

OC MAGAZINE

July 19–August 15, 2019 • One Copy FREE

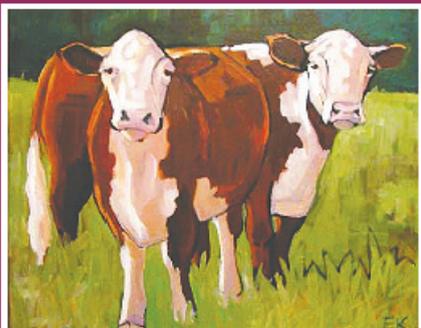
ORANGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA



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Dance Jam Camp For Ages 3-4 ... August 5 – 9 (9:00-12:00noon)
Musical Theatre Camp For Ages 8+ ... August 26 – 30 (5-8:00pm)

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A monthly publication

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The Reynard Florence Vineyard sign. Photo by Barbara Wimble

Sipping Through Orange County – Part Two: *The Romance of Wine*

By Barbara Wimble
Correspondent

*T*hirsty for more knowledge about wineries? In Orange County, you can find a castle, historic ruins, gorgeous vistas, and delicious wines that take you away to a setting of a novel or a movie set, a trip to France or Italy, or the bucolic Virginia countryside. This month, I visited two more vineyards and wineries in Orange County and found that they have unique offerings, but also a lot in com-

mon – including elements of romance. Every season is a wonderful time to enjoy an outing to a winery, but a summer picnic with a glass of chilled wine at one of these sublime settings inspires poetry – “A jug of wine, a loaf of bread, and Thou.” Ahh, how romantic.

*Reynard Florence Vineyard
& Winery
16109 Burnley Road,
Barboursville*

Part of the Monticello Wine Trail, Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery is located in Barboursville on the very western tip of Orange County. While driving down the long road to this winery, I eagerly anticipated what I would see. And as soon as I pulled into the property, I had to stop immediately and take a picture of the breathtaking view of the vineyards and the mountains. Roe and Dee Allison, the owners, chose this location 39 years ago, built a house, and raised their family on this property. And now, on the hillside where their children sledded lies their beautiful vineyard.

Dee and Roe met when they were in college. Originally from Charlotte, North Carolina, Dee came to Virginia to attend Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, where she studied French literature. Her studies included a semester in Paris. Roe, a native of Somerset, was a student at UVA. They married in 1976.

Dee taught high school French in Orange, Louisa, and Green Counties for 35 years, retiring in 2015. During her career, she took several trips to France with her students and in 2001, spent a month in Angers, France, as the scholar in residence – the result of an award from UVA. Dee's impeccable French pronunciation is useful in the French wine business. Throughout her career, she accumulated quite a collection of French-themed memorabilia that she used in her classrooms and now displays in the tasting room. Dee has at least 15 Eiffel Towers!

Roe owns and runs a construction company, Allison Construction, which he balances with their wine business. He put a lot of thought and care into the planning of the vineyard and used his skills as a carpenter and a builder in the design and layout of both the vineyard

See Sipping Page 4

The Cover



Bill Robson explains “vertical shoot positioning” of the grape vines in the vineyard at Hammerstone Cellars.
Photo by Barbara Wimble

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger.



The beautiful sunset at Reynard Florence Vineyard and Winery.
Photo courtesy of Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery.



Dee and Ti Rey welcoming visitors to the Reynard Florence tasting room.
Photo by Barbara Wimble

and the very attractive tasting room. Roe is proud of their “ballerina” trellis design, where the vines are meticulously trained and pruned to curve upwards as well as curl downwards – like a ballerina’s skirt. This system allows the vines to benefit from more sun exposure, resulting in more sugar produced in the grape. It especially helps with their Grenache grape, because it is so susceptible to mildew from the humid Virginia growing season.

Roe explained to me that the Blue Ridge foothills’ topography and climate are similar to that of the foothills of the Pyrenees in southwest France, and the grapes that originate from that region “flourish here.” Petit Manseng, the first grape they planted in 2005, is their featured grape and flagship wine, and the only white that they grow. After my Reynard Florence tasting experience, I found this varietal to be one of my favorites.

Why start a vineyard and winery? Dee said that they wondered what to do with their empty field. She eventually put the question to Roe “Wouldn’t it be romantic to make wine for ourselves and to share with our friends?” As noted on their website, they believe that “The Truth is Romantic.” Operating a vineyard and winery has become their life and passion.

