired in 1994.

“When you talk about JMU athletics, the early history of this school ... Dean Ehlers is who you think about,” says Challace McMillin, who followed Ehlers from Memphis in 1971 to coach JMU’s first football and men’s cross country teams. “It’s because of his great leadership that it was able to develop.”

During his 22-year career as JMU’s first athletic director, Ehlers took an athletic program in its infancy and built it into a nationally recognized Division I program with 28 sports.

“Dr. [Ronald] Carrier always said that athletics was the front porch of the university,” Ehlers says. “It’s the first thing people read about, first thing they see and talk about.”

Ehlers was charged not only with building that front porch; he also added a walkway, some shrubs and a nice swing. “We sold other people on the idea that we were going to have a good program by the rules and within the rules,” Ehlers says. “It was sort of a fairy tale type of story.”

The idea of a football stadium or the football team that would play in it was just a pipe dream in 1971 when Carrier, then the newly-hired president of Madison College, made the long trek from Harrisonburg to Memphis, Tenn., looking to hire the school’s first full-time athletic director. Ehlers was willing to hear Carrier out, but had no plans to leave Memphis.

“I came to visit here on a lark because I had business in the [Washington, D.C.] area,” Ehlers says. “I told [Carrier] I’d come down to look at the school if they’d fly in my wife, Joanne.”

Fortunately for Dukes fans, Carrier was determined and agreed to fly in
Ehlers' wife.

"He talked and talked about what he hoped to do," Ehlers says of that first meeting. Ehlers says he ultimately accepted the position because of a promise that the athletic program could grow as the college did.

"We were here at the right time, things blossomed and we were blessed with good coaches," Ehlers says, with a sense of humility that underscores his Midwestern upbringing.

Raised in the small town of Campbell Hill, Ill., Ehlers' early life goals suggested a future in sports.

"From the time I was a little kid, I guess I had two ambitions: to be a teacher [and] coach and ... a professional baseball player," Ehlers says. "I had a chance to do both of those things."

Growing up near St. Louis, Mo., and wanting to be like his childhood idol Stan Musial, the game of baseball would call first. After a preparatory career that included an all-state selection in basketball, Ehlers also drew interest from several teams in baseball and scored a tryout with the Dodgers organization. Though he always felt more confident in his abilities as a basketball player, he says baseball was his first love.

"In those days, you didn't go into baseball to make money," Ehlers says. "You worked in the off-season."

Ehlers spent his first few minor league summers in the quiet New York town of Elmira, playing for the class A minor-league affiliate of the Dodgers. Renting a room in a small house with no kitchen, Ehlers says the life of a minor-leaguer was not easy. "Basically it was a place to sleep and keep your clothes when you were on the road," Ehlers says. "Pretty primitive."

Ehlers had the additional thrill of rooming with future major-leaguers Don Zimmer, Ed Roebuck and Ron Negray. "They all made it but me," Ehlers quips.

His professional baseball career was shelved in 1951 when he joined the U.S. Army, serving on a special services unit that played exhibition basketball and baseball around the United States during the Korean conflict. There, Ehlers had the chance to play with former St. Louis Cardinals manager Whitey Herzog. Today, he and Herzog are just as likely to swap heart bypass surgery stories as memories of baseball days.
gone by, Ehlers says.

Ehlers returned to professional baseball after 1953, and spent a memorable 1954 spring training with the St. Paul Saints, class AAA minor league team. The Saints trained at Vero Beach, Calif., right next door to the Dodgers.

"That was one of the great thrills," Ehlers says. "Go down to Vero Beach and see [Jackie] Robinson and [Jim] Gilliam, [Don] Newcombe and those guys. Sit there with Pee Wee Reese and say ‘they’re eating [at] the same place I’m eating.’"

