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# VIRGINIA EXTENSION

THE VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE MAGAZINE

Vol. II, No. 1 1984

The  
First  
Agent



Virginia Tech Virginia State Virginia's Land-Grant Universities

# COMMENTARY



*Mitch Geasler*

**M. R. Geasler**  
Vice-Provost  
Extension Division

For most of this century, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service has been "helping others help themselves." This philosophy is the bedrock upon which Extension in Virginia and across the country has built programs to improve the quality of life for all persons.

In Virginia, Extension has a long and distinguished record of successful programs. Many of the more recent projects have been chronicled in the pages of Virginia Extension. In each issue, information is given about projects being conducted by between fifteen and twenty Extension units across the state.

In this issue, there is a story about how Extension is helping the jobless in Gloucester and Mathews counties and an article about how Powhatan County's Extension homemakers are sponsoring a variety of projects to make their county a better place to live. There is a little slice of history—an article concerning Virginia's first Extension agent and how he will be remembered this summer. These are only a few of the success stories found within these pages.

There also is a story in this issue concerning the university's fifty-million-dollar "Campaign for Excellence." The article explains the campaign and how it will nurture the growth of excellence at the university. A direct benefit to Extension will be a computer network that will link all of Virginia Extension's 108 offices so that information can be rapidly exchanged. In this age of technology, such a capability is essential.

The campaign is a comprehensive one. It aims at providing students and faculty members with new and improved facilities and equipment. Many campaign goals will directly affect Extension. Others will have an indirect effect since Extension is irrevocably linked with the university's teaching and research arms. The three areas assist and use each other to benefit society as a whole.

To borrow a phrase from our

4-H program, the Extension, teaching, and research arms of the university are all working to make "the best better." During the next three years, development representatives and others of us at the university will be working to make that goal of fifty million dollars a reality so that Virginia Tech can continue to achieve excellence in all that it undertakes.

The success of the campaign will improve Extension's ability to "help others help themselves." This philosophy is ingrained in our organization. Our specialists, agents, technicians, and secretaries will continue to do the best with the tools at hand.

In fact, the campaign presents you with the opportunity to provide assistance to those who "help others help themselves." Your support of the campaign as a friend of Extension will "make the best better" and, directly or indirectly, improve the community in which you live.

Through the years, many of you have provided Extension with funding for research and demonstrations, new buildings for 4-H camps, new equipment and structures at the research and experiment stations, and for a variety of other needs. Your support has allowed us to make significant strides that could not have been made without your assistance.

The "Campaign for Excellence" is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make a significant contribution that will continue to benefit Virginia Tech and the commonwealth for years to come. Not many persons have such an opportunity. You can truly help Extension through your support of the campaign and thus help those who help others help themselves. Quite often, the expansion of excellence takes only a very small nudge.

So, read the details about the campaign. If you have any questions, contact my office at Tech and I will see that you find the answers. And think about taking a role in "making the best better!"

# VIRGINIA EXTENSION

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Magazine

## VIRGINIA EXTENSION

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### FRONT COVER

The picture of John B. Pierce stands with many of the "tools" he used when he became an Extension agent in 1906. See story on page 11. (Photo by Bob Veltri)



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# IMPACT

DOLLARS AND SENSE FROM EXTENSION



The results of the recent avian flu outbreak in Virginia have not been all bad, says John Wolford, head of the Virginia Tech's Department of Poultry Science. One good thing he expects is a 5 to 10 percent increase in industry efficiency by 1986.

Controls on the movement of people and equipment, as well as improved sanitation of equipment, will continue, he says. As a result of improved sanitation, it will take less feed to produce a pound of meat; birds will gain weight in fewer days so they can be processed sooner; more birds will live; and there will be less condemnation in processing. Poultry producers "have learned that they can do it."

The industry also has learned to cooperate, Wolford says, not only within its ranks, but with academia.

"The way things happened in Pennsylvania and Virginia—progressing from one infected flock to 286 in Pennsylvania and 56 in Virginia—made it obvious that you can't work separately, that training and cooperation are critical."

Tech personnel not only have acted as advisers, but have conducted programs on how to prevent the disease. These programs have been conducted by poultry science faculty and Extension specialists Mike Hulet, Joyce Jones, Paul Ruszler, and William Weaver, and veterinary medicine faculty member Calvert Larson. Wolford says that Charles Domermuth, a veterinary medicine professor, has provided a great deal of information.

The poultry science department and vet college have worked with the Virginia Poultry Federation to produce a procedural manual for avian influenza. The manual is being used in undergraduate poultry management and turkey production classes.

The avian flu also changed the poultry 4-H youth program. "We have really had to improvise to carry on educational activities without using live birds. It's been a real challenge, but it's important that these educational programs continue."

The disease has resulted in poultry industry changes that increased costs, but the improvements in efficiency are expected to more than offset the costs. Moreover, the increased cooperation and awareness bodes well for the future. "The problem isn't over," says Wolford, "but the Virginia poultry industry is going to win the battle."



**Keeping farms alive in today's economy is no easy task**, particularly when it comes to finding credit. And that's why Extension efforts have focused on helping farmers find better ways of getting the loans they need.

"These days, there's a catch-22 situation for farmers who try to get funding," says David Kohl, a Virginia Tech Extension agricultural economist. "A lot of credit is out there, but most farmers just can't show the cash flow necessary for a lender to justify the loan. The current market uncertainty means that lenders must be very conservative in approving loans."

Kohl believes, however, that education in financial management, farm planning, and preparation of financial statements can go a long way toward helping deserving operations get that credit. "And," he says, "this is where Extension can help."

A case in point is Extension's

efforts in the West Central District of Virginia, an area that runs from the North Carolina line up the Shenandoah Valley to Rockingham County.

In this district, Extension educational workshops, meetings, and radio programs assisted over four thousand farmers in farm planning and tax and financial management. According to West Central Extension leader Edward Allen, this resulted in \$5,725,000 in new credit for producers in the region.

Overall, 4,265 West Central producers were assisted in some phase of farm planning. Advice on individual tax management questions saved 81 farm operators \$48,000 in taxes, and 233 farmers were assisted individually in financial management.

This management education resulted in more than \$5.7 million in new credit, says Allen.

And Kohl says: "Farmers who learn to assess their situations and determine their credit needs stand a far greater chance of surviving in today's uncertain market. Extension education has done a lot to encourage this process."



The 261 participants in the Fairfax stretch-the-dollar sewing program last year saved \$16,790 by sewing—rather than buying—their items. One person, for instance, bought and refinished a fashionable beaver coat for \$30.

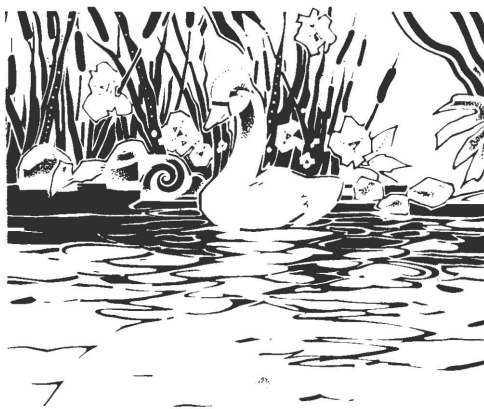
The students, most of whom were elderly, handicapped, or with limited incomes, learned how to alter as well as make garments, says Fairfax Extension agent Jane Thune.

Last fall, Thune worked with forty-one volunteer sewing teachers who taught at twenty-four locations in the county. She also coordinated the work of four county-paid teachers who taught at six more locations.

The county, which had conducted the program for twelve years, found in 1982 that it didn't have enough money to continue it. County officials then asked the Fairfax Extension staff if it would find and train volunteers and otherwise coordinate the program, Thune says.

