

Meredith Poole—Our Forest at Home Administrative Manager by Shannon Purves

It's a little challenging to find Meredith Poole's office which is located in a former studio apartment—#2050—at the end of a long hall of first floor apartments and nowhere near other TFAD management offices. But once a visitor rings the doorbell and is welcomed inside by Meredith, The Forest at Home's first manager, the effort more than pays off. Her presentation of this very welcome addition to the services offered by The Forest is detailed and wonderfully informative.

Asked to summarize the program's basic purpose, Meredith explains that it is to provide support in the home so as to maintain safety and quality of care for the Independent Living residents here in our community. As such, it is, she says, designed to provide both in-home aide services—i.e., bathing, dressing, personal hygiene, medication oversight, etc.—and companion services like helping to shop for groceries, accompanying to appointments, planning outings, playing games, and general companionship. It also offers specialty packages such as support following hospital discharge for which overnight options are available. Meredith offers a printed folder that includes full lists and detailed descriptions of the plan's services, hourly charges, billing arrangements, and application forms.

The Forest at Home, a revenue structure approved by the TFAD Board, was developed over the past 18 months in a collaborative process that included Director of Health Services Lee Ann Bailey-Clayton, COO Sharon Pitt, and Program Director Sarah Haney (now Director of Community

Life), along with valuable input from the Resident Health Committee. Meredith, who was hired in mid-

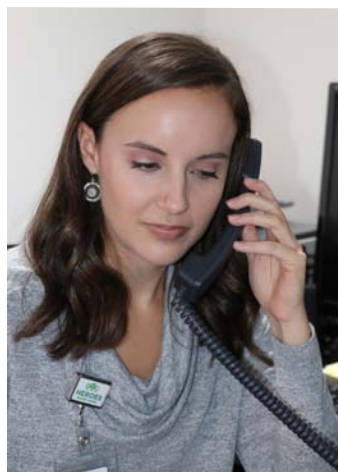


May to help complete the work of establishing the program and to begin training for its operation, was named Administrative Manager. And, on July 6, The Forest at Home opened for business...in Apartment 2050.

As of November 1, Meredith had scheduled 140 hours of home help (a number very likely to have increased by now). She emphasizes that these are hours of scheduled care, not "on demand" care. Asked how she locates caregivers who can accept this kind of part-time, hourly work arrangement, she responds that The Forest's HR department has done a great job finding people looking for something other than full-time work, though the pandemic has definitely made recruitment—as well as retainment—more difficult. She hopes the COVID-19 slowdown the early Fall brought will continue into Winter and Spring.

Raised in Troy NC, Meredith holds a BS in Health Care Management from Appalachian State University and two Masters degrees (in Business and Health Administration) from UNC-Charlotte. She served for three years as Assistant Health Care Administrator at Croasdaile Village. In 2020, she joined the Sheps Center for Health Services Research at UNC-Chapel Hill where she worked for eight months as a research assistant until she learned of The Forest's job and applied for it. We are very glad that she did!

Photos by Bennett Galef



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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Carol Carson
Carol Reese

President's Podium



by Carol Carson

Last month **Lois Oliver** bylined this column. Writing it was one of many items on her to-do list as president of the Residents' Association (RA). As the baton passes, so to speak, I would like to thank her again for leadership during a challenging year. Thanks should also go to many others. On the RA Board, **Margaret Keller** finished two terms as vice-president—probably the first to serve with four different RA presidents. **Tom Keller**, **Bill Losee**, and **Robert Pavan** finished terms as chairs, respectively, of the Health, Marketing, and Finance Committees. Just before the end of his term **Mac Mellor** had handed off his responsibilities as chair of the Activities Committee to the vice chair. Across the committees, some residents are rotating off, and we all can join the committee chairs in thanking them for their time and efforts.

Some may recall that at the October RA meeting I referred to the standing committees as the beating heart of the RA. A few examples illustrate how diverse committee efforts pump life into the RA's purpose of fostering activities that meet residents' needs and interests.

