

Carol Reese—Our Librarian

by Shannon Purves

Carol Reese became our librarian in August 2016, taking over from **Carol Scott** who had been at the helm for eight years. Carol Reese took on the job not long after the renovation of the Community Center when the Library was relocated from upstairs to its current prominent site. A resident of two years' standing with lifelong experience as a librarian, Carol was an obvious—and wonderful—choice for this demanding volunteer job.

It's really two jobs. She's the librarian and also chair of the Library Committee. Asked what being the librarian requires, Carol is quick to answer: organizational skill. She adds that this is especially true at the moment when the Library is about to return to its pre-pandemic status. Various programs that have been suspended—or at least limited—for the past year-plus must be re-instituted. And new volunteers will need to be recruited and trained. Despite the work, you can tell Carol looks forward to getting back to business.

As chair of the Library Committee, Carol has pretty much kept the usual schedule during the COVID-19 era, running monthly meetings regularly on Zoom, co-managing book sales, keeping the residents informed about how to use the Library during the lockdown, and just being her always available librarian self. One example is her informative monthly *Forester* column, "Library Science 101." Another is the way she made sure there continued to be special displays and new books available.

Asked about her pre-TFAD life, Carol explains that she has always been a librarian. "My first volunteer job was in my elementary school's library when I was in the third grade." At that time—late 1950's—that particular school, in Valley Stream, Nassau County, New York, was the only one in the area with a "real librarian" on staff. Carol loved



Photo by Bennett

shelving books, filing cards and just learning how libraries work. She never looked back. After high school and college (Hostra University), she won a Florida State University graduate scholarship to pursue a Masters in Library Science.

With the degree in hand, Carol landed her first job at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft, NJ, where the library setup was departmental. Carol was hired to run the Science Library. Next came the assignment to create and run a Reference Library for overall departmental use. Finally, she was asked to build a Business Library's collection.

At about this time—the late '80's—the use of computers for online information search was just beginning and Carol enrolled in one of the first training programs for librarians so she could train Brookdale faculty and librarians in the process.

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The Forester

The newsletter of the Residents' Association of the Forest at Duke, Inc., 2701 Pickett Rd., Durham, NC 27705. Published monthly except July, August, and September by and for the residents:

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President's Podium



by Lois Oliver

I expect all of us like to be independent and would like to remain so as long as possible. The new program, The Forest at Home, is designed to help us all do that. The Forest is committed to keeping us independent.

We might just need some help for an hour a week, a couple of hours a day, or help for occasional longer periods. Those of us who are single may just need some company for a couple of hours now and then. Or we might be a bit unsteady, but want to go for walks with or without a walker or walking sticks and it would be more comfortable to have a companion with us. We all know how important it is to prevent falls. Those who have visual difficulties could use a younger pair of eyes for some tasks. Help with managing showers and other personal needs is also important. If we need blood pressure checks, dressing changes, help managing our prescriptions, or other services needing more expertise, there will be Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to assist with these.

The Forest's commitment to keeping us in our cottages and apartments as long as possible is important, and I hope we can all appreciate it. ¶

In Memoriam

Mary Leonard

May 7, 2021

In This Issue ...

The front-page article highlights the work of resident volunteer Carol Reese, a professional librarian applying her skills in our Library.

Don Chesnut ruminates on whether dogs go to heaven. In the October 2020 *Forester* he and Debbie lamented the death of their long-time cat, Nikki, who had entered cat heaven the previous May. Don opines that dogs should go to heaven ... and he assures us that Nikki would concur.

Resident Banks Anderson describes the history of one small, but meaningful, planting on The Forest's campus impacted by the Health Center Renovation project.

Squirrels, squirrels, squirrels ... cute little creatures who with ingenuity and persistence entertain, challenge, and perplex us. Six residents describe noteworthy experiences with squirrels.

