

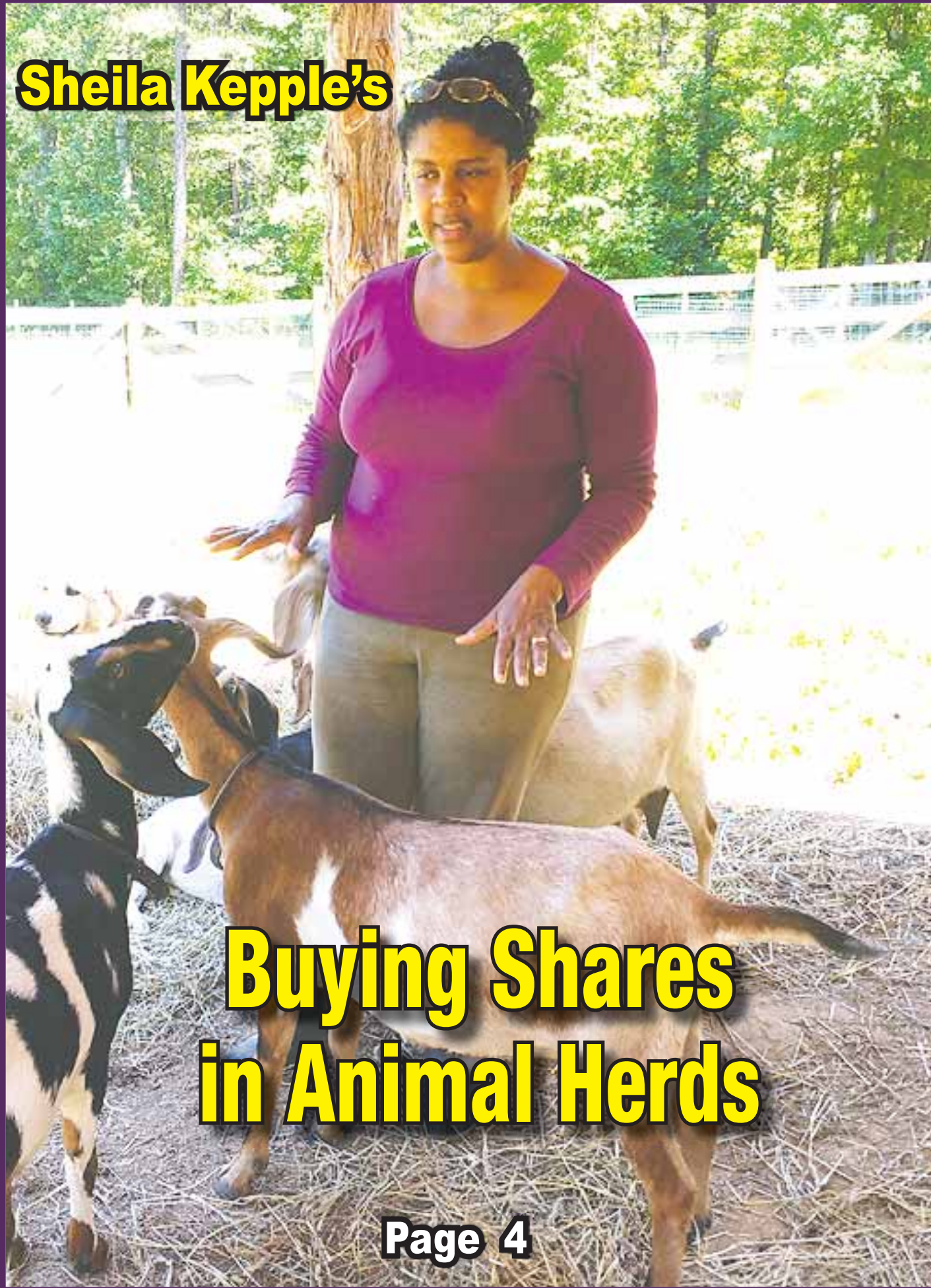
Louisa Life

June 29 - July 26, 2018 • ONE COPY FREE

LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

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A monthly publication

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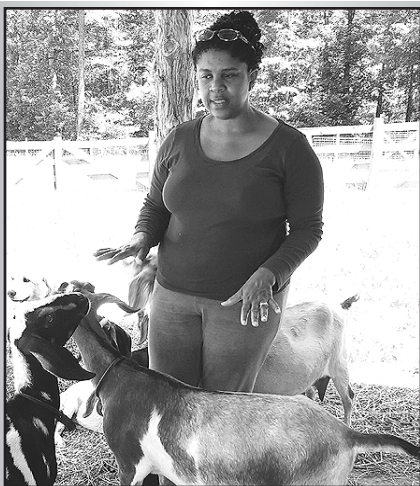
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Sheila Kepple with the does.
Photo by Linda Salisbury.

