

THE FORESTER

Volume 30 Issue 3

A Newsletter by and for the Residents of The Forest at Duke

December 2024

I Am Not Sacagawea

Joan Seiffert

It wasn't that bad. I didn't stay behind on the trail to deliver my first baby alone, and then, carrying her, walk in my moccasins to catch up with the rest of the trek like Sacagawea had to. Nor did I speak two native languages and serve as an ambassador to tribes or have a French husband. And a co-wife. It was February, 1805, in North Dakota when Jean Baptiste Charbonneau was born on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

My husband and I were living in northern California; I was eight months pregnant when the orders came. We were soon to be in Little Rock AK for his training as a navigator in the 384th Bombardment Wing, Strategic Air Command, USAF. It was a TDY (Temporary Duty) change of station, meaning a six-week stint. Then we would have a new manila envelope stuffed with new orders. It was January 1961.

We loaded up our Ford station wagon, stopping every two hours so I could walk around, finally arriving at Little Rock 1633 miles later. I found a doctor by asking the squadron commander's wife for a referral to an obstetrician. At our one and only meeting that doctor held my hand and said "Now don't you worry about a thing, little lady, we'll take good care of you." I never saw that doctor again.

By now I did not feel or look like a "little lady." More like a small whale, a scared, ill-prepared whale. Sacagawea didn't have birthing classes either.

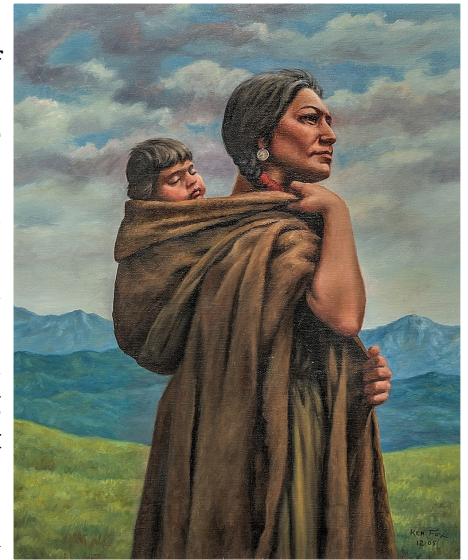
I guess that my daughter's delivery was uneventful—all I know was that it happened. I counted backward from 100 at the behest of another doctor and awakened with a baby.

What I didn't know, in addition to how to have a baby, was that breast-feeding was considered out of date, inferior to formula, and that public breast feeding would bring on the

scourge of the adult version of middle school mean girls. Nor did I know, since I was busy with labor contractions and trying to be brave, that I had agreed to having an injection that would stop the milk.

New baby Susan (I have yet to hear of an "old baby") and I and her father Jack all piled into the Ford bound for the next training base in upstate New York. And, there was another passenger: colic. This was 1961, and my pediatrician had recommended paregoric for the painful belly cramps that some babies experience. I haughtily rejected it—drug the baby? Maybe I should have taken it, for me.

Since on-base housing was not available when we arrived at Plattsburgh, we moved our travelling belongings into the Prays Motel located on the shores of Lake Champlain, nestled in the Adirondacks. Mountain biking, swimming, boating, all were available in the summer for vacationers. But this was February, and the lake was frozen solid; the snow was mounded into high drifts. I recall having to tie a flag on our car radio antenna so that the Ford could be seen by other drivers at an intersection, and we could see if other cars were daring to cross the road. Temperature high was minus ten degrees. We were the only guests in the



Portrait of Sacagawea from the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium

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The Forester

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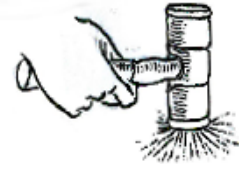
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President's Podium



By Irwin Abrams, IT Committee Chair

In general, residents of The Forest are delighted with the range and number of activities available to them. Many activities are organized by the professional staff, but many others are organized by the residents themselves. We have a Residents' Association (RA) which sponsors the committees, the monthly *Forester*, the annual Pictorial Directory, and the RA Website, available online 24/7.

