

Rural Nelson News

Rural Nelson: Let's Preserve It!

Volume 1, Issue 1
September 2000

Why Rural Nelson?

By Al Weed

Rural Beauty a 2-Sided Coin

Nelson County's beauty and charm is closely linked to its rural character, and is the reason so many of us want to live here. Our largely unspoiled landscape, however, hides many pockets of rural poverty and despair, where living is not as pleasant.

Preservation vs. Development

It is these two extremes that have bedeviled our political leadership: preservation versus development.

More and more we realize that residential development does not pay its way,



and the few local jobs that may result from relocated industry are often outweighed by further influx into the county.

Retail development that does not clearly meet the needs of local people — wants that are now being satisfied outside the county—often displaces established merchants. Increasingly, new retailers

are outside firms which ship their profits out of the area.

The Tourist Trade

Development that seeks to meet the needs of our growing tourism traffic must do so on Nelson County's own terms. We do the tourism industry little good if we re-zone away our rural character for a few dollars of retail taxes. We must seek out development that complements the core of our attraction to visitors—our rural countryside—and not businesses that make us look just like everywhere else.

These are not revolutionary ideas, but Rural Nelson ex-

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Member Profile: Fokie Morgan

By Mary Buford Hitz

A Flower of Nelson

With home-grown flowers in her hand and a welcoming, quiet smile on her face, Rural Nelson Board member Fokie Morgan greets me as I come into Cut and

Dried, her store in Tyro. The store is really more of a staging area where, this time of year, she arranges fresh flowers into attractive bunches for sale at the Saturday Farmer's Market in Nellysford.

In the winter, dried flower arrangements are made here and are sold at The Farm Basket, a store Fokie's mother, Perkins Flippen, started in Lynchburg in 1964.

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Rural Nelson Could Use Your Help

Committees and activity groups are now forming. If you can volunteer a little time, please contact Kim Cash at 263-5000.

Areas of Interest

- Rural Land Conservation & Easements
- County Issues & Local Land Use
- Growth Management
- Historic Preservation
- Profitable Farming
- Commercial Design

Activities

- Telephone Tree
- Community Education
- Letter Writing
- Participation at Public Hearings

"We are young and old, newcomers and natives, tree huggers and realtors. Won't you join us?"

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ists to seek a broader understanding of the pressures of growth that are already being felt in Nelson County.

We hope to become expert in the many challenges facing our community in order to provide constructive assistance to public officials seeking to deal with development pressure.

Comprehensive Plan

The County is now revising its Comprehensive Plan, the document that states publicly how we want our

county to look and be in the future. Rural Nelson will play as large a role in this process as we are permitted. Most importantly, we will seek to inform and involve the public on a regular basis about the plan's progress.

Who Are We?

We are Nelson County's first civic group to hire a professional to look after the interests of the public regarding growth issues. To succeed, we must involve a broad range of our citizens and also raise a considerable

amount of money. Rural Nelson must show our elected leaders that this community also has a vision for the future.

We are young and old, newcomers and natives, tree-huggers and realtors, and we have but one thing in common: we love this county and want to see its rural character preserved. Won't you join us? ❖



Events Calendar

September

12 Board of Supervisors
Lovington Courthouse, 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM

23 Planning Commission
Lovington Courthouse, 7:30 PM.

27 Virginia Summit on Urban Sprawl.
James Madison University, Harrisonburg. 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Registration deadline Sept. 15. For information call 540-568-8043 or 804-263-5000.

October

3 Rural Nelson
7:30 PM.

10 Board of Supervisors
Lovington Courthouse, 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM

25 Planning Commission
Lovington Courthouse, 7:30 PM.

November

7 Rural Nelson
7:30, PM.

14 Board of Supervisors
Lovington Courthouse, 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM

15 Planning Commission
Lovington Courthouse, 7:30 PM.

Member Profile cont. from p.1

Four days a week Foxie works at the Farm Basket, which has expanded into a specialty shop.

Nelson County bakers Mary Allen and Margaret Johnson have produced popular baked goods for the store for years; and to stave off their retirement Foxie and her mother buy the ingredients in Lynchburg, deliver them to the bakers to work their magic, pick up the finished products, and haul them back to Lynchburg!

Town & Country

Foxie was raised, as she puts it, "in the best of both worlds," Lynchburg in the winter and Nelson County in the summer. Her parents bought Pharsalia the year that she was born, and as she grew she would resist their attempts to send her to camp, preferring to ride

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Rural Nelson meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Nelson County Memorial Library in Lovington. All are welcome to attend.

Design cont. from page 4

we want a McDonalds that fits in with this community.