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger



Megan DuBois director of programs and strategic planning stands at entrance to 250 seat Cooke-Haley theater.
All photos by Linda Salisbury.

Louisa Arts Center

New Arts Leader Offers New Ideas

By Linda Salisbury
Correspondent

Until recently, Meagan DuBois was dealing with traffic and crowds on New York City streets and subways as she went to work as an Off-Broadway artistic director of 20 creative shows through The Possibility Project. There was little time to gather her thoughts with that commute. Now, after moving to Lake Anna and accepting a new job at the Louisa County Arts Center, DuBois thoroughly enjoys the peaceful country drive to work where she can see wildlife and farms along the way.

The new job, as director of Programs and Strategic Planning at the center, seems to be a perfect fit for her experience and talent. DuBois, a native of Nevada, majored in music theater performance at Arizona State, then moved to New York City to explore additional performance opportunities in theater. She auditioned for shows, worked at various restaurant jobs to pay her bills, then was hired by The

Possibility Project, an innovative program for teenagers. The diverse group of 250 teens were invited to participate from New York City high schools, foster care agencies, the juvenile justice system and other programs.

The program is designed to be transformative, "using art and art form for social and emotional learning, allowing for development in teamwork, problem solving, emotion management, communication, accountability and responsibility," she said. Participants are divided into groups and have to write their own musical (with help from experienced adults), based off of the stories in their lives, the conflicts that they face, their ideas for change around those conflicts and then perform it Off-Broadway. The idea is to make a difference within their lives and to have a positive impact on their community. They learn to work with and understand people who

See New Director page 7



Louisa Arts Center Interim Director LaVahn Hoh and Director of Programs and Strategic Planning Megan DuBois in the arts office.

Cover Story



Stephen Kepple gives goats animal cracker treats. All photos by Linda Salisbury.



Sheila Kepple pours a cup of goat milk for a guest to try.



Stephen and Sheila Kepple stand in front of the summer kitchen that he designed and built (with help).

Herd Sharing in Louisa

By Linda Salisbury
Correspondent

You've heard of ride sharing, house sharing, boat and plane sharing. But herd sharing?

Though not a new concept, the business of people buying shares in a herd of animals, such as goats, appears to be new to Louisa County. And for Stephen and Sheila Kepple, it means an expansion of their livestock and Friendly Feathers Farm enterprises.

The Kepples are well known for their presence at the Mineral Farmer's Market, where Sheila brings along a crowing rooster for children and adults to enjoy, and where she sells brown eggs, and egg custards, lemon curd, jam and relish.

The couple talked for several years about adding goats to their 25-acre farm near Mineral where they have long kept a large flock of chickens, but they weren't sure they could personally use all the milk.

Then, while sharing in a goat herd at R Half Pint Farm in Spotsylvania, they had the idea of offering their own share. Farmers, without state certified operations and elaborate equipment, can't sell goat milk directly to the public. By buying a share in a herd people are entitled to a portion of the milk that's produced. The share helps pay for the animals' food and care.

The Kepples keep the mini Nubian goat breed, a cross between a standard Nubian goat, and a Nigerian Dwarf goat. Sheila liked the appearance of the Nubians (long floppy ears and Roman nose) and the high butterfat content of their milk. Sheila explained that the mini Nubians have a "nice gentle personality and are remarkably intelligent." She's researched the genetics of different breeds and how to create good family trees, she has plans to someday to develop her own line of mini Nubians.

The couple purchased their first two females last fall, and "two soon became nine."



Sheila Kepple has a talk with Evan, who was shipped from the State of Washington to their Louisa farm.

The females, Lavender and Lupine, gave birth to two kids each in March. The Kepples also purchased a male (Evan) from a farm in Washington State, and added a neutered male companion, Pen-Pen for him. Titania has also joined the females.

