



Antique sewing-machine collector Yvonne Padget laughs as her cat ruffles her hair. Padget's living room is decorated with about 40 antique sewing machines like those pictured above.

WILLIAM HELTON JR. / The Free Lance-Star

A STITCH IN TIME

Stafford women collects antique sewing machines

By PEGGY WESTON MOORE

The names of sewing machines in Yvonne Padget's collection include familiar brands like Singer, but also more obscure models from companies like Essex, Betsy Ross, Willcox and Gibbs, Gateway, Kay'ee and Little Mother.

Padget owns more than 50 machines. Included in the display in her Argyle Heights home are big ones, featherweights and toys. Some have original cabinets, carrying boxes and manuals in good condition that add to their authenticity and value.

Padget's "toy" collection comprises 42 sewing machines. The oldest is a Midget, which dates to between 1902 and 1905. She purchased it for \$2.50. Another toy, a Singer, marked the company's centennial, 1851 to 1951, with a seal.

The featherweights Padget collects were popular among quilters from the mid-1930s to the 1950s. They were well-made, quiet machines, but they could only sew forward and backward. To find one with a cabinet is rare.

Many of the machines in Padget's collection include charming floral designs. The oldest machine in it is an 1868 standard model.

Included in Padget's collection are some unusual sewing collectibles such as the pinking machines, a pre-pinking shears for sewing; Padget has two.

Padget is familiar with the unique qualities of each piece of equipment, and introduces them like friends at a

party as she winds through the maze of machinery.

There's Willcox and Gibbs, a small, strange-looking machine set in a large cabinet. There is a Royal, made in occupied Japan from 1949 to 1953. Another machine, the German Perfix B, was made between 1928 and 1930. This machine, marked "foreign" so the British would know they were buying German goods, sews only forward.

Padget's companion and co-owner of the machines, Fred Willis, an engineer by trade, enjoys the mechanical features of the various machines and the challenge of making them work despite their age and condition. All of the machines have been cleaned and polished, and all of the big machines are operational. Padget keeps an inventory of each machine, including its name, history and purchasing details.

Padget says there is great fun in discovering a machine in an antique shop or at a rummage sale. One of her favorite buys—the White Rotary, a big machine made in 1927. She bought it for \$10.

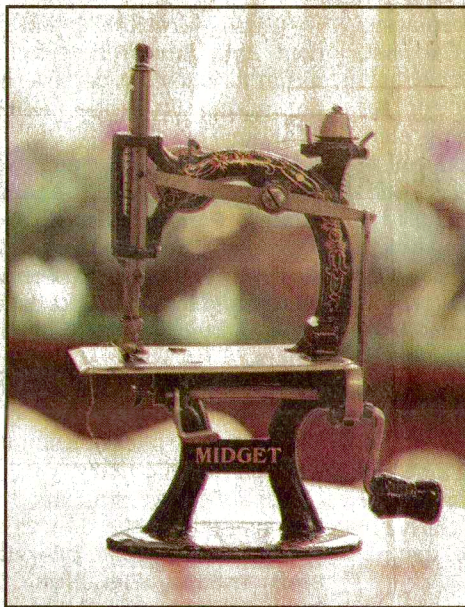
When Padget sews, she uses her Touch 'n Sew machine. The 1967-vintage machine offers a slant needle, which allows for decorative stitches.

But Padget notes, "nothing else sews like a Singer, for toy machines or otherwise."

Peggy Weston Moore is a Stafford County freelance writer.



ABOVE: This small sewing machine from the former Soviet Union was designed to teach young girls how to sew.



LEFT: One of several Midget sewing machines in Yvonne Padget's collection, this model is small enough to fit in the palm of your hand.

Petitioners request more places to play

By KIM DOUGLASS
The Free Lance-Star

Stafford County's kids don't have enough fields on which to play recreational sports. And the fields that are available aren't in very good shape.

That was the message from Mike Engiles, a commissioner of the Stafford Recreational Soccer League, who addressed the Board of Supervisors last week. He presented a petition signed by more than 1,200 parents of children who play soccer in the county. The petition requests more support from the county for recreation programs—not an unusual request in this area, where the growing population is putting a strain on government services. Stafford supervisors may need to increase the real estate tax rate in the next couple of years to pay for the services they offer now, county officials say.

