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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

AMONG THE NEW EATING PLACES

popping up in the Crozet area is Smoked Kitchen and Tap. The full-service restaurant is an offshoot of a popular Charlottesville barbecue food truck and looks to become a local favorite. It is located on the ground floor in the brand new Piedmont Place building across from the library on Library Avenue. It features BBQ sandwiches, salads, and a variety of locally brewed beers. We enjoyed sampling their generous pulled pork sandwich and side of roasted Brussel sprouts, but were surprised by a piece of gristle and disappointed they had run out of coffee for the day. Planned is an outdoor rooftop dining area, accessible by elevator, that should provide awesome views of the surrounding area. Be aware that parking is sometimes challenging and the restaurant can be noisy.



THE LODGE OWNER DAVID HILLIARD is hoping that his one remaining bee hive will survive the winter and begin pollinating again. People in Minneapolis and Madison, Wisconsin are wondering if they will ever see again a bumblebee that was once so prevalent pedestrians in midwest cities had to shoo them away. The once abundant rusty patched bumble bee is the first bee species on the U.S. mainland to be placed on the endangered species list. The collapse of the rusty patched is indicative of the problems bees and butterflies face. The 3.5 million honeybee colonies documented in 1989 was down by one million in 2006. In 2015 alone, Maryland lost 60 percent of its hives.

Suspected causes are pesticides and herbicides, loss of bee habitat through development, disease, and climate change. The endangered designation makes it unlawful to knowingly destroy the bee's habitat.



Rusty patched queen

RESIDENT FOCUS

Lodge resident Benjamin Franklin Hurt is probably the most heralded high school principal in Virginia. Known for his uncanny ability to remember the names of the thousands of students that he would greet at the door in the morning and between class breaks, 98 year-old Ben Hurt was the principal of Albermarle High School for 30 years from 1954 to 1984. He wowed students and faculty alike with his kindness and leadership abilities and won the respect of the county for his devotion to both church and community. He is the recipient of prestigious awards and honors including induction into the Virginia High School Hall of Fame and the naming of a county elementary school in his behalf.

Ben hails from Farmville, Virginia where his father supervised the maintenance crew at Longwood College and instilled among his five sons the desire to learn new words. After graduation with honors from Farmville High, Ben graduated from Hampden-Sydney College with a Latin major in which he excelled. He was the only one in his family who attended college. He later earned a Master of Education degree at UVA.

Upon graduation, Ben was hired in 1940 to teach at the former Greenwood High School in Greenwood before the county consolidated its schools. The principal had me “teach anything that needed to be taught,” says Ben, including Latin, his favorite subject, and math and science classes. At the beginning of his second year, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, served in Italy and Africa as company clerk, or “secretary” to the commanding officer as he describes it, survived several combat missions, and was discharged as sergeant major four years later.



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Resident Focus (cont'd)



Principal Hurt, 1955.

Returning to Greenwood High School, Ben advanced to school principal and married Maria Addleman of Cumberland County whom he met in Farmville at the Baptist church. Maria taught home economics classes at Crozet High School and later at Albemarle High School. She liked to tell the story of the student at a class reunion who approached Ben with his hand over his name tag asking if he

remembered him. Before the former student finished his sentence, said Maria, Ben told him "you are Homer Ray Patterson. I would never forget you!" Maria resides in a separate care facility.

Their only child, James Benjamin, who goes by the name J.B., and his wife are the parents of Ben's grandson and granddaughter. J.B. is an official with a bank in Charlottesville.

When the county consolidated its scattered schools into the new county high school in 1953, Ben was appointed assistant principal for one year before being named high school principal. Continuing to advocate Latin in the high school curriculum, Ben was able to convince the reluctant school superintendent to allow several classes of Latin, one of which he taught. It was during his long tenure there that he



Shaped in the letter A, Albemarle High School outside Charlottesville, seen here just after being built in 1953, is where Ben Hurt spent 30 years as school principal.

earned the admiration and respect of his many peers as well as the whole Albemarle community.

In addition to membership in the Virginia High School Hall of Fame and having a school being named for him, he was added to the Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center Wall of Fame and inducted in the Albemarle High School Alumni Hall of Fame. He received the distinguished Samuel Miller Award for his significant commitment to local youth. The entry road to Albemarle High School was named Benjamin Hurt Drive, and the county's governing board passed a resolution declaring him a model citizen.

His community service includes a 60-year membership in the Crozet Lion's Club, longer than any other club member, and deacon of the Crozet Baptist Church for more than 50 years.

He found enough leisure time to develop his game of golf and achieve two holes-in-one. Ben is a southpaw, but years ago because he was unable to find left-handed golf clubs, he was forced to learn the game as a right-hander!

We are privileged to have such a legendary community figure among us.



The newlywed Hurts, 1948.

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LE'TOILE CATERERS services weddings, parties, and corporate events and is approved to serve at Monticello and UVA. Crozet residents Mark and Vickie Gresge closed their award winning French restaurant in Charlottesville to pursue the full-time catering business in Crozet.

In an unusual sideline and by using the honor system, the Gresge's are making some of their specialties available for the taking. Look for what

is available on the menu sign (it changes weekly) on Jarmin Gap Road on the right as you enter Crozet. (Or check the Le'toile Facebook site.)

Drop your money in the lock box and take your food from the cooler on the front porch of the kitchen cottage where their culinary inventions are prepared.