The RA has ten committees which are organized to parallel the administration's structure. For example, while there is an excellent Dining Services staff, there is also a Dining Committee which works with the staff, reports comments about dining, and participates in planning various dining events.

Resident participation in the committees is important, since the committees are a major way that the voices of the residents are heard and the administration's plans and concerns are explained to residents. But to make the committees as effective as they can be, residents must take an active role in them. There are several committee activities which could benefit from more participation, but I am most interested in two: the new Tech Helpers and the RA Website.

Tech Helpers

It's no secret that technology is increasingly the way that we communicate with each other and get things done, but many residents of The Forest are uncomfortable with whatever technology they have. They don't come from a tech background, and the gadgets that are used today didn't exist when they would have learned about them. At the same time, there are residents who are very comfortable with at least one device or piece of software: iPhone, Android phone, PC, Apple computer, Word, Excel, etc. The IT Committee would like to bring residents with questions

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TFAD's Community Champions, Oct. 4, 2024

(l-r:) Matthew Martin, Emily Steiskal, Mari Lisa Puterbaugh, Lena' Kithcart, Kathleen Allen, Robyn Sloan, Ken Barrett (not shown)

In Memoriam

Fran Whitfield

November 9, 2024

This and earlier editions of The Forester are available in full-color digital PDF format from the RA Website <https://ForestRes.org>.

President's Podium

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together with residents who might have answers: the Tech Helpers! The Tech Helpers existed under a different name for a time in the past, but the presence of technology in our lives has only grown, and it's time to try again.

The help is free since it's neighbors helping neighbors. But the Tech Helpers aren't IT professionals, and some problems are beyond their scope—read "Tech Help: Where Can I get It?" which explains the Tech Helpers' limitations and some alternatives. You can find copies of "Tech Help" in the Connections Room.

If you feel that you have experience that might be useful to another resident and would like to share it, we'd like to hear from you. There are sign-up forms in the Connection Room and, if you'd like to talk first, please give me a call: Irwin Abrams, at 508-259-9773.

The Residents' Association (RA) Website

The credit for the existence of the RA Website is owed to Lowell Goldsmith, who recently

passed away. With no previous experience, he was able to create and maintain the RA Website as an active and useful resource for residents of The Forest. Based on our experience, we'd like to build a website staff of a few people so that the workload is distributed more evenly, and multiple people are involved. The IT Committee would also like to take the next step in the development of the site and modify the layout to contain the same information but in a more compact form.

The website is built on WordPress Pro and Elementor, so that no programming experience is needed—a general familiarity with computers is adequate. We've identified several online tutorial videos that can be useful, and we have technical support from the company that hosts our site to solve particularly knotty problems.

If you're interested in learning more about joining the residents maintaining the RA website, email or call me – I'd be delighted to talk with you. Irwin Abrams, irwinabrams@gmail.com. †

Kasia Charles

by Robyn Sloan

Do you know who keeps track of your every community activity, clinic visit, dining guest, transport, or class that involves a fee? In fact, this



accountant may know more about our entire resident population than anyone else at The Forest since she begins

building files on residents when they first join the waiting list.

Tucked in among the administrative offices, Billing Specialist **Kasia Charles** considers her office the central hub for a myriad of different activities, including a notary public witness/seal service and maintaining records for any change of Power of Attorney, your relatives' addresses, or insurance POA. She maintains a census of the

residence of every single resident.

After coming to TFAD four and a half years ago, Kasia was instrumental in getting the accounting department software upgraded, thus enabling a conversion from paper to digital records. Keep in mind that Kasia is a *record keeper* whose information comes from various departments; she is not the source of the data. For example, residents questioning dining charges deemed to be in error should contact **Aalleyah McKay**.

