

## The Woman in Charge—Shonda Magee

by George Williams

As I was asking Shonda Magee what specific title her appointment carried, Anita Holt, President and CEO of the Forest, happened to pass by. Having heard my question, “I’m the Boss,” she said, “and she’s the Woman in Charge.” A masterpiece of clarity. The title is Administrative Assistant, but that person is in charge, specifically, of preparing the *Forest Forward* weekly, of the Resident Directory annually, of ordering all the office supplies of the Forest, of serving as “Postmistress,” and of any number of other things. She handles those responsibilities well; she is an impressive person.

She was born in Kinston, North Carolina, but she grew up in Hampton, Virginia, where her stepfather was assigned to the Langley Air Force Base. She attended local schools until, as a good Virginian, she enrolled in 1987 in The University. She and her siblings were the first generation of their family to attend college. Her older sister, Rhonda, is now a prominent law professor at the University of San Francisco Law School, recently honored to deliver an important paper to a legal conference in New York.

After college, Shonda went to Columbia, South Carolina, where she worked in the public school system and then at Allen University for five years, in registration and administration. The most remarkable aspect of her years in Columbia, however, was that she adopted a child. It was after a two-year process that she was approved, a single mother, to have the privilege. She did not know the sex of the infant until it was born, when she found herself suddenly the mother of a male, whom she instantly named Caleb Elijah—two good Biblical names. He is now a highly trained mechanic in the Air Force, specializing in the largest aircraft. His friends call him “Eli.”

Though her children had all moved away from Kinston, Shonda’s mother continued to live there until



last year when Shonda and her brother, who had moved to the Triangle, decided to bring her to Durham. She and Shonda now share an apartment here. When Shonda moved to this area, she revived her work records on line, and there our Sandra Mouras found her and brought her to the Forest (another of Ms. Mouras’s achievements).

Shonda says of the position that it is continually innovative. A small example, attributable to her own innovativeness: the little “Resident Directory 2017” is a regular rectangle in format. The same item in 2016 and before had rounded outside corners. At her suggestion they were made square. Most of us will not have noticed the change, but it has saved the Forest a substantial expense. Shonda says of the assignment to the Forest: “This job is the most pleasant of any that I have had.” Working here is like “coming home, surrounded by people I love.”

She has always been active in civic good works. In Columbia she was in a program to teach youngsters how to use the computer and she has been a volunteer in the American Children’s Garden. Since coming to

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## The Forester

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## President's Podium



by Russell Jones

As I start my term as president of the Forest at Duke Residents' Association, I want to acknowledge a debt to the thirteen presidents who have preceded me over the past 25 years. The work they have done has established the Association as a functioning, legally incorporated entity with a well thought-out set of bylaws, policies and procedures, as well as duties and responsibilities for the officers as well as directors of the Association.

But the real strength of the Forest is in its residents. Do you remember the 2017 "Master Resident Volunteer List" that occupied a big chunk of the Connections Room as we polled for Volunteers of the Year? That list illustrated a wide range of volunteering at the Forest. But the list could not include all those who actively participated in the many formal and informal recreational, creative and social activities at the Forest. While leadership of these activities is vital, and thanking those who commit to undertaking those responsibilities should continually be on folks' minds, resident participation is what makes things really work. Staying active and sharing experiences is one of the joys of the Forest.

I'd like to offer special thanks to individuals who have agreed to assume the added responsibility of joining the Residents' Association Board this year as vice president and as directors. Margaret Keller will bring excellent experience to the Board as vice president. And thanks go to Craig Daniels for taking over the Facility Services Committee, to Linda McBride for assuming responsibility of the Caucus Coordination Committee, and to Jean Vail for tackling the many duties of the Resident Services Committee.

