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# VIRGINIA EXTENSION

THE VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE MAGAZINE

Vol. III, No. 1 1985

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Unlocking  
Virginia's  
Economic  
Potential

Extension Year in Review

# COMMENTARY



*Mitch Geasler*

M. R. Geasler  
Vice-Provost  
Extension Division

*Business leaders have called for education that prepares students to participate in our economic system. Don't look now, but Extension has been in the business of economically relevant education for 70 years, and has been a leader in educating the whole family to fulfill its role as an economic unit.*

*When Extension began, there was little question that the primary economic unit was the family. Small family commercial farms grew food for market, and for the home. Food was preserved for future use and clothes were made at home. Children brought new ideas into the home that the family could turn into profitable enterprises.*

*Things have changed a lot in 70 years. The way most people make a living, the configuration of the average household, and the mobility of most people are vastly different. Yet, there is an increasing awareness that our best hope for a prosperous future is to strengthen the family as an economic unit. Extension remains an organization which does that by offering programming which addresses every member of a household and addresses their economic assets—their money, but also their knowledge and their time.*

*Agriculture programs obviously are still helping to create wealth and economic activity in the Commonwealth by giving the agricultural community the tools necessary to have profitable farm enterprises. The agency has been particularly helpful this year in supporting farm income alternatives for producers faced with difficult transitions in the market structures of such commodities as tobacco. Many farm families are facing the most difficult times in their existence. The Extension Service has programs in not only management of farm business resources, but personal family resources as well.*

*The difficult times on farms*

*have caused our country to virtually lose a generation of potential farmers. Having once left the farm, the children of farm families who are now in their 30s and 40s are never likely to return. Nationally, and in the Commonwealth, we have found that the next generation of farmers are in our 4-H clubs, getting experience on the farms of their grandparents. The 4-H club is an important bridge in the continuation of the farm family.*

*Finally, our community development efforts are giving more hope for a future for farm families in rural Virginia. If Virginia farming is to remain vital, off-farm income opportunities must be available near our farms. Consequently, Extension has been active in the training of local government personnel, who hope to attract business. Extension has also been an enthusiastic partner of the budding Rural Virginia Development Foundation, which offers new hope for business that supports rural and farm development.*

*Clearly, what is important to rural and farm families and households is important to all families—to be a stable secure unit for building a home and a future.*

*The Extension approach, which rose out of an age of transition, is now in a better position to be understood by wider society than it has been for many years. No longer will the public feel a need to define Extension in the terms of the important, but very different, categorical support programs that grew out of the depression. The public better understands the need for a force that works with and supports the basic unit in society, the way Extension has for 70 years.*

*Extension, as a whole, is a force for families that appeals to and supports every part of our basic social and economic unit—the household.*

# VIRGINIA EXTENSION

*The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Magazine*

## VIRGINIA EXTENSION

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Photo depicts the unlocking of Virginia's Economic Opportunity. See report beginning on page 5. (Photo by Bob Veltri)



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## Southeast Asians

# Finding the Mainstream

By William C. Burluson

Helping the poor by providing normal social services is an everyday occurrence, but helping poor people who don't understand English, food stamps, running water, electric bills, and how to deal with Americans is a special task that takes special people.

Special people like Luong Phi Phung, who survived an escape by boat from Vietnam, and Neary Seng, a former Cambodian diplomat, have formed an Extension team to help Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees trying to adjust from a rural Asian lifestyle to urban life in Arlington.

Nearly ten thousand refugees live in Arlington and many are not of the professional classes that are so visible in the media. Two Arlington Extension technicians, Audrey M. Moten and Nettie W. Donaldson, noticed that a large number of the community's new arrivals from Cambodia and Vietnam were at the bottom of the community's economic totem pole—even lacking the resources to buy shoes for their children in the winter.

Their talking with Arlington home economics agent Mary R. Eyler resulted in a local Extension study that found that few needed Extension's help more than the refugees. County records show that more than one-fifth live below the poverty level in a county where between \$650 and \$850 is needed to rent a three-bedroom apartment. Many come from very rural backgrounds, speak no English, and are illiterate in their own language. The study prompted the establishment of a nutrition and family adjustment program in March 1983 with part-time help from the Arlington County Extension office and funding from Virginia State University Extension.

The program has reached more than 1,500 refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam who now live in the county. Although the bread-and-butter portion of the program is nutrition, Extension has organized three 4-H clubs with one hundred and forty members in the Arlington County neighborhoods with high concentrations of Southeast Asians and an apartment orientation course that helps those refugees who are unfamiliar with urban living.

The success of the program is illustrated by the fact that this fall it was budgeted as a permanent program by the Arlington County government.

Martha M. Copenhaver, the 1890 Extension agent who directs the program, says, "We have learned that Americans must stay in the background. That is why we use four technicians, two Cambodians and two Vietnamese, to work with the refugees. The refugees are very suspicious, shy, and hesitant to come to any public building or to participate in committee work."

The four technicians have a divided workload, with two being full time and two being part time. Copenhaver says the program is fortunate to have the four as they "are sincerely interested in helping improve the conditions of their fellow countrymen. They care what happens to the refugees after they come to this country."



Photo by Carol Bruce

*Martha Copenhaver talks with technicians Narin Jameson, left, and Kim Phan, right, about visits to refugee families.*

Neary Seng, a Cambodian, and Luong Phi Phung, a Vietnamese, have been with the program almost since its inception. Neary was a counselor with the Cambodian Embassy in Washington when the country fell in 1975. She lost her diplomatic status and was working as a sales clerk in a cheap downtown hotel before being hired to work in the refugee program.

Luong's husband was a financial manager for the Vietnamese department of education before the Communist takeover. He was released after three years in prison on the condition he and his family would move out of Saigon to the countryside. The family finally escaped the country by boat. Luong had to leave her elderly mother and two brothers-in-law behind.

The two part-time technicians are Narin Jameson and Kim Phan. Jameson is Cambodian and Phan is Vietnamese. Both work at translating the information that goes into the educational material as well as working with the individual families. They teach in a targeted neighborhood that contains a large number of Southeast Asian families.

"We conducted an in-depth training program for the technicians at the Extension office. They were taught basic nutrition, how to operate and care for kitchen and laundry appliances, and how to prevent or control household pests. Teaching is done in the native language since the majority of the older refugees don't speak English," Copenhaver says.

Translating information for individuals, many of whom are illiterate in their own language, is slow going. Educational materials, in addition to being printed in Cambodian, Vietnamese, and English, are amply illustrated.

"Whenever possible, the pamphlets contain both English and the native language, so that learning English words will be encouraged. This is very important

to the refugees when buying groceries so that they will be able to read the labels, prices, and directions," Copenhaver says. "We are seeing changes in their attitudes concerning proper food and good health. We give emphasis to pre-natal, infant, and maternal nutrition."

Since June 1982, the program has published more than 100 bilingual publications concerning a wide range of nutrition and housekeeping subjects. Some refugee children who have learned English in the public schools help the technicians and the volunteers with the translations.

Working with the Cambodian and Vietnamese families also is a good opportunity to help them become adjusted to their new homes—usually apartments. Copenhaver says, "Living in an urban apartment in the United States is a very frustrating experience for the refugees. They are hindered by not understanding the language and, in too many cases, by their illiterate background. That is why the apartment living orientation program is so important."