His minor-league career eventually would take Ehlers throughout the United States, Canada and even a stint with fellow Dodger minor-leaguers in South America. Ehlers suggests that his emphasis on always doing his best ultimately may have kept him from reaching the majors. "It seemed to me that guys that made it, who I played with ... striking out and making errors didn’t bother them," Ehlers says. "If I struck out three times, I thought the world would come to an end."

Ehlers’ minor-league career drew to a close in 1955 while he was completing his master’s degree in education at the University of Missouri. Ehlers got a call from a college friend during a team road trip in Nebraska that would start him on his second life goal.

"Another one of those crazy stories of my life, I guess," Ehlers says. The friend, who lived in Wisconsin, called Ehlers looking to see if he was interested in a coaching position at the local high school. Ehlers accepted the jobs of head basketball coach, assistant baseball coach and assistant football coach at the high school without first seeing the town in which Ehlers and his wife would spend the next year. "We drove in and did all this on the basis of [being] college friends," Ehlers says. "It was a great year."

The Ehlers family barely had time to settle in Wisconsin when Ehlers received another unlikely call from his former Central Methodist College basketball coach, Bob Vanatta.

Vanatta had become a father figure to Ehlers during his undergraduate years and Ehlers says he was heartbroken when Vanatta left the team to coach at another school following his junior year. Vanatta called each player into his office
individually to tell him the news. Little did Ehlers know that Vanatta’s words would mark his entry into the coaching ranks of collegiate athletics.

“I’ll never forget ... Vanatta said, ‘If I ever get to a place where I need an assistant, I’m gonna call you,” Ehlers says with a chuckle. He remembers thinking that Vanatta had told every player the same thing. “But sure enough he called after a year in Wisconsin and said, ‘Let’s go to Memphis.’”

The Ehlers family packed their bags again and headed for Memphis State University, where Ehlers would serve as Vanatta’s assistant basketball coach for six years. “My first year as an assistant we played [against] Bradley in the finals of the [National Invitation Tournament] in New York,” Ehlers says. “At that time, the NIT was really considered the better of the tournaments. I thought I was big stuff; we were in New York for about 11 days. I was an assistant ... living it up in the big city.”

It is the sort of story that is typical of Ehlers: self-deprecating, humble and understated, yet the details are anything but typical.

“We tried to play in Madison Square Garden every year, tried to go to Miami every other year, played against Rick Barry, tried to go to the West Coast,” Ehlers says. Ehlers would tell recruits, “You come with us, you’re going to get to see the world.”

Ehlers was promoted to head coach at Memphis State in 1962 and carried the title for four years, compiling a 53-47 record. The experience would help him prepare for the difficult task of building an athletic program from scratch at what was to become James Madison University.

“In my day, you were a coach ... you were also a teacher or educator,” Ehlers says, speaking of a simpler time in college athletics. “That was part of your job.”

Ehlers says he had no intention of getting involved in the politics of collegiate sports when he left Memphis State in 1966 to become the athletic director
for the Memphis City Public Schools.

“I wanted to go into administration when I finished coaching and thought I’d stay with the Memphis City schools for the rest of my life,” Ehlers says. He would spend five years trying to integrate a preparatory athletic program at a time when many schools in the South were unwilling to adapt to a changing society. “I got the impression that the school board didn’t want me to change things a whole lot.”

When Ehlers finally stepped onto the campus of Madison College in 1971, he was handed a $44,000 athletics budget that would barely pay for a large sports utility vehicle today.

“The thing you have to remember is there were no personnel in that [budget] at all, no coaches,” Ehlers says. “I think I was listed as assistant student activities director.”

All coaches served double-duty as educators. Ehlers says even Hank Bowers, the dean of students, served as an assistant coach.

Despite the financial constraints, the athletic program grew quickly, though the plans were not as clearly defined as one would expect. “His (Carrier’s) philosophy was, if we had enough students that were interested (in a sport,) we would add it,” Ehlers says.

That plan would prove especially beneficial in building the men’s athletic program. “Early on, men who came here knew they had a chance to make a varsity team,” Ehlers says. “We got some pretty good athletes as a result of that.”

