



Martinsville area residents have demonstrated an enviable work ethic for more than two centuries, adapting from agricultural work in tobacco fields and factories to skilled work in manufacturing—whether that meant furniture, bricks, nylon hosiery or Army pants. All the while, men and women were gaining training and education for military service, health care professions, teaching and private business enterprises.

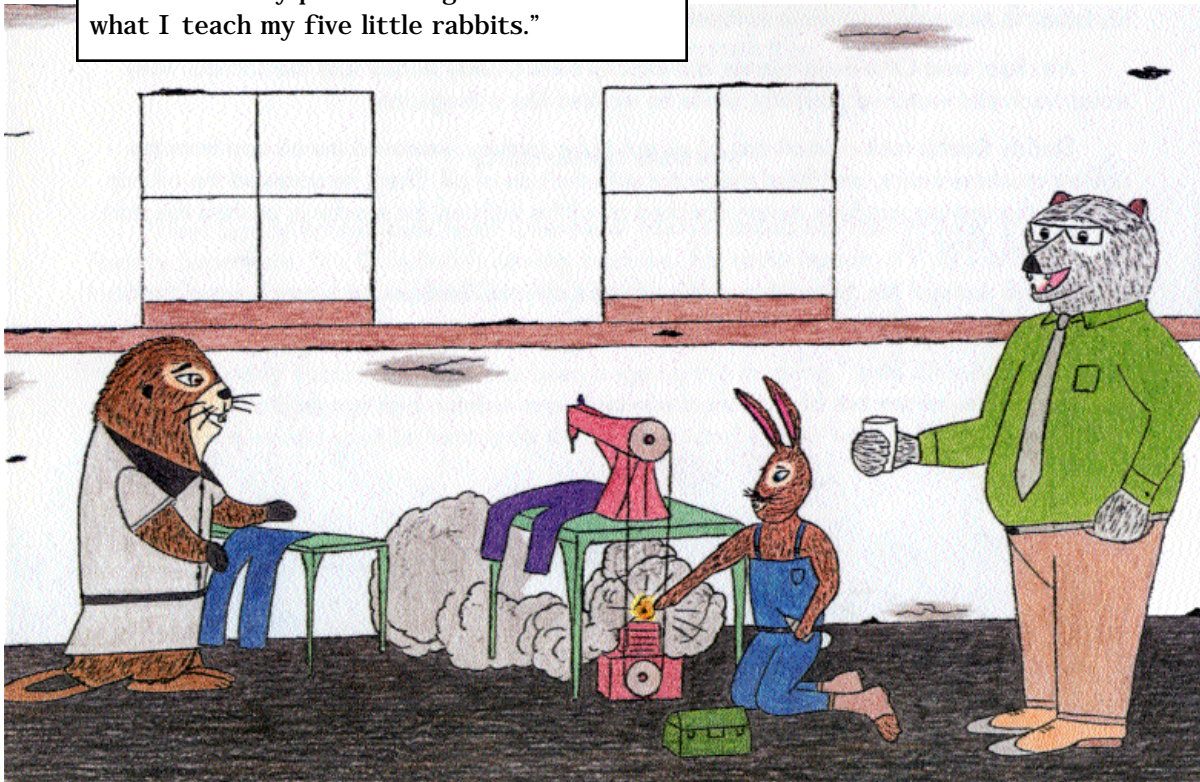
Area histories abound with civic pride detailing economic and industrial successes in cotton, glass, silk, milk production and electrical power as well.

W. NELSON GILBERT, an assistant high school principal in Culpeper, Virginia, and author of *Daddy Rabbit and the June-German Ball*, gave his main character, a single father, a job at The Pants Factory in the fictional town of Marvilla.

In this picture, Daddy Rabbit has just fixed Ollie-Belle Beaver's sewing machine: "Be the best at whatever you do," said Daddy Rabbit. "That's what my parents taught me and that's what I teach my five little rabbits."



W. Nelson Gilbert, a 1966 graduate of Albert Harris High School who went on to St. Paul's College and Lynchburg College, was born on Spencer Street and grew up on Letcher Street.



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WORKING AND PLAYING ON FAYETTE STREET: an exhibit created through the partnership of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Fayette Area Historical Initiative.

