

CATTLE

FROM C5  
alongside his father, he's taking Charity Hill through another Smith generation.

"I'm a sixth-generation farmer and fifth generation here," said the Virginia Tech grad.

The Smith's 800-acre Charity Hill Farm is on winding Golansville Road, a few miles southeast of Ladysmith. From the road, a long, straight drive runs over undulating fields up to the old house, which is white with a prominent front porch and surrounded by ample shade trees. Off to the right are barns and silos. A pretty farm.

They farm an additional 1,200 acres in corn, wheat and soybeans.

Originally called "Hamptonville" and later "Smith Dairy Farm," the name "Charity Hill" is relatively new.

Steve explained at the kitchen table that when his daddy, Floyd S. Smith Jr., went to buy an additional five acres a number of years back, the seller said, "As poor as that land is, you'll need charity to get anything off it!" Steve, Cindy and Chris laughed at the telling of the old story.

The name "Charity Hill" stuck.

I mention that the cows looked particularly content when I passed one of the herds driving up to the house. This gets another laugh.

"The cows are less work than grain farmin'," said Steve, "as long as you look after 'em like you're supposed to."

He went on to explain, "They



Drover is on the alert for any strays. Charity Hill has been in the Smith family since 1854.



PHOTOS BY ED SIMMONS JR.

let you know, too." When they've chewed up one paddock of grass and want to move to the next, one will let out a long, plaintive low.

"They only have to holler one time and we go down to move 'em," Steve said.

I also learned that additional female influences greatly benefited Charity Hill. The farmer said it was their daughter, Dr. Kendal Smith—now a "full-fledged" veterinarian in Nebraska as her dad proudly put it—who urged switching from dairy to beef farming.

I said I'd like to return and take some photographs.

"We have pretty cows," Steve said. "You can take as many pictures as you want!" Chris and Cindy laughed.

A few days later, I was back at the farmhouse with my camera and looking again for the Smiths. Chris pulled up in an open Kubota all-terrain vehicle, dust flying.

Leaning out of the back, enjoying the exhilarating ride, was a friendly Australian shepherd. Bred to herd cattle, this rugged, fluffy, gray, white and black dog—with one blue eye and one green—turned out to be named "Drover."

I asked if the Aussie was a help with the cows, and Chris assured me he was. "If a cow leaves the herd, Drover's right after him."

Drover looked up, eager and ready to prove it.

A few moments later, Steve pulled up in his own Kubota, and together we headed off to see the cows.

Through a cattle gate and down two lanes, we bounced along until we came to a hilltop pasture where about 80 cows were calmly chomping hay. We clambered out of the Kubotas. The cows didn't mind. Some looked up, curious, chewing hay.

Scattered among them were many winsome calves. In a few

weeks, when they were each 600 or 700 pounds, they'd be shipped to a cattle operation in Oklahoma.

Steve told of their crossbreeding, mixing Balancer cattle, Hereford, Charolais and Simmental. "We experiment every year. We're trying to get the ultimate calf," he said.

Striking was the beauty and peacefulness of the scene, the coats of the calmly chewing cattle glossy and shining in the sun, their bodies sturdy, well filled out and radiating good health.

There was a touch of melancholy, too, knowing that some must go. Of the entire herd of 220, one per month is taken to slaughter in Fauquier County. The nearby Timbers Restaurant in Ladysmith serves Charity Hill beef.

Steve said of their cattle, "I believe in feeding them good stuff. I treat 'em like dairy cattle. They get plenty to eat."

During the grazing season from April to October, that means fresh, green grass. In the cold months there's silage of winter rye, wheat, cow peas and clover, all grown on the farm.

All the crops are no-till, meaning the ground isn't plowed, eliminating most erosion. "It does the soil good. I'm a firm believer in that. I'm 100 percent compliant with the Chesapeake Bay Act," said Steve.

Chris pointed out that the cattle are raised with "low-stress handling."

"We don't do any hollering," said Steve. "We don't have shock sticks," referring to electric cattle prods. "There isn't one on the farm."

They've found they have no need to drive the cows. "The cattle will do what we want. Instead of driving, they follow," said Steve. All that needs to be said is "Come on!" and the cows come.

The morning was getting on, and Chris and his dad had soybeans to harvest. It was time for my visit to end.

I would have been content, though, to stand a good while longer gazing at the cows chewing their hay, its aroma sweetly pungent.

The scene was so peaceful. So satisfyingly beautiful.

No wonder, I thought, that the Smith clan continues to be happy here on Charity Hill since 1854.

Mercedes, yachts and suburban palaces can't compare.