- A touch of color! Thanks to the Lobby Flower Subcommittee, you can count on seeing fresh, colorful arrangements on the low table in the reception area.
- The Dining Services Committee advocates for resident interests. For example, in the transition from COVID-19–restricted dining back to a more normal situation, the committee successfully presented the case for reinstating the community table in Heartwood (and now in Greenwood's for breakfast).
- “Invaluable” is often used to describe the Pictorial Directory, a publication of the RA that allows us all to match names and faces. A hardworking team is busy preparing next year's edition.

Different RA committees may be featured in future columns—to highlight both the purposes they serve and the opportunities they offer to be involved in the life of our community. †

In Memoriam

Priscilla Sotolongo	October 30, 2021
Sarah Rogers	November 4, 2021
Barbara Birkhead	November 28, 2021

In This Issue ...

In the November issue the Editors invited you, our resident audience, to submit your work for publication in *The Forester*—be it prose, poetry, drawings, or something else that we can print. This issue contains an episode by John Howell from a memoir in progress, an excellent example of one kind of offering we seek.

You can watch Health Center construction through the worksite camera at

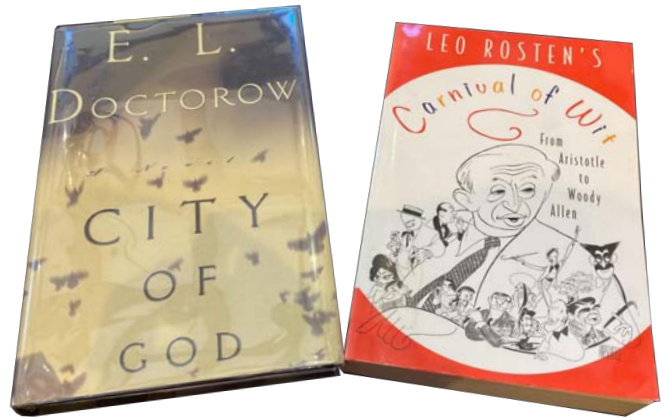
<https://bit.ly/TFADConstructionCameras>

LIBRARY SCIENCE 101

by Carol Reese

AMERICAN JEWISH WRITERS BOOK EXHIBIT—through December

In case you haven't had time to peruse the current Library Book Exhibit that highlights Jewish-American writers, you still have the month of December to enjoy this selection. As America is a nation of immigrants, almost anyone may identify with the writers' exploration of the conflicts between the secular society in which they live and their religious and social traditions. If you wish to dive right in, read E. L. Doctorow's *City of God*. It is and isn't a dramatization of the experience of questioning, losing, then partially regaining one's faith. There's something to pique and challenge the reader's imagination on virtually every page. On the other end of the scale of Jewishness, you may wish to enjoy Leo Rosten's *Carnival of Wit and Wisdom*, a delightful book that anyone who likes to collect witty remarks will enjoy. The quotations in this book are organized by theme. It's a book to pick up for a quick read when you need a lift. And for a more modern take on the constant search for identity, there is Harlan Coben's *Innocent*. This novel is centered on a pair of plot lines—a young woman's search for information about her birth mother, who was a Vegas stripper murdered ten years ago, and the much more recent death of Sister Mary Rose, a nun with breast implants. Coben provides twists and turns before these puzzles are solved. As you can see, there is something for everyone at all different levels of enjoyment.



LIBRARY'S HOLIDAY SALE

The sale took place on Friday, November 12th from 1:00–4:00 p.m. First, I wish to thank **Carol DeCamp** (and her husband, **Dick**), **Linda McBride**, and **Rachel Hamilton** for all their help with the sale. The Library made over \$80.00. This money will go into the Library's book budget to help buy new items for the collection. The items donated to the Library that weren't sold will be given to the Friends of the Durham Library so that they may sell them at their County-wide book sales. The money they receive helps to support the County Library system. Therefore, your donations to our Library not only help support the Forest Library but also help provide support for the County-wide system. As you can see, your donations do not go to waste. No matter what, they end up supporting libraries in the area.

LIBRARY COLLECTION UPDATE

Currently, we have over 4200 individual items in the collection. Fiction (approximately 1500), Mystery (approximately 800), and Large-Print (approximately 600) books make up the majority of the collection as you would expect. From September 2021 through mid-November, 76 different residents checked out 235 separate items.

HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

Hope you all have a great holiday season, and we'll talk again next year. ‡

Welcome New Resident

Irma Kahn

Apt 4001 984-439-8858

Irma grew up in Yonkers NY. She went to State University of New York at Oswego for two years and then to Hunter College, majoring in history and minoring in elementary education for her BA degree. She earned her Masters Degree in education at Hood College. She was then involved in teaching for more than 40 years She taught kindergarten, early grades, and special remedial work in reading and mathematics.



While doing student teaching during her senior year in college, Irma met Samuel Kahn in an interesting way. They were married in 1960. Their marriage lasted 60 years, until his death in 2019. Samuel's work was in biochemical

nutrition, with a special focus on anemia. His longest position was with the United States Agency for International Development. They lived in Potomac MD, and their children grew up there. It was hard to leave that home after all those years.

Irma was active in volunteer work in her community and in her temple. She wrote for school publications and was recognized by parents and faculty for her work. She was a public school teacher for most of her career. She has a great collection of topical outfits that kept the children smiling.

Irma's daughter, Edith, is an occupational therapist. She lives in Carrboro NC; she has two children. Irma's son, Kenneth, lives in Richmond VA. He has a doctoral degree in engineering and business, and is a dean at Cleveland State University. He has two children.

Irma has many interests. These include reading, dancing, exercise, and interacting with people. She probably can't resist teaching her grandchildren when she feels it necessary. She will be adding her skills to life at The Forest, and her big Teddy bear will greet all the hall walkers. ‡

Always Fashionable Hats

by Ursula Kappert



Some people say that their memories reach back to their very early childhood or even baby years. I'm afraid I am not one of them. Nothing comes to mind until I must have been about five or six years old. We lived in an apartment house in Berlin which had a mostly weed-covered courtyard in the back. That's where the good housewives hung the laundry and beat the dust out of the carpets, whether on alternate days or at the same time, I don't know.

My younger sister and I often played in this backyard, where thistles grew in abundance. Out of the seedpods of these thistles, which stuck so nicely together, we once made ourselves caps. In vain did my mother try to take these off our heads. She practically had to shave off all of our hair! To this day my sister maintains that this was the beginning of my love of hats. ‡

Ursula Kappert (top) in a stylish chapeau; middle, the cockleburs that she and her sister fashioned into painful crowns, as shown in Jo Mooney's sketch (bottom).

The sharp hooks of these burs led a Swiss engineer to invent VELCRO® in the 1940s.

Moving On

by Catherine Berg

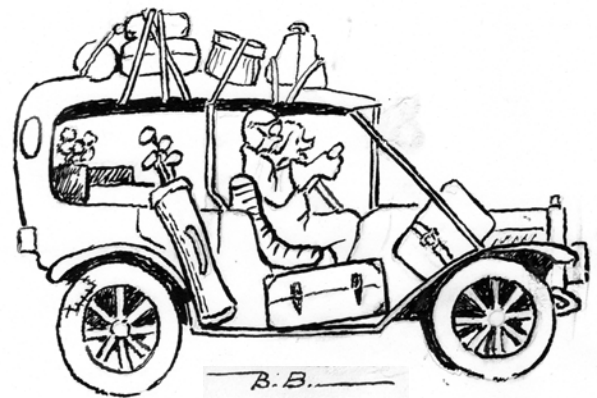
(After hearing David Whyte read his poem “Santiago”)

We call this frenetic activity
“Moving to North Carolina:”
Sifting, stacking, tossing,
organizing, boxing;

Shedding once important papers
no longer relevant to who we are.
Boxing up photo albums rich with memories
waiting to be revisited.

Packing unread books that promise
new pleasures, adventures, and understandings:
giving away those that we once loved,
that no longer illuminate the way forward.

Parting with old clothes, no longer fitting,
inappropriate for a new climate
or for introducing ourselves
authentically to new neighbors.