According to Thune, the program continues to be most popular and the volunteers get a great deal of satisfaction from their work—especially at the end of each session when the students hold two fashion shows where they display their handiwork.

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State and federal rescue plans for the Chesapeake Bay are on the drawing board, but Extension units in Northern Virginia are already subtly affecting water quality there.

As a result of educating farmers about water quality practices, streams flowing into the bay now have less pollutants from farm run-off. This not only decreases pollution, it increases net returns for farmers.

For instance, farmers had been applying nitrogen to their corn once a year. Under the new practice, farmers now apply nitrogen in smaller amounts twice a year. This reduces nitrogen run-off and infiltration—and increases yields.

Soil erosion programs conducted jointly with other agencies in eight northern counties have helped save farmers \$275,000. The value to the bay has not been estimated.

**Nearly a quarter of a million dollars in flue-curing fuel costs** was saved with the assistance of an Extension push to increase tobacco curing efficiency in *Pittsylvania County*.

Farmers with run-down curing sheds and careless habits use as much as twenty cents worth of fuel for each pound of tobacco. Good buildings and proper procedures can cut that cost in half. Other cost-cutting factors emphasized by Extension educational programs involved controlling humidity and only harvesting ripe tobacco.

The proportion of farmers who were curing leaf tobacco efficiently increased from 40 percent to 55 percent in one year. This group saved an average of seven cents per pound of tobacco. If the rest of the growers were to do the same, another \$675,000 in net returns would be realized by the county's farmers.

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**Soil conservation grew by leaps and bounds this year** in fourteen Southside Virginia counties as the Bright Leaf Erosion Control Project took off. A cooperative effort by Virginia Extension and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), the project helped farmers keep 363,587 tons of topsoil from washing away.

Cropping year after year on hilly land has produced a phenomenal annual erosion rate of eighteen tons per acre—three times higher than the national average of 4.7 tons per acre.

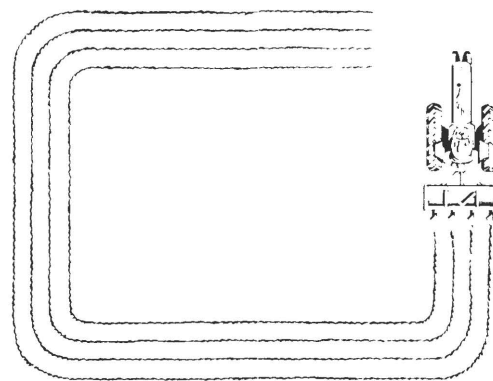
Tobacco, which provides 80 percent of the area's farm income, is the cornerstone of the 572,000 acres involved in the project. "Tobacco prices are down, and these counties are really hurting economically. The average income already is more than \$2,000 below the state average. If we lose our basic soil resources, it will put us in even worse shape," says Keith Painter, the East Central district Extension leader who is heading the Extension end of the bright leaf project.

"Our first step was to help people realize how severe the problem was," Painter says. "Erosion is a problem that creeps up on you over the years. Some of it you can't see, but as gullies and soil washouts become commonplace, you can't keep ignoring it."

To acquaint farmers with the problem, project members held field days, tours, and 107 meetings.

"When times are hard," says Painter, "farmers respond to programs to improve their conditions. There was an incredible amount of enthusiasm among the growers. Many took to the practices right away." Before the program started in 1983, there were 10,585 acres of crop land adequately protected. After one year of the project, the figure zoomed to 23,830 acres, far surpassing expectations.

No-till cultivation is a key practice in conservation. An initial problem, however, was the lack of no-till seeding equipment. Only one of the fourteen counties had the necessary machinery for rent or lease. Local Soil and Water Conservation districts saved the day by borrowing money and buying the equipment, which is now available at low lease rates through the Extension offices in thirteen of the involved counties. Rotating crops and using such cover crops as fescue have also been emphasized in the program.



"Research shows that every ton of soil lost will result in the loss of four pounds of nitrogen, one and a half pounds of phosphorus, and five pounds of potassium. That costs about \$2.70 per acre," Painter points out. "This means the bright leaf project has saved Virginia farmers about \$982,000 in fertilizers."

The impressive results of the bright leaf project led to a \$75,000 grant from SCS to Virginia Tech researchers. "These researchers are studying why and how you get people to adopt soil conservation practices," Painter says.

The goal is to have 212,500 acres well protected from soil loss after ten years of the bright leaf project. "That's a long way to go", says Painter, "but I believe we'll make it."

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## Extending Excellence

# Drive Will Benefit State

by William C. Burluson

A Virginia high-school student receives a scholarship to study at Virginia Tech. In his sophomore year, the student takes an elective in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences because he wants to study under a particular professor who has a reputation for being an excellent teacher. The professor, who holds an endowed professorship, is so captivating that the student decides that he wants a career in agriculture. Upon graduation, he accepts a position as an Extension agent.

This scenario is mythical, but it does illustrate that one cannot easily judge the total effect that a contact or action will have sometime in the future.

And so it is with Virginia Tech's current "Campaign for Excellence." It is almost impossible to judge what effect the fifty million dollars being raised for endowments, capital facilities and equipment, and operating funds will have on students in the future or what section of the commonwealth will benefit from the funding.

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"We accept the challenge to use private and public support as effectively as possible and translate it into that quality dimension for which the university is known."

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New equipment in the College of Engineering may be used to bolster an Extension project in Southwest Virginia. A gift to a research station may provide the difference in developing a new forage project that will benefit state residents. A program to develop nutritious diets for people in Central America might also improve the diets of the rural poor in Virginia.

These are a few examples of how unrelated happenings or projects can have a greater effect than originally anticipated when they began. The university's "Campaign for Excellence" has the same potential. During the next three years, the program will raise eleven million dollars for the university endowment, eighteen million dollars for capital facilities and equipment, and twenty-one million dollars for operating funds.

Tech president William E. Lavery calls the campaign a "new chapter in the history of the university. We accept



*The leaders of Virginia Tech's Campaign for Excellence gather on campus prior to the start of a drive to raise fifty million dollars. They are (seated, from left) Robert Pamplin Jr., co-chairman; Robert Pamplin, co-chairman; Clifton Garvin Jr., vice-chairman; (standing, from left) James B. Jones, faculty and staff committee chairman; William E. Lavery, Tech president; Marshall Hahn Jr., corporate and foundation committee vice-chairman; William Jamerson, major gifts vice-chairman; Harold Hoback, regional gifts committee chairman; Alexander Giacco, corporate and foundation committee chairman; and Lee Tait, rector of the Tech Board of Visitors. William Latham, major gifts committee chairman, was unable to attend the meeting.*

the challenge to use private and public support as effectively as possible and translate it into that quality dimension for which this university is known."

Virginia Tech's need for private resources has "intensified during the last decade. It's become increasingly apparent that we need a campaign to raise private funds," says Robert B. Pamplin, former chief executive officer of Georgia-Pacific Corp. and chairman of R.B. Pamplin Corp. of Portland, Ore.

Pamplin and his son, R.B. Pamplin Jr., president of the Portland firm, are co-chairmen of the fund-raising effort.

The campaign is being directed by a thirty-three-member national campaign committee, headed by the Pamplins and Clifton C. Garvin Jr., chairman and chief executive officer of Exxon Corp., who is serving as vice-chairman of the committee.

From the eleven-million-dollar endowment, ten million dollars will be used for scholarships, fellowships, and professorships, and for academic programs. The remaining one million dollars will be used to improve library acquisitions.

Endowed scholarships and fellowships will allow the university to recruit outstanding students and to provide need-based assistance to promising students from families with modest incomes. The funding for the professorships will allow Tech to attract and retain faculty members of promising ability by adding supplements to the salaries provided by the state.

Not only will the added endowment add to the "seed"

money that is available for the development of new programs, it also will permit the enrichment of existing programs and the stimulation created by new ideas.