Some apartment living problems that the technicians have had to deal with include windows open on 97-degree days to let in "fresh air" while the air conditioners are going full blast; water running all night to "provide fresh water" by morning; human waste in halls, laundry rooms, and apartment entrances; food stamps found in trash because owners did not understand their purpose; and ceilings and floors scorched by religious rituals.

"We have been making progress, but it has been slow. Businesses in the community have donated such things as diaper pails for us to distribute to those families with infants," says Copenhaver. "An Extension Homemakers club has made canisters and collected food coupons to be used by our technicians in their apartment sessions."

Several Extension homemakers are organizing English classes for the women who stay home. Many county residents have donated furniture, clothes, tomato plants, and food for the program. A supermarket chain has contributed food to the program. New friends of the program are found almost daily. Pitching in are businesses, industries, and civic organizations throughout the community.



*Luong Phi Phung, right, explains the basic foods to a Vietnamese housewife.*



*Neary Seng explains to Cambodian family how to use diaper pails.*

The program has drawn its formal support from a variety of sources. A grant to help print some of the material has come from the William and Lora Hewlett Foundation through the Virginia Home Economics Association. In addition to support from the federally-funded Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, dollars come from the 1890 program at Virginia State University, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, and from federal grants, making the program a model of private and public funding at local, state, and federal levels.

Solicitation of community cooperation takes many forms. Some landlords have raised rents continuously, regardless of the condition of the buildings. Program leaders are trying to get landlords to cooperate in getting the refugees settled successfully in Arlington County.

Refugees are beginning to show acceptance of the new program. While first participants in the program were referred by various agencies, many now come on the recommendations of other refugees. The technicians admit that some who have taken the nutrition program continue to shop for themselves at high-price oriental grocery stores. They generally cook American foods for their children, however.

There also are 140 refugee children in the three 4-H clubs. Many of them have participated in the urban gardening project. Eating the produce grown by these young people also has worked to expand the nutritional horizons of the refugee families.

"You can't change a lifetime of habits overnight," Copenhaver says. "We do feel that we are making an impact, however. The refugee problem is a long-range one. Since many special services are provided to refugees in the Washington region, this population is not expected to decrease. It is going to take many years before the adjustment to our culture is made. Nutrition is not their only need.

"If we can educate these refugees in all Extension service offerings, as well as those services offered by the many other agencies located in the county, these new residents will have a fuller, happier life in this country. In the long run, this program will aid them in becoming productive citizens in the community." ㄚ

Photo by W.C. Burleson

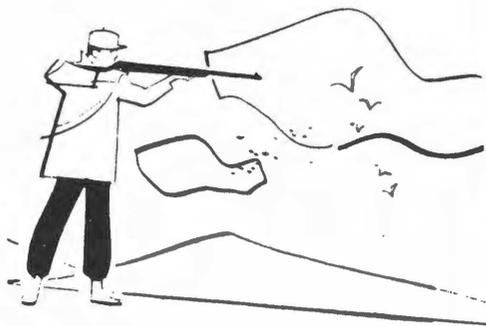
Photo by W.C. Burleson

# IMPACT

DOLLARS AND SENSE FROM EXTENSION

Nearly 1,000 persons are safer hunters because of a safety program that has been conducted in the Tidewater area by Extension and the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. John A. Gray, Newport News Extension agent, has been working with various instructors in the program for fourteen years. Gray has corralled area Navy personnel, National Rifle Association members, and commission representatives to conduct the six-hour course on the use of safety practices while hunting with firearms. The course also has been taught to 4-H'ers attending summer 4-H camp.

"We are willing to teach the course to anyone who wants to participate in the sport," Gray said. "We also have found it to be beneficial as a refresher course to more seasoned hunters as well as beginners. Some tend to forget or overlook some good safety practices after they have been hunting a few years."



□

Approximately 15,000 persons now know more about their microwave ovens, thanks to a learn-by-mail course developed by Virginia Tech Extension home management specialist Janice E. Woodard. The six-week course was offered through local Extension units across the state.

Woodard, who received assistance from Jo Anne Barton, Tech Extension specialist in foods and nutrition, developed the program for new

microwave owners after seeing that Extension agents were getting a large number of questions about how to use the ovens. She worked up four lessons and tried them out on microwave oven owners in Newport News and Dickenson County. The result was the present six-part course.

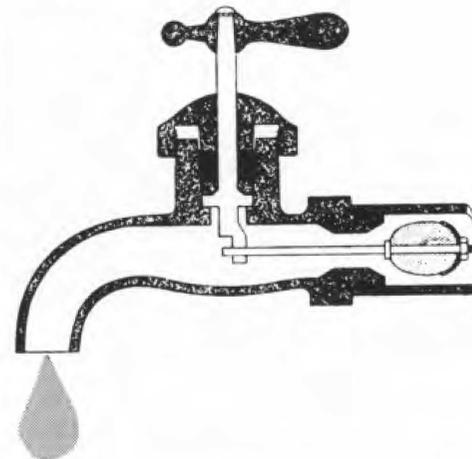
The course examines the basic techniques and management of microwave ovens as well as the cooking of vegetables and fruits; meats, poultry, and fish; and eggs, cheese, sauces, casseroles, breads, and cereals. A course evaluation form, returned by 2,000 participants, showing that Woodard was on the mark with the program, had an average response of 3.0 on a 4.0-point scale. Participants rated especially high those sections of the course that deal with meal preparation, adding to their competence in microwave techniques, increasing the variety of ways of using the microwave oven, improving attitudes about using the microwave, and improving the use of electric energy in cooking.

Of the participants, 35 percent were under forty and 67 percent were under fifty-five years of age. The average size of the household was 2.8 persons with the largest being fourteen and the smallest being one. Of those who took the course, 3 percent were men. Community response varied greatly in terms of enrollment, with Roanoke City having the largest number, 952, while Essex County had the smallest, ten.

□

Nearly 118,000 volunteers participated in a statewide conservation program that was conducted by the Virginia Water Resources Research Center at Virginia Tech. Project director Kathryn P. Sevebeck says that those who volunteered to educate Virginians in water- and energy-saving tactics came from such youth organizations as 4-H, Boy and Girl Scouts, and ecology clubs; garden groups; civic, social and

service organizations; environmental groups; educational institutions; public utilities; local government units; and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service.



Funded by a grant from ACTION, the national volunteer agency, the seventeen-month program sought to provide citizens with practical equipment and educational information that offered immediate savings on water and energy costs and consumption. Volunteers contributed 90,000 hours to the program and distributed 100,000 conservation kits to homes. Center staff members, Extension agents, and volunteer coordinators gave more than 700 educational workshops around the state. Sevebeck estimates that more than 300,000 Virginians benefited from using the water- and energy-conservation tips in their homes and saved a total of ten million gallons of drinking water a day and a minimum of 8.5 million dollars annually in water-heating costs.

"Our statewide conservation program would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation of the volunteers," Sevebeck says. "The fact that the Virginia project is a role model for other states conducting similar programs is a tribute to our volunteers' commitment and success."