This issue is the last *Forester* of Volume 26. Our next issue, in October, opens the 27th annual volume, a number only two less than the "age" of The Forest. We wish you a wonderful creative summer, and look forward to publishing your poems, stories, and sketches when the Fall returns. Due to space constraints, not every submission will see print, but we'll do our best to bring as much to our readership as we possibly can. ¶

Archived full-color issues of The Forester are available under Quick Links at <http://www.ForestRes.org>

Library Science 101

by Carol Reese

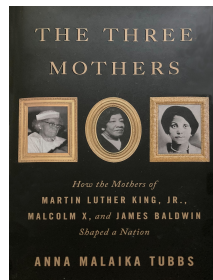
GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

Starting this month, the Library is once again a full-service library. Resident-volunteers are again available to assist you in using the library Monday-Saturday most mornings and afternoons. So feel free to ask them for help. If you are there when no one is available, still feel free to leave a written message at the library Circulation Desk or email me at reese.carol911@yahoo.com.

As part of our normal service, we can now accept large donations of books again. Since the Friends of the Durham Library are again taking donations for their book sales, we can pass on to them the books we can't use. Once we pack up these books, our Maintenance staff trucks them to their donation drop-off place. This way no part of your donation is ever wasted. Just remember, when you make a large donation of books, please place them in the workroom at the back of the library. This will make it easier to sort out what we can use and what we should donate to the County Library system.

BOOK COMMENTARY

In honor of Mother's Day, I decided to read *The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation*. These three women, Alberta King, Louise Little, and Berdis Baldwin, were born within six years of each other and their lives spanned the 20th century. The author, Anna Malaika Tubbs, had to dig through the writings and speeches of others in order to piece together their lives. Being 'only' Black mothers, they weren't encouraged to write their own stories. So they learned to live through their children. All three women set strong examples for their children under circumstances that would have terrified anyone. As Malcolm X said: "The mother is the first teacher of the child. The message she gives that child, that child gives to the world." While not an easy book to read, it is an important start to reclaiming a major part of Black history. 🌿



NEW ADDITIONS TO THE COLLECTION

Books added in March:

- *Big Lies in a Small Town*, by Diane Chamberlain [FIC CHA]
- *House of the Spirits*, by Isabel Allende [FIC ALL]
- *Long Bright River*, by Liz Moore [LP MOO]
- *Master of His Fate*, by Barbara Taylor Bradford [LP BRA]
- *Midnight at the Blackbird Café*, by Heather Webber [FIC WEB]
- *Mike Nichols, A Life*, by Mark Harris [B NIC]
- *Serpentine, An Alex Delaware Novel*, by Jonathan Kellerman [LP KEL]
- *The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin...*, by Anna Malaika Tubbs [920 TUB]

Books added in April:

- *Angle of Repose*, by Wallace Stegner [FIC STE]
- *Kaiser's Web*, by Steve Berry [FIC BER]
- *Plague of Kinfolks*, by Celestine Sibley [FIC SIB]
- *Russian*, by James Patterson [MYS PAT]
- *Searcher*, by Tana French [FIC FRE]

Books added in May:

- *A Whole Life*, by Robert Seethaler [FIC SEE]
- *Black Church: This Is Our Story*, by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. [277.30 GAT]
- *Every Day Is a Gift*, by Tammy Duckworth [B DUC]
- *The Affair*, by Danielle Steel [FIC STE]
- *Transient Desires*, by Donna Leon [LP LEO]
- *Soul of a Woman*, by Isabel Allende [LP 305.42 ALL]
- *Whereabouts*, by Jhumpa Lahiri [LP LAH]
- *Klara and the Sun*, by Kazuo Ishiguro [LP ISH]
- *Sooley*, by John Grisham [LP GRI]

Are There Dogs in Heaven?

by Don Chesnut

Are there dogs in Heaven? A strange question you might say. Why would anyone want to know? Why would anyone care?

In 2005 Debbie and I visited the Galapagos Islands. It was in the Galapagos where Charles Darwin in 1835 at the tender age of 26 made his initial observations on the variety of giant tortoises and finches and other things that led to his epic book (published some 24 years later!) *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. According to Darwin living things evolve and adapt depending on their environment, and, basically, we have all—plant and animal—come from some initial *source* or *few sources* and have diversified through natural selection. During our Galapagos trip we were reminded of this and how Darwin's theory has so greatly changed the way we view nature, including, of course, ourselves.