The school fielded its first men’s basketball team for the 1971-72 season, and Ehlers served as head coach. With few facilities on campus, the team was forced to play its games at Harrisonburg High School.

“It’s hard to believe that we practiced at the high school two days a week and played our games there,” Ehlers says, looking back at those early years. “To see what we have now ... it’s a remarkable story.”

As the program grew, so did the need to build facilities to house them. Ehlers oversaw the building of Bridgeforth Stadium, Long Field/Mauck Stadium, Godwin Hall and the Convocation Center. Each one became a building block in the athletic program and, at the time, were some of the best facilities in the state, according to Ehlers.

Ehlers is quick to pass the credit for the program’s success onto his coaches and staff, but a look at many of JMU’s highest athletic achievements reveals they occurred during his tenure. Among them, future NFL stars Charles Haley, Gary Clark and Scott Norwood all passed through JMU while Ehlers walked the corridors of Godwin Hall. The JMU men’s basketball team beat Georgetown in 1981, the women’s basketball team reached the NCAA tournament five times, and the 1983 Dukes baseball team stands alone as the only one to ever reach the College World Series.

Ehlers is a senior media arts and design major concentrating in print journalism. He will pursue a career in sports journalism and broadcasting following graduation.

CHRISTOPHER LEONARD is a senior media arts and design major concentrating in print journalism. He will pursue a career in sports journalism and broadcasting following graduation.
People are the landscape of the community — they nurture it, infuse it with life, imbue it with the tradition and enrich it with a cultural history that becomes as much a part of the geography as the very mountains and streams themselves.

For 25 years, Curio has told the stories of some of the most prominent and influential residents of Harrisonburg and the Shenandoah Valley. But many of the magazine’s finest personality pieces would be incomplete without the accompanying photography. A good portrait captures the true essence of a subject, revealing character and breathing life into literary existence.

In honor of Curio’s 25th anniversary, this issue looks back to the magazine’s archives and celebrates the most memorable portraits of some of the best-known and loved faces in Shenandoah Valley history.

— Danielle Maupai
a look back at the last 25 years of profiles

Winter 1981
Waynesboro native P. Buckley Moss (far left) received international acclaim for her paintings that depicted life in the Valley, traveling to art shows throughout the United States and overseas and opening her own studio.

Summer 1981
Charlie Shifflett (top center) served up late-night meals for years at the C&E Diner in Harrisonburg, coming into work at 11 p.m. every night to serve everyone from truck drivers to college students.

Spring 1979
Ted Allen (bottom center) spent 18 years in prison for murder, then dedicated the rest of his life to being a Big Brother, helping to keep kids off the path he had fought so hard to escape.

Winter 1980
A name that for a long time was synonymous with barbecued chicken in the Shenandoah Valley, Dave Shirkey (right) would sometimes tend to 500 chicken halves at once.
Summer 1984
Homer Quann (above) was a familiar voice on the early morning airwaves of WSVA with his Early Almanac talk show from 1950 to 1965, and then again in 1980, and also worked as commercial salesman for the Valley station.

Summer 1982
Reba Rhodes (top left), a Valley Old Order Mennonite, provided Curio an insight into her life, from waking at 5:30 a.m. daily to milk 38 cows to cooking meals for her family of five from scratch.

Winter 1981
The work day began at 4:30 a.m. for Harrisonburg milkman Talford "Tat" Wills (bottom center). Wilts delivered milk to Valley residents for 35 years before retiring in 1981.

Summer 1983
As co-founder and director of the Wildlife Center of Virginia and host of the public television show, "Virginia Outdoors," Ed Clark (top right) has been a friend to local forests and wildlife for over 20 years.

Summer 1988
Charles Wampler Jr., (bottom right) former head of Wampler-Longacre, Inc., is a devoted community member, having donated his time to the Virginia House of Delegates, Rockingham Memorial Hospital's Board and Cancer Center and JMU's Board of Visitors.