□

*"Economics does not start with goods; it starts with people, and their education, organization, and discipline." Those are the words of the internationally recognized economic development authority, E.F. Schumacher. The proof of his words can be seen across the Commonwealth where the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service works with people to define needs and apply the resources of the land-grant system toward the education and organization of the people.*

*Extension's educational mission has a special place in America and the Commonwealth with its ability to work with people to help them take advantage of the resources available to them. Economic potential is in our soil, water, time, and willingness to learn. Economic disaster resides in lives without learning and a society that neglects the resources its people represent.*



**Unlocking Virginia's  
Economic Potential**

Extension Year in Review

*Columnist James Reston once wrote: "I think probably that it is on the land, rather than in the machine shops or even the scientific laboratories that America has led and is still the envy of a hungry world. And the land-grant colleges were undoubtedly the seedbed of that agricultural revolution."*

*Our future economic growth will largely be led by a similar grassroots entrepreneurship that will depend on grassroots economic education that Extension offers. We are best known for programs that reach commercial producers and processors of food and fiber. Even here, Extension is an important role player whose identity often gets lost when we honor the state's economic successes.*

*Every major agricultural industry can credit Extension for much of its growth in this century. The growth of the poultry industry, the great improvement of cattle productivity through bull testing, the adoption of hybrid corn which increased feed grain yields and the spread of soybeans from a provincial crop of the East to a burgeoning state-wide crop are all Extension successes.*



## **Barley Option Offers a Chance For Farm Profits**

To survive these days, farmers have to get the maximum use out of their land. And in many cases, Extension's barley management program may help them do that.

Both hard-pressed cash grain and livestock producers can gain another tool in their farm businesses through a viable barley option.

"Barley has a tremendous potential as a silage and grain crop, especially in the Southeastern Piedmont of Virginia," says Daniel Brann, a Virginia Tech Extension agronomist involved in the project. "Farmers who grow small grains should take another look at growing barley."

In the past, low yields have made barley less attractive than wheat, but the new program is giving producers the know-how to grow high yielding, high protein barley.

The first step to high yielding barley is a good variety, Brann explains. This area has not been neglected. Agronomist Thomas Starling of Tech has developed many varieties suited for Virginia.

But a good variety is only one side of the coin, he said. "Good management, particularly nitrogen manage-

ment, is half the secret to growing barley well. Before last year, there was very little work done on this aspect. Virginians were growing barley the same way their grandfathers did, and it showed."

"The results of our first trial show that if you treat barley as an important crop—prepare a good seedbed, and control weeds and insects—nitrogen applications can produce extremely high yields," Brann says.

"We got 20 tons of silage per acre, three times the state average," says Brann. "If we could get 20 on our small plots, the yield potential is certainly at least 15 tons per acre on a larger scale."

Grain yields were 137 to 152 bushels per acre with just 40 pounds of nitrogen applied in the spring, he said. Previously, good farmers on good land were happy to get 100 bushels per acre, and the state average was 60 bushels.

Better nitrogen management may also mean a higher quality barley, says Brann. And that could translate into improved prices for the grain.

"Barley has always been available at bargain basement prices," says Brann. "People prefer to feed corn. But if we can create a barley with more protein in it, maybe we can start more people looking for barley as a feed, instead of just accepting it if nothing else is available."

"Barley is a very versatile feed," says Kenneth Webb, the animal scientist working on the project. "Producers can decide right up to the time of harvest whether to use the crop for grain or silage. Either form makes a good feed for swine, cattle and sheep."

"Although it's slightly lower in energy than wheat, barley has more protein than other small grains," Webb says. "This could eliminate some of the need for expensive protein supplements."

"Barley can be especially advantageous for farmers who double-crop their land," Brann says. It matures a week to ten days earlier than wheat, giving producers more time to get in a second crop of soybeans, corn, or sorghum.

"The combination of barley and soybeans gives a good net income, and the beans do better with the added growing season," Brann says.

"We're already seeing quite a bit of interest in growing more and better barley," says Kenneth Webb.



## Virginia: The World's Wood Basket?

Midwest farm economies have been characterized by the designations "corn belt" and "breadbasket." Virginia is likely to find itself in the world's "woodbasket" as the Pacific Northwest declines in its significance.

Virginia is two-thirds covered by forest and like other Southeast states has the transportation system to make the wood readily available to world markets and therefore make forest products the growth industry of the nineties.

"Since domestic demand for forest products is expected to double by the year 2000 and world demand for paper is expected to double every 15 years, Virginia with its wealth of forest resources, manufacturing facilities and major ports, can play a major role in satisfying this demand," says Fred Lamb, the Extension specialist in wood products at Virginia Tech.

Even at the threshold of new dramatic growth possibilities, forestry is already a major part of the Virginia economy. It generates \$3 billion in manufactured goods in the Commonwealth yearly and employs

one of every six industrial workers in the state.

Virginia has 520 sawmills, 54 furniture plants, 18 treating plants, 17 veneer and plywood plants, and seven pulp and paper mills.

Not only are wood products a promising growth arena, but a great investment arena for the Virginia economy. Every dollar invested in the forest industry yields nearly two dollars in economic activity in the state and the spread of forests throughout the Commonwealth makes that promise a good one for every section of Virginia.

The unique character of the industry necessitates a strong Extension program if we are to bring people, resources, and expertise together to take full advantage of opportunities for economic growth. Extension not only educates private landowners and farmers who own 77 percent of the forests, but works with industry to improve efficiency and productivity through better use of technology. Extension also tries to assure the cost efficient use of timber to reduce pressure on forest lands that are precious to recreation and tourism.



*Today, Extension is helping to spawn new economic successes by identifying needs through local agents and their clients, and identifying opportunities for them. The project to diversify tobacco farms faced with declining markets is a prime example, but only one of many. Extension is answering the cost/price squeeze of cattle producers with a drive to improve reproduction management through highly technical methods involving estrous synchronization and embryo transfer. Cash flow management education has been a crucial push for all hard-pressed farmers and relatively low numbers of farm financial disasters in Virginia attests to the effectiveness of such programs.*

*Many of the same educational programs that reach agricultural producers find audiences in 4-H clubs. U.S.D.A. historian Wayne Rasmussen has noted that a generation has turned away from farming and 4-H has been instrumental in recapturing interest in agriculture for the next generation. This is the case in Virginia, where many a 4-H'er in livestock or other farm projects gets experience on the farms of grandparents. 4-H is also kindling interest in several of the promising growth industries of Virginia through projects like sheep production, forest judging, and meat judging.*



## **Good News From the Broccoli Belt**

In the Southside region of the state, the theme "We have it made in Virginia" could be amended to "We have it grown in Virginia". Farmers there are turning to broccoli and cantaloupes to supplement their tobacco income, and supplying Virginians with fresher, tastier versions of crops traditionally trucked in from California.

"Two years ago, people would have laughed at us if we'd said Virginia farmers would be producing broccoli," said Charles O'Dell, a Virginia Tech Extension horticulturist. But the scepticism has become enthusiasm.

Last year's 35 acre pilot broccoli project has bloomed into a 300 acre business this year. While essentially zero acres of cantaloupes were grown in 1983, 90 acres were planted this spring, with plans to expand in the near future.

What has generated the sudden produce boom in Virginia's tobacco country? Tobacco farmers are facing a high supply, low demand situation in marketing their labor intensive crop, said Larry McPeters, a Halifax County Extension agent. They've been searching for other crops to supplement tobacco for several years, and appear to have found the answers in broccoli and cantaloupes.

"These crops fit in perfectly with tobacco," said O'Dell. Cantaloupes and tobacco are planted at the same time, with the cantaloupes ready to harvest right before tobacco. Broccoli can then be planted, and is harvested from October through December. All

three are row crops, with similar cultivation practices.