The DNA makeup of man and animals and other living beings is very similar, consistent with the idea of natural selection guiding the development of living beings. We recognize the great similarities between *man* and *animals*; they both have feelings of pain and joy, are able to reproduce, and can communicate with each other and often with other species. I could tell when our cat Nikki was unhappy, or hungry, or contented.

The theory of evolution is backed up extensively with scientific evidence and has shown to be consistent with our observations time after time. The phrase “evolution is only a theory” is really rather silly. Do you believe in the special theory of relativity? Do you believe in the theory of non-relativistic quantum mechanics? Do you believe in gravitational theory? To the extent they are applicable, they have been tested and have been shown to explain our observations and, more importantly, allow us to make predictions that have been verified. They work.

It's rather like the old backwoods farmer who was asked if he believed in baptism. “Believe in it?”, he said. “I've seen it happen!” So, too, we have seen relativity and quantum mechanics and gravity—and *evolution*—happen.

Of course, accepting evolution doesn't solve the problem of how things first were that then began to evolve, nor, for that matter, whether life arose here on earth or was transported here from an external source (the panspermia hypothesis). The starting materials had to come from somewhere and we can't see back beyond the Big Bang some 14 billion years ago. There

is biological evidence for “life” starting some 3.5 to 4.0 billion years ago, but no one knows yet just *how* it started. The Big Bang for many scientists is where the concept of God or creator or supreme being comes in. After all, it would take Someone (notice the capitalization!) pretty darn smart to have designed the evolving universe as we know it.

But I don't want to argue here the case for evolution or for God/creator for that matter but rather want to accept both as reasonable and then see where it leads us. Nor do I want to try to define heaven but rather adopt it as a concept that most religions accept, that it may exist, however defined, as a higher level of being, perhaps a oneness with God. However defined our main question is basically its exclusivity or lack thereof.

So here's the main question: if evolution is true and all of us—man and beast and plant—have come from the same source, do we share the same relationship with God? Why not? Is the soul of the dog intrinsically different from that of a human? Isn't it rather anthropocentric to think we humans have been uniquely chosen by God? Are there dogs in heaven? It's not a trivial question.

We could easily ask this of a cat, or a gerbil, or a horse. Or mouse or ant or fly. Fly? Some might object to the fly for, as Ogden Nash put it:

“God in His wisdom made the fly

And then forgot to tell us why.”

But I think we have to be inclusive. Which of God's creations would He exclude?

Are there dogs in heaven? I suppose it might depend on what heaven is like.

There is an old movie called “A Guy Named Joe” in which the actors Spencer Tracy, Van Johnson, and Irene Dunne play characters in a story set in World War II. Spencer dies in a military action and finds himself in heaven and directed to go back to earth and help out a young pilot. The young pilot he is assigned to falls in love with Spencer's former fiancée, and you can imagine the complications that arise.

In this movie the scenes of heaven show an empty sky, not very bright, and everyone walks around on what appears to be a layer of flat cloud. There are no trees, there are no animals, there are no plants. Pretty dull. I don't think I would like that sort of heaven.

What do I think heaven might be like? Imagine yourself now at home or at your favorite location at the beach or in the mountains in the early phases of

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Dogs in Heaven...

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evening with a brilliant sunset, all your physical pain and discomfort gone, all loved ones present to share happy memories. (Only *happy* memories!) Now, take away the pine trees and the dogwood, or the seashore and ocean. Take away the sunset. Take away your loyal pets. Absent these things it doesn't seem much like a heavenly place to me.

The point is that I don't think heaven can be less wonderful than those collections of things we consider wonderful now on earth. And to me that means, in particular, our pets and the other animals whose care we are entrusted with.

Are there dogs in heaven? I hope so. Will Rogers is quoted as having said:

"If there are no dogs in heaven, then when I die, I want to go where they went."