The people we meet on this adventure
will kindly ask us: our names, where we have lived;
why we have moved; about children and grandchildren;
about careers and what we hope to have accomplished.

All questions and answers will be
well-intentioned and well-rehearsed.
But it will be a while, requiring patience and faith,
until one day, someone will dare ask us:

who we are,
who we have been,
about our lives and our losses,
what we love and what we fear:

will ask us about our journey,
who we are still becoming.
And will meet us on this new road,
recognize us, and call us by our true name: *Pilgrim*.

September 19, 2021

Diwali Festival of Lights Celebration

by Steve Laning

With the days growing shorter, we are fortunate each year at this time to celebrate Diwali, the five-day Hindu festival of light and love and victory over darkness. Our Forest celebration was again inspired by **Usha Gulati**, organizer extraordinaire. It's no surprise that we enjoyed a "full house" in our auditorium yesterday afternoon with many attendees dressed in traditional Indian style. And with the wonderful colored lights on stage and over the entry, it all was quite a sight to see!

Usha also invited her friend Nina Das, a resident of Chapel Hill, to perform for us. Nina stunned us all with her remarkable dancing skills, elegantly complemented by her beautiful sari and jewelry. Nina first performed a dance telling the story of Prince Rama and his Princess Sita. Prince Rama is one of the greatest heroes of India due to his victory over the demon king, Ravana, a

prince of darkness. After a well-deserved rest, Nina treated us again with another dance, this time about love for the beloved.

Usha then shared several photos of Indian saris, including some she wore during her wedding to **Umesh** nearly 59 years ago. Those saris and Usha were very beautiful indeed. It was then time for many of those costumed residents and staff members to go to the stage. With the auditorium lights dimmed and with everyone on stage and in the audience holding tea candles, we

wished all friends, family, and staff a happy Diwali. Our only regret is that we must wait until next year at this time to celebrate Diwali again! 🌿



Photos by Richard Ellman



From left to right: Kelsey Fry, Steve Laning, Nathan Summers, Jean Vail, Sarah Haney, Sharon Pitt, Tess Thomas, Arpita Chakraborty, Usha Gulati, Nina Das, Anita Sharma, Prem Sharma, Ellen Durrett, and Umesh Gulati

A Pollinator Garden Gets Real

by Phil Baer

I'm happy to report that we now have a pollinator garden at The Forest at Duke. The project began back in late June, when **Elodie Bentley** sent some insect-loving residents a link to a video showing how Duke University had planted a native plants pollinator garden in the divider strips in one of their parking lots. And it was thriving, between expanses of asphalt, without supplemental watering, already providing food and shelter for beneficial insects, with bees buzzing and butterflies fluttering. Maybe, Elodie suggested, we could do something similar here at TFAD. We discussed the idea with Nathan Summers,



The planting crew, left to right: Phil Baer, Ralph Nelson, Beth Timson, Ellen Durrett, Susan Smith, Elodie Bentley; not pictured: Robyn Sloan.



Pollinator Garden Sign

Willow Oak and Forest at Duke Drive was our choice, and we called in an expert to see if it would work. Annabel Renwick, horticulturist and curator at Duke Gardens, met with us in July. She agreed that the rocky clay soil, barren of plants, would make a fine native plants pollinator garden. And she sent us a list of plants that she recommended for the site, along with suggestions for how many plants per square yard and planting instructions.

We decided that a kidney-bean shape would best

fit the site, and that a total area of 60 square yards would be a manageable undertaking, providing space for 250 plants. We selected 16 varieties from Annabel's list, such as Rattlesnake Master and Beebalm, Anise-scented Goldenrod and Hoary Mountain Mint, and Butterfly Weed and Stokes Aster, with flowering dates ranging from last frost in the spring to first frost in the fall, colors ranging from white to yellow, to red-blue-purple, plants that would provide both food and host sites for eggs and caterpillars. And we found them at local nurseries like Mellow Marsh in Siler City, Big Bloomers in Sanford, and Cure Nursery in Pittsboro—local plants from local suppliers for local insects. Planting was done by the hardy crew of resident volunteers shown in the photo, over a two-day period in mid-October, followed by spreading a 4" layer of hardwood mulch, a bit of watering to get the plants settled in, and nature helping out with bountiful rain.