The story of the new Southside crops is a perfect example of the Extension process. Local clients, organized into an advisory group for Extension, defined their problems to local agents, who called on the expertise of the land-grant system. A U.S. Department of Agriculture economic feasibility study in 1982 identified the two crops as good tobacco companions for Southside farmers with promising market windows. The Southside Virginia Produce Cooperative was formed to try out the idea. The co-op markets the produce, and supplies the cooling plant and refrigerated trucks necessary for quality broccoli production. The farmers in turn pay a life-time membership fee and a small fee per cantaloupe or box of broccoli marketed. There are now 105 members, with more on the waiting list.

Initially, marketing the produce was hard work, said O'Dell. "Buyers had simply never heard of Virginia broccoli," he explained. But they were quickly convinced of the value of the product, and this year contracting for the crop posed little problem.

"We're only an hour away from our markets, while California broccoli takes three or four days to get here," said O'Dell. "You lose some quality over that period of time."

"The Californians must grow a variety of cantaloupe that will travel," said McPeters, "They have a thick rind and weigh about two and a half pounds. But since we're so close to market, we can grow a thin-rind, more flavorful variety which weighs about six and a half pounds. That's definitely more fruit for your dollar."

Extension scientists are working to assure a long future for Southside vegetable crops. Extension horticulturist O'Dell began work on labor-saving direct seeding of broccoli after the first season and identified broccoli varieties and practices that could help overcome weather-related losses that plagued growers during their second season. O'Dell is even exploring the advantages of no-till broccoli, an appropriate endeavor as Virginia Extension is a national no-till pioneer.

Despite some set-backs, local producers expect to invest in a better cooling plant for their new products—a sign of confidence in the future.

"We'd like to make our area the broccoli capital of the world," McPeters added. "And I believe we will."



## Food Profits Are in the Process

One of ten manufacturing workers in Virginia works with foods, and the numbers are growing in Virginia. The potential for growth is greater yet. Though far less glamorous than industries associated with silicon and steel, food processing is an attractive growth industry for Virginia.

Virginia enjoys many competitive advantages—proximity to markets, excellent transportation systems including ports, a good banking system, and an excellent land-grant research and Extension program.

The program is continually helping the existing industry get an edge. Extension food scientist George Flick developed a fish washing process which could extend shelf life of fish between one and two weeks. This opens the possibility of tapping great Midwest markets for fish products and improving profits.

Extension food scientist Lewis Wesley developed a computerized management system for poultry houses which tracks down factors that are causing lower quality gradings of poultry. Most of the

industry has adopted the system. These are examples of Extension support for an industry that shows promise of repaying all the support it receives.

Kent Stewart, chairman of Virginia Tech's food science department, sees a wide open international market for food products that have value-added treatment. But trends in our own country point to growth in manufactured foods demand. More working women and smaller households contribute to demand. Today, 45 percent of household food expenditures go toward convenience foods.

Not only are opportunities growing, but the industry offers stability against throes of the economy since food consumption is fairly constant. Despite all this, there is not the tremendous competition for food processing industries that we see for glamor industries. The door is open for growth and well-distributed growth, since food processing tends to be an industry that resides close to its food production sources.

*If we listen to IBM's William Howard, then we would recognize the need for 4-H programs. Howard recently told the Education Commission of the States that industry needs employees who are trained to be trainable, who can think logically, understand the forces that drive industry, and can deal with personal finances, and he challenged the educational system to provide such people.*

*The 4-H program is an educational system that helps to deliver such people not only to be employees but entrepreneurs and household managers. For example, 4-H is preparing youngsters for the complexities of managing personal finances and homes. The youth in these programs are required to keep records of receipts and expenditures related to their projects.*



## **Sheep Outlook is Bullish**

The fruits of change go to those who are ready for change.

"All the signs say the sheep industry is moving East. Virginia is the natural place for it to come," said Steven Umberger, a Virginia Tech Extension animal scientist.

Virginia Extension has led moves to overcome some of the Commonwealth's sheep marketing disadvantages and seize opportunities to establish sheep as a growth industry in the state.

"We have a lot of excellent forage in Virginia that we need to market. The way to do it is through sheep."

This year a marketing breakthrough for Virginia sheep producers combined with disaster in the industry out West is producing a boom in the Virginia sheep industry.

Virginia producers have received prices equal to those in the pace setting Midwest markets.

Umberger said Virginia producers realized at least an additional \$240,000 in revenue due to computer marketing of lambs. Successful computer marketing of lambs created more competition among buyers to bring prices up from as low as 10 cents a pound below Midwest prices. Severe weather related reductions in flocks in the West brought all prices well above last year's levels.

Producers in Rockingham and Shenandoah Counties consulted with Umberger and formed the Shenandoah Valley Lamb Marketing Association early in 1984 with the aim of assembling loads of computer sales. By August, 5,000 lambs had been sold by computer, about one-sixth of all the lambs marketed in the state during that time.

"There used to be very little competition between buyers in Vir-

ginia," said Umberger. "But by using the computer, we've hooked up with all the major lamb packers in the Northeast, Midwest, and Canada. It allows the producers to get the most competitive bid possible."

"Selling that many lambs over the computer forced buyers at local auctions to pay more than they normally would," Umberger said. "Lamb prices were exceptional all over the state."

The computer marketing system was developed with U.S. Department of Agriculture funding by Virginia Tech Extension agricultural economists. Southwest Virginia sheep producers have used the system for several years, but prices have been below Midwest levels due to distance from markets.

Umberger emphasized that the computer sales do not compete with the local lamb auction markets.

Earlier strategies for improving prices for Virginia lamb included efforts to establish a lamb slaughtering facility in the state. All major lamb packing facilities are outside of Virginia.

Though some efforts failed in the past, Umberger thinks improved price competition leading to higher sheep numbers is the first step toward attracting a packing facility to the state.

The prospects for expansion of Virginia's sheep flocks look excellent for at least the next five or six years. The reason is a nationwide decrease in sheep numbers along with an increase in consumer demand for lamb.

"We could double our numbers without affecting prices," Umberger said.

He expects at least a five percent increase in the Virginia sheep population this year alone.

In addition to plentiful forage and good weather, Virginia has an ideal location for marketing sheep. Sixty percent of the lamb produced in the U.S. is consumed in the Northeast. Unlike Western producers, Virginians are only a few hours away from the major markets.

Losses from predators are a deterrent to Western producers. Although Virginia does have a dog problem, the situation is not as severe, Umberger said.

"Since Virginia has small farm flocks, we can put up fencing and facilities to protect the sheep. Westerners who graze huge flocks on

miles of open range don't have these options."

Finally, Virginia has a solid sheep industry base. Education has resulted in lambing rates well above the national average—a key to profitability. A pooled wool sale, not available in many states, gives a ready outlet for wool. Interest in the industry is spurred by a popular 4-H sheep program and home economics

programs in wool. This year's annual sheep conference combined with the Make-it-Yourself with Wool contest for the most successful conference in years.

"Morale in the Virginia sheep industry is the highest it's been in ten years," Umberger added. "All the signs say 'Go,' and that's what producers are doing."



## Building Character A 4-H Challenge

Education through 4-H complements other educational programs of Extension, but 4-H has a special role to play in the personal development of young Virginians. The most vivid example is the wilderness challenge program which makes a special effort to divert youth from antisocial patterns of behavior.

Under grants from the Department of Criminal Justice Services, pilot programs were started for youth offenders in ten counties. The program placed youngsters in groups that were prepared to meet the challenges of the wild together. Trained by volunteer leaders, each youngster learned to depend on others while others depended on them. The character-building programs culminated during week-long excursions in wilderness areas.