The males share a large enclosure and a new barn, designed and built by Stephen, away from the females' barn and fenced area. The female goats have special protectors; a pair of young Great Pyrenees (now about 100 pounds each), who guard night

See Herd page 6

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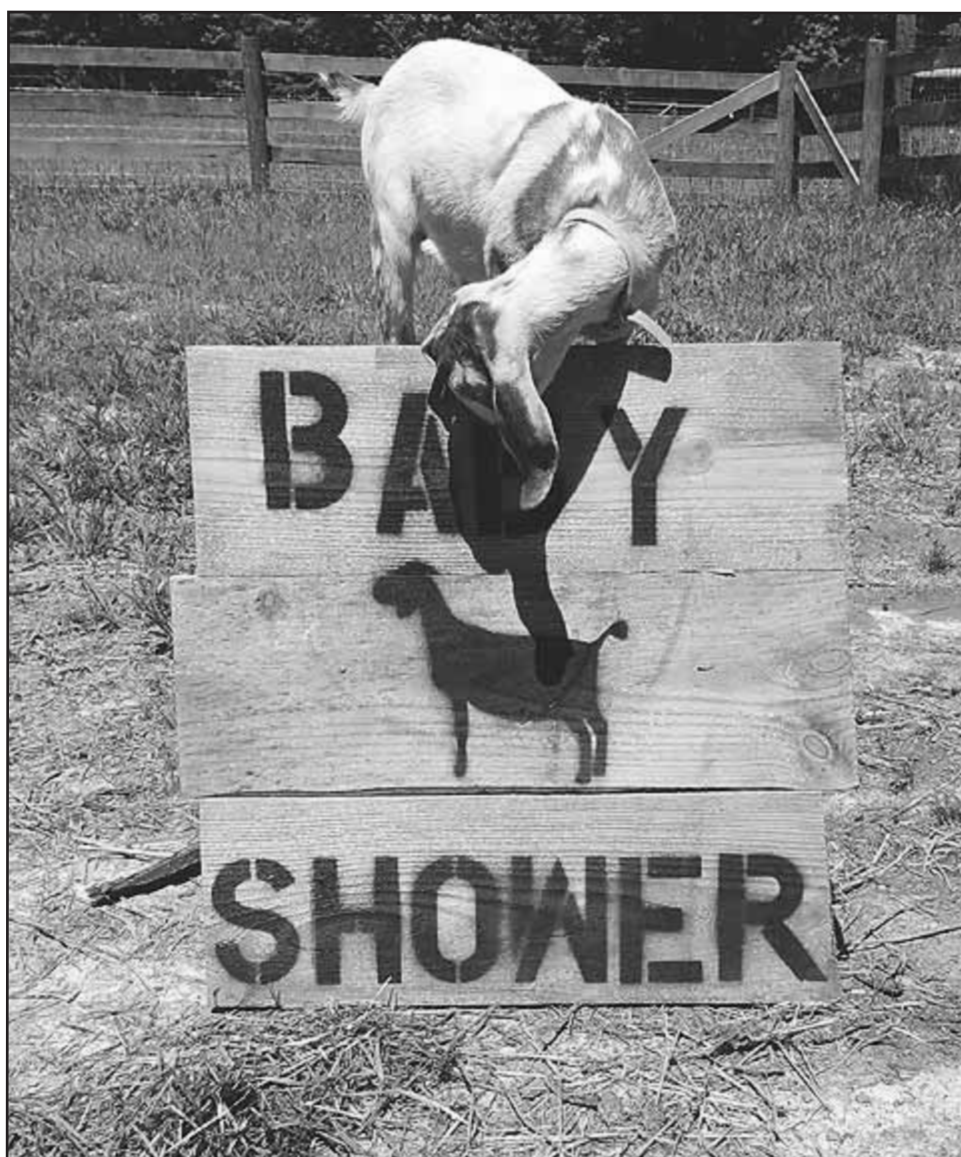
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Stephen Kepple in a quiet moment with his faithful Great Pyrenees guard dogs.
Photo by Sheila Kepple.



Sheila Kepple enjoys making custard, jam, relish, lemon curd and ice cream in her summer kitchen.



Little Praline checks out sign for Baby Goat Shower.

and day against predators. "They are overwhelmingly powerful creatures, able to kill coyotes and even wolves," said Stephen.

Stephen, a former magazine editor, is now a full-time farmer, helping Sheila with the daily animal chores, especially on the days when she works as a physician assistant. In addition to the pens, fences and barns, he has constructed a milking room inside a hay barn, and a summer kitchen in a brick structure that looks almost like a Colonial Williamsburg historic building.