The library—the campus laboratory for the mind—will be able to acquire additional books and audio-visual materials necessary to keep students and faculty members abreast of the latest technical advances and developments in an ever-changing world.

Thirteen of the eighteen million dollars slated for capital facilities will supplement state funds to improve the quality of the colleges of Business and Engineering and the Department of Chemistry in the College of Arts and Sciences. Some money also is scheduled to help finish construction of an urgently needed veterinary teaching hospital for the Virginia/Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine.

The remaining five million of the eighteen million dollars will be used to purchase state-of-the-art research and instructional equipment to ensure that Tech graduates will be knowledgeable about the latest equipment when they enter the job market.

Included in the campaign are plans to assist in the development of a statewide computer network for Virginia Extension. The network will provide electronic links for communications and the delivery of program material between the Extension staff at Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, district and unit offices, research stations, the six 4-H educational centers, and the Donaldson Brown Center for Continuing Education.

Although Virginia Extension has used computers to deliver educational programs to state citizens for fifteen years, only twenty field offices currently have state-of-the-art microcomputers, which are required for completion of a statewide network.

Mitchell R. Geasler, vice provost for Extension at Tech and director of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, says that the new system would improve the management of information, personnel, and clientele data bases at all levels. It also would make it more efficient and easier to coordinate program efforts across the Old Dominion.

Twelve million of the twenty-one million dollars for operating funds will be used for annual support. This means that the funds will guarantee that Virginia Tech will meet or exceed the current level of funding for



*Tech President William E. Lavery explains the gifts campaign to representatives of the press as (from left) Lee Tait, Clifton Garvin Jr., Robert Pamplin Jr., and Robert Pamplin listen.*

scholarship aid, academic program support, faculty salary supplements, and other ongoing obligations for which state funds are not appropriated.

The final nine million dollars will be directed toward research support and will be solicited from foundations and corporations so that university researchers will be able to continue expanding their already impressive contributions to agriculture, health, science, energy production, industrial technology, and myriad other fields.


Kicked off in early April, the "Campaign for Excellence" has already exceeded the eighteen-million-dollar level, a fact that leads those associated with the drive to publicly voice optimism about exceeding the goal.

Richard M. Bagley, D-Hampton, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, endorses the campaign, saying: "The General Assembly of Virginia has been inclined to help those who help themselves." Bagley is also president of the 80,000-member Virginia Tech Alumni Association.

Alexander F. Giacco of Wilmington, Del., chairman, president, and chief executive officer of Hercules, Inc., is chairman of the corporate and foundation committee, while T. Marshall Hahn Jr. of Atlanta, Ga., chairman, president, and chief executive officer of Georgia-Pacific Corp., is vice-chairman.

William C. Latham of Manassas, chairman and president of Budget Motels, Inc., is chairman of the major gifts committee, and William E. Jamerson of Appomattox, executive vice-president of J.E. Jamerson and Sons, Inc., is vice-chairman.

The special gifts committee is headed by Harold N. Hoback of Roanoke, executive vice-president of Charles Lunsford Sons and Associates and Frank B. Hall and Co., Inc. The faculty and staff committee is under the direction of James B. Jones, Tech professor of mechanical engineering. Hahn, who served as Tech's eleventh president, is the only one who did not attend the university.

The optimism of the campaign leadership is reflected by the elder Pamplin who says: "We intend to raise more than fifty million dollars. The more successful the campaign is, the more successful it becomes." 



*William and Peggy Lavery exchange pleasantries with Clifton Garvin Jr. on the day the campaign was announced.*

# IN BRIEF

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM ACROSS VIRGINIA



The Virginia Extension Homemakers Council "Walk for Life" program has been honored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The council was cited because 500 of its members had collectively walked the equivalent of twice around the world to demonstrate good community health habits. Group members received certificates signed by secretary of health and human services Margaret M. Heckler.

The "Walk for Life" program was created by the homemakers, who worked with program chairperson *Connie Lewis* of *Fieldale* and *Gaynelle Hogan*, retired Virginia Tech Extension specialist in health education.

Homemakers from twenty-nine county groups participating in the program walked between fifteen and thirty miles three days a week for more than two months—about 49,800 miles.

"The 'prizes' for the participants were: losing weight, having better circulation, increasing endurance, and gaining the ability to cope with stress," says *Frances H. Graham*, Tech Extension specialist and adviser to the organization.

*Ann McCue* of *Mechanicsville*, current program chairperson, represented the council at a ceremony in Richmond at which *James B. Kenley*, Virginia commissioner of health, presented the certificate to the homemakers.

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Six Virginia 4-H'ers will visit foreign countries this year through the International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE).

*Lydia Barrett* of *Manassas* in Prince William County will live with Luxembourg families from June to December, while *Mary Turner* of *Laurel Fork* in Carroll County will visit Australia from September to April as a guest of the Australian Young Farmers organization.

Participating in the summer study experience of the IFYE ambassador program will be *Leslie Halstead* of *Chesapeake*, *Margaret Brown* of *Suffolk*, *Jimmy Wade* of *Greenville*, and *Katherine Johnson* of *Oakton*. Halstead and Brown will study the horse industry in the United Kingdom, and Johnson will look at the livestock in that country. Wade will learn about the sheep industry in Australia.

The National 4-H Council conducts international programs on behalf of the Cooperative Extension Service. *C. Dean Allen*, Virginia Tech Extension specialist for 4-H youth, is conducting orientation programs for this year's Virginia participants with the help of IFYE alumni.

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*Arden N. Huff*, Extension animal scientist at Virginia Tech, has been elected president of the National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association. The new organization is designed to facilitate communication, establish guidelines and uniformity for contests, and improve and promote horse judging educational programs.

The other new officers are from Pennsylvania State and Middle Tennessee State universities. North Carolina State University, Purdue University, and New Mexico State University are represented on the board of directors.

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Virginia Extension was well represented when Governor *Charles S. Robb* proclaimed April 23 to be Consumers Week. Those at the signing were *Elizabeth D. Pessner*, Extension agent for home economics and state coordinator for consumer education, and *Suzanne P. Helms*, Extension consumer education specialist at Virginia State University.

Others attending the signing were *Sumpter T. Priddy*, president of the Virginia Retail Merchants Association; *John Taylor*, vice-president of the Consumer Education Information Association of Virginia, and *Jean Bass*, director of the Consumer Affairs Office for the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Many Extension units across Virginia held special consumer programs during the special week.

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**R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. has awarded** Virginia Tech two grants totaling \$26,000.

One grant of \$21,000 was made to enhance the university's Extension tobacco program. The funds will be used to support additional county agent training in tobacco production, improved resources for Extension tobacco work, an on-farm test review session, tobacco growers' conferences and Extension apprenticeships for undergraduate study of tobacco.

A \$5,000 grant was also made for discretionary use by the dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, *James R. Nichols*, to

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enhance agricultural programs at the university.

Since 1962, R.J. Reynolds has contributed more than \$410,000 to Virginia Tech for tobacco research, Extension, and educational programs.



**A Blacksburg high-school senior** who marketed the produce grown in his family garden won a trip to the 33rd annual 4-H Commodity Marketing Symposium in Chicago. *Dan Martin*, seventeen, was among forty-five 4-H'ers attending the four-day educational event. The winners were selected by the Cooperative Extension Service.

Sponsored by the Chicago Board of Trade, the annual event brings together 4-H'ers who have completed outstanding commodity marketing projects during the past year.

**Tidewater cable television subscribers** can now tune in to a new thirty-minute weekly television program designed to deliver consumer education information. "Consumer Guideposts" airs Mondays and Wednesdays at 9 p.m. and at 10 a.m. Fridays on Cox Cable Channel 11.