Leaders estimate that a five-year program reaching 525 youth annually will save the Commonwealth \$1,312,500 in youth detention costs, now at about \$1,750 per month per youth. Volunteer time over five years would be about \$1.2 million.

What can't be quantified is the value of diverting youngsters from patterns of behavior that could prevent them from achieving their potential as contributing members of society.

Youth don't have to be offenders to benefit from 4-H programs. Wilder-

ness challenge programs now are offered to non-offenders and summer camp experiences reach over 10,000 each year. Programs in shooting safety reached 700 last year, while 12,000 participated in performing arts programs. Over 150,000 youngsters were 4-H members participating in some 4-H activity.



*In Virginia alone, household income amounted to \$61 billion in 1982. We are amazed at the change that has taken place in our factories and offices, but no other economic entity has undergone more change than the household.*

*The traditional household of breadwinner, housewife and kids is very much in the minority. In the case of 62 percent of couples, both work. Single parent households and blended families are unprecedented proportions of our households. The effects are far reaching.*

*A home economics program implemented through the 4-H program has led to the training of children all over the Commonwealth in basic survival skills that will assure their safety and self-confidence when faced with hours at home alone without parents.*

*The effects of contemporary life can be chilling. Half of all infants born in Richmond are born to teenagers and a study in Virginia shows that child abuse and neglect results from a lack of understanding of child development, heavy continuous childcare, and financial stress. To help families pull together and build a future, the Extension service home economics programs have addressed all these major problems, through programs like volunteer financial counseling and home and family management education. These programs are focused on being a force for families. Families that provide support for their members are an incalculable, but immense economic asset to the Commonwealth.*



## **Project HOME Beautifies Houses**

The communities of Upper Potomac West and Potomac East are made up of small row-houses which are occupied by families earning low to moderate incomes. These areas have become run down and are in need of a lot of repair work.

"Our goal, when planning programs, has been to help them as a neighborhood," said Extension's Project HOME coordinator Barbara M. Joseph. "Working with a lot of the families, we have organized programs that involve the neighborhood as a whole."

The programs included home maintenance, nutrition, textiles, garment construction, energy conservation, and gardening.

For example, one neighborhood has been landscaped with the aid of the Extension-trained and -organized Master Gardeners. The new plants have made a visible change in the neighborhood. Though the families agree there is a long way to go in beautifying the neighborhood, their efforts have received recognition in a letter of commendation from the mayor of Alexandria.

The Extension workers also have been coordinating the efforts of this same group of families to form a cooperative and be involved in the administration of the apartment building in which they live. Working with the Metropolitan Planning and Housing Office, the neighborhood group is in the process of learning about the ramifications of forming a cooperative.

"We also have been working with the youngsters in the neighborhoods," said Ms. Joseph. One of our outstanding community leaders also finds time to work with youngsters. "Last week she had about 15 of them in her tiny kitchen all making apple chutney,"



## Hotlines Offer Food of Knowledge

When the jelly doesn't gel, or the peppers don't dry, or the canning jars don't seal, 3,000 Virginia food preservers call an Extension Food Preserving HotLine to find out what to do about it.

And the home economists who answer the hotline questions tell them how to do it right next time and give them basic information on the food preserving process.

Food Preserving Hotlines at Roanoke, Fairfax and the Tidewater area, operate throughout the food preserving season. A home economist is generally available to answer questions from morning to mid afternoon. At other times, a tape recording is made of the questions and the home economist calls the client back. The service is fast to be able to help the food preservers while there is time to do something about the problem. In a random sample of those who used the Roanoke line, all who replied to a question on how fast they got an answer, indicated that they got the information in time for it to be of use.

The results were valued in several ways. In Virginia Beach, the worth was calculated at \$874 per family for the 809 families who called. This figure included the value of food from the home garden. In Fairfax, calculating the replacement cost of the food preserved came to \$398,000.

More than just a quick service to clients, the hotlines are providing lasting education. In a random sample, 84 percent of clients at Virginia Beach and 89 percent at Fairfax replied that they changed their practices or tried new techniques.

These hotline projects are funded in part by Virginia State University Extension.

Master Food Preservers, trained by Extension home economists, may be used to extend the hours of the hotline. In Virginia Beach, 15 Master Food Preservers were trained in 1983 and returned 300 hours of work. Another 13 volunteers joined them in 1984. In Fairfax, eight new Masters joined the core of 16 actively volunteering their time and talents.



## Critical Beginnings Assured through Nutrition

Young, growing children need a balanced diet to become healthy, productive adults. In the 12.5 percent of Virginia families who are living at or below the poverty level, youngsters can be at risk.

The potential cost to the Commonwealth of allowing poor nutrition could be enormous. Extension intervenes with federal resources provided through USDA's food assistance programs and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

In Virginia, 26 counties and cities have an EFNEP program under the guidance of the local home economist. Technicians reached out to the 9,000 enrolled families in 1984, seeking those who need the information, and providing the education in a way that fits their needs best.

To evaluate the program, its coordinator, Betty S. Mifflin, Virginia Tech Extension home economist, asked 11 units to respond to a questionnaire. In this sample, 2,193 families extended their resources by \$169,169 through food budgeting and improved buying skills; 741 had home gardens valued at \$148,200 for food produced; and 613 families preserved food valued at \$36,796.

In 1984 volunteers donated 7,270 hours, worth over \$29,000 to EFNEP families.

Since it is the youngsters who are most in need of the EFNEP program, a special 4-H segment is offered. In 25 counties and cities, 632 volunteers taught nutrition to 8,304 low-income youngsters. The setting was 397 small neighborhood learning groups of about five to 12 youngsters.

The specially designed program covered topics such as the food groups and food preparation skills. Often local individuals and businesses contributed materials so nutritious snacks could be prepared and eaten to enhance the learning, said Ms. Mifflin.

The 4-H segment offered a Survival Skills program in the City of Richmond as a model. About 163 youngsters who were home alone after school and evenings, were taught skills to help them better cope with the challenges of being alone. Food preparation skills are an important part of being comfortable at home, alone.

To measure if more essential nutrients are part of the family's diet, technicians record a daily family menu every six months. These were analyzed, with the aid of a computer program, to see how well they compared with the recommended servings from the food groups which offer a balanced diet. The families in the sample who had at least one serving from each of the food groups increased from 60 percent at the beginning of the program to 93 percent. The families that had the recommended servings from all food groups increased from eight to 58 percent.

*The community, too, is an essential prerequisite for any economic growth. It is the "organization" element of Schumachers formula for economic development. Once considered a peripheral aspect of agricultural policy, community development has been hailed as central to agriculture's future by no less figure than Tom Urban, President of Pioneer Hybrid. He says that a new contract with rural America should mandate "...direct involvement of rural residents in the planning and execution of programs allowing rural communities to themselves build for a future rather than be devastated by cyclical forces beyond their control;.."*

*Extension has been central to the training of local public officials through the Virginia Institute for Economic Development, but countless other endeavors at the local level have organized marketing opportunities for local economies, as well.*



## **Virginia Declares Economic Independence**

Colonial Virginia still exists, some would argue. Not as a historical curiosity in Williamsburg, but as an economic fact in a Commonwealth that still exports many of its agricultural and natural resource products in raw form to other countries and regions.