But this raises some difficult questions. Are there turkeys in heaven? What about the one that visited your dining room table last November. Tennyson's Ulysses statement might be restated "I am a part of all that I have et," quite literally true. We are all part of the food chain, and, happily for us, we're at the top of it—currently.

We could all be vegetarians I suppose. But plants are living things, too, and if God caused dogs to be here, the same must be true of corn and peas and tomatoes. And poison ivy, for that matter. (I don't think Ogden Nash had any poetry about poison ivy.)

The Bible doesn't help us either. In Genesis 1:26,27 it is stated that God made the plants and animals before he got around to Adam and Eve.

"And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (KJV)

That would seem to take care of things. Man is in command and everything else is subservient to him, animals and plants be damned! But, of course, the Bible was written by Man, and it would have to be the way Genesis puts it. You certainly would not expect to find the Bible quoting God as saying, "Well now folks, I've made Adam and Eve, but I'm going to put the snake in charge...."

And a critical question, the basic reason for the previous material. Did God reveal Himself through

Christ or the prophets *only* to us humans? One might argue that Man was in most need of help then—and now! It is often said that the main thing that differentiates Man from the beasts of the field is that Man kills for reasons other than food. Not a nice way to be thought of.

But maybe God in His wisdom—not ours— has revealed himself to all creatures. Wouldn't that be consistent with our observations of natural selection from a single source? And wouldn't that be wonderful to think that we all—plant and animal—are related in God's universe and one day will share a new home, together again, in the best way possible. Can't other living things, as we humans do, have a sense of God?

Darwin thought it overall a pretty picture. In the concluding chapter of his *Origins* book he wrote:

"There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved."

It makes sense to me. And it is consistent with present-day scientific theories.

One of the many pictures Debbie and I brought back from the Galapagos is of a female sea lion and her young offspring. The female sea lion appears to be one of the most gentle creatures you could find, and this in my mind is reflected in this particular picture. I call it "Madonna and Child." You get the idea.



Are there dogs in heaven? I hope so! I personally think so. Just remember that dog spelled backwards is... Well, you know. And I'm sure God does, too.

Don Chesnut—Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at Duke, poet, and playwright—is a frequent contributor to The Forester.

Fleur-de-Loys

by Banks Anderson, Jr.

No, it is not a typo. Louis VII of France decorated his coronation robe with stylized yellow irises, fleur de loys—flower of Louis. Later Capets adopting his logo referred to them as fleur-de-lys. The purple irises blooming near TFAD's tobacco barns in early Spring prompted this prose. And just in front of our Cottage 40 were about a dozen beautiful yellow ones. While Louis' golden irises date from the 12th century in Paris, the history of our beautiful ones goes back to the 1930's in Durham.

Duke Hospital opened its doors in 1931. After the very short tenure of his predecessor, Frederick Moir Hanes of Winston-Salem was named to the chair of the Department of Medicine. It was a very felicitous fit. Fred and his lovely wife, Betty, had circumnavigated the globe in first class aboard the Queen Mary for their honeymoon. Upon deciding to move to Durham, they built their house of Duke stone up the hill from what is now the Duke Karsh Alumni Center. Fred loved irises and bred them as a hobby behind his house. He and Betty were friends of my family, as my father was also a Duke physician. They became even closer when Fred presented my mother with bulbs of a yellow iris that he said were named his "Mildred" variety for her. Mildred planted and coddled them, and later a few were passed along to Nancy and me. As I write they are blooming in front of cottage 40.

Fred Hanes' gift to Durham and to world visitors was the expansion of his iris garden. Down the hill behind his Durham house was a swamp with a creek running through it. It was to be a lake, but depression money was tight, and it was left a mess. Fred was the physician to the Duke family. He needed his

back yard cleaned up and a more pleasant stroll to his office. Perhaps since he and his wife were childless, he also wanted a future for his beloved irises. Sarah P. Duke, the widow of Benjamin Newton Duke, was a grateful patient of his. Mrs. Duke was amenable to cleaning up her doctor's back yard and provided the funds to do so. The mess disappeared. Soon what is now the Duke Gardens lawn contained 40,000 irises. I do not know how many, if any, were golden. Later with help from daughter Mary Duke Biddle, to honor her mother, the garden was redesigned with formal terraces. There was a planting of irises. If you took the path to the right of the gazebo, it was down to the right



Photo by Banks

Photo by Banks

Fleur-de-Loys...