Originally from Louisiana, Kasia used to come to North Carolina to visit her aunts during the summers. She moved to NC ten years ago and lives with her son, daughter, and two dogs. She chose between job options to take the more sociable position at The Forest at Duke because she enjoys direct contact with people and values being helpful. She likes her job and feels that she learns much from our residents. Kasia is happy to have you stop by to say hello. †

Welcome New Residents

Ted & Alice Barrow

Cottage 3

919-704-6892

tedb.email@gmail.com

919-704-6897

barrowASF@outlook.com

Welcome to Ted and Alice Barrow who come to us from Chapel Hill. They each have two children and between them have eight grandchildren. After prior marriages, the Barrows met in church in Northern Virginia 28 years ago, married in 1998, and lived in Burke VA until moving to Chapel Hill for 14 years. They continue to be active members of the University Baptist Church in Chapel Hill.

Ted grew up in Potomac MD. He attended McDaniel College (1969-1970) and Texas A&M (1971-73), receiving a BS in Accounting. He had a 40-year career with the Securities Investor Protection Corporation in Washington DC during which time he became licensed as a CPA. His career revolved around protecting and returning assets to customers of failed stockbrokers.

Ted married in 1980 for 12 years. Ted's son, Daniel Barrow, lives in Corapeake, NC and works on shipboard digital systems for the US Navy in Norfolk. His wife also works in Norfolk. Ted's daughter, Lauren Martinez, is Tax Director at Dollar Tree and lives with her husband David in Suffolk VA where he is a Special Projects Manager at Sumitomo Machinery Corporation of America. They have one daughter.

Ted's volunteer activities have included serving on several homeowners' associations and singing in choirs. His hobbies include traveling, photography, and computers/technology.



Alice grew up in Kingston GA, which is northwest of Atlanta. In 1965 she graduated from the University of North Georgia, the Military College of GA, with a BS in Education. Following graduation, Alice taught third, fourth, and fifth grades, married, started a family, and eventually began a new career as a computer programmer and quality control analyst. During a span of 20 years, living in several states to follow her first husband's job, she also earned an AAS degree in Computer Programming at Utah Technical College in 1985 to help satisfy her curiosity in computers. Shortly afterwards, her family moved to northern VA where she became single, and began her second career with Deltek Systems, Inc., a financial software company, until her retirement 15 years later.

Alice's daughter, Audrey Gerkin, lives in New Hampshire with her husband Rob and three daughters. Their oldest daughter's disability has inspired Audrey to work for improving services for people with disabilities through employment with the New Hampshire Dept. of Health and Human Services. Rob is an occupational therapist for the state of Massachusetts. Alice's son, Jeffrey Stumb, lives in Richmond VA with his wife and two young daughters. He is an Engineer III serving as an Inservice Testing Fleet Lead for Dominion Energy's Nuclear Division. His wife is a Senior Manager for Capital One.

As a volunteer, Alice has led a high school youth group, worked as an ESL teacher, and sung in choirs. Her hobbies include family, traveling, hiking, physical fitness and reading. †

Library Science 101:

By Carol Reese

ACCESSING THE ONLINE LIBRARY CATALOG

The TFAD Library's online catalog is now accessible through CUBIGO's Information Cube. From the CUBIGO page, you then click on the RA Website. From the RA page bring down the Quick Links list and click on "TFAD Online Catalog." This will bring up the Search catalog, and you will be able to search by word, title, and author. Also, if you wish to browse the DVD or audiobook collections, you can bring up a list just by searching on their media type: the media code for DVDs is **DV** and the code for books on tape is **CD**. Click the media button to bring up the appropriate list to browse. For help with creating your searches, please read the HELP screen on the main Search page.

Speaking of the Library's collection, here are some statistics that you might find interesting:

Total number of items in the collection—
4607

Breakdown by media type: audiobooks—
50; DVDs—219; puzzles—108; books—
4187

Large print books are approximately 13%
of the entire print collection.

In addition, since January 2024, 135 patrons have checked out 485 unique items, 722 different times.