Extension specialists decided that declaring independence from this modern day mercantilism would take a unique approach that would bring the expertise of the land-grant system together with venture capital, entrepreneurs, and other educational institutions.

In April, legislation originating from Extension specialists was signed into law, beginning a process that would begin in 1985 to put money into the hands of Virginia entrepreneurs and back them with research and training expertise.

Brady Deaton, an Extension resource development specialist, who was among the authors of the founding legislation, says the foundation was created from the ideas of several successful venture capital groups in other states.

"Never has an idea like this been tried in its totality in other states," he says. While operating loans were available for Virginia businesses from traditional sources, he says few sources of equity capital are available for small business starts.

"When you look nationally, Virginia doesn't even show up on the map of places where venture capital investments are being made."

The foundation's board expects to raise private funds and match them with small business administration money. The group plans to follow up by identifying entrepreneurs and offering them technology assistance along with equity capital.

Deaton says that the foundation will target investment toward small

businesses with the capability of hiring between 20 and 50 people and concentrate heavily on value-added industries relating to agriculture and natural resources of the state. Small food processing and wood products businesses would be prime examples, but the possibilities are as great as our natural resources including fisheries and coal. Board members hope to tailor businesses to local interests and attract investments from communities where new ventures are located. While all of rural Virginia will be served, high unemployment areas such as the Northern Neck, Southside and Southwest can expect particular attention. Value-added industries are important ways of maximizing the return Virginia gets from its primary products, but it may also be an important way of keeping primary industry alive. "Nationally, 64 percent of farm household income comes from off-farm income," says Deaton. "If we're going to have a healthy viable agriculture in Virginia, we have to have a healthy viable set of communities generating non-farm jobs to support the households engaged in farming."



## Pulling Agencies Together Pulls Neighborhood Together

A few years ago, the community of Forest Glen/Centerville in James City County was in trouble. Over 40 homes in the community were abandoned and deteriorating. The crime rate was increasing, and those who were able, moved out of the area.

Today, it is a growing and developing community with virtually no abandoned homes because the leaders of the County and the Extension agents cared what happened and did something about it.

All of their efforts were honored when the project received a 1984 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties, which was presented to the Extension staff members by James City County.

The community, for all its problems, was relatively young. It was started in the early 1970s by a private developer. But when the developer went bankrupt, the project was never completed. Some homes were not insulated sufficiently. Roads and community areas around the 144 two- and three-bedroom structures were never finished. Farmers Home Administration took over many of the homes.

James City County leaders were attempting to help the area, by seeking funds to complete and repair structures. But Extension home economist and unit director, Shirley M. Willis, thought the development's best chance for recovery was through coordinated and concentrated efforts of several agencies in the area.

Extension took the lead. With funds from Virginia State University, a technician, Thelma Griffin, was hired to work in the community full time.

County maintenance employees converted one of the abandoned homes into a residential community facility to be used for meetings, demonstrations, and a youth center.

An average of 60 individuals participated monthly in Extension programs in home maintenance, gardening, lawn improvement, upholstery, sewing, refinishing furniture, and nutrition. Special educational programs were also conducted for teenage parents and single parents.

Other county agencies offered their programs at the building, to make it easier to reach the people. They included Social Services, Community Development, the schools, and the crime prevention and recreation offices.

Several agencies brought programs to young families including the Bright Beginnings program, a federal program to aid youngsters from birth to five years old.

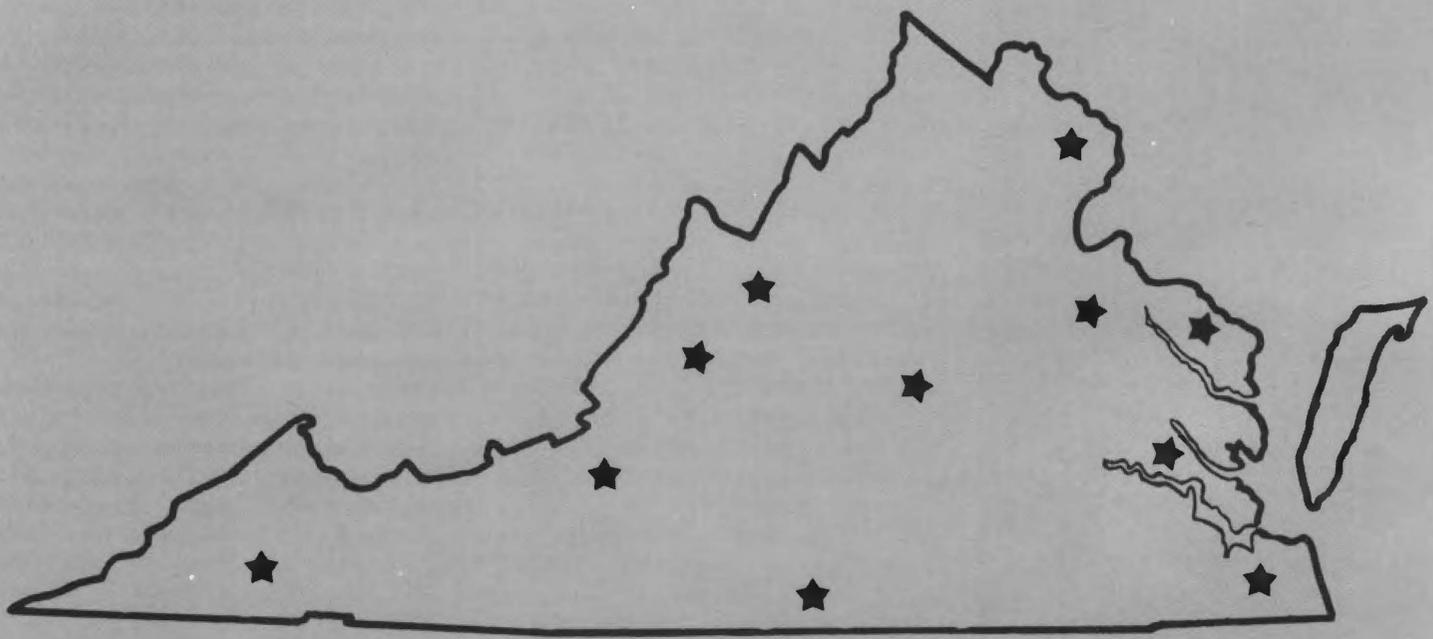
Agencies working closely together could focus on specific needs of residents, said Ms. Willis. For example, a single parent was attending a program to learn how to help her children do better in school. As she worked with the instructors, she felt the help her youngsters needed most was to have privacy and a quiet place to study. When other county agencies joined to aid her, she was able to find another home where she and her children could have more space of their own.

The Urban Homesteading Program is also successful as part of the county's integrated effort. So far 14 vacant homes were acquired by the county, using Federal Homesteading funds. These homes were then deeded to qualified persons to rehabilitate and live in for at least three years. This was the first use of Homesteading funds to purchase homes from the Farmers Home Administration inventory.

The program will continue. The Farmers Home Administration has extended the funds for 18 months.



*There are tremendous untapped opportunities for further economic growth for Virginia. The Commonwealth has ports, roads, location, and natural resources that, when combined with the know-how of the land-grant system, promise great economic growth. Extension has an important role to play and a proven record of great returns for the Commonwealth. But Extension is a shrinking organization that has fallen from a strength of 1,600 employees in the 1970s to 1,000 today. It is no time to shrink in the face of opportunity.*



# Ella Agnew: A Maverick Leader

By William C. Burlison

A maverick Virginian with a desire to advance the rights of women, Ella G. Agnew brought women and girls into the Extension Service 75 years ago fully aware that she could be opening or closing a career for women as employees of Extension.