"I'd like to see us do more fields," said At-large Supervisor Ferris Belman. "But I just don't see how we can afford it. Fields don't come cheap."

This spring, 3,000 boys and girls are registered to play soccer in the county. That number is up 12 percent over last spring, Engiles said.

Often, those teams have to scrounge to find suitable places to practice, Engiles said. Most of the county's approximately 30 fields are at Stafford schools, and are shared not only by school programs, but also various recreational sports programs.

"Games get scheduled and then people can't practice because all the

fields are used for games," Engiles said in a telephone interview after the meeting. "So, some will find space at the end of a field. Or a lot of teams just practice once every couple of weeks, when they can."

Rusty Dodd, who coaches 12- and 13-year-old soccer players in Stafford, said he believes county leaders aren't concerned enough about the county's recreational needs.

"Stafford County has a lot of land," Dodd said. "What they need to be doing is building new fields today."

He worries that unless the county starts dealing with its lack of playing space now, the problem will be the same—or much worse—once his toddler is old enough to play.

"The county needs to push developers a little bit harder," said Ron Downing, a girls' coach who is a board member on the county's soccer league. Developers could build recreational sites—playing fields and playgrounds—as part of new developments, he said.

He said he also would like to see Stafford give recreational leagues access to land to build their own facilities.

The petition asks that the county require developers to specify when planned recreational areas will be built. The supervisors voted last week to require this of developers.

Planning Director William Shelly said developers sometimes promise amenities, and don't come through with them in a timely manner.

Engiles was at last week's meeting when that vote was taken, and he called it a step in the right direction.

IN BRIEF

Mitchell plans meeting for Aquia District

Kenneth Mitchell, chairman of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors, is holding a town meeting on April 9 to get input from residents in his Aquia District.

Mitchell has invited Spencer Hudson of the Planning Commission, David Kerr of the School Board and County Attorney Alda White to participate.

The meeting will start at 7:15 p.m. in the board room of the administration building.

Stafford signs up would-be voters

The Stafford County Office of the Registrar is offering voter registration for county residents at the following permanent locations:

■ Registrar's Office—County Administration Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

■ Porter Library—2001 Parkway Boulevard, Monday through Thurs-

day 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

■ Department of Motor Vehicles—385 Garrisonville Road, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

■ Stafford County Extension office—359 Butler Road, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to noon, 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Office of the Registrar is also offering voter registration at the following special locations:

■ Stafford Senior High School—March 31, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

■ North Stafford High School—April 22, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

■ Brooke Point High School—May 12, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Residents may request an application by mail by calling 659-8777. However, those registering for the first time in Virginia who do so by mail must vote in person and present identification the first time they vote.

All requests for accommodations due to a disability should be made to the registrar with at least 48 hours' advance notice.

SCHOOL MENUS

The following are menus for Stafford County Public Schools. All meals are served with milk. Menus are subject to change.

Elementary, middle school lunch menus

Monday, March 30

Choose one: cheeseburger on bun with pretzel cup, manager's choice; choose two: hot vegetable soup, lettuce and tomato cup, peaches; manager's choice pudding.

Tuesday, March 31

Choose one: chicken nuggets with muffin, school-made burrito; choose two: rice, seasoned green beans, fresh fruit, pears; snickerdoodle.

Wednesday, April 1

Choose one: stromboli, chicken fillet on bun; choose two: lettuce and tomato cup, orange juice, pineapple cup; Mr. Crunch.

Thursday, April 2

Choose one: spaghetti with meat sauce with roll, corn dog; choose two: fresh fruit, fresh vegetable with dip, fruit crisp; ice-cream cup.

Friday, April 3

Choose one: sausage pizza, hoagie fish; choose two: lettuce and tomato cup, potato rounds, fresh fruit;

granola square.

High school lunch menus

Monday, March 30

Choose one: cheeseburger on bun with pretzel cup, manager's choice, salad bar; choose two: hot vegetable soup, lettuce and tomato cup, peaches; manager's choice pudding.