Freelance writer, poet and folk musician Ed Simmons Jr. lives in Bowling Green.



# RIDDLE ANSWERS AND WINNERS

Prizes can be picked up between 9 am - 10 am on Monday. Please bring identification to claim your prize.

## WINDOW WONDERLAND WINNERS

<b>\$1000 Gift Cards</b> .....	Stephanie Whiting	Orofino.....	Marissa Dimeo
<b>\$500 Gift Cards</b> .....	Kristina Olivarez	R&R Antiques.....	Stacy Neuberger
<b>\$300 Gift Cards</b> .....	Rachel Kappler	Latitudes.....	Leslie Rigby Kash
<b>\$100 Gift Cards</b> .....	John Sielski	Sophia Street Studio.....	Jennifer Blum
		Pye & Co.....	Amy Reardon
<b>\$50 Gift Certificate</b>		The Card Cellar.....	Brody Kester
Ulman's.....	Kevin Carmichael	Peacaloo.....	Lisa Cockeham
Monkee's.....	Kelly Haden	Foodie.....	Rebecca Rodgers
Handsome Hound.....	Debbie Sullivan	Bella Hair.....	Samantha Wilson
Kimman's Co.....	Kaete Anderston	Italian Station.....	Katherine Weeks
Gemstone Creations.....	Susan Morgan	Irish Eyes.....	Rick Thomas
<b>\$40 Gift Certificate</b>		Dragonfly Yoga.....	Megan Parker
Made in VA Store.....	Krole Family	Dog Crazy.....	Scott Past
<b>\$30 Gift Certificate</b>		City Vino.....	Raleigh Parrott
Beck's Antiques.....	Nicole Taylor	Fred Antique Mall.....	Stacey Brain
<b>\$25 Gift Certificate</b>		Crown Jewelers.....	L. Kay Miller
Blue Shark Antiques.....	Denise & Bill Taylor	Lady Legacy.....	Judy Klehm
Benny Vitali's.....	Max Kappler	Jabberwocky Books.....	The Gallagher's
Sugar and Spruce.....	Kristin Chavez	Du Jardin.....	Lucy Melson
Rocking Horse Gallery.....	Carley Winesdorffer	Heather.....	Anna St. Ours
Southern Accents.....	Matthew & Jamie Henning	Artful Dimensions.....	Vincent Yao
Taste Oil Vinegar Spice.....	Woody Lee	Courtyard by Marriott.....	Ryan Kenney
Union Bank & Trust.....	Valeri Smiddy		
Whittingham.....	Matt Bartosh	<b>\$20 Gift Certificate</b>	
Shoppes at Caroline St.....	Sydney Piontek	Ponshop.....	Brad Rhines
Re-Run Shoppe.....	Colleen McDonnell	Katora Coffee.....	Katrina Callahan
Community Bank of Chesapeake.....	Michelle Blackburn	Agora Downtown.....	Connor Hamburger
Wildflower Collective.....	Zoe Jackson Lapour		
Olde Towne Butcher.....	Tammy Buisson	<b>Shop Gift</b>	
Colonial Tavern.....	David & Erika Birie	Willow.....	Shelby Emch
J Brian's Taproom.....	Laura Gilchrist	Pamora's.....	Megan Street
	Laura Thomson	HFFI.....	Jeff Forman
		Connect Games.....	Paul Bartman

### RIDDLES & ANSWERS

- 1 810 Weekend Gallery**  
810 Caroline Street  
Spirits speak, present, future, past. Love people, not gold for happiness to last! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *A Christmas Carol*
- 2 Agora Downtown Coffee Shop**  
520 Caroline Street  
Our hero horrified, a gift grinds his gears: it's painfully pink with big, fluffy ears! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *A Christmas Story*
- 3 Artful Dimensions**  
922 Caroline Street  
He likes venison, he loves pork, he always sinks (not float, like cork!) WHO IS THIS? *Abominable Snowman*
- 4 Beck's Antiques**  
708 Caroline Street  
Dental daydream... the kid's no dunce, perfect pronunciation is what he wants! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth*
- 5 Bella Hair**  
818 Caroline Street  
Made for an icon, pretty and pink, this plastic palace is perfect I think! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Barbie's Dream House*
- 6 Benny Vitali's**  
722 Caroline Street  
A cruising concert, given on your lawn, hearts are filled... will you sing along? WHAT IS THIS? *Caroling*
- 7 Blue Shark Antiques**  
904-908 Caroline Street  
Bald boy believes, children cheer, sanguine search for sapling sincere! WHAT TV SHOW IS THIS? *Charlie Brown Christmas*
- 8 City Vino**  
810 Caroline Street  
A deer or a tree, shapes galore, wonderful and warm, who could want more? WHAT IS THIS? *Christmas Cookies*
- 9 Coldwell Banker Elite**  
520 William Street  
Wired and fired, blinking and bright, inside or out to color the night! WHAT IS THIS? *Christmas Lights*
- 10 Colonial Tavern**  
406 Lafayette Blvd.  
Filled with toys, or chocolates to share, but not the five pigs, who usually live there! WHAT IS THIS? *Christmas Stocking*
- 11 Commonwealth Lighting of Virginia**  
811 Caroline Street  
It came in the mail in days of old, packed with pages... where dreams unfold WHAT IS THIS? *Christmas Wish Book*