A campus tour revealed a number of sites that might work, areas without extensive plantings, sunny, with dry soil, where native plants could demonstrate their ability to thrive in harsh conditions. The northwest corner at the intersection of

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As a finishing touch, an informative sign was added, and in the future there may be a path, and a bench, and a sign listing the plants by flowering dates and colors. We hope that enjoying the garden will help residents appreciate the beauty and benefits of gardening with native plants, a message that was emphasized by Annabel in her November 15 talk here, "All About Pollinator Gardens." There's so much more that we can do. ♣

On Being Fifteen at the Casino Theatre

by John Howell

Before *Playboy*, before *Hustler*, before internet porn, there was the relative innocence of burlesque. *Variety* argued that Toronto's Casino Theatre was the "last vaudeville theater in North America." Maybe so. It offered the usual singers, magicians, ventriloquists, acrobats, and jugglers of vaudeville. But it also offered the naughty comedians and striptease "exotics" of burlesque. Not everyone approved of the burlesque. Toronto's clergy certainly didn't. Collectively, the Anglican, United Presbyterian, and Baptist ministers argued that disrobing to music was immoral, that the Casino was "a den of iniquity," and that it should be shut down. Instead, Toronto's Police Commission created a "morality" squad that scrutinized the initial performance of each stripper, evaluated the performance for decency, and sometimes demanded changes. Though the Casino was unhappy with police supervision, it wanted to stay in business.

My buddy Jim Clark and I didn't know the police watched the strippers take their clothes off. We were just fifteen. We didn't know many girls with their clothes on, let alone off. We didn't have sisters, and girls didn't attend Upper Canada College, our prep school in Toronto. We had started there in 1944, while the war was still on. With our fathers overseas, our mothers had "boarded" us at the school, so we would have male supervision and "stay out of trouble." It didn't work. Apart from the usual sins, we smoked cigarettes, we drank beer, and, in 1948, we went to the infamous Casino Theatre. (You were supposed to be eighteen, but Jim had the vague hint of a beard—and got us tickets.)

The Casino offered a chorus line, naughty comedians, B-grade detective movies, and sometimes, though not always, a stripper—all seen through a mist of cigarette smoke provided by the lungs of the mostly male audience. Jim and I had hoped to see either Carmella, "The Sophia Loren of Burlesque," or Valerie Parks, "The Personality Girl." We hadn't heard of Dardy Orlando, who was "appearing in person from Montreal."

After seeing *The Jade Mask*, a Charley Chan movie starring Sidney Toler, we raced down the aisle and got seats in the front row, about ten feet from the



stage—and where we could see the drummer in the orchestra pit below the stage. Girls were our first interest, but drums were a close second. We both played drums in our school's marching band, but we had recently seen Gene Krupa's sensational drumming in a movie, and we wanted to learn how to play on a pearl marine drum kit, with all its tom-tom drums and cymbals.

The drummer at the Casino, though, wasn't anything like Gene Krupa. He actually looked bored when he played. And when Dardy Orlando came on stage, looking blonde and beautiful, he just looked at his music while she swirled, shimmied, and switched in response to his rolling on the snare drum, hitting on the tom-toms, and tapping on the cymbals. In fact, I remember the drummer better than I remember Dardy, even though I laughed with the rest of the audience when she pretended to "strip" a long glove from her arm while the drummer rolled on his snare drum.

Today I barely remember Dardy Orlando, but I vividly remember Ella Logan. It was on our second—and last—trip to the Casino. Once again, we were able to get seats in the front row, close to the stage. The

(Continued on Page 9)

On Being Fifteen...

(Continued from Page 8)

marquee said that Ella Logan was “appearing in person from Broadway.” We didn’t know who Ella Logan was, nor where she was from. We just wanted her to take her clothes off.