Stephen jokingly said that the kitchen facility, which he had some help with, is sturdy enough that it could probably provide shelter during nuclear attack, with its 8-inch slab floor, white oak timbers and antique-brick and block walls. An antiques lover, Stephen found old wooden doors at a salvage company to complete the ambiance.

He had a practical reason for the summer kitchen. He got tired of all the jam- and custard- making that Sheila was doing in their home kitchen. So this separate kitchen provides space for her to focus on the products to take to market. "Now I don't have to clean up the home kitchen," he said with a smile.

After the goats are milked (about a two-minute process per goat through modern machine technology), the raw milk is a pasteurized, strained, and bottled. A taste quickly shows why this milk is in demand. It is light, yet creamy, has a natural sweetness not found in cow's milk, and it is more easily digestible.

After the babies are weaned, the goats will be milked twice a day for six months. Milking is only part of the daily work. The Kepples also groom the goats, trim their hooves, and control flies. And then there's "litter management." Stephen spreads fresh straw in the pens and removes the soiled material to keep them clean. Each day the goats are turned out to browse in a large fenced pasture.

Females (does) are bred once a year and are pregnant for five months. An area of the does' barn is set up with special pens for mother and kid to keep them warm and safe for the first few weeks.

When the first kids were born this year, what better way to announce their arrival than to throw a baby goat shower? About 25 partygoers from the community joined the celebration on April 29, bringing gifts of bottles, nipples, goat treats and milk pails.

There's no doubt that the mini Nubians are as friendly and curious as Sheila expected. They boldly approach visitors and look for treats (animal crackers are a favorite) and affection. They nibbled this reporter's notebook and were curious about the contents of her purse.

As the small herd develops, Stephen said he hopes the number will be limited to about 10.

"I've always been scared of taking on too many animals," he said. He wants to be sure they "can provide the best care for them and have a little time left for other things like sleep."

So far the Kepples have limited their herd shares to one and will add slowly as they gain experience. The shares cost \$40 per month, for which the shareholder is entitled to about a gallon of milk a week.

Sheila is developing goat cheese and ice cream and is experimenting with soap making. "Although the goats seem to chew up more and more of their time," the couple's egg operation with the Mineral Farmer's Market is never put on the back burner, Stephen said. He has high praise for this Saturday seasonal event. He calls it the best market he and Sheila have been involved with. "I think it's the greatest."



The Possibility Project cast members perform in "Flip the Script," directed by Meagan DuBois.

are different from them, to resolve conflicts without violence and become effective leaders in the world moving forward.

"It was the perfect way to blend theater and youth theater," she said.

In the seven years that she headed the program, DuBois said that The Possibility Project had amazing results, not only in the musicals that the young people wrote, produced and performed in, but also in their achievements in school. Ninety-nine percent completed high school and 92 percent went on to college.

"People can do anything if someone believes in them," she said.

She credits her parents for providing a home in which the arts were encouraged, from music (she plays violin) to art. Her mother, a softball player at UCLA taught her discipline and order, which helps with running programs, and her father, who worked in construction, added the creative component and support for projects.

She met Peter DuBois in New York City, and married him in Las Vegas, her hometown. His passion is restaurants, where he worked in New York City, often creating special menus with a fresh take on traditional items such as Asian dumplings. His dream was to have a restaurant of his own away from the Big Apple.

His parents had moved to Lake Anna from Northern Virginia in 2013 so the area was familiar.

Peter DuBois, while thinking about what sort of restaurant he would like to start in this area, has already started 191 Smokery, a BBQ catering service with a special menu featuring smoked meats as its centerpiece. Besides catering, he takes his food truck to local events.

Meagan DuBois is busy at the arts center, working with its board, and interim director LaVahn Hoh, to finalize the program schedule, which includes several summer camps for youngsters, plus the shows at the arts gallery, music and wine at sundown concerts, the arts center's 10th anniversary in September, the Silver Tie Gala on Oct. 6 (a major fund-raiser), plus the concerts and theatrical performances that bring national talent to the 205-seat Cooke-Haley theater.



Meagan DuBois works as an acting coach with The Possibility Project participant, Tamia Young, who starred in "Versus." (photo provided)

Enthusiastic about the center and appreciative about what has been accomplished through its staff, community, and volunteers in the past decade, she hopes to expand the center's offerings in the 2019 season.