Each week, the program shows consumers ways they can get the maximum use of their time, money, and energy by telling them about effective buying skills, creative credit alternatives, budgeting money, and understanding consumer rights.

The program is a cooperative effort of the Virginia Beach Cooperative Extension Service, Cox Cable, WCOX Channel 11, the Virginia Beach campus of Tidewater Community College, the consumer protection offices of Virginia Beach and Norfolk, and the Consumer Affairs Office in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**The work of the Extension homemaker clubs in the Roanoke Valley** has led to the clubs' being nominated for a Volunteer of the Year Award from President Reagan. *Roanoke County* supervisors made the nomination to show their appreciation for the work the homemakers did in making valley planning meetings a success.

"We tried to make everything go smoothly at the planning department meetings," says *Johnnie Hunter*, president of the Roanoke Valley Extension Homemakers Council. "We made the arrangements for the meetings, greeted participants at the door, helped keep discussions on the topic, and took notes of concerns and reported them at the community meeting."

During the first year, the valley clubs assisted at ten community meetings. Last year, forty homemaker volunteers played major roles at twelve meetings. The homemakers are planning on helping in the program again this year.

**Virginia Tech's Extension information office** is planning a two-day workshop for news media representatives to help them have a better understanding of agriculture. "Very few reporters covering agriculture have a farm background. This course will help give them a fundamental understanding of agriculture," says *Terry Canup*, Extension information director. "We thought this would be a way to help them feel more comfortable with agricultural assignments."

The program will be held Tuesday and Wednesday, July 10-11, at the Donaldson Brown Center for Continuing Education as part of Agri-Tech '84. Plant Industry Day on July 12 and Animal Industry Day on July 13 make up the rest of the week's activities to spotlight agriculture.

During their two days on campus, the reporters will hear Tech faculty members and Extension specialists explain government support programs, commodity markets, vegetable, fruit, and livestock production, and new technology. Several of the news representatives will be able to test their new expertise by covering the agricultural programs during the rest of the week.



**The Center for Volunteer Development** at Virginia Tech continued to enjoy spectacular growth last year. When the center began its work in 1980, twenty-seven Extension offices volunteered to be pilot units and provide special assistance. Last year, all 107 local Extension offices had joined the center's volunteer network by designating an agent to work with the Tech-based organization.

Last year, these agents spent more than 4,444 hours in delivering special assistance to volunteers or volunteer groups. For example, eighteen units conducted nine "Coping Locally" workshops, which involved more than three-hundred individuals and focused on the dynamics of fund raising and resource development for volunteer organizations.

Sixteen agents helped organize teams of school personnel and volunteers for three regional conferences that dealt with putting volunteers in the schools. At least seventeen units conducted volunteer development workshops for 556 individuals.

Some 176 problems were referred to the center by agents during a fourteen-month period. The problems involved community improvement and evaluation, financial management, fund raising, neighborhood services, and planning and training.

In each case, at least four professionals, including a center specialist and a local agent, were involved. In addition to those problems that were referred to the center, agents were able to handle 1,289 calls for assistance locally.

*Delwyn A. Dyer*, center director, calls the work of the statewide volunteer network "outstanding." He says that the center's progress justifies the faith exhibited by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation when it made the grant establishing the center at the university.

# Counties Work Together Help Jobless Find Jobs

by William C. Burlinson

After hard times forced the state to close the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) office serving Gloucester and Mathews counties, local officials decided that they had to do something about it.

And they did. Now, thanks to Extension and other agencies, residents can visit a locally supported clearinghouse to look for jobs. The new operation eliminates drives of between forty and fifty miles for those residents who previously would have had to visit the VEC offices in Newport News or Warsaw.

"When a person has no job, he or she can't afford to use up what little money they have in gasoline," says Gloucester County Extension agent Freedom Goode, who led efforts to establish the Gloucester-Mathews Job Referral Service last fall.

Volunteers at the referral service keep the names of prospective employers and employees on file and try to match them. The VEC helps its "competition" by regularly providing its employment listings.

The need to help the area unemployed find their way into the work force was obvious, but how could that be accomplished? Fortunately for the residents in the two counties, an organization already existed that was willing and able to perform the task—the Middle



*Volunteer Frank Scott is one of four persons who regularly call area businesses and industries to find job vacancies that can be listed with the service.*



*Judy Conner, high-school business department head, and Extension agent Freedom Goode discuss the program's progress.*

Peninsula Interagency Council. The council, composed of fourteen area groups and organizations, was searching for a project that would benefit area citizens.

"The council, which represents both the public and private sectors, has been in existence for more than eight years," says Douglas Wilton, council president and executive director of the Lewis B. Puller Vocational Center and council president. "We needed a project to pull our organization together. The referral service was just the thing to do it."

Although the council may have provided the initial push, there were many individuals who helped make the referral service a reality.

Goode, who is chairman of the council's employment services committee, points out, "We had to find a location for the service; make area industries, businesses, and the unemployed aware of the service; raise some money for its operation, and find people who could work in it and keep it running. As it turned out, none of the problems were as large as they looked when we first began considering the service. We had people and organizations volunteering to provide all kinds of help."

For example, volunteers—such as retired hospital administrator Frank Scott—make phone calls to businesses and industries to learn of job vacancies and the qualifications needed to fill them.

Another problem was solved when the Gloucester County School Division offered Gloucester High School as a location for the service. The program is based in the school's business department and has some student help. Two members of the faculty—career counselor Nancy Keenan and department head Judy Connor—maintain



Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal

*High-school student Lisa Shelton adjusts screen so the client can review current job openings offered by the Virginia Employment Commission.*

In the first five months, 365 persons were sent for job interviews, seventy-eight referrals were made to the job training center for additional training, and six referrals were made to the area agency on aging.

Scott is impressed by the progress of the service in its first year. He calls it "a vehicle for informing the employers—a marriage between the two groups." He and the other volunteers regularly check with businesses and industries in the area to find out when they have job openings.

Although he thinks it's too early to tell if the service will be successful, he says that the "vibes" are right and most employers welcome it. One gauge of success will be when all businesses and industries contact the service when they have vacancies and do not have to be called.

Wray Herring, a retired public-school music teacher, was one applicant seeking employment. After two years of gardening and doing odd jobs around the house, he was ready to find either full- or part-time employment. He wanted a job different from his former one; a position that would allow him to stay in the area and not commute as his former position required.

After being interviewed as to what kind of work he wanted to do, what job experience he had, and other pertinent data, Herring checked the service's employment listings and was later sent out on interviews. Within a few weeks, he found himself working as a carpenter's helper in Gloucester County.

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"It is good to see schools and the community working together. This is how it should be."

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Conner is happy with the program, not only for the training in office procedures that it gives the ten students who are in the operation, but for the community service it provides and the good relations it has established with area employers. She believes that the latter will prove extremely beneficial to graduating students who seek such employment in the area. "It also is good to see the schools and the community working together. This is how it should be."

The ten students in the program work in pairs, performing clerical duties and helping applicants read through the job listings from the Virginia Employment Commission. They all work a specified number of hours serving the public, gaining poise, and learning to cope with real-world situations. The students also gain school credit along with the experience.

The success of the Gloucester-Mathews program can be seen by the fact that other localities in the area are looking into setting up similar programs. Wilton believes that such a network of "satellite" offices can really be helpful and hopes that these operations can be established.

"Many of the area unemployed do not have the means to travel a great distance in searching for a job. If we can put a job referral service close to them," he says, "they will use it and the entire community will benefit. That is an exciting prospect." 

liaison with the council and see that the program works.

Since it was estimated that nearly \$1,700 a year would be needed to run the service, money was solicited from individuals and such organizations as the Mathews Chamber of Commerce, Abingdon Women's Club, and Kiwanis of Gloucester. Such solicitations are necessary because, as Connor says, "There is no charge for the service and we are not connected with any employment agencies. There are no hidden fees. No money is handled here, just jobs."