With your help and input, your officers and directors will continue the work of making The Forest a good place to live. And to help me keep up with my new responsibilities, you can contact me at my new e-mail address for Residents' Association work—: [RAPres1719@gmail.com](mailto:RAPres1719@gmail.com)

## In Memoriam

Louise Goshorn                      October 2, 2017

Rheta Leverett Skolaut        October 11, 2017



## Library Science 101

by Carol Reese

The Library Committee had its first meeting of the new fiscal year. We welcomed back several members from last year and added two new ones. Those that are returning are **Carol DeCamp**, **Scott Hughes**, **Linda McBride**, and **Carol Scott**. Our new members are **Shannon Ravenel** and **Ella Jean Shore**. At this meeting the members brought up several recommendations for possible ways to improve our services in the future. I have asked them to research their ideas and present what they have found at our December meeting. For more information on these recommendations, please feel free to read the minutes of our meetings which now reside in the Residents Services notebook in the Connections Room.

Again, I wish to repeat that we encourage residents to make their own suggestions regarding possible future services. The Suggestion Cards are always available to you; please make use of them.

For those of you who have ventured into the Library this last month, you might have noticed a new piece of furniture right by the entrance. This is our new **Library Book Return**. While it is called a “Book Return” due to library tradition, it is where residents may return all checked-out materials to the Library—books, puzzles, DVDs, etc. **Just drop what you are returning into the front slot.** The Forest’s Maintenance staff has even modified the slot to let our puzzles fit through it. We hope having it right by the entrance makes it easier for you.

You also may have noticed the **Desktop Magnifying Reader** in place on the long table at the Library entrance. It was purchased by the Forest at the recommendation of the Low-Vision Mutual



*Eunice Grossman returning a book*

Assistance

Group. The Reader provides high quality electronic magnification. It is easy to use, and is perfect for reading newspaper and magazine articles. Give it a try.

And a reminder—there is a copy machine in Connections, across from the Library, that you may use to make a copy of an item in a newspaper or magazine that you want to keep. No need to clip a page. You’ll have your information in convenient compact form, and other residents will still have a chance to read the entire publication.

Your Library has many things to offer. Enjoy.



*Bill Leonard at the Reader*

## Filling a Void

by Banks Anderson, Jr.

Not three miles from my desk the Confederate demigod Robert Edward Lee has disappeared from his niche near the entry to Duke Chapel. The neglected and abused sculpture has attracted the attention of a Greek shipping lord who collects antiquities. He has allegedly purchased it and is having it crated and shipped to Athens where it is to be displayed near the Parthenon. While admiring the artistry of the carving, visitors there may learn of the culture and mythology associated with its vandalism and that of other similar works of its region and era.

But who is now to stand in that vacant Chapel niche?

A substitute general might be the confederate demi-satan William Tecumseh Sherman. After all, his troops were responsible for the Duke fortune. In a marvelous marketing coup they distributed free samples of stolen bright leaf tobacco all over the country. Thus Washington Duke and his boys needed their own product to capture some of that vastly expanded market. They hit upon the idea of making and marketing little cigars—called cigarettes. Much later WWII likewise provided their successors the opportunity to distribute free samples to the troops ensuring a continuing supply of nicotine addicts.

Or why not select General Ambrose Burnside? His troops captured New Bern, NC, in March of 1862 converting all of the northeastern part of the state into Union territory. Any slave who reached his command was welcomed as contraband of war just as any other property of the confederate cause. The next three years of war resulted in a federal housing project for them and their families across the river. And when Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation they became free and some saw service with Union troops at Petersburg. In sculpting General Burnside's face particular care should be taken in carving his luxuriant sideburns, a noun that originated from his transposed

surname. Since facial hair seems to be sprouting uncut on young males all about the University, they might support this selection. I would certainly lobby for him as one of his men shot off the thumb of my great grandfather Gerard James Banks in that battle for New Bern. This wound spared him from the slaughter at Gettysburg and resulted in my Grandmother Mary Banks's birth in 1871.

Or if generals are out of favor, perhaps Charles Sauria, the inventor of the first practical friction match, should stand there. His chemical concoction used white phosphorus which made it possible for Duke and Sons' cigarette smokers to light up wherever they might be. Or Johan Edvard Lundstrom who pioneered their cheap mass production and whose "safety match" won a prize at the 1855 Parisian "World Exhibition." Without the trillions of their cheap matches, the Dukes' tobacco fortune would have

been problematic.