LIBRARY BOOK AND PUZZLE SALE

Thanks to everyone who showed support for the Library either by helping to run the sale or by buying the books and puzzles. The Library made about \$72.00 in two hours. Considering the books sold for a \$1.00 apiece and the puzzles for \$0.50 each, this total isn't bad. Some of this money has been placed in our book fund while the rest will be used to purchase supplies such as pens, pencils, etc.

I wish to thank the following people from the Library Committee for helping out: **Rachel Hamilton, Chhanda Ganguly, Linda McBride, and Carol DeCamp.**

ONGOING BEST BOOKS OF THE 21ST CENTURY EXHIBIT

If you haven't done so already, browse the latest book exhibit located on the book cart as you enter the Library. This exhibit consists of books selected as the best books in the first quarter of this century. I'm sure you will find something to interest you.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

From the volunteers who keep the library functioning to all the residents, here's wishing everyone a happy holiday season. ¶

Joan Seiffert

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Prays Motel.

Jack left for work at the base at 7:00 AM and returned home in the winter dark after five. More often than not, he took the pail of diapers to the laundromat. Then there was the folding, ready for another day. I wonder what Sacagawea did.

Colic, torturer of babies and helpless parents, stayed with us. Susan, wailing with gut pain, and I spent the days and nights walking paths in our motel room rug. I held her, crooning, then trying to comfort her by rocking, singing, or bouncing. Maybe she was hungry, so formula bottles needed to be sterilized. At least we had a kitchenette, but Jack and I barely slept. I did

discover that my impatience, my slipping away from confrontation with wise guy wit, my disorganization, were no match for colic. I endured and did not throw the baby out the window.

Sacagawea, a Shoshone Indian, was fifteen when she and her French husband joined up with the Lewis and Clark expedition in North Dakota in November of 1804. I bet after her child's birth, she just built a papoose backpack and, fortified with roots, on she went, catching up with the expedition. And I had thought I was strong. After exactly six months, colic gave up. Susan was finally smiling, and so was I. ¶

Pages of Possibilities

by Beth Timson

Maybe you're one of those people who view your computer, tablet, or smart phone with a mixture of fear and loathing. Sometimes the modern tech world can seem overwhelming to those of us who remember a phone that we dialed, a phone that didn't talk to us unless we happened to be on a party line with the neighbors. Or we remember the first television that appeared on the block; it was small, maybe with a round screen, and it showed pictures only in black and white and went off the air at midnight.

So when the staff of *The Forester* talks about taking this TFAD magazine out of the print format and into digital, you groan and wish we wouldn't do it. That's understandable, but it doesn't have to be that way. You're probably going to like the transition, and your fears about the use of technology will be taken into account. Let me explain.

For one thing, the link to *The Forester* will come to you by email, and email is one thing that seniors DO use. A 2017 study showed that 78.8 percent of seniors say email is their preferred form of communication (a higher number than millennials). For another, the format that we're exploring takes into account the user-friendly challenges that some seniors say they face when dealing with technology:

The concept is just unfamiliar. This new format starts with a simple email that comes to you from *The Forester*. From there, you click on one button to get to the magazine.

I don't want to work my way through lots of layers. Who does? So, you won't have to. That one click takes you to a page that opens and reads just like a regular magazine.

Any screen is harder to read than a printed page. Well, that depends on the screen—how about a screen where you can turn pages and make them larger with one touch of a button?

I worry about making mistakes with technology. Not a problem in this case. Say you turn two pages instead of one; okay, just back up, the way you would with a page in a book. You

can start and stop anytime, put it down and pick it back up as you choose.

Why is *The Forester* staff looking at this change anyway? A big part of the impetus is cost; it's over \$4000 a year to print copies of the magazine now, and the cost is always slowly rising. That's *your* money, from your RA dues. And struggling to keep the costs down limits us in various ways, from things like the number of pages we can print to how many photos in color we can include.