And to make sure people would have as much access as possible to those jobs, Goode donated an answering machine so that anyone could call during after-school hours and leave a message.

The service has grown very rapidly, too. In its first four months, it contacted all area businesses and industries and placed sixty-seven persons in jobs. The 222 persons on file during that time were seeking jobs in such categories as business and clerical, humanities and human relations, medical and related services, personal and protective services, science and engineering, and trades and industry.



*The staff of the referral service takes a moment to talk with Gloucester County Extension agent Freedom Goode, left, who also is a member of the interagency organization that started the center. They are (starting second from left) high-school career counselor Nancy Keenan, department head Judy Connor, volunteer worker Stanley Hall, and high-school student Rhonda Conney.*

# PEOPLE

**Kitty Nicholas**

## Leaves Fashion for Farm

Her motto is a simple one: "If you're not going to do it right, then don't bother doing it at all."

And Kitty Nicholas really believes and abides by this. She has followed the motto in all of her careers—fashion, athletics, and now dairy farming.

The events of her life have brought her full circle to the farm outside Winchester where she was born forty-two years ago. As she stands amid her white-washed milk parlor, Nicholas remembers how it all happened.

"Fashion merchandising was my original career. I worked for several years as assistant buyer for a major department store in Washington, D.C.," she says. Her ex-husband's job, however, required frequent transfers so she had difficulty pursuing her fashion career.

By the time they were transferred to Maryland, she had decided to attempt a new career involving one of her old loves, tennis. She had played tennis at Danville's Averett College and had kept her skills sharp with regular practice over the years. "I decided that I wanted to teach tennis professionally, so I attended several clinics and graduated from a specialized tennis university," she explains. "Then I started my own tennis schools for children and adults."

The schools were an immediate success and Nicholas found satisfaction in her role as founder, developer, and teacher. Then in 1977, a tragic farm accident claimed the life of her younger brother and resulted in her eventual return to the farm.

"I realized that if I didn't help my father keep this farm running, years



*Kitty Nicholas enjoys life as dairy producer.*

of work would go down the drain," she says. "The heritage my family has at Hedgebrook Farm is very important to me, and I knew that with my love for animals and the out-of-doors I could be happy and fulfilled here."

So Nicholas returned with her two daughters, Jackie and Shannon, to Hedgebrook, confident that she could succeed at the male-dominated dairy business. "I knew there was a wealth of information out there—I just had to reach out and get it. I also had my father's experience to draw from on a daily basis, as well as that of our hired employee."

To supplement this on-farm information, she took advantage of educational seminars and meetings offered by Extension and got involved with the Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) on a local, state, and national level. "The Extension service and local agents Gary DeOms and Lance Kauf played a key

role in the knowledge I acquired and am still acquiring," she states. "Farming is a continuous learning process."

Nicholas has learned her lessons so well that she now has major responsibility for the fifty-three-cow Holstein and Jersey dairy operation. This leaves her father, Robert Hockman, free to oversee the family's sixty-acre apple orchard and to perform necessary maintenance on the farm equipment.

Except for the assistance she receives from hired help in the milking parlor, Nicholas handles the entire operation of the dairy.

"To survive in the dairy business you've got to be a good manager, use good genetics to build the foundation of your herd, and be very meticulous," says the Frederick County farmer.

Not only has she succeeded at her new career, the outgoing dairy operator has also had little trouble gaining acceptance among her male peers. "I'm usually the only woman at meetings, and in most cases I'm treated as an individual and not as a female," she says. Solid evidence of her acceptance came when she was elected president of the local DHIA, state board director of DHIA, and chairwoman of the Frederick County Dairy Committee.

As time-consuming as a dairy can be, Nicholas still manages to find time for her tennis and has installed a clay tennis court on the farm. She also breeds and sells cocker spaniels and is building an on-farm kennel for them. "We don't make ourselves slaves to this farm," she explains.

Career moves from the glamorous world of fashion to the exciting world of tennis to the farmer's world of cows and tractors may be a bit irregular, but for Kitty Nicholas the move was only natural.

"I have absolutely no regrets. This is the goal I've had for a long time," she admits as she gazes fondly at her surroundings. "But I had to leave to realize that this was what I wanted."

—Sherrie R. Whaley

John B. Pierce

# Virginia's First Extension Agent

At the turn of the century, John Baptist Pierce had a vision. He hoped there would come a day "when the lowest income farmers in America could live at home, educate their children in nearby training schools, and build for themselves a satisfying farm life."

As Virginia's first Extension agent, Pierce helped lay the foundation for making his vision come true.

In fact, even before he was offered a position with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 1906, Pierce was working to help farmers and farm families. As a biology teacher working under the direction of Hampton Institute, he was teaching farmers in Norfolk County about better ways to farm.

When the founder of Cooperative Extension, Seaman A. Knapp, offered the thirty-two-year-old a position with the USDA, it was arranged that Pierce could continue his connection to Hampton Institute, which served as Virginia's black land-grant institution until 1930. His appointment was under a working arrangement between H.B. Frissell, principal of Hampton Institute; Joseph D. Eggleston, state superintendent of public instruction, and Knapp.

Pierce wrote about his new job: "Frissell called me into his office and offered me work that was closest to my heart—that of carrying the school to the farmers." Frissell also stressed that Pierce should continue to serve black farmers.

Pierce's first assignment was in Gloucester County, an area where a concentrated effort was being made to provide education and improve civil rights for blacks. And his first demonstration was conducted on the farm of T.C. Williams, another Hampton Institute graduate and an activist in the area.

Thus the quiet, ex-biology teacher began his thirty-five-year career of helping Virginia's black farmers.

The technique he adopted in his



Photo Courtesy of Hampton Institute Archives

*John B. Pierce devoted his life to improving rural farmers' standard of living.*

work was the one advocated by Seaman Knapp: learning by doing. And he found many ways to use that technique. For instance, he conducted conferences, lectures, demonstrations, and tours so that farmers and their families could see the results of new farming methods.

He also organized a "Live-at-Home and Community Improvement Program" where farm families could come together with volunteer leaders to learn new farming techniques. One part of this program encouraged young boys and girls to increase their knowledge through club work.

During his career, Pierce's responsibilities expanded considerably. After serving as an agent in Gloucester, he became the supervisor of agents in three counties: Gloucester, Mecklenburg, and Nottoway. In 1911, he became district agent for

Negro demonstration work in Virginia and the Carolinas. And, by 1936, his duties had grown to directing agents in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, Arkansas, Delaware, and Missouri.

Having agents scattered over such a large territory certainly tested Pierce's skills as a planner. Thelma Hewlett, an agent who joined Extension in 1930, remembers one such test: "Women agents didn't drive long distances then, so when we had a meeting where all the agents had to attend, he would have to arrange for someone to pick up each of the six women agents. Then he would have to arrange where we would stay at night throughout our journey."

Hewlett was impressed with the concern Pierce showed for all who worked for him. He even had high expectations for the families of staff members, she says. "He motivated people to believe in themselves."

Pierce wanted agents to reach all of the people, so he designed and implemented programs to benefit every member of a farm family. For instance, in 1913 he appointed a district agent—Lizzie A. Jenkins—to work solely with black women.

The Extension programs he fostered were not limited to a single subject, either. They included such topics as gardening, leader training, and how to arrange for houses to have running water.

Extension agents were few in number at the time and had to work under less-than-ideal conditions. For example, agents frequently had to



Extension Review

*John Pierce receives congratulations from Extension director M.L. Wilson upon completing thirty-five years with Extension as T. M. Campbell, who also had thirty-five years of service, looks on. Pierce was in charge of the black agents in the upper ten southern states while Campbell headed those in the lower South.*

work out of their boarding house rooms.