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The field of blue iris in bloom in April 2021 near the TFAD tobacco barns. Planted originally by retired Duke professor Bernard Peach (then in Cottage 29), they are being tended currently by Ann Inderbitzin.



of this path. The iris bed has moved from time to time. At some visits I have not been able to find one. When I have discovered irises blooming, most have been purple. The front-yard yellow cultivars shown in the photos of the previous page are soon to disappear along with our cottage, but our daughters and daughter-in-law have shown interest in giving the golden Mildred irises a new bed.

Louis VII and Fred Hanes and Mildred and I have loved these golden ones. Not so the 18th century Paris revolutionaries. They chiseled the fleur-de-lys from all Paris buildings. I hope our flowers will continue to delight. And fleur-de-lys still decorate New Orleans and Quebec where, as yet, they remain politically correct. ♣

Banks Anderson, MD, is Professor Emeritus of Ophthalmology at Duke, amateur astronomer, ham radio operator, and frequent contributor to The Forester. He was born and reared in Durham.

Carol Reese...

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Although she had tenure at this point, Carol decided to leave the college for another type of work where she could learn more about using computers. So, in 1988, she accepted a position at the American Society of Civil Engineers in the Publication Division, headquartered first in Manhattan and later in Virginia, where her job was to move their paper-based index to a digital database. She next developed an online system for their journals, moving on to conduct research for the society and, finally, to develop an online database on the history of civil engineering. Carol says, “By the time this was completed—in 2014—I was ready to retire and move here!”

Clearly still enjoying the work she has pursued since the age of 8, Carol has, much to our benefit, found a good way to extend that passion as TFAD’s librarian. It is time consuming, but never mind: as long as she has time to devote to another of her passions—shooting pool—she’s fine.

TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE FORESTER

Perry Como and Me

I was wearing a black patch following a cataract operation, otherwise he would never have been able to identify me.

My husband and I were in New Orleans. It was the beginning of Mardi Gras and Como was King Bacchus. Film crews were out on Jackson Square televising the decorating of the little carts for the parade, and I was taking pictures.

Someone said, “Here comes Perry Como!” As he was about to climb into a cart, a wardrobe person hurried up with a pair of trousers, and Perry was removing the ones he was wearing. I was standing very nearby with my camera and, as he looked over at me, I put it behind my back. At this, he smiled and waved.

There were some spectators, and we were invited to join in the filming. When it was over, Perry spotted me and came over. “Thanks for not taking that picture.” We exchanged a few pleasantries and I said, “You look like you’re enjoying this.” “I am,” he replied, “and when I stop having fun I can always go back to cutting hair.”

—Edna Wilson, TFAD Pioneer

(Volume 7, Issue 9, June 2001)

Squirrel Tales

Our Forest is full of wildlife, and squirrels are the creatures with which we are most likely to interact. They provide entertainment and frustration in abundance, as these stories reveal.

From Sharron Parker:



A Sassy Squirrel

My cottage garden came with thriving strawberry plants, as well as strawberry-loving squirrels. One day a squirrel appeared outside the window with a huge berry in its mouth. I pounded on the window and yelled at it through the glass. Did the squirrel drop the berry and run? No, it stared at me smugly and ate the berry as I watched.

From Jeffrey Collins:



Upstairs Downstairs

I used to live in a house with cedar wood siding surrounded by thick forest. One day we heard strange sounds coming from our attic. We called Critter Control, who came and verified the presence of a squirrel, which they captured and returned to the surrounding woods. But the sounds returned, and on their second visit they discovered a nest with a litter of newborn squirrels. The determined mother had chewed her way back into the attic through our cedar siding to get to her babies. This time, after mother and babies were removed, we had the siding patched and had a metal cage placed over that area in case she chose to return. When that did happen, the squirrel was captured in the cage and left there for a while to warn other potential intruders against assault on our house.