But this is all pipe dreaming as nowadays in academia, while tearing down is easy, building a consensus around a constructively politicized project requires inclusive committees with their interminable delays. In the interim, poor Thomas Jefferson will be standing there isolated. Who better to keep him company in his loneliness than Sally Hemings? Like the carving of Lee whose features looked nothing like the real general's and whose buckle bore an engraved USA, it is the perception—not reality—that seems to count. A long dress and long tresses on any figure in the niche would do. After an initial media blizzard, she might, like her predecessor, stand there unnoticed for three generations.

*Banks Anderson is Professor Emeritus of Ophthalmology at Duke, and contributes regularly to The Forester.*





## I Have Shaken by the Hand

by James Stanley Barlow

Afterward I stood in the long line  
and I saw his weariness.  
Campaigning in 1956, he had  
finished writing his speech while  
windy admirers were introducing him.  
My turn came and I felt his hand limp  
and looked into his blue eyes.  
They were marbles.  
I had come to meet him but he wasn't there.

And then our Senator, the man who had been  
Dean of the Law School, the man from Oregon  
who could stand up and speak his mind  
in Washington and then to us at Erb Memorial.  
I stood in line to shake his hand;  
Came my turn, I looked into his dark-bead eyes  
under their thick black gray-streaked bowers.  
Oh, I was hoping to see a person there.  
But, alas, no one was at home to me.

There was another time at Erb Memorial,  
I am glad to tell you,  
When I stood in line  
to shake the speaker's hand.  
Not only would the back of my head  
and my right ear larger-than-life  
show on the front page of the  
*Register-Guard* the next day,  
opposite Thurgood's friendly face.  
But he was there and welcomed me.

Memories of other handclasps comfort me;  
I'll sing some names to you:  
Bella, Roy, Martin, Muriel, and Hubert Horatio.  
Oh, let me add  
that despite their cerebral tendency  
To be elsewhere while shaking hands,  
I still admire both Adlai and Wayne.

*Stanley Barlow grew up in Johnson City, TN. He is an educator, writer, and ordained Presbyterian minister.*

## Woman In Charge ....

(Continued from Page 1)

Durham she has been too much occupied with settling in, but she seeks out ways to be helpful. She is now mentoring a young woman. She is the proud owner of Rosie, her chihuahua here shown in her pumpkin costume.



Shonda's particular hobbies are reading and sketching. It is a mark of her interest in words that she keeps in her office a copy of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, two volumes, the compact edition of the fabulous many-volumed original. It is high on a shelf, not easily accessible, but its presence testifies to her maintaining of the highest standards of language and excellence.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

## Lobby Flower Arrangers

by Doug Whitfield

For twenty-five years visitors and residents alike have been welcomed to The Forest by attractive flower and plant arrangements in our lobby. Changed weekly, they are the work of an enthusiastic, talented group of arrangers currently headed by Doug Whitfield, assisted by Nancy Miller, following in the recent footsteps of Carol Griffith, Fran Bryant, Martha Uzzle and Kay Randolph.

If you enjoy flowers and flower arranging, Doug and Nancy would welcome your participation. Please contact either of them or see the Count-Me-In Book for more information and instructions. Flowers come from many places: your own garden, a florist, local stores such as Target, the Durham Farmers Market, or other sources of fresh flowers or plants.

Current plans are to recognize special-occasion arrangements with an adjacent card announcing "In Celebration of the..." (birthday, anniversary, etc.).

To participate in this delightful welcoming tradition, please sign up either in the Count-Me-In book or talk with Doug at #2026 or Nancy at #38.

## Welcome New Residents

### Gerald & Audrey Lazarus

Cottage 67

Jerry: 410-490-0183 GLazaru1@gmail.com

Audrey: 410-924-3708 10AFJL@gmail.com



Jerry and Audrey moved to the Forest from Queenstown, Maryland.