But we were in for a surprise. After the comedian told his last naughty joke and the applause ended, the stage went completely dark and an unseen announcer said, “Now, in person, direct from Broadway, the star of ‘Finian’s Rainbow,’ Ella Logan.” Someone played on a piccolo, and a spotlight focused on the dark-haired woman standing in front of us. Then, as the lights came on full, along with the music, she looked up at the balcony and sang

I hear a bird, a Londonderry bird

It well may be he's bringing me a cheering word

Then she smiled at Jim and me, as if she knew us, and reached out her arms and sang

I hear a breeze, a River Shannon breeze

It well may be it's followed me across the seas

Then tell me please

How are things in Glocca Morra?

Years later, I can still hear Ella Logan voice the question, and I can remember again what it was like to be fifteen and foolish. No, she didn’t take her clothes off. Instead, she sang more songs from the musical, and Jim and I hummed them all the way back to school. †

John Howell was a professor of American Literature and chair of the English Department at Southern Illinois University. This is an excerpt from a memoir in progress.

A MEMORABLE HOLIDAY

Halloween Memory

by Lila Singer

It was 1957 and I was taking my three-year-old twin sons out for their first trick or treating. We practiced saying “Trick or Treat!” several times. When we arrived at the first house and friendly Mrs. Mahon answered the door, I said to the boys, “Now what do you say?” They both smiled and said, “Hi!” Ah, sweet memory!

TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE FORESTER

About Christmas

It wasn’t always this way, you know—Santa Claus and the jolly old elves, flying reindeer, the tree of falling needles, unlikely gifts, and sales afterwards. As we all know, the American Christmas was slow in getting started here. New Year’s Day was the great holiday in this country until well into the 19th century. Once it got here, however, fact and fancy followed soon thereafter until it became what we have now, a blend of piety, nostalgia, general celebration, and lots and lots of commerce. As we all know, “Christmas comes but once a year,” and maybe a good thing, too.

Perhaps Phillips Brooks, way back there in the late 19th century, caught the spirit of Christmas as it still is today:

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight!

Christmas in lands of the fir-tree and pine,

Christmas in lands of the palm-tree and vine;

Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn

and white,

Christmas where cornfields stand sunny and bright.

Phillips Brooks also wrote “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

And, of course, Dickens had the last word. What would the spirit of Christmas be without Scrooge and Tiny Tim from whose childish lips came the universal message, “God bless us every one!” After all the rest, it’s the message that counts.

—John Tebbel

[The Forester, Volume 8, Issue 3 (December 2001)]

Food for Thought

by Banks Anderson, MD

All animals must take up more calories than they expend. Some animals conserve energy by waiting for food to come to them. During the pandemic we at The Forest have been ambush predators pouncing on food appearing at our doors. But happily, we are now again out hunting and gathering. Our senses are again employed to choose and reject, and taste is one such sense. It is not the same as flavor. If you neglect the mouth-feel of temperature and density, scientifically there are only five tastes. They are salt, sweet, sour, umami, and bitter. These are distinct neural messages from taste buds in the oral cavity and pharynx. These organelles react to chlorides, to sugars, to pH, to glutamate, and to poisons that are bitter. Alcohols are bitter.

There are at least twenty-five gene alleles for bitter. While those first four tastes are nutrient guides, the last is a danger signal. It is hypothesized that humans experiencing vastly different environments evolved bitter genes that protected them from local plant poisons.

Since we have two bitter genes, the chance that your alleles are the same as those of someone unrelated is extremely small. A classroom variability demonstration is the ability to taste filter paper strips laced with PROP.* A quarter of the class tastes nothing. Half the class appreciates some bitterness. Another quarter, the supertasters, find them disgustingly bitter.

Wine is around 12% ethyl alcohol. Red wine has tannins, also bitter. Ethyl alcohol is a well-known killer of sophomore students. Methyl alcohol is even more toxic. Given the wide genetic variation in the perception of bitterness, it should be obvious that expert wine ratings are meaningless to anyone not their twin. Presented with black wine glasses, studies have shown alleged experts to have difficulty duplicating their own assessments when the same wine is presented to them twice in a series. Scientifically having wine “tastings” is oxymoronic.