Putting *The Forester* into digital format will allow us to do a lot of interesting things that we believe our readers will enjoy. We can have any number of pages in an issue, depending on writer input. We can include lots of color photos, something everyone likes to see. And, a new opportunity, we can include video clips—wouldn't it be fun to see short interviews with residents! All the issues will be stored on the RA website, so they can be read or viewed as often as you like.

Of course, changes take time and work. Right now, we're looking at various vendors who sell programs that convert magazines into digital format. Several other CCRCs in this area already are using programs that looking promising. And we realize that some residents have physical limitations that make using any electronic device difficult; almost certainly some number of printed magazines will still be needed for those residents. We are planning to have this transition completed before new residents move into The Terraces, so we have a bit more time for planning.

If you have thoughts on this project, please share those ideas or concerns with someone from *The Forester* staff; all our names are on the masthead. And...thank you for moving ahead with us. †



Forest Readers

by Carolyn Cone Weaver, with Jo Mauskopf and Ellen Baer

So you've been looking for something exhilarating to revive you between your Wednesday nap and supper, but haven't found it yet? Come spend a half hour or so with those of us who've already discovered the joy of the Forest Readers program. **Jo Mauskopf**, the program's chair, says it's bound to "delight, amuse, inform and inspire." Who can resist that kind of temptation? To find out for yourself, gather with us in the Party Room on Wednesdays at 4:30. I bet you'll return on the following Wednesdays to listen—or to read.

Jo has chaired Forest Readers since 2018, but it has been one of TFAD's favorite programs since former resident **Carol Oettinger** introduced it in 2007. The program is totally volunteer-run, totally TFAD...and totally creative. Readings range from poetry and humor through murder to Readers' memoirs or short stories to work or volunteer-related tales, even play-by-play descriptions of baseball games.

I've attended dozens of readings since November 2021. A brief sample of those I've sat in on includes a poignant history of Charles Lindbergh's life, a TFAD resident's memoir about his time as a young man translating American movies into Italian, climate change as experienced in New Zealand, the tale of a raunchy female detective, modern and classic poetry, and a hilarious *2023 in Review* by the *Miami Herald's* Dave Barry.

You see the choices are wide and varied, selected by the Readers themselves. The only guidelines are that Readers truly believe their audience will enjoy the piece and that it be within 30 to 40 minutes when read aloud. (A 30-minute reading should run about 3,900 words, a comfortable pace for most audiences, according to *Speakflow.com*.)

Surely you're curious by now. Come to a meeting and learn about the program first-hand and see what fun it is, both as audience member and as Reader. If you're not able to attend, the program is also available later on TV Channel 1390. Of course, it's more fun to attend in person, to get a feel for the comraderie, to actually show the Reader your appreciation, and to meet

residents who share the same interests. Another way to see a variety of readings is to watch presentations from 2024 and earlier, on TFAD's YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+forest+at+duke+readers+2024

Jo has scheduled readings into December and has asked me to schedule Readers for the first months of 2025. She plans to continue the program as is, and she's also considering new formats, for instance group readings. Suggestions are welcome.

Forest Readers meets year-round and is in the Party Room for the time being. Once construction restrictions are lifted, meetings will probably return to the Auditorium where the sound and video are more up to date and the readings can be seen on 1390 directly.

We are forever grateful to Community Life Team Members **Amari Pettiford** and **Emma Hoffman** for preparing the room and for their good-natured patience and support. It's a cinch we couldn't do it all without them. (I wonder if they knew that adjusting sound systems and moving furniture are in their job descriptions.) Announcements listing each week's Reader, and what and where they will read are listed in *Forest Forward*, in the monthly Activities Calendar, in a banner announcement in the Atrium, and on TV Channel 1390.