Jerry was born in New York City, graduated from Stuyvesant High School, and progressed through a BS in chemistry from Colby College, an MD from George Washington, a residency in internal medicine at Michigan, residencies in dermatology at Mass General/Harvard, and research training at NIH and Clare Hall, Cambridge, UK. After three years as head of the dermatology section at Montefiore Hospital in New York, he was recruited to Duke as chief of dermatology. His expertise: inflammatory diseases of the skin and wound healing. In 1982 Jerry left Duke to become chair of the department of dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Audrey grew up in Dunkirk, NY, earned a BS in chemistry from Seton Hill College, Greensburg, PA, and a PhD in physical chemistry from SUNY-Buffalo. After post-docs in medicine, she joined Bristol-Myers Squibb, working initially with dermatological products. Subsequently she built a regulatory group for world-wide registration of cancer, cardiovascular, central nervous system, anti-infective, and anti-HIV drugs.

Audrey and Jerry met at a dermatology meeting and after a long-distance courtship were married in Philadelphia. When Jerry became Dean and CEO of the UC-Davis Medical School and Health System in 1993, Audrey left 15 years of executive leadership in big pharma to move with Jerry to Northern California. There she joined a succession of small pharmaceutical firms, assuming responsibility for regulatory affairs and quality assurance.

### Mary Helen Watkins

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Mary Helen was born in Greensboro, and aside from several early years in Amarillo, TX, grew up and graduated from high school in Greensboro, where she played clarinet in the band. She attended Randolph Macon Women's College for one year before transferring to UNC-Chapel Hill where she earned her BS in nursing. While working on the medical wards at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, she met Warren Watkins, a veteran studying at Guilford College. After their marriage, Warren began work in building and development in Durham. Mary Helen worked as a public health nurse until the arrival of her four children kept her busy with child rearing.

Having lost her husband when her oldest child was fourteen, Mary Helen did a refresher course at UNC. She worked in GI research at Duke for a year. Then she moved to a staff position in the Student Health Service at UNC. Mary Helen has always been committed to her church, serving as a Stephen Minister, visiting shut-ins, and volunteering in many community agencies. She is most proud of raising four successful children—Warren, Mary Elfret, Susan, and Palmer—and dotes on her five grandchildren. The family enjoys her beach home at Oak Island together. For fun she enjoys bridge, her two book clubs and her garden club.

In 1999 this adventurous couple relocated to Beijing as visiting professors at the Peking Union Medical College. In 2002 they returned, and Jerry became director of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine wound center. Both Audrey and Jerry have been active volunteers and trustees. As founding president of the Milstein Medical Asian American Partnership Foundation, Jerry forged medical and scientific partnerships between American and Chinese universities. Back in Durham, he will be associated with Duke Dermatology as a consultant and teacher.

Jerry and Audrey have a broad range of hobbies and interests, especially boating, and they are very proud of their six children and ten grandchildren.

## Welcome New Residents

### Maureen Johnson

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Maureen grew up near Indiana, PA, and earned her BA degree from Muskingum University in German and History. She spent her junior year abroad at Heidelberg University and Kiel University. She entered graduate school at the University of Illinois and while serving as a teaching assistant fell in love with one of her students, an ex-GI, James Johnson III, and when they married, Maureen needed to look for work. At Motorola, she learned they were looking for those with language backgrounds to learn a new language for computers. A twelve week course from IBM turned her into a computer programmer, and she never looked back.

She grew with the field from main frames to laptops. When she and her late husband moved from Chicago to Durham, she worked in the registrar's office at Duke and then at the Environmental Protection Agency in the RTP where she stayed for the rest of her career. Along the way she studied German a bit more, and eventually did an MBA at the Fuqua School. She and her family enjoyed their life in the South.

Maureen travels with great regularity and still manages to enjoy time with her son. She has been both a docent at the Nasher Museum of Art and a long time docent at Duke Chapel, and is a member of the League of Women Voters. She keeps fit with hiking, and relaxes with knitting and reading. Her son, Patrick, is a research analyst at Measurement Incorporated in Durham.



### Sharon Dexter

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Sharon grew up in Dayton, Ohio, where she and her husband were high school sweethearts. Sharon worked as a secretary while David attended the University of Michigan. After graduation they were married and moved to Rosslyn, VA, where Sharon worked while David earned his doctorate at Georgetown. They moved to northern New Jersey, and David completed a post-doc at Columbia.

After their two children were born, the family moved to Alma, MI, where David developed the computer center for Alma College. Sharon worked part time and attended college classes. A Fulbright Fellowship took the family to Izmir, Turkey, for a year. They did extensive traveling and learned to appreciate the culture and the people. After they returned to the US, David's job took them to Vermont, Ohio, and Virginia.