Roe explained to me that they started as consumers and had a curiosity about wine – especially French wines. They believe that “great wines aren’t exactly made; they are grown. It all starts in the vineyard.” Both Roe and Dee took classes in enology and viticulture at Piedmont Virginia Community College and were among the first graduates from that program. They planted their first vines in 2006 and had their first vintage in 2009. They are proud to say that this fall’s harvest will be their tenth vintage, and they will be celebrating with special events throughout the year.

Two and a half of their five acres are in vines, growing Merlot, Petit Manseng, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, and Grenache. They also grow Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay offsite. They bottle their own wine at the production facility that adjoins the tasting room. Eighty percent of the grapes they use in their wines are their own, and they produce 1,000 cases of wine annually. The grapes they source are from the Monticello AVA (American Viticultural Area), which, as members of the Monticello Wine Trail, is a priority for them.

Running a vineyard is not all romance. They both work hard at the vineyard planting, pulling leaves, hedging, cutting clusters, pruning, harvesting, bottling, putting up bird netting, and trapping raccoons. Roe recently trapped 16 raccoons in a six-week period!



Dee prepares to make crepes for the Bastille Day celebration. Photo courtesy of Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery.

See Sipping page 6

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Upcoming Art Classes

LOUISA Arts CENTER
540-967-5200 LouisaArts.org

Toast to Art Jr

Birdhouse Painting
Saturday, July 27
from 11:00AM-12:30PM
Cost: \$8 per student
(includes snacks and all supplies)

Come join us in painting birdhouses. This is a Toast to Arts Junior event accepting students of all ages. Class will run from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a private instructor. Snacks will be provided and your student will be going home with a lovely, hand-painted birdhouse.



JULY 26TH & 27TH
LOUISA FIREMEN'S
FAIRGROUNDS

*Come Join the fun at the 2019
 Louisa County Agricultural Fair!*

- Educational Demonstrations
- 4-H Livestock Show & Sale
- Judged Exhibits
- Children's Games
- Great Fair Food
- Petting Zoo
- Music & More!



Admission: \$5

Children 10 & Under: Free

This Year's Entertainment Includes...

Sauna Mountain Valley



Friday, July 26th at 6:30 pm
 Louisa County Agricultural Fair

Hailing from Louisa, VA, the Sauna Mountain Valley Boys are coming to the Main Stage this year! Enjoy a repertoire ranging from the blues, rock, country, standards and Americana.

Pig Races

New this year at the fair come and see the exciting Old McNally's Pig Derby. Come cheer on the pigs! The pigs will race several times each day on both Friday and Saturday. Fun for the whole family!



New Events Include

Baking with Bacon Contest

Antique Tractor Show

Portable Sawmill

Wooden Spoon Making

FFA Ag Mechanics Demo



For a complete listing of events check us out online at www.louisacountyagfair.com



Roe Allison moving harvest bins in his loader at Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery.
Photo by Barbara Wimble



The Reynard Florence Ballerina vine trellis.
All photos by Barbara Wimble

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Running a vineyard is not all romance. They both work hard at the vineyard planting, pulling leaves, hedging, cutting clusters, pruning, harvesting, bottling, putting up bird netting, and trapping raccoons. Roe recently trapped 16 raccoons in a six-week period!

They do make time for fun. Roe plays the guitar and sings as a member of a musical trio, "Vern Fischer & His Can't Hardly Playboys." This band of friends, which includes Carl Prober in addition to Roe and Vern, entertains guests on the tasting room's deck with live jazz, standards, and old timey music every Sunday. Roe is a multi-talented Renaissance man!

In 2011, Roe and Dee opened their tasting room, becoming the third one in Orange County after Horton and Barboursville Vineyards. Their sweet seven-year-old Corgi, named Ti Rey (for "Petit Reynard"), is the official greeter. He even has a



Dee Allison prepares the bottles for labeling. Photo by Barbara Wimble



From operating the loader to pouring wine in the tasting room, all in a day's work for Roe Allison at Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery. Photo by Barbara Wimble



The "Can't Hardly Playboys" entertaining guests with their tunes in the tasting room at Reynard Florence. Photo courtesy of Reynard Florence Vineyard & Winery.

Rosé wine named for him! But the fox is the prevalent motif. They named their winery for Reynard, the sly red fox character from Medieval folk tales. (Because of the popularity of the Reynard stories, the word "renard" became the French word for fox.) Florence is Dee's first name – thus the name Reynard Florence. Adding to the foxy décor and the charm of the French-inspired tasting room, local artists show their paintings and photography, and the curtains in the tasting room illustrate the history of wine-making.