Now that you know the details, come sit in at the next Wednesday reading, 4:30 in the Party Room. You are the people we're looking for. TFAD is a rich source of bright, witty, accomplished seniors who over their lifetimes have collected experiences worth sharing with us, your equally bright, witty, accomplished fellow residents. Tell us of your own experiences, or material you've read and would like to share, and we'll tell you ours. Continuation of the program depends on you, our TFAD residents, so when you're ready to read something that has meaning for us, please contact: Carolyn Cone Weaver, 984-219-2635, cconewvr@gmail.com or Jo Mauskopf, 919-308-7612, jmauskopf@iatrometrics.com. 🌿

A Fortuitous Path to an Art Career

Bunny Koff

As a creative child, I could color for hours...no piece of paper, not even dinner napkins, was safe around me. Sadly, being the youngest child in a poor family, all I ever had to work with was the small box of 12 Crayola colors; many friends had 48 and I drooled with envy. I can't help but think my adult sense of color and passion for working with it had its roots back then.

An English major in college, I first taught high school in NC while my new husband **Steve** was in Medical School at Duke. An unfortunate experience with the Klan at that time led me to a job at the Duke Library where my skills with languages were useful. I was sure my future lay in writing. Art had been fun but certainly not a career option.

With three children of school age, I found a renewed passion for art in being a docent at the Columbus OH Museum of Art. Giving tours to all age groups on everything from realism to abstraction, from Asian art to modern sculpture, drawing, watercolors to contemporary mixed media—at times talking in French to visitors or college classes—my earlier passion for art found a new way of enhancing my life while letting me be the stay at home mom I needed to be.

As I gave tours, my curiosity about the decisions artists make in producing their work deepened. Why is that red spot on the left side of the canvas and not on the right? Why is there a red area at all? I signed up for a watercolor class in the winter of 1992. The plan was to enjoy the painting class and be a more interesting docent because I could talk from the perspective of an artist as well as art historian. Then when spring came I would take golf lessons. Happily for me, as a very mediocre athlete, that's not the way things played out.

The first evening painting class was right before Valentine's Day, so of course we painted hearts in watercolor. But none of mine were red; I used unique color palettes to make the hearts jump off the page, and I loved doing it. So did the teacher, who pulled me aside at the end of class and asked me to consider going to art school. The stars must have been in alignment that night because the docent program allowed me to take classes at the local art school.

Lessons, classes, workshops all followed. I was enthralled. I painted florals at first, a subject that lent itself to watercolor; in fact, the first painting I took to be framed was a trio of pots of gerbera daisies. The framer was so taken with it that he asked me to bring in more work, and he gave me my first art show. I sold two paintings the first night, then came home and looked at my husband, sixteen-year old son, and two pet dogs, and announced they'd all better shape up, I was an artist now! I had more free time, a house with room for an art studio, and opportunities to travel, especially as Steve's career offered many travel invitations. Over time we went to Europe, Asia, and many parts of the U.S.

Originally painting from photos taken on these trips, development led me to the addition of collage to my acrylic paintings. You'll often find metro tickets, playbills, restaurant menus or matchbooks (remember those?) in my mixed media works. One of my most memorable exhibits was to have a gallery of my paintings lead into rooms of original glass art of Dale Chihuly at the Conservatory in Columbus. I was so enthralled by his work in an exhibit at our Museum that I based some of my abstract paintings on his blown glass. The director of the Conservatory saw them and created a space for me to exhibit with his art. Afterwards, the Columbus Museum acquired two large paintings from that show for their permanent collection.

Moving to North Carolina as Steve retired in 2012 gave me membership in the Orange County Artists Guild as well as exhibits in various local galleries. I was also recruited to teach painting and collage classes through Duke's OLLI program, something that I am continuing by teaching in their 2025 Spring Session right here at TFAD.

Who knows what life might have been like for me with a box of 48 Crayolas each school year, but I do know how grateful I am for the way things did work out; it made it possible to do what I love for the past 30 years, sharing my passion for art with students, colleagues, collectors, and family. And it kept me off a golf course that clearly was not in my stars and wouldn't bring me the same joy, passion and satisfaction I find in being an artist. 🌱