In Charlottesville, VA, Sharon worked as an editor for a publishing company. Retiring to a 36-acre property in Roseland, VA, they planted a 7-acre vineyard. For 17 years they grew and sold fruit to local wineries until David's death in 2016.

Sharon enjoys knitting and classical music, and loves to read. Her son, Scott, is a professor at Brooklyn College. Her daughter, Kathy, lives in Cary and is responsible for bringing Sharon to The Forest.





## ASK A CONCHOLOGIST

## Why You Should Collect Seashells

by Bill Michal

It is my very biased opinion that every resident of TFAD should strongly consider collecting seashells. First, I will shoot down the “routine” excuses given for *not* collecting. Then I will totally ignore all the obvious reasons *for* collecting and provide four reasons that I bet never entered your mind.

1) The usual negative practical aspects of collecting: *Space limitations?* Forget it; great shells come in all sizes and you can house a superb collection in a small button box. *Cost?* While expensive shells exist, there are literally thousands of beautiful and fascinating species easily available for less than the cost of a cup of coffee. *It might turn out to be only a passing fascination:* Their beauty will outlive you as well as the individuals who inherit them from you. *In addition, here is a unique aspect of collecting seashells:* As people explore ever deeper into the world’s oceans, the price of most shells is *decreasing*. A collector starting today has a real advantage over one who began long ago. How many collectibles can claim that?

2) To provide a pathway to delightful new friends: The people involved in seashells seem to be old-fashioned in the very best sense. I have been struck by the fact that most of my seashell interpersonal relationships remind me of life in the 1950s. Compared to the twenty-first century there is more trust, more honesty, less greed, a slower pace, and a much more helpful attitude. Seashells are like a time capsule of the pace of life we fondly remember. It is no secret that many areas of “collecting” are mainly focused on making money.

Compared to several objects I have collected, the emphasis in shells seems to be almost exclusively about a genuine love of the shells. As long as that persists, seashells will yield really big profits...in friendships.



*Striatulus alibaster*



*Chicoreus ramosus*

3) They provide a dandy excuse for acquiring a few really superb books: Despite the many advantages of modern technology, it offers nothing comparable to a really fine book. It feels good in your hands. It literally puts vast knowledge at your fingertips and the best of them include beautiful images that can be endlessly devoured without losing their amazement. Seashell books rank near the very top. If you don’t collect shells, it might be difficult to justify the cost of owning more than one of these. As a collector, I can attest that you can rationalize a small shelf full.

4) To recapture some of the awe of childhood: As we age we all lose much of the awe of life. A large part of that is unavoidable and stems from our having seen and/or experienced so much. That tendency is gigantically enhanced by modern communication media such as television. On the other hand, much of the loss of the “wow factor” in life is something we foster. Often we choose to act sophisticated and work to appear “cool.” Sadly, such behavior often becomes habitual. In our senior years we can make the conscious effort to break that mold, revert to childhood, and collect some pretty keepsakes. Seashells are a perfect vehicle for this healthy and fun regression.

*Bill Michal is a retired pediatrician, banjo player and long-time collector.*



## U.S. Route 501

by Ted Harris

Why write a story about a single road? Would you believe that U.S. Route 501 takes us to numerous educational institutions, some of our most beautiful beaches, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and sport including both golfing and whitewater escapades?

From the city of Durham northward, 501 travels into the Shenandoah Valley; its southern route takes us all the way to the Atlantic Ocean, for a total of 355 miles. Its terminal points are Buena Vista, Virginia, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Sit back, relax and enjoy the ride.

You might say that 501 belongs partly to our community at the Forest. It is our closest US highway. It takes us in many directions, starting out on a path for services, entertainment, and shopping. Going east it carries us to Guglhupf and Foster's and delivers us to DPAC for wonderful shows. For the delights of Chapel Hill we travel westward. All of north Durham is in easy reach by motoring north on the 501 by-pass.