Reynard Florence celebrates *à la française* on Bastille Day, when guests enjoy Dee's delicious crepes, enter a Bastille Day trivia contest for prizes, play *boules* (lawn bowling), listen to live music, sing along to *The Marseilles*, and sample newly released Reynard Florence wines. Mardi Gras is also a popular event at Reynard Florence, with participants celebrating with Dee's beignets and beads. *Laissez les bon temps rouler!*

Experience a little taste of France and romance with Dee and Roe's joie de vivre at Reynard Florence Vineyard and Tasting Room!



The pergola in the Reynard Florence vineyard is a romantic site for enjoying a bottle of wine while watching a sunset. Photo courtesy of Reynard Florence Vineyard.

See Sipping page 10

Events and Announcements

540-967-5200 LouisaArts.org

LOUISA Arts CENTER
PRESENTS:

Summer Family Movie Series

Join us this summer for the
Summer Family Fun Movie Series!
There Is One Movie Left
In Our Lineup

Showtimes: Tuesdays at 12:30PM
Admission: \$2 Youth, \$3
Adults // Movie Passes:
Every Movie, All Summer (\$10 per
person or \$30 per family of 4)



Hotel Transylvania 3: July 23



Animals in Oil Workshop - The Art Center In Orange

Explore painting with oils through a variety of exercises with Ed King. In this workshop you will address color, composition, value, and style. One-on-one guidance makes this an appropriate class for a wide range of students from beginning to advanced. Ages: Adults
Instructor: Ed King

Date: Saturday, August 3, 2019

Time: 10:00am - 12:30 pm

Cost: Registration: \$40,

Supplies: \$20

Location: The Art Center In Orange,
129 East Main Street, Orange VA

Website:

<https://artscenterinorange.com/>

More Info: 540-672-7311



Downtown Orange

Free Summer Concert Series presented by the Orange Downtown Alliance. July 20th Concert: Latin Beats with Berto Sales & Vincent Zorn Latin Guitar Duo. August 17th Concert: The Kurt Crandall Band. Music in the Park will be held in Taylor Park from 6-9 p.m. In the case of inclement weather, the event will not be canceled but will be held at MADISON AT THE MILL, 323 N Madison Rd, Orange. Location: Taylor Park, West Main Street, Downtown Orange, Va.

Website: <https://www.theoda.org/>

More Info: 540-672-2540



Summer Concert Series in Taylor Park

Date: Friday, August 9, 2019

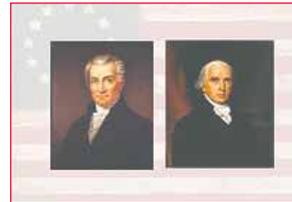
Time: 6:00 pm

Cost: FREE

The Dolley Madison Garden Club of Orange Virginia presents their Centennial Celebration Summer Concert Series at Taylor Park in Downtown Orange. The second Friday of July and August. July 12th concert presents The Fun Band and

August 9th concert presents Beach Music with DJ Nate Clancy (ImTheDJ) Rain or Shine, Bring A Chair. • Location: Taylor Park, West Main Street, Downtown Orange.

Website: <https://www.dmgcvirginia.org/>



The James Madison Museum of Orange County Heritage

**A Friendship That Helped Forge A Nation:
Madison & Monroe**

August 11, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

Presentation by Mr. Jarod Kearney, Curator of The James Monroe Museum & Memorial Library.

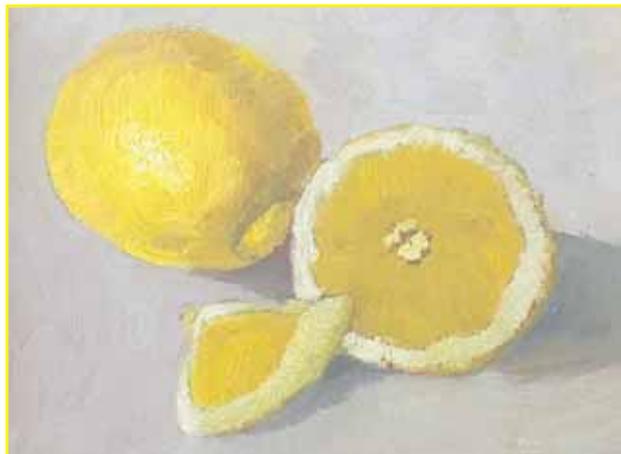
Members Admitted Free • Non-Members \$5.00

Admission • Please RSVP

129 Caroline Street, Orange, • (540) 672-1776

jamesmadisonmuseuminfo@gmail.com

Annie Gould Gallery



*Painting by
Anne de la Tour
Hopper*



9th Annual OI' Fashioned Peach Festival!