With her expertise in working with youth theater, she also will work with the students in the summer camps this year.

"I hope to diversify the programs we're offering and grow the number of patrons who come to the center," she said.

Through strategic planning aspect of her job, she'll help make not just the Louisa community but surrounding areas, including Lake Anna, more aware of the center's diverse offerings.

LAC Board President Rob See said, "We are excited to have someone with her talent and love for community join our team at Louisa Arts Center. Meagan is a team player, a community-builder, and pleasure to know. We feel blessed to have her share her love for the arts with all of us at Louisa Arts Center."

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Friday, July 27th: 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 28th: 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

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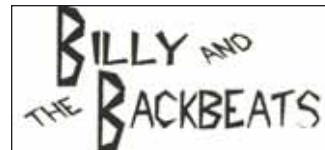
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EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Triumphs and Challenges of VFW Post 8947

By Linda Salisbury
Correspondent

VFW Post 8947 commander Beth Rowley stands at doorway of Post 8947 in Mineral. Photos by Linda Salisbury

When VFW Post 8947 earned the Partner of the Year award this spring from the Louisa County Chamber of Commerce, it came as a surprise and honor for its members. On the surface the award was for opening its front room and storage areas for the chamber's monthly meetings, and providing volunteers for various chamber events, such as the Louisa Street Festival. Below that surface, however, by entering the Post's doors, chamber members and the community are able to learn more about this historic organization's increasing involvement in the community as a service organization to veterans,

their families and young people in the area. According to the Veterans Administration there are about 3,000 vets in Louisa County, which is about 10 percent of the population.

Post Commander Beth Rowley, a retired lieutenant colonel, joined the Army in 1987, and retired, along with her husband, Col. Andy Smith, in 2007, and they moved to Lake Anna from Northern Virginia with their two sons. She had served in the signal corps, then in the acquisitions corps, with a tour in South Korea, in Europe and various stateside locations. Her husband served stateside, and also Europe, Bosnia, East Timor and Afghanistan.

Like many people, she had driven past the circa 1890-1900 brick building on Main Street in Mineral (originally the D. E. Bumpass Department Store) and saw that it needed a good cleaning and updating. In fact, from the street it didn't look like it was in use. After she joined the organization in 2012, it didn't take long for her to be named the commander of the organization which then had about 167 members and begin growing it to 206 members today. The Post and its members have earned the VFW All State award for three years in a row.

The clean-up of the building involved making it smoke-free and far more welcoming to families with children who participate in meetings and to the other organizations that meet there. There are also youth activities sponsored by the Post, such as Venture Crew 1776, affiliated with Scouts BSA. "Word is slowly getting out to the community that we are a community support organization and are no longer just a smoky bar," Rowley said.

Rowley said that the spacious, but rambling building, is undergoing a renovation to upgrade electrical systems and restore the original tin ceiling and brickwork in the room that serves as the canteen. Flags of all service branches and the affiliated organizations are neatly displayed and an "missing man" table for POWs and MIAs is permanently on display in a corner of the main meeting room.

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Beth Rowley, commander of VFW Post 8947, looks at paintings hanging in a back room that were from the U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam Combat art collection that were discovered in a Goodwill store.

But the VFW is not just about a building. The organization honors those who have served in all wars. George Marshall, a charter member from 1946, is one of the few survivors, along with John E. Thomasson, of WWII. Then there's Mel Sandlin from the Korean War and a host of other veterans who have served in Vietnam, the Middle East, Afghanistan and other conflicts around the world. The Post "is a safe space for vets," said Rowley.

As part of the Vietnam War 50th Commemoration program passed by Congress in 2012, the VFW and America Legion Post 116 are giving lapel pins to recognize Vietnam War-era veterans who served between 1955-1975, to welcome them home and thank them for their service.

VFW volunteers help veterans and family members get to appointments at VA facilities and work with them on paperwork. They are now able, and "honored" to serve as part of a joint honor guard unit with the Louisa County and Goochland County American Legion Posts to provide full military honors, including a rifle team, at local burials.

The organization is increasingly active with young people. Besides the Venture Crew, which provides leadership training and character development, it works with the Louisa County High School Armed Services Career Club and is supporting LCPS Supt. Doug Straley with his goal of establishing a Junior ROTC; offers a Patriots Pen essay contest for middle schools aged youngsters and the Voice of Democracy competition for high school-aged students and honors them with awards and a dinner; and the VFW Auxiliary conducts a patriotic art competition. High school graduates who have committed to joining the military are also honored with a dinner and receive their first Challenge Coin during the Senior Awards ceremony.