But taste is not synonymous with flavor. All the senses are used by experts in evaluating comestibles. Smell is one of the most important and any oenologist will smell a wine as well as assess its color before taking a sip. Humans recognize and remember the odor of thousands of different substances. It is not

wine taste, but wine flavor that you appreciate. Saccharomyces and other fermentation yeasts are more important to flavor than the *Vitis vinifera* variety. The “sour” in sourdough bread is not from the wheat. Before Pasteur a bottle might be vinegar or smell of manure. No more. Most vintners do not trust the yeast that lives on the ripe grapes or that the *Drosophila* flies in. They sterilize with sulfur dioxide and add back their own carefully vetted culture of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. Now even the cheapest plonk is palatable. If fermentation is stopped early, sugar remains to sweeten the wine. If fermentation is complete the wine is dry. Most have an acid pH. If wine labels were important, the yeasts should be listed. But the assessment of any wine’s flavor is unique to you. Evidence is strong that if you paid more you would believe it tasted better. Even assuming the labels don’t lie and are not counterfeit, only the price tag really matters.

Taste buds are collections of cells arranged in oropharyngeal papillae that also vary greatly. Many of these thousands of cells seem to be replaced every ten days and they decrease with age. The expert’s count is probably more than a thousand different from yours. Temperature also affects taste. Human biological activity slows when their internal temperature is below 37 C. The ice in cocktails and a preference for very cold wine or beer may be related to a reduction in bitter signals from cooled oral neurons. As the alcohol content increases, so do the attempts to disguise its taste. Juniper and sloe were added to produce a more palatable gin. Bartending is all about adding and mixing and cooling to cover up bitterness. A genetically reduced bitter sensitivity has been hypothesized to increase the danger of alcohol addiction. But we seek danger and novelty and mind benders. We may not order our vodka straight up but we do order our coffee black and prefer dark chocolate and tannin rich burgundy. But numerical wine ratings are mostly fiction as tastes do widely and wildly differ. †

*PROP is 6-n-propylthiouracil. Similar testing has employed filter paper strips containing 0.007 mg of phenylthiocarbamide (PTC) available from Carolina Biological Supply in Burlington.

A MEMORABLE HOLIDAY

A Christmas Apart

by Phil Baer

Starting in 1962, when I took Ellen home from college to meet my parents at Christmas, and fully expecting that we will make it through the coming one, we've been together for 59 out of the last 60 Christmases. While there were other memorable ones among the 59, this is about the one we spent apart.

It was in 1963, and we were spending a year in France, enrolled in the *Cours des Etrangers* at the University of Strasbourg. Wanting to improve our college French as much as possible, we avoided other Americans and became friends with a few French students. One of them, Yvette, invited Ellen to go home with her to Paris for Christmas. And I found an invitation on a bulletin board, from a family wanting an American to spend the holiday helping their four kids, ages 8–18, learn some English.

We bid each other *adieu* at the train station, and I set off on a two-hour bus ride to *Lunéville*. After I missed my stop and hitchhiked back to my destination, the family welcomed me with a supper of *pain y potage* and asked if I wanted a hot-water bottle to take to bed. It was warm and comfy in the kitchen-dining-living area, so I declined. As I crawled into my frosty bed, I realized there was no central heating. A quick learner, I happily accepted the offer the next night.

When the family somehow discovered that I knew how to play bridge, they asked me to teach them. After we learned about 30 bridge-related words in each other's languages, I coached them through a few hands played face up to demonstrate simple bidding and play. The evening drew to a successful close after, with much kibitzing and uproarious laughter, *Maman* carried out a successful *finesse* against *Papa*.

Christmas morning, there was no tree, but there was one present per person next to the simple *crèche*. My gift was a key-ring, with a tiny *Lunéville* coat-of-arms. When I praised the youngest daughter's new sewing machine, saying "*C'est très jolie, ton machine à coudre,*" she immediately corrected me: "*Ta machine.*" To this day, *la machine* is the one and only French noun of whose gender I am certain.