Our chimney provided another way for squirrels to enter our house. And one did make it down the chimney into our fireplace while we were out. Despite there being closed glass doors in the fireplace, it managed to throw itself against the door hinges and thus get into the living room. When we returned we found a frantic squirrel running around the room,

peeing on virtually every piece of furniture. My wife and I opened all the doors, and then proceeded to play "goalie" trying to steer the culprit out of the house. We thought we had succeeded, only to be frightened to death when the squirrel leapt from under the sofa about 8 feet into the air (remember the scary scene in the movie "Wait Until Dark"?). We finally got the critter to flee and had a wire cap placed on our chimney to avoid such fun in the future.

From George Williams:



Squirrels Galore

When we moved in to the Forest, some twenty years ago, we were assigned Apartment 2007. This has proved highly acceptable, partly because of the spacious view of the wetlands and the pool. And added to that view were many rabbits running all around. They were ornamental, appealing, and lively. We became accustomed to many rabbits until the first squirrels appeared on the scene. At first they seemed to live comfortably with the rabbits; a few years later they began to outnumber the rabbits, and then all of the rabbits were gone. Where they went, I do not know; but they were no longer here. They remained absent until, a few weeks ago, when one or two rabbits were observed. Our view now includes many squirrels—often four or five at once—and an occasional rabbit. Oh, the wonders of Nature!

From Elodie Bentley:



Squirrella and Me!

I love my fourth-floor balcony. I can survey my domain, and greet people as they walk by. But it has been a battle to retain my ownership of this balcony.

A few years ago I was away

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Squirrel Tales...

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for several weeks; when I came back and checked my balcony I found a large, but organized, pile of twigs, branches, leaves, and parts of my balcony plants. What on earth is this? I couldn't imagine, but my son said immediately, "squirrel nest!" There were no little squirrels yet, thankfully, and he helped me dismantle and dispose of the nest. I thought the nest builder had left the area. But no, she was, in fact, clinging to the wall (remember this is fourth floor) waiting for me to get off her balcony. Thus it began!

For the next several years, the nest building was attempted, usually in the spring, and with some plant destruction. One dismantling was enough. Squirrella and I coexisted, if not totally amicably, it wasn't open warfare either.

Then I had the bright idea that I could have a bird feeder inside the balcony where the dropping seeds wouldn't bother those below me. It worked. The birds had no fear of feeding from feeders attached to the glass doors with suction cups. But neither did Squirrella; and she was too heavy for the suction cups. For a couple of years this was the standoff: I would shoo her off and enjoy the birds; she would come when I wasn't there, the bird feeders would be knocked to the ground. Eventually they were beyond repair. I rigged a more secure system that I thought would keep Squirrella from the bird seed. Imagine my expression when I looked out one morning and saw her hanging, upside down, with feet and arms around the tube of the feeder, munching away. I concluded that she was going to get the seed no matter what, but at least she wasn't able to pull the feeder down.

For a week or so, Squirrella was absent. I was sad to think that one of our hawks or an owl had dined on her. Silly me! Yesterday she came back, and she had brought a friend and they were gamboling about my balcony as though it were their personal fiefdom! I am wondering if the friend will turn out to be a friend with benefits and there will be renewed nest building attempts.

Now I accept defeat.



Photo by Elodie Bentley

From Carol Oettinger:



My Squirrel Adventure

It all began when I took possession of a squirrel cage that a friend left behind when she moved. I love to feed the birds and have been battling predatory squirrels forever. I put the cage out on the back porch and forgot it, until my daughter Janet, who can fix anything, came to visit. She had it ready for action in a moment. We put it back on the porch and I forgot about it until after she left a few days later. When I went out and found a very irate, trapped squirrel. Now, how to relocate the little villain?