- 12 Community Bank of Chesapeake**  
425 William Street  
Baked bribe, and a dose of dairy, is a blissful break for a worker so merry! WHAT IS THIS? *Cookies and milk for Santa*
- 13 Connect Games Escape Room**  
1011 Caroline Street  
North Pole ninny, can no longer stay, tallest of the troop has human DNA! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Elf*
- 14 Courtyard by Marriott**  
620 Caroline Street  
Innocuous informant, tiny tattletale, a certain Santa spy reports without fail! WHO IS THIS? *Elf on the shelf*
- 15 Crown Jewelers**  
200 William Street  
A flick of the wrist, spinning and soaring, catch and return: certainly not boring! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Frisbee*
- 16 Dog Crazy**  
307 William Street  
Malevolent magician, causes stress and strife, by reclaiming clothing, that fired flakes with life! WHAT TV MOVIE IS THIS? *Frosty the snowman*
- 17 Dragonfly Yoga Studio**  
810 Caroline Street  
Clunky confection, arrives in the mail, never gets eaten, but never goes stale! WHAT IS THIS? *Fruitcake*
- 18 Du Jardin**  
822 Caroline Street  
Kringle crime, oh what deer have done! Northern neighbor charged with holiday hit and run! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *Grandma got run over by a reindeer*
- 19 Foodie**  
900 Princess Anne Street  
Frugal fuel? Miracles ablaze, end result: seven bonus days! WHAT IS THIS? *Hanukkah*
- 20 Gemstone Creations**  
606 Caroline Street  
Cram into closets or under beds shove, boxes and baubles for those that we love! WHAT ACTIVITY IS THIS? *Hiding Christmas Presents*
- 21 Handsome Hound Pet Grooming**  
613 Caroline Street  
Holdup halted, thieves thwarted, a war with this kid should not be started! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Home Alone*
- 22 Heather**  
721 Caroline Street  
In plastic lanes, as fast as can be, the power source is the earth's gravity! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Hot Wheels*
- 23 Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc.**  
1200 Caroline Street  
Secret smooch seen, by the midnight clock father doesn't know... his world is going to rock! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *I saw mommy kissing Santa Claus*

- 24 Huckleberry's**  
316 Forbes Street  
Written in war, it's plain to see, soldier seeks solace in family, home and tree. WHAT SONG IS THIS? *I'll be home for Christmas*
- 25 Irish Eyes**  
725 Caroline Street  
Disheveled, disgraced, a wish to be erased, a man learns that love, is the wealth that life is based. WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *It's A Wonderful Life*
- 26 Italian Station**  
620 Caroline Street  
Dreams dropped on paper, by those who believe, wishing and waiting in hopes to receive! WHAT IS THIS? *Letters to Santa*
- 27 J. Brian's Taproom**  
200 Hanover Street  
Percussion so perfect, sweet sound to uplift, meager musician, but a royal gift! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *Little Drummer Boy*
- 28 Jabberwocky Books and Toys**  
810 Caroline Street  
No dolly for her, she'd scoff at a skate, she needs the deed to a country estate! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Miracle on 34th Street*
- 29 Katora Coffee**  
615 Caroline Street  
Stop and look up, and if I am there, pause and pucker and show them you care! WHAT AM I? *Mistletoe*
- 30 Kimman's Co.**  
820 Caroline Street  
Property picked, strategy nimble, dice and deals with hat or thimble! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Monopoly*
- 31 Lady Legacy**  
723 Caroline Street  
Habits to quit, (or maybe start), future you will be off the chart! WHAT IS THIS? *New Year's Resolution*
- 32 Latitudes Fair Trade Store**  
800 Caroline Street  
Head of haunted a haven, tired of the same old thing, replaces a frighten fat man, for holly and horror fling! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Nightmare before Christmas*
- 33 Manarc, Borne to Battle**  
1008 Sophia Street  
Want a tasty treat? solve this riddle verse, find a painted soldier, and feed him first! WHAT IS THIS? *Nutcracker*
- 34 Monkee's of Fredericksburg**  
827 Caroline Street  
Tune for a town, so long ago, hope was born, and would grow. WHAT SONG IS THIS? *O little town of Bethlehem*