In describing conditions in Charles City County in 1912, agent R.E.F. Washington said: "...there wasn't a highway in the county that a car could travel on during the winter months without getting stuck; school houses and churches were unimproved; no purebred and very few high-grade hogs were owned by our farmers; poultry flocks were mostly of mixed breeds; very few farmers were growing corn of a known variety; and all fertilizer was bought by brand name and not by analysis."

Whatever the obstacles, though, Pierce and his agents persevered because they truly wanted to see farmers and farm families prosper and enjoy a satisfying life. When Pierce died in 1942 at the age of sixty-seven, he was still working with Extension toward that end.

John Pierce was a pioneer and a visionary—and Extension is still building on the foundation he laid.

—Mary Ann Johnson

## At Hampton Institute

# Ceremony Honors Pierce

"Pioneer," "innovator," and "educator" are words that have been used to describe John B. Pierce. These and other glowing words were used at Hampton Institute when the man who became Virginia's first Extension agent was honored at the unveiling of a highway historical marker in his honor.

The ceremony, held under the school's "Emancipation Oak," brought together representatives from three institutions of higher education and the Cooperative Extension Service to honor a man who for thirty-five years worked to improve the circumstances of the rural black farmer.

The marker that capsules Pierce's accomplishments is at the corner of Tyler Street and Emancipation Drive.

The unveiling was attended by his three living children: William M. Pierce, retired senior vice-president and business development officer at the Union National Bank in Little Rock, Ark.; Charles I. Pierce, retired superintendent of water control in Philadelphia, and Harriet P. James, Appomattox County High School guidance counselor.



Checking the soil at the Gloucester County site of Pierce's first demonstration in Virginia are, from left, Freedom Goode, Extension agent; T.C. Williams, who then owned the property; L.B. Dietrick, then director of agricultural Extension, and Ross Newsome, state agent. The occasion was a state Extension meeting in Gloucester. Coincidentally, Goode's house now sits on the site of that first demonstration.

could attend. All of us attended Hampton Institute.

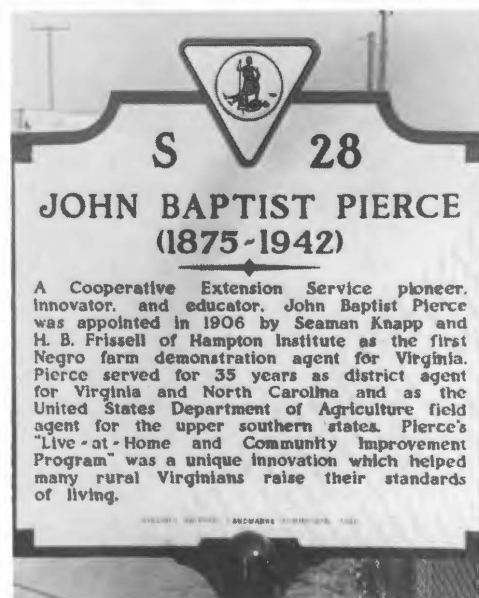
"Papa often would take us on short trips for meetings in Washington, at Virginia State, and at other places," she recalls. "He constantly was pointing out things of interest to us and telling us facts he thought we should know."

Booker T. Washington was Pierce's good friend and often tried to get him to come to Tuskegee Institute to work. George W. Carver, recalls James, was also a good friend and often visited the house.

Also attending the ceremony were representatives of other organizations that worked with Pierce in spreading the Extension word throughout the upper South.

Pierce continued to work for the Negro Extension Service until his death in 1942. The Negro Extension Service was affiliated with Hampton Institute until 1930 when it was moved to Virginia State. In 1965, the Extension operations at Virginia State and Virginia Tech became one.

The "Emancipation Oak" got its name from being near the spot Union General Samuel Chapman Armstrong read President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation to slaves during the Civil War. Armstrong returned to that spot after the conflict to found Hampton Institute as a post-secondary institution to educate Negroes and Indians.



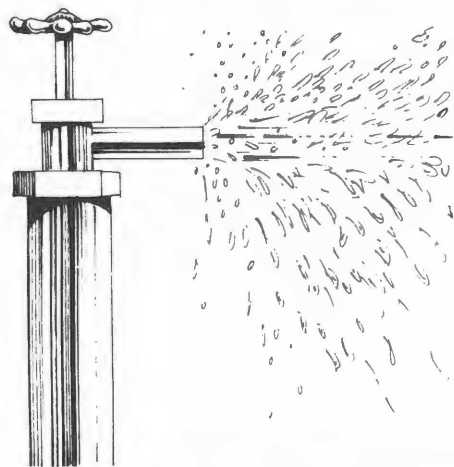
This highway marker relates Pierce's accomplishments.

Harriet James, the youngest of the seven Pierce children, recalls her father's strong desire for all of his offspring to have a good education. "That was one of the advantages of living in faculty housing at Hampton Institute," she says. "There were so many cultural events that we

Hampton Institute Archives

# INNOVATIONS

RESEARCH TO BENEFIT VIRGINIANS



A new irrigation system is being tested at Virginia Tech that could prove to be more cost effective than irrigation systems now in common use, says Tech agronomist Norris Powell.

Powell has been studying the yield differences between irrigated and non-irrigated corn, peanuts, soybeans, and potatoes for four years, and says that there's no question that irrigation pays off in a dry year. But, Powell contends, irrigation can also have its drawbacks. For instance, when overhead irrigation is used during moderately dry years, the additional water on the leaves causes a disease problem with peanuts.

Powell has studied various irrigation systems, and this spring he will experiment with subsurface trickle irrigation, a method that he feels has the benefits of overhead watering—without its shortcomings. "It saves water because less is lost to evaporation, and it saves energy because the water pressure required is low," he says. And since it does not add water to the plant's foliage, there should be fewer problems with disease.

According to Powell, the initial cost of installing the new irrigation system should be no more than that of installing traditional overhead systems. "It will be rather expensive initially, but the pay-back is insurance—better yields in dry years when prices are higher."

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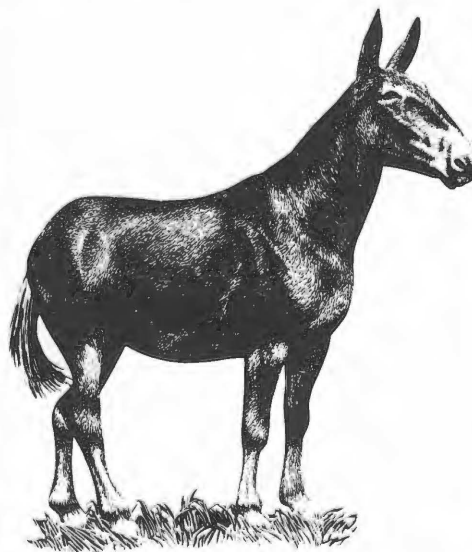
A new computer management program is helping Virginia's poultry industry to have fewer downgrades. A downgrade, or lower quality rating, occurs when poultry goes through the processing plant and is bruised, loses parts, or is damaged in other ways.

Virginia Tech Extension food scientist R. Lewis Wesley says that the program first analyzes poultry in the processing plant according to ten quality factors. Then it relates that information to forty environmental factors found in production houses or during hauling. A producer can then know the cause of the downgrading and remedy the problem.

The computerized management program thus results in lower production costs for farmers and processors, which in turn mean lower prices for consumers. The program is already being used to test 80 percent of the chickens and 100 percent of the turkeys in Virginia.

William D. Weaver Jr., Extension poultry specialist, R. Michael Hulet, assistant professor of poultry science, and Wesley have worked three years to develop the program.