Today, thousands of women Extension agents touch millions of lives each year. This contribution by Ella Agnew has given her a position along with other women who contributed to the state's history and are being featured in a traveling exhibit, "A Share of Honour: Virginia Women 1600-1945."

Agnew is included with such famous women as Pocahontas, Dolley Madison, and Nancy Astor as the exhibit moves from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond to Norfolk's Chrysler Museum for a month (Feb. 8-March 17) before going to the Roanoke Museum of Fine Arts for showing between April 18 and June 6.

Agnew was no pampered rebel. Born in Prince Edward County in 1871, Agnew had an unsettling childhood—in separate incidents, she saw her home destroyed by fire and her father and mother die before she was nine. "I began the adjustment to varied living in my first year," she later recalled, "and seemed to keep it up. My education has been on the pay-as-you-go, get-what-you-can-when-needed plan."

Agnew, acknowledging that the only respectable employment open to women at that time was teaching, decided on the then avant-garde profession of being a secretary. This choice of vocations led her to spend five years in South Africa; first as a secretary in a seminary, then as a principal of a girls' school, and finally as an interpreter at the American consulate in Pretoria. It was during this time in South Africa that Agnew became interested in women's rights. Although never militant, she openly avowed to advance opportunities for women's service whenever and wherever she could.

After returning to the United States, she was working in 1909 as a YWCA general secretary in Toledo, Ohio, when a series of events led to her return to Virginia. The first was an office visit by a young woman who wanted to know if Ohio educational leaders were being fair to the girls living in the rural areas. This conversation led her to write Virginia's superintendent of public instruction, J. D. Eggleston, asking him the same question. As a result, she came to Virginia on Feb. 1, 1910, ready to go to work.

It wasn't until May 31, however, that Agnew met with Seaman Knapp, the acknowledged father of the Cooperative Extension Service; Eggleston, who would be president of Virginia Tech for seven of her years in Extension; and Virginia Governor William Hodges Mann. After discussing the present and future directions of demonstration work in Virginia, they decided that rural girls needed a program similar to the corn clubs to which the boys belonged.

Eggleston recalls in his brief history of "Extension Work in Virginia: 1907-1940" that the choice of Agnew



Photo by D.D. Galyean

*Agnew portrait hangs in exhibit honoring Virginia's women.*

was a wise one. "The work then was trail blazing; pioneer work requiring great wisdom, great patience, and great constructive ability. And Miss Agnew laid wisely and solidly the foundations on which the girls' work and the women's work have developed. The idea from the beginning was to start in the garden with a tomato club, then to get into the kitchen, and then into the home," Eggleston wrote.

Agnew had reservations about taking the job, saying she knew nothing of gardening. "If ignorance of this subject were accepted as a qualification," she wrote, "then I was good." She recalled that Knapp assured her that "you know girls, Miss Agnew, and they are so much harder to learn than tomatoes."

When on July 1, 1910, she accepted the position she would hold for nearly ten years, she was the first home demonstration agent in the United States as well as being the first female field worker for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Knapp added to the pressure by telling her that she could be responsible for either closing the door or opening an unlimited field of service to women.

She spent the month prior to beginning work learning how to raise tomatoes from faculty at Hampton Institute.



Photo by W.C. Burleson

*Portrait of Ella G. Agnew hangs in exhibit.*

It was during this period that the decision to start the first club in Nottoway County was made. Nottoway was selected because Agnew and T.O. Sandy, state agent, both lived there.

Agnew had many obstacles to overcome, including the resentment against a woman who would be bold enough to travel around the county to speak to mixed audiences about this new idea in schooling. Another problem was that most girls were indifferent to gardening, considering it a task that should be done by servants. That these obstacles were not insurmountable is evident in the fact that Agnew had organized six clubs, three each in Halifax and Nottoway counties, with a membership of forty-eight girls by the end of her first month on the job. She used her own kitchen to demonstrate canning techniques and spoke the message of better living to all who would listen, reaching the mothers through their daughters.

There was no doubt that at the end of the first year, the tomato and canning program was permanent. More funding was needed, however, to supplement the state appropriation. She secured further assistance from the Cooperative Education Association, the Farmer's Institute, and the Suffrage League. And like many Extension people who followed her, she turned to local boards of supervisors.

In the soon to be published *"History of Extension in Virginia,"* Agnew tells about her first experience with a board of supervisors. She asked the Halifax County board for a small appropriation to carry on the girls' tomato and canning work. She wrote, "As I entered the room that morning and saw twelve serious-looking men seated around a table, I knew I had never seen so large a table or talked to such a large crowd of men! I was called upon to present my cause first, and I did it in what I thought was a most clear and concise manner, and sat down.

"There was a thunderous silence. Finally one kindly-looking man turned in his seat and inquired, 'Miss Agnew, if we allow this appropriation just what will you do with it?' What a blow! I gasped for a second, then slowly rose to my feet and said, 'I can tell you what we hope to do, but the Lord only knows what we will do—so much depends upon the people of the county.' There was laughter and the tension broke." Agnew got her "infinitesimal" appropriation and continued to build the program through the time honored formula of federal, state, and local participation.

Agnew was determined to establish the program on a firm foundation and as part of a state college operation. She felt that she could profit by the examples of other pioneers and would leave the job before the public became convinced that it was her work.

World War I also occurred during her tenure as a state home demonstration agent. During the war, she also served as assistant to the state food administrator and was in charge of the women's program, organizing and carrying out a house-to-house registration of homemakers in the state. The registration in eighty-five of Virginia's one hundred counties and in all of the cities was accomplished in three weeks. She also got the cooperation from the state's four Normal schools in demonstrating wheat substitutes on the food train that was provided by what was then the N&W Railway Co.

During the 1918 outbreak of influenza, she and the other home agents volunteered and served under the State Health Commissioner to establish diet kitchens and organized hospitals in high school buildings where they were needed.

Agnew left Virginia in 1920 to work with the YWCA national board as a secretary in the finance department, with the special assignment of visiting town and rural YWCAs throughout the country.

Agnew, who died in 1958, spent her latter years collecting honors. She was the first woman to receive a certificate of merit from Virginia Tech in recognition of her service to rural Virginia. In 1939, she received the Outstanding Service Award from Epsilon Sigma Phi in recognition of her outstanding work in Virginia. She also was named a member of the Extension honorary fraternity's House of Pioneers. Tech named a building in her honor in 1940. Each year a scholarship in her name is given by the Virginia Extension Homemakers Council for a student to study nursing.

Her legacy lives on by the work being conducted by the thousands of 4-H young people and the homemakers club members in Virginia and across the United States. ☞



Photo by Rachel Brydie

*Hilda Cassell, left, president of the Blackstone Extension Homemakers Skills Club, and Ruth King, president of the Nottoway Extension Homemakers Club, visit highway marker dedicated to Ella Agnew near Crewe on U.S. 460.*

# IN BRIEF

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM ACROSS VIRGINIA



**The Greensville County/Emporia 4-H forestry team** has the enviable record of never losing a 4-H event during the past year. The team competed with those from the other seventeen counties and cities in the Southeast Extension District, at State 4-H Congress and at the Virginia State Fair. Team members are *Patrick Jones*, 17; *Dexter Grant*, 16; *Jeffrey Hicks*, 16; and *Carlton H. Jarrett*, 17.