- 35 Olde Towne Butcher**  
401 William Street  
Footsies frozen, nostrils numb, trust to trip the horse... he's not dumb! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *Over the river and through the woods, to grandmother's house we go*
- 36 Orofino**  
1006 Caroline Street  
Choose and chop, carry to car, fun for the family from bucket to star! WHAT ACTIVITY IS THIS? *Picking a Christmas Tree*
- 37 Sugar and Spruce**  
726 Caroline Street  
Colors in a can, soft and squish, form your fancy... and create your wish! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Play-Doh*
- 38 Peacaloo Boutique**  
720 Hanover Street  
Adventure abounds, miniature space, dolls have it all in this case! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Polly Pockets*
- 39 Ponshop Studio and Gallery**  
712 Caroline Street  
Freaky facial feature, but this flaw was a favor, the rejected returns... as a megawatt savior! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Rudolph the red nosed reindeer*
- 40 Pye & Co.**  
809 Caroline Street  
Generous gent for all to see, lengthy legend, from the third century WHO IS THIS? *Saint Nicholas*
- 41 R&R Antiques, Inc.**  
1001 Caroline Street  
A Christmas custom you might not know: line up your shoes by the window! WHAT DAY IS THIS? *Saint Nicholas Day*
- 42 Re-Run Shoppe**  
1017 Caroline Street  
Fat man versus aliens, need I say more? This deck deserves the depth of it's rotten Tomatoes score! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *Santa Claus Conquers the Martians*
- 43 Shoppes at Caroline Square**  
914 Caroline Street  
Wee workers winded, their labor at last is done, a year of toil tallied for a single day of fun! WHO ARE THEY? *Santa's Elves*
- 44 Sophia Street Studios**  
1104 Sophia Street  
A tattletale tally of good deeds and ill, will you get coal, or holiday thrill? WHAT IS THIS? *Santa's List*
- 45 Southern Accents**  
807 Caroline Street  
He was a hoarder who got it all wrong, but Christmas he'll share all the year long! WHO IS THIS? *Scrooge*

- 46 Pamora**  
1109 Caroline Street  
A collection of crystals, frigid floating art, many make a blanket... then the fun can start! WHAT IS THIS? *Snowflake*
- 47 Taste Oil Vinegar Spice**  
815 Caroline Street  
Fun and four sided, coins may you win, all, half or nothing... now give it a spin! WHAT ACTIVITY IS THIS? *Spinning a Dreidel*
- 48 The Card Cellar**  
915 Caroline Street  
Bright beacon, in night forlorn, marks the spot where hope was born! WHAT WAS THIS? *Star of Bethlehem*
- 49 The Fredericksburg Mall & Clock Shop**  
925 Caroline Street  
Money makes a man? Sometime it doesn't, a beautiful family, could have been... but wasn't! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *The Family Man*
- 50 The Made in Virginia Store**  
920 Caroline Street  
Holiday heist, presents picked clean, mean misanthrope furry and green! WHO IS THIS? *The Grinch*
- 51 The Rocking Horse Gallery**  
803 Caroline Street  
New job is jolly, whiskers and weight, a man is recruited for a magical fate! WHAT MOVIE IS THIS? *The Santa Claus*
- 52 Ulman's Jewelry**  
903 Caroline Street  
Slugging through sand, monarchs did seek, the perfect promise and a birthday peek! WHO ARE THEY? *The Wise Men*
- 53 Union Bank & Trust**  
725 Kenmore Avenue  
Mechanized marvels, heroes are hidden, in everyday life these guys are driven! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Transformers*
- 54 Whittingham**  
1021 Caroline Street  
Finery and fowl, gifts galore, day after day filling up the floor! WHAT SONG IS THIS? *Twelve Days of Christmas*
- 55 Wildflower Collective**  
208 William Street  
Tangle time, fun flows, colored spots and pretzel pose! WHAT TOY IS THIS? *Twister*
- 56 Willow**  
305 William Street  
Gaudy garb, obnoxious charm, holiday horror to keep you warm! WHAT IS THIS? *Ugly Christmas Sweater*

Thank You to the participating businesses, everyone who played Window Wonderland and the Fredericksburg Department of Economic Development and Tourism!