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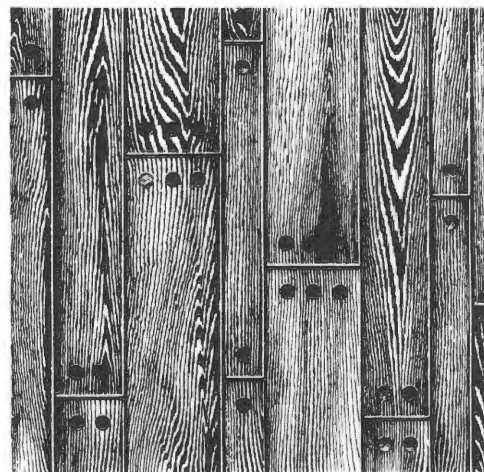
Virginia Tech has drafted some donkeys and mules for guard duty. The animals are being used to guard sheep at Tech, at the Southwest

Virginia Research Station at Glade Spring, and at the Shenandoah Valley Research Station at Steele's Tavern.

Steve H. Umberger, Tech Extension sheep specialist, says that little if any formal study has been done on the use of donkeys and mules for predator control. "Most information regarding the subject is based on hearsay, so we want to study the personalities of donkeys and mules around sheep."

The results of the study will be extremely important to Virginia's 3,000 sheep producers who have had serious problems with dogs in parts of the state, particularly southwestern Virginia.

□



Two-thirds of the cost of turning a log into rough dry boards involves removing water from the log. And the cost is even higher if the lumber is dried improperly. To control these costs, Virginia Tech researchers are developing computer-controlled drying systems.

One such system is an automated, computer-controlled kiln that adjusts temperature drop across the load. The kiln, which is already in operation, was developed by Extension specialist Eugene M. Wengert.

So far the system has worked very well: a major Virginia manufacturer

has saved more than \$200,000 in one year after the system was installed.

Another system, now being developed by Thomas M. Brooks Professor Christen Skaar, improves drying efficiency through computer monitoring of acoustic emissions from the drying lumber. These emissions are indicators of drying problems that reduce lumber quality. Computer processing of the number and intensity of the acoustic emissions is used to automatically control the kiln drying process.

□

**Wood chemistry researchers** at Virginia Tech consider wood to be a basic chemical raw material that should be used for many consumer products that are now being made from petrochemicals or coal.

At present, wood can only be converted economically into pulp and paper, and only one-third of the forest material harvested is now used, says Geza Ifju, head of the university's Department of Forest Products. The remaining material is residue of the process.

But researchers led by Wolfgang Glasser, professor of wood chemistry, are using the leftover two-thirds to develop various plastics, such as high-quality polyurethanes. They are now modifying such wood-based plastics to make them suitable for engineering applications.

□



**Extension agents needing to know about pesticides** have a new source of current information now at their disposal.

Michael J. Weaver, Extension coordinator in Virginia Tech's chemical, drug, and pesticide unit, says that a new computer system, called the Virginia Pesticide Information Retrieval System (VPIRS), allows agents to get current information on happenings in the chemical field.

VPIRS is updated on a continuous basis with information from the Environmental Protection Agency, chemical company newsletters, and other sources. Weaver calls it a "computerized newsletter." He says that the program also has information concerning pesticide applicators' training and the results from various testing laboratories.

The system, which was begun in January and is still being refined, is designed with a menu so that callers can quickly locate a specific topic or problem. This way they won't have to spend a great deal of time searching for the information they want. "There are so many changes being made almost daily that affect chemical users that we wanted to find a way to get the information to where it would do the most good as quickly as possible," Weaver says.

And although VPIRS allows the Tech office to get information out to agents much quicker, newsletters will be used to supply detailed information concerning specific problems, such as was done for the recent EDB controversy.

Weaver says that work has also started on a system that will help guide users through a series of questions and answers. The user will then receive information about a problem's cause and be given a possible solution. This program, however, is still more than a year away.

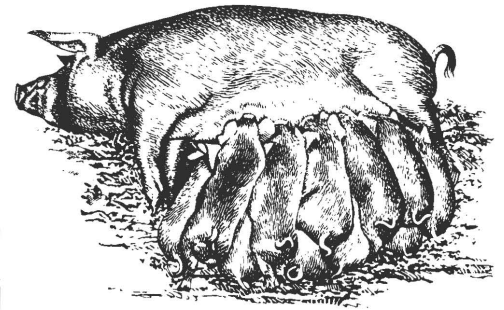
"The computer really allows us to distribute information across the state very rapidly," Weaver says. "We are obligated to use it as much as possible."

□

**Would a slanted farrowing pen for sows** be more efficient and increase the number of offspring that would survive? This question by a Virginia hog producer has led to research on the subject at Virginia Tech's swine center.

Eldridge R. Collins Jr., Tech agricultural engineering Extension specialist, and E. T. Kornegay, professor of animal science, are now looking into the slanted farrowing pens to see if they will promote happier pigs and lead to more efficient production.

Collins says that the inclined pens do allow the sows to follow their natural inclination to lie with their backs uphill. The arrangement gives the mothers ample opportunity to



move around without harming their offspring. In regular flat pens, mothers quite often injure or crush their young.

At the base of the incline is an eighteen-inch creep area for the young pigs. And to keep them at the bottom of the pen, the researchers have installed a heat lamp.

Each of the inclined pens has a plastic-coated welded wire floor with the slots running across the slopes so that the mothers can have good footing on the one-foot incline. The Tech researchers are using six inclined pens, three that measure six-by-six feet and three that are six-by-seven feet. These pens are being compared with the standard five-by-seven-foot farrowing crates.

Collins and Kornegay are evaluating a number of factors in their research: the weight of the sows entering the test; their feed and water consumption; their weight at the end of the test; the number of live pigs born to each sow; the cause of deaths of pigs that die during farrowing; and the number of pigs weaned from each sow.

"We also are using time-lapse photography to study the behavioral aspects of the sows during the period they are being tested," Collins says. The project, which has received funding from the Virginia Agricultural Foundation, began last fall and will evaluate six sets of sows before any conclusions are made.

"Although the current system is efficient, the inclined pen may be even better since it could reduce pig losses and result in more contented sows during farrowing," Collins says.

□



# Powhatan Homemakers

# Making Life Richer

by William C. Burlison

Life would be not be as rich in Powhatan County without its five Extension Homemakers clubs. For years, their fifty-nine members have sponsored county-wide activities that have provided education and entertainment for Powhatan's 13,000 citizens.

The clubs—which are named Busy Bee, Happy Hands, Genito, Red Lane, and Jefferson—work together through the Powhatan Extension Homemakers Council to sponsor a wide variety of events. For instance, they manage the annual Fourth of July celebration that attracts participants from throughout the area. They also run the Christmas Mother program at Christmas to insure that the less fortunate in the county have a happy yuletide. And when Powhatan County decided to sponsor its bicentennial celebration, local leaders turned to the clubs to put the event together.

The Powhatan County Public Library is another project that the Extension Homemakers have fostered. Although small, the nine-year-old library continues to expand and contribute to the total welfare of the county.

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“For sixty-one years, Powhatan homemakers have led projects that have really improved the quality of life in the county.”

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The newest project the clubs have undertaken is the Hungry, Elderly, and Needy (HEN) program. HEN, which began operating at the first of the year, provides food for those families or individuals who don't qualify for welfare, but do have need of temporary assistance. Members of the five clubs and the St. John Neumann Catholic Church work through the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond to assist a dozen families and several individuals each month.

Powhatan County Extension agent Frances Morris points out that the Extension Homemakers movement has a long and successful history in the county. “For sixty-one years, Powhatan homemakers have led projects that have really improved the quality of life in the county. We don't have large numbers,” she says, “but we do have the willingness of nearly every member to do her part to make each project successful.”