501 might be called University Way. It makes entrances to six universities, skirting by North Carolina at Chapel Hill on its way to Saint Andrews in Laurinburg. In South Carolina it serves Coastal Carolina in Conway. After passing Duke it heads north to Virginia, where it connects with Jerry Falwell's creation, Liberty, in Lynchburg; and with Southern Virginia, the only Mormon school east of Utah, in Buena Vista. Certainly there is a great variety in this collection of universities.

Seven areas in the United States presume to be America's golf capitals, and two are served by 501, making 501 the road to Golfdom. For ten days' worth of top quality courses travel to Pinehurst. For quantity the Myrtle Beach Grand Strand offers a player ninety courses.

The twenty-five mile northernmost section of road plays hide and seek with rivers, first the James and then its tributary the Maury. Traveling west from Lynchburg on 501 you come over the top of a hill for a panoramic view of the Blue Ridge with the James River in the foreground leading your eyes to the mountains. If you stop on this roadside when the moon is full, the river shimmers and sparkles with



reflected moonlight.

Until the year 2000 the Appalachian Trail used the 501 bridge to cross the James River at Snowden. Without sidewalks the narrow bridge was dangerous for pedestrians. Because of a blind curve on the south bank, experienced hikers scanned the road on the north bank for cars before attempting a crossing. Now an old Chesapeake and Ohio train trestle has been converted for a safer hiking passage.

501 is the road to white water sports. There are a number of superlatives often used: great for canoeing, really fun tubing, challenging fishing, and wonderful wildlife watching including bears on the river banks.

Crossing the Blue Ridge, 501 hairpins its way up, over, and down the north flank of the James River Gorge. On the western slopes there are overlooks for spotting Balcony Falls (see photo). "Putting in" above Balcony Falls, the cascading river drops eighty feet in a five mile stretch without any exit until "taking out" at Snowden. For a real treat Google "Balcony Falls" and watch a video.

501 was also the closest federal highway to our home in Lynchburg. When asked how we got to the Forest at Duke, my wife Dale said we just moved down 501 a ways.

*Ted Harris, former banker, legislator, advocate and promoter of old-growth forests, has serious interest in environmental issues.*

## BOOK REVIEW

***The Underground Railroad***

by Colin Whitehead

(New York: Doubleday, 2016) 306pp.

by Paul McBride

“My mother’s name is Lily Jane. My father is Jerome. I don’t know where they are.” In three spare sentences, Caesar, a slave in Colson Whitehead’s brilliant novel, exposes the utter disregard of slave masters for the families of their human property. Then, through the eyes of Cora, the 15-year-old “stray,” whose mother, Mabel, had escaped the Randall plantation, we witness the mind-numbing and physically crippling field work, the beatings and whippings, the hangings and mutilations, the hopelessness that made slavery a cumulative terror.

Whitehead’s depiction of slavery’s reality is a fairly recent phenomenon. Only since WWII have scholars begun to recognize slavery as the monumental evil that lay at the core of our history. Before that, the dominant historical interpretation had depicted slavery as generally benign. Slaves had loved their masters, realizing that America had rescued them from savagery and had exposed them to the beneficence of Christian Anglo-Saxon culture. Today, we are all familiar with stereotypes given life by that narrative: the “good” slaves who remained loyal to their masters to the bitter end, the childlike darkies clearly in need of white oversight, the cute pickaninnies playing innocently with the masters’ children. From this historical mythology emerged “Birth of a Nation,” D.W. Griffith’s groundbreaking silent movie of 1915 that glorified the KKK and vilified the newly freed Negro as well as the “radical” whites who espoused racial equality. White America continued to find comfort in these stereotypes well into the 1960s when TV reruns of Amos ’n’ Andy mercifully ended.

Few topics capture our imagination about slavery more than the Underground Railroad. Generally, we think of public transportation in terms of its destination. I might take the “A” train *to* Harlem, or an early flight *to* Chicago, or the trans-Canada *to*

Vancouver. That the cattle cars of Nazi Germany were headed *to* the death camps, we know. Yet, we think of the Underground Railroad as an escape *from* slavery rather than a destination *to* anywhere in particular. Whitehead’s *The Underground Railroad* forces us to understand that the desperate refugees from slavery were arriving *to* an America that, at best, wanted little to do with them and, at worst, was murderously hostile. He takes us on the slaves’ harrowing journey through space and time and, in the process, introduces us to an America that was not a pleasant destination.