The program, developed by the Cooperative Extension Service with the local unit of the Virginia Department of Forestry, is designed to teach club members the important aspects of the industry—which is a major source of income in the Greensville/Emporia area.

□

**The new chairman of the Center for Volunteer Development** at Virginia Tech is *Sam Clay*, director of the Fairfax Library System. He succeeded *Mrs. D.M. "Rusty" Erskine* of Botetourt County. *Delwyn A. Dyer*, center director, says both Clay and Erskine were reappointed to three-year terms on the committee.

*Judy Gough* of Charlottesville was elected committee vice-chairman and reappointed to a three-year term, and *Jean Newman* of King George County was elected committee secretary and reappointed to a two-year term. *King E. Davis* of Norfolk, *Virginia Kennedy* of Blacksburg, *Rachel E. Key* of Danville and *Jennifer Taylor* of Danville are new members serving three-year terms on the committee. Reappointed to a

three-year term on the committee was *Dot Blanchard* of Blacksburg.

Tech's Center for Volunteer Development was established in 1980 with the help of a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to provide a network by which volunteer organizations in the state can get assistance in solving their problems.

□

**The State Extension Advisory Committee** has two new members. *Rosalie F. Leigh* of Centreville has been appointed Northern District representative, succeeding *Carl Washington* of Madison. *Josephine Smith* of Rt. 1, Capron, has been named 4-H at-large representative, replacing *Hester Clark* of Fairfax. Both women have long histories of involvement with Extension and 4-H. Leigh currently is secretary of the Virginia Association of Adult 4-H Leaders and Smith assumed the presidency of the organization in November.

□

**A board of directors has been formed** to direct the four-year-old surface mine land reclamation program in Southwest Virginia. The board will develop new revenue sources and establish new research directions for Virginia Tech's Powell River Project.

The board, equally divided between representatives from Tech and industry, is headed by *James R. Nichols*, dean of Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Other University representatives are *J. Richard Lucas*, head of the department of mining and minerals engineering; *Lon K. Savage*, executive assistant to the president; and *Milton B. Wise*, associate director of Extension for agriculture and natural resources.

Industry representatives are *Thomas K. Henritze*, president of Penn Virginia Resources Corp.; *H.C. Van Meter*, president of Jewell Smokeless Coal Co.; *Michael J.*

*Quillen*, president of Paramount Mining Corp.; and *S. R. Villseck*, president of Island Creek Coal Co. *C.B. Slemp*, project director, is an ex-officio member of the board.

The Powell River project began in 1980 when Penn Virginia Corp., a natural resources and equipment firm, provided \$500,000 in grants and made available 1,200 acres of reclaimed mined land in *Wise County* for research. Today, more than two dozen projects in forages, cattle production, fruit growing, turfgrass production, water runoff, land subsidence, and the placement of mine overburden materials are being conducted by the researchers who are looking for ways that the land can contribute to the region's economy.

□



**Front Royal businessman and agriculturalist William Vincent Robinson III** was honored by the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center with ceremonies dedicating the new lodge in his honor. The 16,000-square-foot dormitory and conference center features individual rooms with baths to accommodate 104 persons. In addition to the lodging, the entire ground level is composed of conference rooms for meetings of groups of up to 600 persons. The building is heated so that it can be used by groups throughout the year.

Robinson, a native of the Front Royal area, provided major funding for the lodge's construction. Interestingly, the properties being developed by the center were once owned by Robinson's ancestors.

□

Telephones used to be like mountains...they were just there. Consumers didn't have to make any decisions other than which style and color they used. The deregulation of the telephone industry spurred the creation of new communication service companies which introduced the public to a profusion of brand names and exotic equipment. This competition also means that smart consumers can save money.

To help Virginians to save money, *Donna M. Graham*, *Scott County* Extension agent, prepared an education program, including a series of publications, that covers different aspects of telephone service. This includes looking at local and long distance telephoning and equipment, as well as wiring maintenance and repair options that are available to consumers. The program has been offered by agents throughout the state and has enabled hundreds of Virginians to get help with this financial management program.

□



Two Virginians were among the tobacco growers from eleven states who received Outstanding Young Tobacco Farmer awards from Philip Morris U.S.A. in ceremonies at Richmond: *Donnie Anderson* of *Halifax County* received the flue-cured award while *James M. Johnson* of *Washington County* was presented the award for being the state's outstanding young burley tobacco grower. Each award consisted of a plaque and a check for \$1,000.

The two producers were accompanied by *Halifax County* Extension Agent *William E. Green* and *Frank E. Smith*, *Southwest Extension* farm management agent. The six-year-old program is conducted by Philip Morris with the cooperation of the Extension services at the land-grant universities in the tobacco-growing states.

□

The West African nation of *Chad* has become the eighth country

to benefit from a five-million-dollar Virginia Tech-U.S. Department of Agriculture program designed to improve the financial management of agricultural and rural projects in the Sahel region. Other countries involved include Cape Verde, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, and Upper Volta. *Ruth Harris*, associate professor in international extension, is in charge of the project and *James E. Williams*, an expert in economic development, is director.

□

A National Cooperative Extension Center for Community Education has been established at Virginia Tech to encourage greater involvement of this nation's Cooperative Extension Service with community education programs across the country. The center, which is being supported by a four-year grant from the C.S. Mott Foundation in Flint, Mich., and Tech, is one of five such centers being established across the country and the only one being located at a university.

The Tech center is headed by *Steve R. Parson*, an associate professor and Extension specialist in the College of Education. He has worked in community education since joining the faculty in 1974. The other centers have been established in the offices of the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Public Relations Association, the San Diego Department of Education, and the Literacy Volunteers of America in Syracuse, N.Y. The Tech center will promote greater cooperation between each state's Cooperative Extension and Community Education operations.

□

Physical fitness is an important component of good health. To help those communities wishing to begin a health fitness program, the community resource development program (CRD) in Extension has issued a "Resource Guide for Health Fitness Programs" to explain how to set up a program. *J. Douglas McAlister*, program leader for CRD at Tech, said the guide was developed with the cooperation of the university laboratory for exercise, sport and work physiology.

*William G. Herbert*, director of the exercise programs at Tech and editor of the booklet, said the publication

doesn't provide detailed information about starting exercise, dietary, smoking cessation, and stress management programs, but it does contain a resource section that lists sources that can be used in establishing such operations.

More than 350 persons have gone through the Tech program since it was established in 1976 with the help of a one-year grant from the Virginia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Virginia affiliate of the American Heart Association. There currently are 120 persons participating in the program which involves both local physicians and the local hospital.

The guide is to help those recreation directors and hospital administrators who are considering beginning programs of exercise for those wishing to improve their health through a regulated physical fitness program.

□



*Chesterfield County's* Extension employees are well, but there may be some discussion about their fitness. Extension agents *Willie Schmidt* and *Suzan Craik* worked on a committee to hold a Wealth of Health program that promoted attitudes and behaviors for good health practices. The program was aimed at teaching county employees about wellness and how to achieve it.

Participants learned ways to prevent cancer and heart and lung disease and took part in screenings for high blood pressure, glaucoma, blood sugar, weight, and body fat. The day ended with a two-mile race between teams of the seventeen county departments. The Extension team of *Richard Nunnally*, *Mike Henry*, *Skip Todd*, and 4-H technician *Cathy Winchester* brought up the rear of the seventeen-team race.

□

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