Such a group effort is what it takes to carry through any project, says Lillie Walthall, past chairman of the Christmas Mother program. “I certainly couldn't have done it alone,” she says. “There were so many people willing to aid in finding, collecting, and distributing the



William C. Burlison

*Extension agent Frances Morris, left, and Lillie Walthall review results of homemaker programs in Powhatan County.*

food, clothing, and toys that it did not seem like a chore.”

Her words were echoed by this past year's co-chairman, Dorothy Nichols, who called the experience both “gratifying and enjoyable.”

And the backing and support the homemakers receive from local residents, merchants, and interested citizens seem to bear out their statements. Businesses from as far away as Richmond have added food and merchandise to the boxes that are given away to needy area families. The Powhatan fire department allows its firehouse to be used as the headquarters for the Christmas campaign. And county 4-H'ers and scouts wrap the presents, while homemaker volunteers sort the parcels and make certain that the right articles get in the right boxes.

Two years ago, the Christmas Mother program provided 250 boxes that were presented to 700 persons. Last year, despite a lackluster economy, 550 family members received 210 boxes of food, clothing, and toys.

The Christmas Mother and the HEN programs are related. What one tries to do during the Christmas season, the other attempts the rest of the year.

Belle Matthews is president of the program's governing group and Morris serves as secretary. The governing group is called, appropriately enough, the HEN pantry, and has representatives from local churches and other organizations, as well as the homemaker clubs.

Matthews and Morris are enthusiastic about the fledgling HEN operation and feel that it will fill a vital need in the community by helping those who have temporarily come upon hard times.

Homemaker volunteers make regular trips to the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond to purchase the food that is distributed in the program. To raise the

money to make those trips, individual clubs sponsor yard and bake sales, as well as solicit contributions.

The annual Fourth of July celebration that the homemakers sponsor is typical of such celebrations across the country. The festivities include a traditional parade, concession booths that serve the several thousand visitors, and each club has a booth where they offer food, crafts, or "white elephants" to raise money to help support its projects. There are also horseshoe contests and other events, and, of course, the day ends with a fireworks display.

Paulette McWaters and Addie Weisiger headed last year's program. For McWaters, it was her fourth year, but the transplanted Rhode Islander says that the job isn't difficult because of the assistance she receives from other homemakers and interested persons, and from area businesses.

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"But there is a lot of fun and enjoyment connected with putting the program together, as well as the satisfaction you get when the event goes smoothly."

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*Dorothy Nichols, left, and Marianna Hobson say they derived a great deal of satisfaction from working in the Christmas Mothers program.*



*Powhatan County Library is located in former county firehouse.*

"When you look back at what had to be done—the posters and other publicity, getting as many participants as possible, and looking after the other details—you wonder how it happened. But there is a lot of fun and enjoyment connected with putting the program together, as well as the satisfaction you get when the event goes smoothly," McWaters says.

Of course, not all of the groups' projects run smoothly all the time. The Powhatan County Library, for instance, has experienced high and low points during its nine years.

The library hasn't had quite the success that club members feel it should, and many think that the lack of county funds is part of the problem. The county only provides \$2,000 each year to the library to help pay for insurance, utilities, and supplies.


Another problem arose when the library found that it couldn't be open on a regular basis. To remedy this, the Extension Homemakers decided to hire a person to work part-time in the library. This permitted a continuity of service that was not possible when the library depended solely upon volunteer help.

"Sometimes a volunteer was prevented from performing library duties when she was scheduled. Consequently, the library was not open during the hours it was supposed to be. In a rural county like Powhatan, a person doesn't want to make a long trip to get a book and find the library closed," she says.

Now the library has constant, though limited, hours during the fall, winter, and spring. Because the library could rely on part-time student help in the summer, it has a more liberal schedule and offers reading clubs for adults and children, and a story hour for those of nursery-school age.

"The library is making a contribution to county citizens," Morris says. "Its growth has not been spectacular, but more and more residents are aware of it and are using the books. Each month, there are new users."

As many projects and programs as the clubs have undertaken, there always seems to be a need for more work—and more volunteers. Indeed, plans are now being made to form a sixth club in the county.

Those future members will undoubtedly have their own ideas about new projects to help county residents. And Powhatan County is all the luckier for it. 

Powhatan Gazette

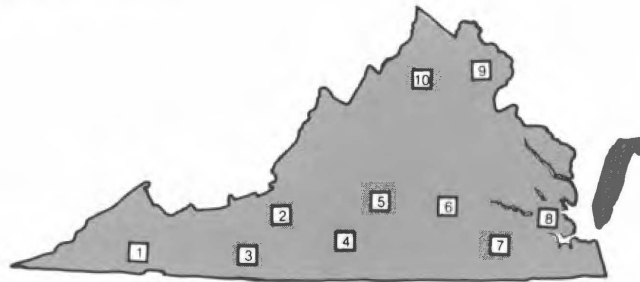
# Need a Meeting Place?

Four continuing education and six 4-H educational centers offer Virginia agencies, organizations, and companies meeting facilities in congenial surroundings at very reasonable rates. Most also have a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

Lodging and meals are available at seven of the centers and are near the other three. For more information concerning how you can have a successful meeting, contact the center director of your choice or C. Ned Lester, associate dean, Extension Division, Donaldson Brown Center for Continuing Education, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. 24061 at (703) 961-5631 for additional information.

## TEN CONVENIENT MEETING LOCATIONS STATEWIDE

- 1** Southwest 4-H Educational Center  
Route 4, Box 131  
Abingdon, Virginia 24210  
Telephone 703-628-7231
- 2** Donaldson Brown Continuing Education Center  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061  
Telephone 703-961-6208
- 3** Reynolds Homestead Continuing Education Center  
Box 21  
Critz, Virginia 24082  
Telephone 703-694-7181
- 4** West Central 4-H Educational Center  
Route 1, Box 289  
Wirtz, Virginia 24184  
Telephone 703-721-2759
- 5** Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center  
Route 2, Box 234  
Appomattox, Virginia 24522  
Telephone 804-248-5444
- 6** Southern Piedmont Research and Continuing Education Center  
P. O. Box 448  
Blackstone, Virginia 23824  
Telephone 804-292-5331



- 7** Southeast 4-H Educational Center  
P.O. Box 637  
Wakefield, Virginia 23888  
Telephone 804-899-4901
- 8** Jamestown 4-H Educational Center  
Route 1, Box 171  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185  
Telephone 804-229-2571
- 9** Northern Virginia Graduate Center  
2990 Telestar Court  
Falls Church, Virginia 22042  
Telephone 703-698-6000
- 10** Northern 4-H Educational Center  
Box 1101  
Front Royal, Virginia 22630  
Telephone 703-635-7171

## Facility Capabilities and Services

LOCATION	LODGING			FOOD			MEETING SPACE			SUP-PORT	RECREATION										AVAILABLE								
	Singles	Two or more	Four or more	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack Bar	Classrooms	Theatre		Outdoor	Audio-visual	Program Planning	Swimming	Boating	Fishing	Hiking	Golf	Tennis	Softball	Volleyball	Basketball	Archery	Camping	Picnicking	Historical sites	Weekdays July-August	Weekends July-August	Weekdays September-June
1																													
2																													
3																													
4																													
5																													
6																													
7																													
8																													
9																													
10																													

\*Not available November-March.

VIRGINIA EXTENSION  
Extension Division, Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061  
3579 Requested

2nd class postage paid  
at Blacksburg, Va. 24061

## Upcoming Events

<b>Aug. 13-15</b>	<i>4-H Electric Congress</i>	<b>Richmond</b>
<b>Sept. 18-20</b>	<i>Virginia Turfgrass Research Field Days</i>	<b>Blacksburg</b>
<b>Sept. 20-30</b>	<i>Virginia State Fair</i>	<b>Richmond</b>

*Virginia Extension, a quarterly magazine, was developed to replace the monthly tabloid Extension News. It is intended to explain the scope of the organization's resources and programs.*