Mark says this service will continue as long as it does not interfere with catering.



Remembering the Forgotten

Imagine if everyone living in the nearby city of Waynesboro were to be evicted and relocated. That should give you an idea of the number of people living on the Blue Ridge who were forced to move when the Shenandoah National Park was established. The park offers some of America's most spectacular views, attracting over one million visitors a year, but it required the sacrifice of 22,000 residents who were removed from their living spaces to make room for the 100-mile long road and park that overlook eight Virginia counties.

For over 70 years, the people who were displaced by the park were mostly forgotten until a grassroots effort was formed to memorialize the displaced residents. The Blue Ridge Project intends to build chimney monuments and information kiosks in each of the eight Virginia counties where the mountain dwellers were evicted. The monuments will represent the typical chimneys found on mountain homes. (The volunteer project was the subject of a Third Thursday presentation at The Lodge and relies on private donations.)

The chimney monument honoring Albemarle



County evacuees has been constructed in the Albemarle County Byrom Forest Preserve Park not far from Sugar Hollow in the northwest corner of the county. Stones from the ruins of the home of a displaced family were used to construct a full-size replica of the typical home chimneys used before creation of the park. The names of 67 Albemarle families displaced by the park are engraved on a plaque mounted to the chimney. The Via family was one of those.

After searching for people having direct knowledge of the uprooted families, Barbara Wright of Staunton found several including Arnold, a descendant of the Via family that was forced to move from their home in Sugar Hollow when he was two years old. Wright set out to document the "forced migration" in a paper she produced for an honors class at the Blue Ridge Community College. The paper was later published in the *Community College Journal*.

Arnold's family migrated to the mountains and Sugar Hollow in the early 1700s from the Piedmont. He told Wright that his great-great grandfather married into the mountain people and fathered 12 to 14 children. His great-grandfather's legal stills in the early 1900s were in Upper Sugar Hollow, named for the wagon loads of sugar brought to the stills. Lower Sugar Hollow is where the people lived.

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Remembering (cont'd)

His illiterate father later made illegal whiskey while living in Sugar Hollow and continued to produce moonshine after being relocated from the mountains. He spent seven years looking for a job because of no education or work qualifications.

Arnold's maternal grandfather lost his comfortable two-story frame house and farm and orchard in the early 1930s when greeted by a knock on the door, a check for \$2,280 based on a fixed purchase price, and the order to pack up his wagons and leave. His house was later burned to prevent his return. Arnold says his grandfather never recovered from the ordeal and died heartbroken.

A brother-in-law of Arnold's great-great-uncle refused to move. The sheriff and Civilian Conservation Corps workers stacked up his belongings outside his house, carried him outside while he was sitting in his rocking chair, and burned his house down in front of him.

Arnold's great-great-uncle challenged the constitutionality of the taking of his 154 acres in Sugar Hollow. The case was heard in the U.S. District Court in Harrisonburg and ended in the U.S. Supreme Court where he lost the case.

And so it went with the government removing some 450 families who had lived in the mountains for generations, many of whom resisted the government's efforts while others hoped the move would provide a better life. Land was purchased outside the park boundaries where families could resettle in homestead communities, 42 individuals were given lifetime rights to remain within the park because of age, and others left the mountain on their own. (A later law required that people whose property was acquired by federal projects would be treated fairly and equitably and receive assistance in moving.)

The original 522,000-acre park plan was ultimately reduced to 194,000 acres. Intending to expand the park to its original size, the federal government in the 1970s tried to explain its plans at a meeting attended by several mountain people descendants including Arnold. He told Wright that the speakers were "run off the stage and not allowed to speak." Shortly thereafter the plan to acquire more land was abandoned when two Virginia congressman introduced legislation to freeze the current boundary line.

After hearing about the lost mountain culture from the descendants of displaced families, Wright feels a degree of sadness for what can never be regained. But she also opines "there is no way to know how these mountain families if left alone and undisturbed would have survived if the park and the Skyline Drive had been scrapped."



Virginia agreed to purchase the Shenandoah parkland by eminent domain and turn it over to the federal government. The park and Skyline Drive were proposed and recommended by businessmen in the Shenandoah Valley because of the economic stimulus they envisioned. Congress authorized the park on the condition that Virginia acquire the needed properties. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the linear park in 1936.

Almost 40 percent of the park is designated wilderness. The park contains over 500 miles of trails including the Appalachian Trail, numerous overlooks along Skyline Drive, and nearly 300 rooms in two concessionaire-operated lodges. The entry point closest to The Lodge is located at Afton exit 99 on I-64. For more information, visit the National Park Service website [nps.gov/shen](https://www.nps.gov/shen).



Patricia Ann Byrom was a teacher at Crozet Elementary School and spouse of Robert Byrom. Mr. Byrom donated 600 acres of their farm on the edge of Shenandoah National Park to Albemarle County in 2004 for a forest preserve park in honor of his wife's service as Air Force spouse and school teacher. Besides the chimney monument, the park contains a large parking area, toilets, an information kiosk, hiking trails, and impressive mountain scenery. The trails are considered difficult because of steep slopes. Ms. Byron died in 2010. Mr. Byrom died in 2016. The park address is 6610 Blackwells Hollow Road, Crozet. It is located 7.8 miles from Whitehall on Route 810. Roads are narrow and it is best to use GPS as a navigation guide.