

# FEATURE COLUMNS



## Fluvanna Faces Arlene Prince

Wayne Cain of Breomo Bluff, the successful and productive glass artist, is living the best part of his life right now. With clients in Washington DC, Richmond and Charlottesville, business is flourishing.

And now life has another richer dimension because he and his wife Marcia of three years are enjoying raising their five children, David, Daniel, Martha, and twins Emily and Eric White.

Born in Portsmouth, Virginia, Wayne grew up and attended school in Richmond, Virginia. He was the oldest child of three. He has a brother Steve who lives in Florida and a sister Kathy Parrot who lives in Richmond.

His success as an artist belies problems he had with his formal educational program. Summing it up, he says simply: "School was a nightmare. I hated every minute of it from grade one to senior in college."

Yet he recalls that he was "a good kid with plenty of friends." He simply tuned out of classroom activities, netting poor grades in the process. More interesting and fruitful thoughts were going on in his head, and he has since studied enough about creative people to learn that this way of thinking is a rather typical situation for them. Nevertheless, he had been taught at home that you must go to college, and that was a message he took seriously. Despite a less than stellar ac-

ademic record, Wayne enrolled in Steven F. Austin State College in Texas and paid all of his living, and college expenses himself with funds he had earned painting houses and in construction work. He earned a degree in sociology, with a minor in forestry.

Equipped with his degree, and ready to earn a living at age 23, Wayne sat down at the kitchen table to figure out what he was going to do in his life "I knew I wanted to be in charge of my own life," he says. "I knew I wanted to be my own boss—to be free to follow my own path—and I knew I didn't want to be a part of corporate politics."

And the kitchen table actually became the cradle of creative work. Thinking of himself as a craftsman, he bought a crate of glass and began by fashioning simple objects like apples and pears, and chickens on wire legs, and sold them to gift shops by the hundreds. He struggled at first to make Tiffany-like shades, found them quite complicated, and finally mastered them too. He had found the beginning of what was to be his life's work.

"I loved what I was doing. I worked seven days a week, and it was a sheer pleasure," he recalls of that period.

By that time he was married, and the downside of his enthusiasm for work was that he drove his wife crazy with his dedication to it. He was very successful and became the head of a small company employing five craftsman/artists who were commissioned to

create works in glass for restaurants, churches and home. He found his role was mostly that of a business manager, and, although he did some creative work coordinating the design of projects, he was doing less hands-on artwork. He also got a divorce.

Realizing that he needed a change, he went on to what he calls "plan two." He went off by himself and found the seven-acre home and barn site in Breomo Bluff where he now lives. He salvaged the house, and greatly expanded the barn, which is his studio and offices.

Once again he felt the "sheer pleasure of doing my own thing." He also took time to read—concentrating on philosophy, art and psychology. From his reading, he learned that his way of thinking and feeling was rather typical of creative people. By this time he had made the transition from craftsman to artist. (In part, he credits a book "How to Draw on the Right Side of the Brain" with contributing to this transformation.) He expresses delight at the positive reception of his work stating, "It's a wonderful feeling to go into someone's house and they want to build something that is esthetically pleasing...and then they're shown a design and they give you money to build something." Business



Wayne Cain

comes to him "word of mouth" from a circle of craftsmen who recommend him, and he's always busy.

But for the past three years, his life has an expanded scope because Marcia, his wife of three years brought David, 16, Daniel, 14, Martha, 10 and twins Emily and Eric, 7 with her when she married Wayne. And he's enjoying the situation immensely, stating that this is the "best part of my life." Wayne says the oldest children are already involved in the glass art business. David is in charge of marketing and is a "computer whiz," while Daniel helps in the shop. The entire family draws together at least once a day for a candlelight supper, and for family meetings where everybody has input as to the family rules and who'll do what chores.

Family life and glass art seem a good mix for Wayne. He says of this period, "I'm now on my most creative binge."

# HERE'S THE SCOOP