Saturday, July 27, 2019 at 9 AM – 6 PM

Sunday, July 28, 2019 at 10 AM – 6 PM

Carter Mountain Orchard

1435 Carters Mountain Trl, Charlottesville, Virginia

Phone: (434) 977-1833

C'mon out for pick-your-own peaches (availability permitting), peach cider donuts, peach cider slushies, peach pies, and ice cream available all day!

Festival activities include:

Games – Sack Races, Tug-O-War, Water Balloon Toss, Pie

Eating Contests, and more...

Hayrides – Take a scenic ride through the orchard on our tractor-pulled wagon!

*3.00 per person (free for kids under 2)

Pie eating contests – Categories for kids (12 and under) and adults (13+). Prizes for the winner of each round! *2.00 entry fee

August Archaeology Dig

Aug 4 at 4 PM – Aug 9 at 7:30 PM

James Madison's Montpelier • 11350 Constitution Highway, Orange



How can archaeology help us connect the past to the present? Join our professionally trained archaeology staff as we answer this question! Not only will you dig on an actual archaeology site, but you will also learn about artifact analysis in our archaeology laboratory! **Email dig@montpelier.org for a complete program schedule.**

*Painting by
Alex Gould*



109 South Main Street • Gordonsville, VA 22942 • 540-832-6352

• www.facebook.com/anniegouldgallery

• www.instagram.com/anniegouldgallery



**Shakespeare at the Ruins:
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**

The beloved, nationally acclaimed SHAKESPEARE AT THE RUINS collaboration between Four County Players and Barboursville Vineyards returns — after 13 years — for a special one-time production. Performances will be on-site in the beautiful Barboursville Vineyards, at the historic ruins of Governor James Barbour's mansion, designed by Thomas Jefferson and destroyed by fire on Christmas Day, 1884. ABOUT MIDSUMMER: On a midsummer's night, four young lovers find themselves wrapped in the dream-like arms of an enchanted forest where sprites lurk and fairies rule. While a feuding Fairy King and Queen are at war, their paths are crossed by Bottom, Quince and their friends presenting a play within a play. Chief mischief-maker Puck is on-hand to ensure that the course of true love is anything but smooth, and games of fantasy, love and dreams ensue in Shakespeare's most beguiling comedy. (Blurb from Royal Shakespeare Company)

Dates: July 26 & 27

Time: 7:00 pm • Cost: see website for details

Location: Barboursville Ruins, 17655 Winery Road, Barboursville • Website: <http://fourcp.org/> • More Info: **Box Office: 540-832-5355**



Bull Riding Rodeo

Come to Oakland Heights Farm for family entertainment in the form of live bull riding!

Date: Saturday, August 10, 2019

Time: Gates open at 5:30pm, Bull Riding at 7:30pm

Location: Oakland Heights Farm, 17110 James Madison Highway, Gordonsville

Website:

<http://oaklandheightsfarm.com>

More Info: (540) 222-1824



Sunflower Festival at Liberty Farms

Come celebrate the Sunflower Festival at Liberty Mills Farm. Brand new event this year!

Date: Saturday, August 24-25 and Saturday, August 31-Septemebr 2

Location: Liberty Mills Farm, 9166 Liberty Mills Road, Somerset

Website: <http://www.libertymills-farm.com/> More Info: 434-882-MAZE



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LOUISA Arts CENTER

212 Fredericksburg Ave, Louisa

In the Gallery



**Call for Entry
Color Therapy**

**Exhibit:
August 2 – September 20, 2019**

This exhibition is open to all 2-D and 3-D artists. All artwork submitted must be original, and not have appeared in a previous show at the Louisa Arts Center. There is an entry limit of four pieces of art per artist. This opportunity is open to artists of all levels.

540-967-5200 LouisaArts.org

LouisaArts.org LOUISA Arts CENTER PRESENTS: 540-967-5200

Coming in September 2019:



**Geometric Sandbox
by Monty Montgomery**

Exhibit dates as September 27 – November 22,
2019 with an opening reception
September 27, 2019 from 6pm – 8pm

A native of Louisa, Monty Montgomery's artistic vision can best be described as emotional language created using his innate intuition about color and object rule relationships to connect with the viewer. His abstract work includes geometric shapes and vivid colors to combine urban sensory with his impressions of the natural landscape into pieces of art that capture attention and intrigue.

