



## 6 cookie lady

Have you seen this sign?



## 25 motor maids

At a pharmacy near you ...



## 30 smoke it!

You don't have to have a bushy beard to smoke meat like Strawberry.

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## on the cover

**Pictured:**  
Rockfish River @ Wintergreen Winery  
**Photo:** Tommy Stafford

We were talking to Jeff and Tammy Stone about their recent wins at the International Eastern Wine Competition when squeals coming from kids interrupted our conversation. We turned our heads towards the Rockfish River and there they were, doing what kids do when it's hot outside.



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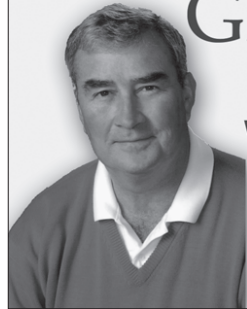
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## from the publishers

It must be when a bicyclist begins to slowly climb up the mountain on Rt. 250 that biking then becomes a mind sport. You can train and train and train to develop the muscles necessary to pedal through the climb, but psyching yourself up to reach Waynesboro from the foot of Afton Mountain takes a certain kind of motivation. We've often wondered where bikers get it from. A song they have in their head? A power bar? Or maybe, the Cookie Lady?



Photo: Debbie Bryant

Thanks to Dale Johnson, we now know who the Cookie Lady is. Bikers around the country know June Curry as the sweet granny-like lady in Afton who serves cookies and snacks to visitors, letting them rest inside a brick house next to hers. Over the last 30 years, the biker house as it is called, has evolved into a museum, filled with biking memorabilia and souvenirs left behind by visitors. There are many bikers who have told the Cookie Lady that were it not for her hospitality, they would have never

made it up the mountain.

Wouldn't it be great if at every tough turn in life we had a Cookie Lady pushing us on? There is no doubt in our mind that June Curry has touched many people over the years. She can add two more to the list.

Enjoy!

Tommy & Yvette Stafford.



# cookie lady

a biker's angel for 30 years

■ Photos: Tommy Stafford  
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For a lady who doesn't like to cook and can't ride a bike, June Curry has made quite a name for herself among bicyclists made weary by the rigorous Blue Ridge Mountains.

"I have had more than 12,000 people stop here and I don't think I can honestly say there's been over a dozen I had just as soon they hadn't stopped," June says. "They've been wonderful and they really helped me through a very bad time."

June's life as the legendary Afton Cookie Lady began as an unexpected blessing. She had spent years taking care of her invalid mother. June's father was able to support the family by running a shop next door. In 1976 -- the year of the Bikecentennial -- June and her father noticed streams and streams of cyclists pedaling up the mountain. Drained of energy, some of them would stop by the shop looking for a grocery store.

"They would come in the evening and say 'I just can't make it any further. With no grocery store, nothing to eat, I'm hungry.'" June recalls.

"I decided it was cheaper to feed

them than it was to put them up!"

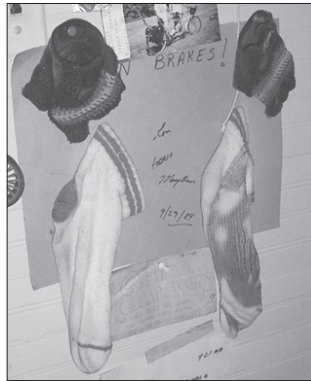
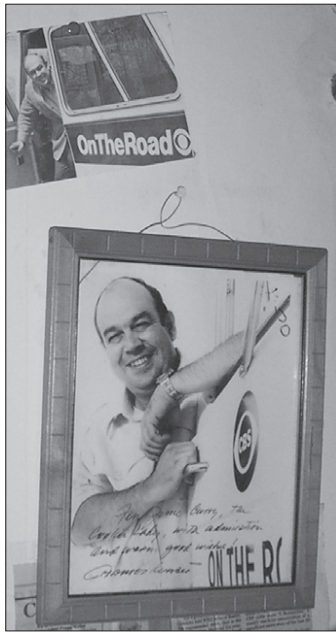
So June's father put up a sign that read "Water for Bikers" and June began baking cookies. Eventually, she began offering the a brick house next door -- ironically the one in which she was born --- to bikers as a place they could use to sleep and rest.

Over the years, the bike house has become more than just a place to crash. Hundreds of postcards and mementos are plastered on the walls. There are newspaper clippings, stacks upon stacks of scrap books, jerseys, gifts bikers have made from tires, you name it. Many people who visit the home now consider it a museum to the spirit of the bikers who pedal perhaps the hardest continuous climb on the TransAmerican Bicycling Trail.

"I have hundreds of letters from people that have told me that this bike house was what gave them the initiative to go on," June says. "I've had bikers come by here that were ready to give up, they spent the night, and by the next morning, they were ready to go!"

Continued on page 7





At 84 years old, June Curry is still the cookie lady who greets bikers passing through Afton. She has snacks for them in the kitchen (opposite, lower left) of the bikehouse which is filled with bike memorabilia and souvenirs.

### Continued from page 6

Word of her generosity spread throughout biking circles and eventually to Charles Kuralt, who thought a story on the "Cookie Lady" would be a perfect piece for his "On the Road" series on CBS. His autograph hangs on one of the walls in the bike house.

"I didn't do this for publicity. I did it because I was getting a kick out of it," June says. "I was doing it because I enjoyed the people." And people enjoy her. 30 years later, June still greets bikers, though it takes her longer to come down the stairs. She suffered a stroke in February 2005 that paralyzed her left side. As she was recovering, she broke a wrist. Despite the set backs, June's doctors say the recovery's been remarkable. You can thank the bikers.

"They have been the nicest, most appreciative people and I get some of the sweetest cards and letters."

She has letters and well-wishes from all over the country and around the world. Her bikers often leave behind souvenirs and mementos. In return for giving them food and shelter, June asks that they stand in front of a Polaroid so she, or her assistant Debbie Bryant, can take a picture.

"I've met people from all over the world," June says. "It's so interesting because I've always wanted to travel, it was so nice to get away and have someone to talk to for an hour."

"They come back and see me, they keep in touch with me. They keep me company."

And in exchange, she keeps those bikers in her heart.

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