Beth Rowley, commander of VFW Post 894, talks about the table for POWs and other deceased military to let all know that they are not forgotten. The table must remain in its corner of the hall, even when the facility is rented.

The VFW Auxiliary name replaces the name "Ladies Auxiliary" to reflect the fact that there are many male family members and spouses who are eligible to join and would like to help serve the organization.

The building is used by other organizations, among them American Legion Post 116, and Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 87. The building is available to the public for rent for receptions, showers and other events. The members continue to enjoy the space for a monthly bingo game and a monthly Texas Hold'em tournament, both of which are open to the public and help raise funds for the Post's operations.

Members continue to make an impact, not just in their community but statewide. On Flag Day, June 14, State Delegate John McGuire III, drove by the Post to inform Rowley that an initiative begun by Comrade Ron Sims had been successfully passed into Virginia law and there would be a signing ceremony before the end of June. The DMV will now add a veteran's military status to driver's licenses, so they won't have to carry a second piece of identification in order to prove that status to businesses, stores and restaurants.

Meanwhile, Rowley is hoping that the VFW will be able to make another dream come true, and that is to build a new, 150-200-seat facility on five acres somewhere between Mineral and Louisa. It would replace the current smaller building and help accommodate members of the Gordonsville Post, which merged with the Louisa group. The Gordonsville building ownership transferred to the Louisa Post, and its eventual sale, plus that of the building in Mineral, would help fund the new venture. A new building would have not only greater space for veterans and the community, but also therapy rooms, a game room and office space for VA representatives when they come to the county. Rowley hopes that a generous landowner will come forth with a donation of the acreage.

It's a new era for the old VFW Post. While honoring the past, it is also looking to the future to better serve the many veterans of America's wars.

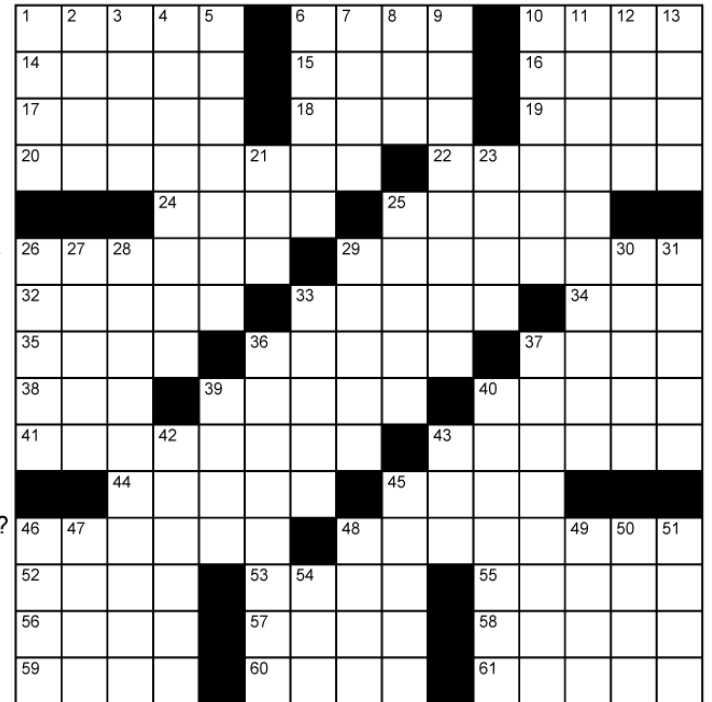
For more information about the Post call (540) 894-5677.

Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 It's a piece of cake
- 6 Checked item
- 10 Little bouquet
- 14 Kind of paint
- 15 Cathedral recess
- 16 Not deceived by
- 17 Concerning
- 18 Garden tool
- 19 Techie, stereotypically
- 20 Statue, perhaps
- 22 Predicament
- 24 Target of a joke
- 25 Photo session
- 26 Current location?
- 29 Fellow crew member
- 32 Speak from a soapbox
- 33 Tinkerbell, e.g.
- 34 Stroller rider
- 35 Grimm villain
- 36 Boast about
- 37 ___ and kin
- 38 Grafton of mystery
- 39 "Goodness gracious!"
- 40 Small part
- 41 Inclination
- 43 Solitary sorts
- 44 Baseball deal
- 45 Chinese mafia
- 46 How long one might stay
- 48 Captains of industry
- 52 Cage on a farm
- 53 Big fat mouth
- 55 Grind down
- 56 Basketball goal