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July



7/19 Made in the USA

7/20 The Strain Featuring Sammy Shako

7/21 Rick Hollowell

7/25 Glen Shelton

7/26 The Mash Up Band

7/27 Cheap Whiskey

7/28 Warren Cottrell



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The Hammerstone Cellars sign welcomes visitors. Ethan Robson, the owner's son, designed the logo based on the ancient hammerstone found on the property. Photo by Barbara Wimble

*Hammerstone Cellars
14035 Kendall Road, Orange*

On the other side of Orange County, there is another charming family-owned boutique-style vineyard and winery. Hammerstone Cellars, owned by Bill and Sue Robson, is located two miles from Chateaux MerrillAnne Vineyards. One of the newest wineries in the county, it is part of the Montpelier Wine Trail.

Bill and Sue bought their 100-acre property 18 years ago as a real estate investment and an escape from Northern Virginia. Their family, which includes two daughters and three sons, enjoys the outdoors, and they have camped and hunted on their property, and enjoyed the stream that runs through their farm. They timbered some of the forest and planted fruit trees, including pear. Last season, they yielded 10 gallons of pear juice that Coyote Ciderworks in Mineral made into cider for them.

They also grew grapes – as a hobby – and had thoughts of having a winery one day. In 2011, they began their experiment to determine which grapes would grow best on their property. The entire family, including Bill's 90-year-old mother, helped with the initial planting of the vines. In fact, the entire winery has been a real family affair, as all have participated and contributed in one way or the other. Their oldest, Elise, planted the roses at the tasting room; Alexandra and her daughter Kyleigh helped plant the vines; Chase helped dig holes and run wire; Logan worked on the irrigation system that uses solar power and made the tables for the tasting room and deck; and Ethan designed the logo and also did a lot of planting and digging.

During the process of converting the timberland to vineyards, they unearthed Native American artifacts, including arrowheads, stone hand axes, and spears. A reputable archeologist estimated that their artifacts were from the Archaic period – 2,000 to 8,000 BC – and identified one as a hammerstone. (A hammerstone was used to strike off stone flakes to make sharp edges. It is one of the oldest and simplest stone tools.) The archeologist believes that, because of all the artifacts found,



Sue and Bill Robson, owners of Hammerstone Cellars, enjoy meeting and talking with their fellow wine-loving visitors. Photo by Barbara Wimble

the land may have been a Native American trading site.

After discussing possibilities for the name of their future winery, the family decided on hammerstone. It is displayed on a wall in the tasting room along with other artifacts found on the property. The logo Ethan designed features the hammerstone in the ground surrounded by roots symbolizing "from the earth." They note on their wine bottle labels that "Much like our predecessors who crafted rocks from the ground, we have crafted our wines from the mineral rich soils of our land."

They opened their tasting room in 2016. The family did most of the construction, including laying the concrete. They used the wood harvested from the trees on their property to build the bar, tables, and trim in the tasting room. The tasting room deck they built overlooks the picturesque vineyards, and cards and games are set out on the tables for guests to play while enjoying their wine.

Bill is from Williamston, North Carolina, where his family has been farming since the 1740s. While growing up, he spent every summer living on his relatives' farm and picking tobacco. He was taught the value of land and learned to invest in it as opposed to stocks.



Wine among the vines" at Hammerstone Cellars. Photo courtesy of Hammerstone Cellars.

ABSOLUTE AUCTION
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In addition to farming, Bill is an architect specializing in churches, while Sue is a sales manager at a hotel. The couple met in high school and married after college. They celebrated their 35th anniversary in March by exploring the wineries in Southern California. Owing a vineyard is labor-intensive, and they both work hard mowing, tying up the vines, trimming, pruning, testing and charting the sugar content of the grapes, and harvesting. They also bottle their wines in the production room that adjoins the tasting room.

Bill learned about the wine business from volunteering in vineyards and attending educational programs and conferences. He joined the Virginia Vineyards Association and the Virginia Wine Association and found them to be very supportive and great resources. The late Dennis Horton of Horton Vineyards was generous with his time helping and advising him. David King, who also passed away last year, taught him the "do's and don'ts" of the business.

They have more than five acres of grapes in vine growing Norton, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Chardonnay, Petit Manseng, Gros Manseng, and Triaminette. They also grow grapes offsite at other vineyards. At some point, they may expand and cultivate another five acres in their back field.