Tuesday, March 31

Choose one: chicken nuggets with muffin, school-made burrito, salad bar; choose two: rice, seasoned green beans, fresh fruit, pears; snickerdoodle.

Wednesday, April 1

Choose one: stromboli, chicken fillet on bun, taco bar; choose two: lettuce and tomato cup, orange juice, pineapple cup; Mr. Crunch.

Thursday, April 2

Choose one: spaghetti with meat sauce with roll, corn dog, potato bar; choose two: fresh fruit, fresh vegetable with dip, fruit crisp; ice-cream cup.

Friday, April 3

Choose one: steak and cheese sub, hoagie fish, salad bar; choose two: lettuce and tomato cup, potato rounds, fresh fruit; granola square.

The Stafford County Department of Parks and Recreation will offer a number of summer recreational camps. For more information about any of these programs, call 373-2229.

Art camps

■ Creative art and painting camp—classes will be held at Debi's Studio at 874 Truslow Road.

The camp sessions are open to children ages 9 to 16. Sessions run Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. Fee: \$52. Registration deadline: one week prior to camp. The following sessions are available: July 13 to 16 for children ages 12 to 16; July 20 to 23 for children ages 9 and older; Aug. 3 to 6 for children ages 12 to 16; and Aug. 17 to 20 for children ages 9 and older.

■ Crafty kids camp—provides children ages 6 to 11 the opportunity to explore all types of arts and crafts during this one-week camp that runs from July 13 to 17 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the former Stafford Middle School. Fee: \$50. Registration deadline: July 2.

Camp discovery

Camp activities will include a field trip, arts and crafts, games, music, finger plays, storytelling and motor development skills. Campers 3 to 5 must be potty trained. Sessions run from June 21 to 26, July 6 to 10 and July 13 to 17 at the former Stafford Middle School and July 27 to 31 at Curtis Park.

Recreational camps

The department offers a number of recreational camps. Camps take place during one of 11 sessions.

All camps cost \$65, except for those that run during session 2, which are \$52. There is a \$15 nonrefundable deposit required for each session. The balance is due one week prior to the start of camp. Additional fees include \$5 for T-shirts (required for field trips).

Pre- and post-session child care is available. For camps held at Curtis Park, pre-camp session run from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and post-camp sessions run from 4 to 6 p.m. For camps at the former Stafford Middle School, pre-camp sessions

run from 7 to 9 a.m. and post-camp session run from 4 to 6:30 p.m. The fee for child care is \$10 per camp, per child. There is no discount for session 3 and no child care available for Camp Morning Star.

Camp sessions are as follows: Session 1, June 22 to 29; Session 2, June 29 to July 2; Session 3, July 6 to 10; Session 4, July 13, July 17; Session 5, July 20 to July 24; Session 6, July 27 to July 31; Session 7, Aug. 3 to Aug. 7; Session 8, Aug. 10 to Aug. 14; Session 9, Aug. 17 to Aug. 21; Session 10, Aug. 24 to Aug. 28; Session 11, Aug. 31 to Sept. 4.

Eligibility for camps is determined by age on Sept. 30, 1998. Campers are required to have health history forms and permission slips on file before the beginning of camp. A limited number of scholarships are available.

Here are the recreational camps offered:

■ Camp Aquia—available during all sessions. Campers will swim, take a field trip, participate in games, sports arts and crafts, drama and other events. Activities

will be held inside and outdoors. Camp is for ages 6 to 11 and meets from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the former Stafford Middle School.

■ Camp Morning Star—for campers with disabilities. Activities include swimming, field trips, arts and crafts, games and nature-awareness activities. Camp is for ages 5 to 14 and meets from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Curtis Park during sessions 5 and 7.

■ Curtis Park Camp—campers will play sports and games, participate in nature-awareness activities, arts and crafts, music, drama and a field trip or special event during sessions 2-9. Activities are held indoors and outdoors at Curtis Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for ages 6 to 11.

■ Teen Camp—includes sports and games, arts and crafts, swimming, nature-awareness activities, music, drama and a field trip during sessions 2-9. Activities are held outside and indoors at Curtis Park for ages 12 to 14.