

# The Recorder

IN THE COMMUNITY, ABOUT THE COMMUNITY, SINCE 1877.

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## Bath women earn equestrian awards

BY GEOFF HAMILL • STAFF WRITER

HOT SPRINGS — Two Bath County women received awards in the Virginia Trail Riders 30-mile equestrian endurance ride at The Homestead last week.

Claudia Campbell of Warm Springs received the Suitability Award and second place in the novice class. Trish Darby of Millboro received first place in the heavyweight class.

Virginia Trails Riders Inc. conducts two events at The Homestead every year — a 30-mile ride and a pleasure ride in October, and 50- and 100-mile rides in April. Horses are judged on manners and physical conditioning, while riders and horses are judged on their mutual suitability.

A group of 43 equestrians assembled at Shenandoah National Park in 1957 and formed Virginia Trail Riders to “inaugurate, promote and execute an endurance trail ride in Virginia and to inaugurate, promote and execute other trail rides and recreational enjoyment of horse sports in Virginia.”

“This ride started from fox hunters around the Richmond area, who had their horses terribly fit and fox hunting season ended,” said VTRI vice president Doris Stimpson. “They thought their horses were so fit, they should do something else and they made side bets between themselves to see which one could ride 100 miles. That’s how it started, and now it’s evolved into these two events.”

The 30-mile ride is conducted over two days and riders stay at the hotel overnight, but Darby carried enough gear to camp out. “This is the first time I’ve ever done one of these, so I had lots of water and different things in my saddlebag,” she said. “So I got bumped into the heavyweight division.

“It was more challenging than I expected,” Darby added. “We had to keep a faster speed; it was not a sightseeing ride. They do have a pleasure category, in which you ride at whatever speed you want. But in the judged 30-miler, you have to keep going at a pretty good pace.”

Though not a race, riders and horses must complete the first day’s 20 miles in less than 4.5 hours, and the final 10 miles in less than two hours. During the ride, the horses’

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Bath supervisor Stuart Hall opts for jury trial, page 3



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These turkeys were spotted recently trying to get in on the great learning going on at Valley Elementary School. (Photo courtesy Steve Sizemore)



## Landowner: ‘Dominion would just dig us up and throw us out’

BY JOHN BRUCE • STAFF WRITER

MONTEREY — Call it a Catch-22 for rural America. Looking back, landowners say they went from feeling secure to defenseless, despite donating acreage to a legally binding, state-run program to prevent development.

Dominion’s modified Atlantic Coast Pipeline route could violate agreements of at least 10 property owners who placed their land in a special trust, the Southern Environmental Law Center charged in a filing to federal regulators last week.

Doing so, SELC said, would jeopardize confidence in Virginia’s conservation easement program and betray easement donors.

For its part, Dominion maintains the impact would be “minimal.”

“You think, my goodness, what does a conservation easement mean?” northern Bath County landowner Roberta “Robbie” Koontz said in an interview with SELC.

She and her husband, Bob, years ago put their 1,200 acres in the state conservation easement program with the

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### RECORDER Spotlight

Burnsville United Methodist Church will host a covered dish appreciation dinner for Burnsville EMT, rescue and fire fighter volunteers on Sunday. See the calendar for more details.



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