They don't rely on one winemaker to produce their wines. Rather, to get the best product, they use four notable winemakers from throughout Virginia who each excel in a certain type of wine. Their Norton '17 won a major award at the *San Francisco Chronicle* wine competition. There were over 6,200 entries, including more than 40 Nortons, in the competition. This flavorful limited release wine was aged in bourbon barrels.

Visitors come mostly from Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Lake Anna to taste and buy their wines. While I was there, friends and enthusiastic wine drinkers Sherrie Shaw from Fredericksburg and Angela Jones from North Carolina enjoyed a wine tasting wearing "Sip Happens" shirts. They said that they like visiting wineries and collecting fun wine-related t-shirts to wear. A regular patron they call "Norm" after the "Cheers" television show character stopped by for a chat and glass of wine. The tasting room is open weekends, but they close after they take in the harvest in late October. They reopen for a few days during the holidays and for private tastings.

Many visitors have commented on feeling a certain peace and serenity at Hammerstone. Some call it cathartic.

There is always a breeze on the site that is good for both the vines and the visitors. Could it be the ancient indigenous people whispering through the vineyard?

For delicious wine, good company, a peaceful setting, and spectacular sunsets, enjoy "wine among the vines" with Bill and Sue at Hammerstone Cellars.

~~~~~

*I'm learning so much about wine and the fun of wine tastings, and enjoying meeting the people who make award-winning wines in Orange County. I look forward to visiting and sampling the wines of the last two vineyards in Orange County - Barbourville (the ruins) and Horton (the castle). Cheers!*



Visitors Angela Jones and Sherrie Shaw show off their "Sip Happens" t-shirts while enjoying a wine tasting with Sue at Hammerstone Cellars. Photo by Barbara Wimble



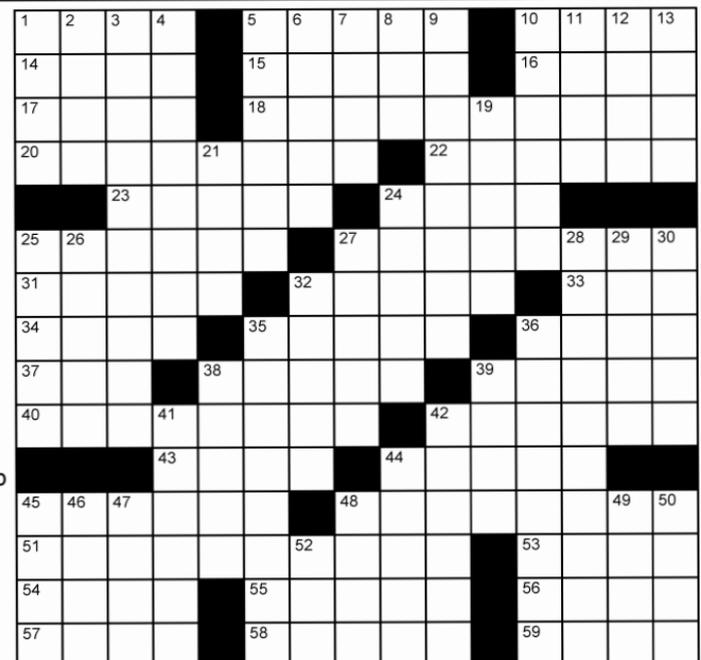
The Hammerstone Cellars tasting room.

## Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- 1 Fizzy drink
- 5 Toned down
- 10 5:1, e.g.
- 14 Large-scale
- 15 Join together
- 16 Medic or legal starter
- 17 Take it easy
- 18 Something to recycle
- 20 Completely surround
- 22 Back out (on)
- 23 Rudimentary seed
- 24 Net-surfer's stop
- 25 "War of the Worlds" star
- 27 James Garner title role
- 31 Like some criticism
- 32 On the wagon
- 33 Woman with a habit
- 34 One who raised Cain
- 35 "Grab \_\_\_!"
- 36 Bring on board
- 37 Newton fruit
- 38 "Humble" dwelling
- 39 Adorable sort
- 40 Period of unbridled activity
- 42 Day spa offering
- 43 Fail to mention
- 44 Winter wear
- 45 Radio noise
- 48 Guiding light
- 51 Free-market proponent
- 53 Scrabble draw
- 54 Furthermore
- 55 In need of a massage, maybe
- 56 Divisible by 2
- 57 "\_\_\_ there, done that"
- 58 Like a beaver
- 59 "It's a Wonderful Life" actress Donna



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- 7 Bad thing to blow
- 8 Posting at JFK
- 9 Like the needy
- 10 First game of the season
- 11 Social outing
- 12 Type of race
- 13 After-Christmas event
- 19 Coin collector?
- 21 Football play
- 24 Fine fur
- 25 Like the needy
- 26 Diameter halves
- 27 Prone to sulking
- 28 Ambition
- 29 Vatican tribunal
- 30 Prepare to be dubbed
- 32 Young hog
- 35 Give up the throne
- 36 Shoddy goods seller
- 38 Fess up (to)
- 39 Be concerned
- 41 Skin soother
- 42 Hesitate
- 44 Outlaw chasers
- 45 Healing sign
- 46 Saga
- 47 Cathedral recess
- 48 Metallic sound
- 49 On the safe side, at sea
- 50 Tear
- 52 Pastoral setting

## Crossword Answers page 15



Stella and Bella Gibson have selected piglets for the ag fair's Bottle Babies exhibition.

# Off to the Louisa Ag Fair

By Pat Wilson  
Correspondent

Harley and Davidson are going to the Louisa County Agricultural Fair and Tyler Gibson hopes one of the two will reward his efforts with a championship in the market lamb division. Since mid-May, the Louisa County High School senior has been caring for the pair as his 4-H Livestock project and plans to show them in weight, pairs and senior showmanship classes at the late July event.