Putting it on Paper

Our challenge is to develop this consensus, and to put it into the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances. We might also consider seeking enabling legislation from the General Assembly to help us do all this. This will not be easy, but it is the only thing that stands between us and Gatlinburg, TN. (Did you know that communities outside the National Forests are



The McDonalds sign at Forest Lakes in Charlottesville shows how companies will alter their signage to accommodate a community that has clearly defined its requirements.

the fastest growing rural areas in the country?)

You Can Help

We are seeking people who will work on our Commercial Design Task Force: artists, builders, architects, farmers, preservationists, historians and others. If you can help call 804-263-5000 and leave a message for Al Weed. ❖



“Communities outside the National Forests are the fastest growing rural areas in the country.”

Member Profile cont. from p. 2

horseback all over the unspoiled beauty of the valley defined by the Tye River.

She attended St. Mary's Junior College in Raleigh, and then switched to V.C.U., to be nearer Dick, her high school sweetheart.

In 1974 Foxie and Dick were married and moved into their current house on Pharsalia land.

Schoolteacher and Pony Club President

Foxie taught 2nd grade at Rockfish Elementary School, but after her children Richard and Maria were born she didn't want to teach full-time. Gradually, she began getting involved in the Farm Basket, and pretty soon she and her mother reversed roles, Mrs. Flippen staying home to babysit, and Foxie working in the store.

As busy as she stayed, Foxie still managed to find the

time to run Pony Club, in which all her children, including youngest daughter, Perkins, participated. The garden that supplies both the store and the Farmers' Market is also a family affair—Dick tills it and helps set up the booth at Nellysford.

Foxie blames her mother for her love of Nelson County. "The home I live in," she explains, "belonged to my [maternal] fourth great grandfather. His father, Thomas Massie, lived at Level Green, and built Pharsalia for his son."

Been Heres and Come Heres

Asked what she makes of the evident division in the county between those who have "been here" and those who have "come here," she says "the been heres and come heres all have one thing in common – they all love Nelson County."

Serving on the Rural Nelson Board

Foxie is on the board of Rural Nelson, and is articulate in explaining why:

Progress has got to happen, but there is a peacefulness here that isn't everywhere. People who move here come for that peacefulness, but then they want the amenities, dry cleaners, food stores, etc. Most of us are used to going to town for all that. The more of that kind of thing you bring in, the less we're rural.

On a hot summer day, Foxie, relaxing on the bench outside Cut and Dried, seems to have soaked up a good measure of the peacefulness she has just described. As she looks around at the valley, green from the June rains, she seems content to be where she is, and to be doing what she's doing. ❖



Foxie Morgan serves on the Rural Nelson Board of Directors.

Please Mail to Rural Nelson, PO Box 401,
Lovingson, VA 22949

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____
 Tel # _____
 E-mail _____

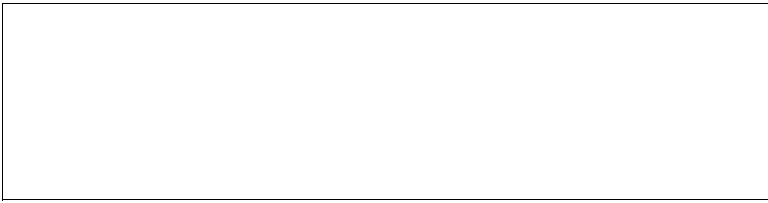
Please tell us how you will help.



We believe that change in all these areas, while inevitable, can take place in a way consistent with the intrinsic value of Nelson's rural character.

- Support agricultural & forestal activities;
- Preserve our historic heritage and the integrity of our natural resource systems;
- Protect affordable housing opportunities for Nelson residents;
- Encourage commercial development & design appropriate to Nelson's rural character.

The mission of Rural Nelson is to preserve and enhance the rural quality of life enjoyed by Nelson County residents by developing broad-based support for informed growth policies that:



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Rural Nelson & Commercial Design

By Al Weed

Franchises Will Come A'Calling

As our tourism industry grows, and as the local population increases, we will see more national and regional firms interested in locating here. As US 29 becomes a more critical transportation corridor with the congestion on I-81 and 95, highway based retailers, used to advertising their presence in the most garish ways, will come a'calling.

impact of a Sheetz gas station, with little success. The Sheetz spokesman insisted that Madison could do little about his trademark red canopy, and that Sheetz was going to build it. Other counties, however, that have developed some sense of place, and how they want their communities to look, have had better success with Sheetz. Every national franchise cookie-cutter sign and building that goes up steals a bit of Nelson County.

No Consensus, No Power

A community that does not develop a consensus on acceptable commercial design is at the mercy of outsiders. Our regional neighbor to the north, Madison County, fought long and hard to moderate the visual

Define Our Vision

Businesses are going to take the easy way, but if we, as a community, say our way is the only way, then they will either agree or locate elsewhere. No one is arguing that we don't want, say, a McDonalds, but only that

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