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- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 57 Scrabble draw | 10 Organized | 33 Ludicrous situation |
| 58 Infant's woe | 11 In an orderly way | 36 Blood feud |
| 59 Circular current | 12 Dance instructor's call | 37 Aussie hopper |
| 60 Awfully long time | 13 Oxen's harness | 39 Diner offering |
| 61 Sings the praises of | 21 "___ now or never" | 40 Get in touch |
| | 23 Kind of cat? | 42 Overly sentimental |
| | 25 Like a new penny | 43 Nautical journal |
| | 26 Fowl place | 45 Cassettes |
| | 27 Lock horns | 46 Persistent pain |
| | 28 1989 Steve Martin film | 47 Carpenter's supply |
| | 29 Impertinent | 48 Drone, e.g. |
| | 30 Bag carrier | 49 Fragrant resin |
| | 31 Cultural values | 50 Cut, maybe |
| | | 51 Parts of a min. |
| | | 54 Fix, in a way |

The Canine Athlete

By Pat Wilson
Correspondent



Using voice, hand and foot movements, Lynn Sigman is telling Ringo to turn to the next obstacle. Photo by Kim Black



Ringo knows to stop at the foot of the teeter-totter and wait for his trainer's signal to move to the next obstacle. Photo by Kim Black

The teeter-totter, the tunnel, a series of jumps, a pole weave, the pause table and more ... Ringo quickly negotiates the obstacles at an agility dog competition. Trained by his owner, Lynn Sigman, the versatile Swedish Vallhund, has been taught to attend to his owner's voice, hand signals and even foot movements as he races through the course completing U-turns and avoiding faults such as knocking off jump rails.

Ringo was not Lynn's first agility dog, but the one who has taken her to elite ranking. Her interest in the sport led her to purchase the now six-year-old male, which she terms was "a spectacular puppy with enormous potential." She claims her previous experience with training agility dogs resulted in her "being thrilled that I didn't screw him up."

The remark is proven modest by the fact that Lynn had trained several other successful dogs. Sam, Quincy and Arlo, her first Swedish Vallhund, had earned champion status with national organizations, each having varying qualifications. The trials were first recognized in the 1980s by the United States Dog Agility Association and the North America Dog Agility Council. The American Kennel Club would not recognize agility dog competition until a decade later.

Patient and consistent training leads to success in the competition ring. Participants can walk around a course prior to a class, but the first time the dog sees it is upon entering the ring. The handler must direct the dog through the shortest but most efficient lines to complete the obstacles as labeled with numbers and without faults. Various classes, such as Standard, Gamblers and Snookers, have different rules.

After slowly developing his skills over the previous year, Ringo competed in the less demanding baby classes in 2014 to gain experience. Lynn was proud to see he "took to the sport" and earned champion honors at two years old.

In fact, Ringo is not only a champion but has earned bronze, silver, gold and platinum honors because of his vast number of wins at trials and tournaments. The Vallhund has qualified for national and international trials and has been recognized by AKC as one of the top five dogs in his breed. Not willing to rest on those accolades, the professional trainer will continue exhibiting Ringo in search of the diamond level and has taken on a new challenge, Ringo's daughter Rapid.

Lynn began working with Rapid at eight weeks old. Now nine months old, Rapid first learned basic commands, and through reward with a toy or treat progressed to easier agility skills, such as "jumping" poles on the ground. One of the most diffi-



Dog tired! Ringo and Rapid relax on a sofa after a workout.



Ringo clears one of the numerous jumps in an agility dog trials class.

cult aspects of training is teaching the dog to “go away” from the handler and concentrate on the obstacles, according to Lynn.

“I don’t do anything that will harm Rapid’s physical development,” she said. “She must build a relationship with me and socialization skills with other dogs. Rapid will be eligible to compete in novice classes at 18 months old, if I feel she’s ready.”

A Variety of Roles

In 1994, Lynn successfully tested to become a judge for the sport. Once hired by a competition, she must design numerous “challenging but fair for the level” approved courses and make copies of the course maps for the exhibitors. At the event, she first confirms that the course is safe and set properly and then spends the day, moving around the ring, watching the dogs compete.

