



Book Club learns about drones

The Third Thursday Book Club held its March meeting at the High Street Theater with Donna Van Cleave and Lorrie Watson serving as hostesses. The speaker was drone photographer Clint Mooney. He displayed several drone cameras and explained how they operated. Mooney closed his presentation by showing several videos he had taken using drones including one of the Dunnington Mansion at Poplar Hill. Pictured are, from left, Lorrie Watson, Clint Mooney and Donna Van Cleave.

Burcham sets collegiate best in Invitational

Junior Carter Burcham posted collegiate-best outdoor times of 2:09.40 in the 800 meter run, and 4:27.36 in the 1500 meter run, to lead Hampden-Sydney College at the Dr. Jack M. Toms Alumni Invitational on Saturday, March 25 in Lynchburg. Burcham finished 32nd of 65 in the 800, and placed 52nd of 74 in the 1500. Sophomore Kade Minton competed in the Open 5000 meter run for the Tigers and posted a time of 17:03.97 to finish 10th of 20. Others competing in the 800 meter run were senior Justin Stimpson with a time of 2:09.63 to finish 34th, freshman Tommy Bennett with a time of 2:24.28 to place 5th, sophomore Kevin Busch with a time of 2:33.92 to finish 61st, and sophomore Dan Ludovico with a time of 2:36.42 to place 63rd. It was the first time that both Bennett and Ludovico have run outdoor 800s. H-SC will compete again at the WildCat Track Festival hosted by Randolph College on April 8 in Lynchburg.

Opinion

YOUR VIEWS I

It's time to prove it first

Dear Editor,
We persist in asking our County to stop metallic mining from coming to Buckingham by passing the proposed rights-based ordinance. One of the numerous sensible, key protections in that document is the Prove It First section. This requires the applying industry to simply first show proof, before getting any permits, of another mining project of similar scope that has caused no harm to that community. At the Planning Commission work session on 3/20, where mining industry representatives had a full 90 minutes to present their posi-

tions, they gave assurance of responsible mining. With that confidence, industry should have no problem fulfilling this requirement. This simple and effective requirement was adopted into state law by Wisconsin in 1998 and held for 20 years. The legislation was passed by overwhelming bi-partisan margins (27-6 in the Senate and 91-6 in the Assembly). More than 60 organizations supported the legislation along with petitions signed by more than 40,000 residents. While it was law, not one mining company applied for permits. Thus it was a solidly

effective roadblock. And it took hundreds of thousands of industry dollars and energy to take that law down with the help of industry friendly politicians. This law was directed at copper sulfide mines, which are the largest source of taxpayer liability under the EPA's Superfund cleanup program. It was this track record of sulfide mining pollution that prompted a massive grassroots environmental, sportfishing, and tribal movement to successfully oppose Exxon's metallic sulfide mine at the headwaters of the Wolf River and enact Wisconsin's landmark Mining Moratorium

Law, known as "Prove It First". I thank Professor Al Gedicks of the University of Wisconsin for this information, and his work to help create the "Prove It First" law. Renowned biophysicist Steve Emerman, who also participated in the creation of the law, and informed us of it, also reviewed and approved the Buckingham proposed rights-based ordinance, for scientific and general correctness. He presented to the State Agency Committee on the study of the impacts of gold mining on Virginia. We have asked Chairman Bickford to invite Dr. Emerman to the next Planning Commission work ses-

sion on Wednesday, April 19 on metallic mining to advise on the scientific questions and on Prove It First. We are happy that a representative from the Virginia Community Rights Network and Friends of Buckingham will have the opportunity to present at this session. The rights-based ordinance is a gift - a collaboration by many clear-thinking, concerned people. We call on our neighbors to speak up to their supervisor to support this ordinance to truly protect our home.

Julia Maria Gibson
Buckingham

Let's talk about my cousin Chris

Christian Sorenson Bennett, one year my senior, was my favorite boyhood cousin. He was named after his Danish grandfather (my great-grandfather), a fisherman who had left that life to come to America as an indentured laborer at the turn of the other century to pour and finish concrete in Jackson, Tennessee. Later, he could still take a ball of cord and easily make a basketball net in just a few minutes. He relished any ed or soft-shelled turtle we might bring home from the river. He also cheated at checkers; Chris discovered one day that Big Daddy would cover several checkers at once with his huge hands and slide one along underneath with his thumb as he made the presumed real move with a finger. Chris's mother was my grandmother's younger sister, and his dad was a very nervous veteran of World War II whose hands shook for the

rest of his life. No wonder: he had driven a fuel truck in Italy. Uncle William developed the skill of crafting beautiful knives from old, discarded leaf springs and abandoned fence posts. We whiled away many summer days reading and re-reading his footlocker full of comic books. His allowance of a dollar a week allowed the purchase of ten new ones every time he went to the store. Most summer mornings we went to Campbell Pond to fish for catfish with balls of biscuit dough. Saturday morning at ten, they had special movie showings for kids, and we enjoyed such classics as "The Three Stooges Meet Hercules" (oddlly, no Oscar nominations). Chris was a natural comedian, preternaturally cheerful, who at an early age knew every lyric of Roger Miller's Greatest Hits. He became adept at "seeing and harmonizing" after seeing Riddle and



YOUR TURN I
MIKE WILSON

Phelps only once or twice on Hee Haw. All in all, I think he may be the only personal acquaintance of my lifetime I would characterize as jolly. We once went to visit his family as they camped for two weeks on the banks of a creek that fed the Buffalo River. The creek was cold, clear, and about a foot deep, perfect for cousins of eight and nine. You could catch a beautiful rock bass on almost every cast at the confluence of the two streams; we got our bait by seining for craw-

dads. Later, in high school, we had some fun running around once he got his driver's license. He once took me to see a bootlegger named Tomcat (Madison County was dry) with an honest-to-God tony door in the bigger one to place orders and receive half-pints. On one visit to town, he drove me to the airport to see the first microwave oven in the city. (Imagine, in those days one could walk into an airport without a cavity search.) Our lives rather diverged after high school. He went to vocational school to become a machinist, a trade he plied for the rest of his life. He could hollow out a large needle, put a smaller one inside so it rattled, and solder the big one shut again seamlessly. I believe he was the first recycler I knew: he kept iceed PBR's for his trip home each afternoon and threw the empties through the little sliding

rear window of his pickup. When the bed was full, he turned them in. I only saw him at funerals for most of our adult lives. We exchanged Christmas cards, and while our address must have changed over a dozen times, his always remained the same. His pride and joy was his little Grand-son Christopher, who at the age of three wandered away momentarily and drowned in the family pool. I'm afraid the entire rack of Hallmark cards contained no sentiment suitable to send him. His medical file may suggest otherwise. I am certain Chris died of a broken heart. The comments collected with his obituary cited his kindness, generosity, and good humor. Of course, I already knew all of that.

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The Farmville Herald
Member: Virginia Press Association
All communication and monies should be addressed to The Herald, P.O. Box 307, Farmville, Virginia 23901 (USPS 188-020)
Published Every Wednesday and Friday
Entered as periodicals at the post office at Farmville, Virginia under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879

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