Back in Strasbourg, Ellen and I found each other at the American Express office, that wonderful business which served as a communications center for students abroad. To cap off the memorable-ness of our Christmas apart, we, or at least I, sampled the city's New Years Eve traditional dinner—smoked eel. Taste was fine, texture a bit mushy, and Ellen averted her gaze, while she told me of her memorable Christmas in Paris. Maybe someday she will tell you about it. †

A MEMORABLE HOLIDAY

Christmas Eve in Abqaiq

by C'Ann Saterbak

Step back in time to Christmas Eve of 1979; our family had been living in the desert of Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia, for four months. Santa, in his red suit and jolly "Ho! Ho! Ho!" had delivered wrapped gifts to our three daughters, ages 6, 9 and 11. Then we had a decision to make: should we go to Christmas Eve service, as was our tradition, or not. Earlier in the day, the Catholic priest, wearing his vestments, had stepped outside of the building in which he had been holding mass. He had been promptly arrested and taken to jail! We Protestants were holding our service in the school's multi-purpose room in a few minutes.

After a very brief discussion, Bob and I decided that we must stand up for our convictions and not be unduly threatened by those with other belief systems. In a leap of faith, we hurried our daughters into the car and drove to school. Truthfully, I don't remember anything our young pastor said that night. I do remember that he was very pale, that the ushers locked us into the room and that I was filled with deep peace and joy for the opportunity to celebrate Christ's birth with other believers. We worshiped without incident!

After the service, we invited one of the contractors who lived outside of our camp to join us for Christmas dinner the next day. We hardly knew him, but we knew he was alone, and he had taken a greater risk than we had in attending worship that night. We had a delightful dinner and just wished we'd invited more.

As we look back now 40+ years later, I'm sure we'd make the same decisions again. What kind of witness would we have shown our daughters if we had just skipped worship and enjoyed the feast of Christmas dinner without sharing it with others? This was the most memorable Christmas we ever celebrated! The overwhelming peace, hope, joy and love which we experienced during those 24 hours so long ago fill us each Advent season as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior! †

C'Ann and Bob Saterbak grew up in Birmingham AL. Bob is a Georgia Tech engineer. His working career with ExxonMobil took them around the world, including this four-month stint in Saudi Arabia, as described in the December 2019 Forester.

An Autumn Pumpkin Party

by Judy Jo Small

Who says that Happy Hour must begin at 5:00 p.m? A very happy hour was had by a group of Forest residents on a November Friday morning in a Teach-and-Taste session led by Elizabeth McNamara, the Forest’s dietitian. Tables in Taproot were adorned with colorful fall napkins and pumpkin-related tasting samples. In the background, a hotly contested pool game took place, with intermittent shouts of delight and dismay, as we settled in to sample the treats and to learn pumpkin facts and fun.

First, there was a quiz. You probably know that a pumpkin is a kind of winter squash, right? But did you know that pumpkins are classified as a fruit by botanists but treated by culinary specialists as a vegetable? Do you know what state dominates pumpkin production? Illinois! And do all you grocery shoppers know what company produces 90% of all canned pumpkin? Of course you do! Libby’s! The variety of winter squash Libby’s uses in their canned puree, though, looks quite different from the bright orange pumpkins popular for Jack O’Lanterns.



Elizabeth McNamara



Sharron Parker with bountiful choices

Our group tasted pumpkin muffins and two kinds of crunchy roasted pumpkin seeds, rich in zinc and magnesium. According to our dietitian, pumpkin seeds have been reported to be helpful in alleviating male pattern baldness. *(Disclaimer: the author of the present article takes no responsibility for the accuracy of this report.)* We tasted pumpkin butter, lower in calories and fat and higher in fiber than peanut butter, though some said it looked less appealing. Nearly everyone liked Trader Joe’s savory Pepita Salsa, made with pumpkin seeds. Pumpkin Ale (also from Trader



Joe’s) was zesty with hints of clove, ginger, and cardamom.

Finally, tasters got fully into the act by making their own individual pumpkin parfaits, topped with pumpkin granola. Some of the parfaits were pretty as a picture. 🍂

Photos by C’Ann Saterbak



Harold and Judy Vick and Ann King toast with their own Pumpkin Parfaits.



June Whitaker and Mary Anne Walker sample different zesty creations.