“I can’t judge people I have trained, so I don’t judge in this area,” she said.

Lynn is periodically involved in chairing a show, which she acknowledges is less intensive physically, but more of an obligation to ensure the show is financially successful and meets association regulations. Shows attempt to find sponsors to help pay for ribbons and awards, which, on occasion, involves prize money. Lynn can both chair a show and compete, which she prefers. Her reputation and expertise resulted in either judging or chairing over two dozen competitions last year. Now, in her mid-50s, Lynn is considering relinquishing judging to younger folks with more stamina.

See Canine page 14

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Under the training of his owner Lynn Sigman, Ringo has earned USDAA Platinum Championship status as well as AKC Master Agility Dog Champion recognition.



Ringo and his daughter Rapid are Swedish Vallhunds.

“The roles have given me a better insight to the sport and I’ve worked to improve some of the rules,” she said.

Always a Dog Lover

Lynn grew up with beagles as pets but when living on her own in her 20s, Lynn picked out Sam, a black and tan mixed breed dog, at the local shelter. She enrolled him in obedience classes and even competed occasionally in that discipline.

“He was German Shepherd-looking and, by far, the best dog I’ve ever had,” she said. “Anything I wanted he thought was great, but I now realize I made tons of mistakes while training him.”

A weekend trip to watch a three-day horse event changed Lynn’s life and Sam’s as well. She parked in a spot near where an agility dog competition was being held in conjunction with the equestrian trials. She admits that she was fascinated and never saw a horse unless it passed by the agility ring.

“I started asking questions, found a person who lived near me, and signed up for lessons with Sam,” she said. “Next, I got a second dog, Quincy, a Border Collie, and then realized I knew very little about dog training but just had a great dog in Sam. So, I rolled up my sleeves and learn how to train a dog. I had to learn how to speak dog.”

Lynn was working in Pennsylvania as a metallurgist, when her mother, who lived in Albemarle County, needed assistance. She resigned her position and moved with four dogs to the family farmette. Lynn discovered an Earlsyville veterinarian office that had an area with obstacles. She inquired about joining a class to find out they were looking for an instructor. Lynn was offered that role. She taught in the evenings while working daytime with a construction firm. Part-time agility training soon became fulltime and Lynn rented a field in Ruckersville.

“Some friends and I formed a group, MAD-Co (Master Agility Dog Company) and things evolved from there,” she said. “In 2006, we held our first trials.”

Today, Lynn lives and teaches in the Green Springs area, utilizing an indoor-outdoor facility. Handlers can sign up for either group or private lessons offered during weekdays or evenings. She is willing to go to a client’s home or an off-site, if the dog needs to train in a less familiar location.

“People ask me if their dogs can do agility. My reply is ‘Of course they can,’” she said. “The question is actually whether the handler has the fortitude. I do recommend that the dog first do some obedience training or socialization so that it is used to being around other dogs.”



An up and coming competitor, nine-month-old Rapid is learning to bond with Lynn Sigman, forming a trust so necessary in the sport.

Want to give agility training a try? Many of her clients are not interested in competing but enjoy the bonding with their pets and the sense of accomplishment. Lynn can be reached by phone or text at 434-566-2612 or email at lynnsigman2039@gmail.com.

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Answers to the Crossword Puzzle from page 11

S	L	I	C	E	C	O	A	T	P	O	S	Y	
L	A	T	E	X	A	P	S	E	O	N	T	O	
A	N	E	N	T	R	A	K	E	G	E	E	K	
M	E	M	O	R	I	A	L	S	C	R	A	P	E
B	U	T	T	S	H	O	O	T					
R	A	P	I	D	S	S	H	I	P	M	A	T	E
O	R	A	T	E	F	A	I	R	Y	T	O	T	
O	G	R	E	V	A	U	N	T	K	I	T	H	
S	U	E	M	E	R	C	Y	C	A	M	E	O	
T	E	N	D	E	N	C	Y	L	O	N	E	R	S
T	R	A	D	E	T	O	N	G					
A	W	H	I	L	E	M	A	G	N	A	T	E	S
C	O	O	P	T	R	A	P	E	R	O	D	E	
H	O	O	P	T	I	L	E	C	O	L	I	C	
E	D	D	Y	A	G	E	S	T	O	U	T	S	

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Curator Susan Crave Rosen

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May 25th – July 27th, 2018



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Curator Lee Nixon

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