"Lambs are hard to show because you can't use a harness or halter, but just your hands to control them," he said. "I'm also raising a doe goat for the breeding classes which allows you to use a collar."

The 4-H projects require that Tyler keep accurate digital records of his care and expenses including feed and medications. He handles them so they will stand correctly for judging and walks them to increase their muscle tone. Before the show, Tyler will shear and bathe the market lambs.

"I'm hoping to have one in the heavy weight class and the other in the middle weight class," he said. "I'll sell them at the fair's livestock auction and any profit will go into a savings account for college."

His father Chris, the 2019 ag fair



The 2019 Louisa County Agricultural Fair will be held July 26th & 27th at the Louisa County Fairgrounds.

president and, who along with his wife Natalie, has been a previous livestock club leader, added, "It is through the generosity of the businesses and individuals in the community that the kids can enjoy a profit from their projects."

To be eligible for the county fair, Tyler had to meet the yearly requirements of the club which includes attending at least seven meetings, making a presentation to the members, participating in two group community service projects and helping with fund raisers. The young man combines those efforts with helping on the family farm.

The Gibsons live east of Mineral on a 65 acres family farm which Chris returned to after college. His focus has always been beef cattle. Today, the family keeps small herds of beef cattle, goats and sheep as well as, at a nearby location, contracts with Tysons Food to raise chickens. While Chris works as an IT specialist for Virginia Community Bank, Natalie handles the poultry operation.

When ten years old, Tyler became interested in 4-H after attending the weeklong Camp Holiday and then joining the Louisa County 4-H Livestock Club, it was natural for his parents to consider his raising a heifer.

"I was always a cow man," said Chris. "But others recommended that for younger members lambs or goats were much easier, so we purchased two lambs."

The next year the Gibsons purchased a flock of seven ewes from John

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Tyler Gibson works with his 4-H lamb projects for three months prior to the ag fair, teaching each to stand correctly.

Purcell, a 4-H club member who was leaving for college. Over the years, the herd has expanded to 35, and it is from among those that Tyler selects his project lambs.

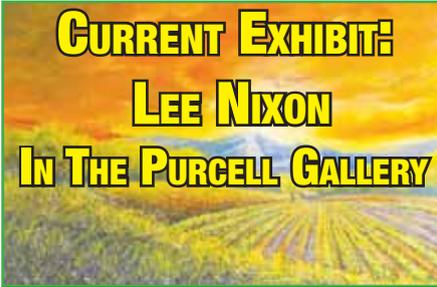
"I look for ones that have good structure and muscle. You learn what the judges are looking for," he said. "I've had success at the fair with champions and reserve championships" with Natalie adding, "He has won the showmanship class every year but one and then he was second."

Tyler's resume includes wins on livestock judging teams which require knowledge of the conformation of goats, lambs, hogs and steers. The senior is president of the high school chapter of Future Farmers of America. In

**See Ag Fair Page 14**

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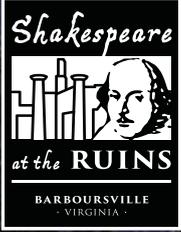
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**J**ames Madison's Montpelier will be offering free tours this summer to all kids ages 14 and under through August 30. Children must be accompanied by a paying adult.

The free tours and family-friendly activities make for an affordable and enriching summer experience available to the public any day of the week. Montpelier offers "Discovering Montpelier: A Family Friendly Tour," an interactive tour for families and children that involves discovering artifacts and documents, participating in activities, and touring the House and its surroundings. Other daily House tours offered are the Signature tour and Madison and the Constitution. Included in admission is "Montpelier's Enslaved Community" walking tour, as well as access to Montpelier's award-winning exhibition *The Mere Distinction of Colour*.

The archaeology lab is free and open to the public every day, and children are invited to explore the drawers of artifacts, use the touch screen to understand how archaeologists work, and "dig" for artifacts. Other free tours offered monthly this summer are the Journey from Slavery to Freedom and the Historic Landscape.