When Cora makes her break with her fellow slave, Caesar, she is 15. She has been gang raped by several older slaves, brutally whipped by the master, and selected to provide him sexual satisfaction. Partly to find her mother, whom she deeply resents yet also admires, but mostly to escape the hell of slavery, Cora agrees to Caesar’s plea to join him on the Underground Railroad. In Whitehead’s surreal telling, it consists of terminals, locomotives, railroad cars, engineers and tracks laid deep underground passing through tunnels painstakingly excavated by hundreds of Blacks. And so we, Cora, and Caesar begin our journey to “away from here.”

We travel to only three stops: a strictly segregated city in South Carolina, a small town in North Carolina, and a community of escaped slaves and free Blacks in Indiana. In those three locations, Whitehead acquaints us with the America that awaits. In South Carolina, Cora works first as a maid in a white household; Caesar toils in a local factory. Soon, Cora is scheduled for a health examination in a hospital where all the doctors and nurses are white and all the patients black. She is approached by a nurse who strongly urges her to use birth control. Thus, Whitehead has Cora encounter the Eugenics movement that began programs of forced sterilization as early as 1907. Some continued well into the 1970’s and 80’s.

When Caesar is captured by Ridgeway, the slave

(Continued to Page 11)



## CAROL'S CORNER

**Railroad ....***(Continued from Page 10)*

catcher who has been chasing them, Cora is forced to take the next “train” out of town. Her next stop is North Carolina where she is confined to the attic of her underground contact. On the way to his home, he stops to show Cora the “Freedom Trail” where, mile after mile, Negroes are hanging from trees on both sides of the road. Again, Whitehead presents a surreal reflection of reality. Between 1880 and 1925 or so, some 3,400 Blacks were lynched in the US. People used to send postcards picturing the grisly sights to friends and family.

The final stop for Cora is Indiana, a free state, where she settles at Valentine Farm, a rural community of escaped slaves and free Blacks. There, Cora enjoys freedom, useful work, and a supportive community. Yet, as the novel ends, Ridgeway reemerges organizing a sneak attack on the Black community that had stirred deep resentment among the surrounding whites. Many of the inhabitants are slaughtered; the buildings, including a treasured library, are burned to the ground, and Cora once again flees for her life. Historically, Black communities have had a tough go of it. In the South, they were harshly segregated, denied services, and badly shortchanged regarding education, work opportunity, property ownership and nearly every social amenity. In the North, segregation was nearly as complete while social and political equality remained a distant hope. Worse, like Valentine Farm, a large number of Black communities were brutally attacked and even destroyed.

*The Underground Railroad* portrays unforgettable images of slavery, of the ordeal of escape from it, of people caught in its vortex. Yet it is most grating as a mirror held up to American society and history, providing a reflective reality that we have been pathologically reluctant to acknowledge.

*Two years ago, Paul and Linda arrived from Ithaca, NY, where Paul taught US history and Linda psychology at Ithaca College. They gladly call TFAD home.*

**Kevin Britton****By Carol Oettinger**

Most of you know Kevin. He is the very efficient, pleasant, tall server in the dining room. When Kevin serves you, you know that all will be well.

There are a number of things about Kevin that you don't find out in the dining room. He went to Hillside High School and is now a full time sophomore at St Augustine College. He plans to go on and study for a doctorate, so he can work in sports medicine. He has always enjoyed all sports, especially baseball and basketball.

Kevin spends his spare time working at a Boys and Girls Club in Durham. His grandfather, Mr. Loyan, who started the club when Kevin was a boy, has been his mentor. This club was a place where boys and girls could have a safe place to be with people who cared. Many of them had no other safe place to go. They could learn and play sports. They could also get tutoring in reading, math or any other school subject with which they were having trouble. Or they could just hang out.

As Kevin got older the club became sponsored by the United Church of Christ. Kevin continued to attend; he was on the basketball team and later became coach. He also began tutoring the younger boys and girls to help them learn and grow. As many of the children do not have a father in the home, Kevin models for them what an adult man can be and do. He does this for the love and kindness he was shown as a boy, and, I would say, out of the goodness of his heart.