I consulted my friend, Mal, who didn't know what to do, but was confident that I would figure it out. The squirrel was making ugly faces and chattering unflattering comments all the while. I put on my thick gardening gloves and put the cage in the trunk of my car, being very careful not to get near the gnashing teeth. I took it down the road to where I saw a FedEx truck, and asked the driver if he would release the critter in the patch of woods next to the shop. He said, "Lady, I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole." So, I set off for the animal shelter, several miles out into the country, where I left the squirrel, cage and all, on the front porch. When I got home, I called the shelter to be sure they had found their latest guest.

There was a message light on my phone. The message was, "This is Samantha Squirrel. My husband went out this morning to find food for the children and he hasn't come back. Have you seen him anywhere?" Mal got the last laugh, but I got rid of my squirrel.

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Squirrel Tales...

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From Peg Woerner:



Come Home, Baby Squirrel

My first encounters with the squirrels who visited my terrace were adversarial. I am a flower lover, and did not appreciate their digging up my zinnias. I started watching out; when I saw a squirrel, I went out and shook my cane at them and yelled. They usually leapt into the nearby oak tree, only to return, of course, another day. Somehow most of the flowers survived despite the invaders' propensity to cuddle up in the zinnia pot. I tried moth balls and commercial repellents to no avail.

In early spring I discovered that a small hole near the bottom of a large, sturdy self-watering planter had been enlarged by chewing. The well on the bottom, meant for water, was full of dirt, and as I began to watch I saw a squirrel going in and out of the enlarged hole during the day. Aha! This could be a nest. There could be babies in there, I thought. This was at the beginning of the COVID lockdown; squirrel babies seemed more interesting than flowers, so I changed from adversary to interested observer.

Now I was seeing only one squirrel at a time, and concluded it was always the same one. Its behavior changed too. Imagine having eye contact with a squirrel! When I went out, it didn't retreat as before. It stood, rigid, and we locked eyes. I was always the one who looked away first. Squirrel never moved until I left. When I watched from inside, I could see it lounging on a deck chair, going in and out of the presumed nest, and sometimes leaping into or out of the tree.

Soon a little head peeked out of the hole, and then a cute baby squirrel tiptoed out. Baby and Mom entertained me for much of the summer, scampering around, chasing and grooming each other. I worried about whether Baby would be able to function in the real squirrel world, having grown up in such an unnatural environment, or if it could even acquire the skills needed to leap into the tree to exit the terrace. I didn't see it happen, but somehow Baby did get into the tree. I watched as Mom tried to coax Baby to leap from the swaying tree branch to the terrace rail, to return. I never saw her succeed,

The oak tree has been pruned, making the leap to my terrace much harder, and squirrel visitors are now rare. I have my flowers, and the lockdown is loosening, but I miss you, Baby. Please come home. 🌿

Music Lessons by Ursula Kappert

Elodie Bentley's funny article in the May *Forester* about learning to play the recorder prompted me to tell you about the music lessons in my family.

During the war when we still lived in Berlin, my sister and I, like all well-brought-up middle-class young girls, had to take piano lessons. Our teacher was a tall, skinny spinster, Ms. Piesoke, who always dressed in black or brown garments almost down to the floor and never went out without a small hat of a similar color. We used to walk to her apartment for our lessons.

On top of her piano were two gypsum busts, probably Bach and Beethoven, who stared down at us with stern eyes when we played. My sister was quite afraid of them. In a corner of the room sat Ms.

Piesoke's ancient father or grandfather, drooling, and we never heard him say a word.

Sometimes we "forgot" that we were supposed to go for our lesson, but here came Ms. Piesoke in her usual garb down the street with her poodle (or Spitz) on a leash to get us. I think we enjoyed playing the piano, but not the lessons.

After the war, when we lived in that old tenant farmer's cottage near the North Sea, we did not have a piano. So my brother, the youngest of us three children, had to make do with a recorder. As everyone knows, it's no pleasure to listen to someone learning to play the recorder, particularly the soprano version. My sister and I made fun of my brother's attempts and called the recorder the "Whining (or Whimpering) Bone." He got mad and either broke it or threw it away. 🌿

Rocks

by Carol Oettinger

For as long as I can remember I have loved rocks. As a small girl, I searched for rocks along the river bank or in fields. I arranged them around my mother's flower beds. There were always a few special ones that I wanted on my dresser. I took some of the most special ones to school for "show and tell."