Mr. Madison will be at home and receiving guests in the House several Saturdays throughout the summer. Visitors are welcome to greet him and talk to him on topics of interest. Montpelier's 8+ miles of walking trails - great for hikers of all ages and skill levels - are free and open to the public, and dogs on leashes are welcome. The Gilmore Cabin and 1910 Train Depot are open daily and are self-guided. The Gilmore Cabin is staffed on Saturday and Sunday. Learn about life on a freedman's farm.

Enjoy award-winning barbeque, specialty sandwiches, and a kids' menu at the Exchange Cafe, or bring a picnic and choose a shady spot anywhere on Montpelier's 2,650 acres. The David M. Rubenstein Center also houses two galleries and a Museum Shop. In the Grills Gallery, the new, interactive "Mysteries of Montpelier" exhibition aims to put visitors into the shoes of museum curators. Guests will learn how curators,



archaeologists, researchers, and preservationists use objects and materials to answer questions about the past and tell stories about who lived at Montpelier, and they can create their own mini-exhibits.

To learn more about any of these activities, visit

<http://www.montpelier.org> or call 540-672-2728 x 141.

**WHAT:** Summer activities at Montpelier: Kids Free, Trails, Exhibits Archaeology, and More.

**WHEN:** July 8-August 30, 2019

**WHERE:** James Madison's Montpelier, 11350 Constitution Highway, Montpelier Station, VA, 22957

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## Ag Fair from page 13

Mid-June he attended the FFA state convention

Not to be outdone, the younger Gibsons – eight-year-old Stella and six-year-old twins Eli and Bella – will participate at the ag fair with other Cloverbuds, a pre-4-H group for children eight and younger. The twins work with kid goats, Peewee and Coco, while Stella has a lamb, Cookie Dough. The three have attended youth judging camps to learn skills, as did Tyler in previous summers.

"We even got to help pick out our animals," said Stella. "I picked a friendly one."

For Friday's Bottle Babies class, Stella and Bella will each select a piglet from the litter the Gibsons' sow carried. Eli will show a calf from the family's herd.

"We encourage participation for younger kids to increase their interest in 4-H and FFA activities," said Chris. "Their activities are not competitive, but give them a chance to show off their skills and hard work."

The Gibson youth also show on the Virginia Showmasters Circuit which provides youngsters the opportunity to exhibit lambs and goats. The organization offers nine competitions during the spring and summer, with the top ten finishers awarded prizes at the Virginia State Fair in October.

"The circuit has events from Virginia Beach to Abington. Tyler can accumulate points on how well he does in showmanship and animal management classes. The first show of the year had 42 youth in his 15 – 19 age bracket, so the competition is tough," said Chris then with a smile added, "We take most of our vacations pulling a livestock trailer."

A bonus for the Gibsons is that some shows offer a peewee division so Stella, Bella and Eli can show young lambs and goat kids. They especially enjoy the costume classes and Natalie's creativity becomes obvious. One year the three youngsters were the Three Little Pigs and a lamb was the Big Bad Wolf, of course. Last year Stella and Bella were Virginia Tech cheerleaders, Eli was a football player and the lamb was the referee.

This fall, Tyler will exhibit at the 4-H show at the state fair and if successful on the VSC will compete in those events as well. The three youngsters will take their projects for a costume class. Another family road trip pulling a stock trailer!



Showing lambs, Tyler Gibson has had numerous wins in statewide competitions.

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Answers to the Crossword Puzzle  
 from page 11

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| R | E | S | T |   | S | C | R | A | P |   | M | E | T | A | L |
| E | N | C | I | R | C | L | E |   | R | E | N | E | G | E |   |
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| H | A | R | S | H |   | S | O | B | E | R |   | N | U | N |   |
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