I am proud to know Kevin Britton and to have him as part of my life here at the Forest.

*Though she's from the Midwest, Carol Oettinger has lived in Carolina for 50 years. She did take time out to spend two years in the Peace Corps in Fiji and a year on a houseboat in Key West. She loves her family—her children and her ten grandchildren and twenty-five great grand-children ranging in age from 6 months to 19 years. And one reason she loves living at The Forest is how the staff become family, too.*

## Pioneers

by Joanne Ferguson

When The Forest opened, the pioneers either lit in apartments in the area awaiting their summons or drove straight from their homes. The initial plan had been to start with cottage 1 and proceed numerically, but that opened the possibility of moving-van traffic jams in cul-de-sacs, so it was abandoned.

**Peg and Phil Lewis** landed at Wood's Edge apartments near Woodcroft, and she bought some chrysanthemums to plant in her garden-to-be at cottage 50. From cottage 49 across the street **Bernice Hopkins** came running to welcome her and wish her a quick summons. The Hopkins and a couple on Silver Maple Court had been the first to move in and though they had been welcomed with a dinner of shrimp cocktail, a splendid steak, dessert, and champagne, Bernice said they found that when the staff went home at 5pm, it was a little unsettling to feel all alone in The Forest.

Peg became the first female president of the Residents Association. She was on the committee planning the new Health and Wellness Center and recommended that the back door close to the Clinic be added. The next day the architect came back with the drawing, and this handy door was accomplished. Peg's children call it "Mom's Door."

**Molly and Frank Simes** had sold their house and had to vacate before they were summoned, so they found a place at Wrightsville Beach for a happy month on the ocean.

They loved it so much that they returned every year for fourteen years. Molly volunteered at Duke Gardens, where she and Frank donated a golf cart for drives around the gardens. Foresters affectionately refer to it as "Molly's Trolley."

**Evebell and Bob Dunham** drove straight from Hinsdale, Illinois, to Willow Oak Court. After some time had passed, Bob spoke with **Nelson Strawbridge**, the first elected president of the Residents Association, about how it would be good for The Forest to have a newsletter instead of the little sheet called The Echo, and Nelson agreed and said, "You put it out, and I'll get the association to pay for it." Thus *The Forester* was born.

**Mary Ann and Don Ruegg** arrived from Chicago on a miserable cold, cloudy, wet day in April of 1993. Management treated them to a guest room for the first few nights. Mary Ann managed the Lunch Bunch for years, scouting out restaurants, booking tables, and arranging transportation.

We have **Ethel Foote** to thank for her tireless work toward getting our Medicare beds approved for the Wellness Center, a truly valuable benefit to us.

**Elizabeth Dube and Bert** moved from Hudson Falls, New York. Elizabeth was among those who started the garden plots; hers were at the entrance to the gardens, and hers the most beautiful and well tended of all. It was she who discovered our infestation of fire ants and sounded the alarm.

These listings can't begin to cover all the resident initiatives but it brings us to one of their greatest legacies. In order to secure a certificate of occupancy, The Forest had to be landscaped. The Crapos hired a landscaper to lay out trees and bushes for planting, where they lay in the hot August sun awaiting the event. As the cottages and apartments filled at two or three a day, and the trees were planted, the men formed a committee, secured hoses, and kept the landscape alive during that long, dry fall and the following summer.

I never tire of hearing stories of these early days: In July before the opening the food service held a picnic in the unfinished dining room, where hard hats were passed out and residents sat on milk crates and ate a box lunch with sandwiches, fruit, and a cookie.

But there are two things I regret very much having missed: one was James Crapo's "This Is Not a Democracy" speech, in which he pointed out (did he scold?) that if three hundred people tried to manage The Forest it made for chaos. The other was the male ballet troupe, costumed in tutus made by Mollie Simes, at a New Year's Eve party in which our pioneer **Glenn Arrington** participated. I still long for a repeat performance.

*Joanne Ferguson, Editor in Chief of The Forester for ten years, was, before that, an editor at Duke University Press.*