When I got older and began to travel, I always found a rock that represented the place I was visiting. When I was in Arizona, I was given a beautiful chip of obsidian, which is pure black. Sometimes my suitcase got so heavy that I had to sort through my rocks and leave a few behind. I liked the variety of shapes and colors and textures. This love of rocks has gone on throughout my life.

Some rocks have been polished and are used as precious gems. The African diamond mines have been exploited for years. These rocks are special minerals that were gathered and pressed for millennia. Geodes are round rocks, which, when cut in two, show several different layers of minerals. The center is hollow and often contains a gem stone. I have a lovely geode that I treasure. There are some places in North Carolina where it is possible to dig for gem/rocks.

The day I saw our rose garden path edged with wonderful rocks was such a happy one for me. I thanked our grounds manager many times for this gift. It takes me a long time to walk by because I have a number of pet rocks, and find new ones every day. One of my favorites is an oval shape with three bands of color. In the middle is a brown bow tie, only slightly askew. Another is the soft coral round rock with a white upside down smile. A large red beauty has a bright white cap. An orange, square rock has different tiny mushroom-shaped projections. A number of the rocks have lacy-lichen decorations. So many of them look as if an expert carver had created them. Each walk beside the rocks is a delight. The roses are pretty, too. I do glance up at them now and then.

The Two Wolves

A Cherokee Story

from June Whitaker

A young boy came to his grandfather filled with anger at another boy who had done him an injustice.

The old grandfather said to his grandson, "Let me tell you a story."

"I, too, at times have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and hate does not hurt your enemy. Hate is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times.

"It is as if there are two wolves inside me. One wolf is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way.

"But the other wolf is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is helpless anger, because his anger will change nothing.

"Sometimes it is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, because both of the wolves try to dominate my spirit,"

The boy looked intently into his grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which wolf will win, Grandfather?"

The grandfather smiled and said, "The one I feed." ¶

There was a program on PBS called "Life's Rocky Start." It demonstrated the ways in which rocks, which were all there was at first, created earth. As the rocks split, the elements inside formed the building blocks to create life on earth. It is clear to see that rocks have created life. Perhaps that is a part of the reason why I love rocks. ¶



Garden Tour

May 14, a day to visit residents' gardens. Sheri Sampson and Tina McLeod are pictured at **Sharron Parker's** cottage garden. Continuing clockwise: **Nathalie Goodrich, Muriel Rioux, Jo Mooney, Lynn Langmeyer, Judith Ruderman, and Lois Fussell** in the Community Gardens.



Photo by Robyn Sloan



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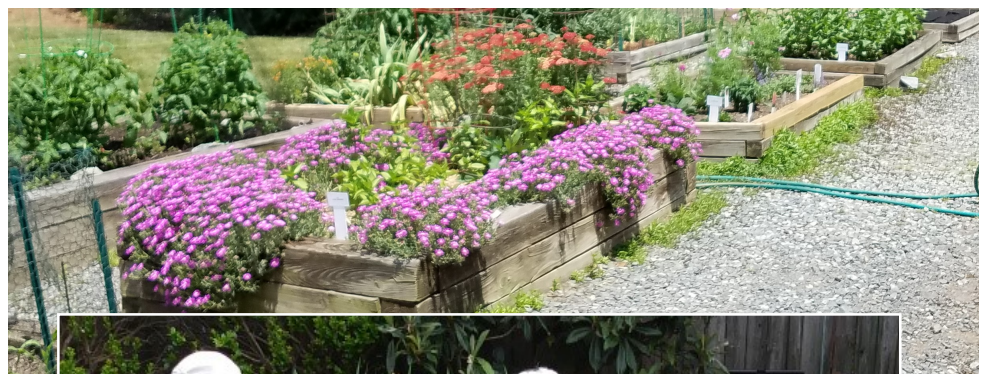


Photo by Robyn Sloan