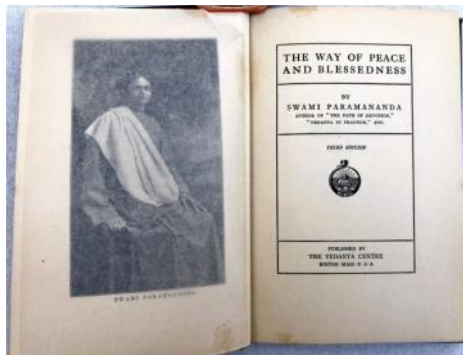


Beyond Romeo and Juliet

by Donald Chand

At a Self-Realization session here at The Forest, I received a sheet summarizing Swami Paramananda's words on love. Instead of filing it away, I left it on my dining table. The next day, it reminded me of a conversation with my wife Shirin on our wedding day in 1966, and I felt drawn to explore that memory. What began as a simple recollection grew into something larger. The classical Greek words—*eros*, *storge*, *philia*, and *agape*—once only academic terms, became keys to understanding how we connect with one another and with the world. First, I recalled a conversation on our wedding day. Second, I'll share how remembered incidents became a dialogue years later.



Part I: A Wedding Day Revelation

July 25, 1966. The Methodist Church in Faizabad, India

We had just been married. As the car pulled away, the minister's words from *Corinthians* lingered in the humid air:

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

And it ends with:

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Rain hammered the roof of our car. Lightning split the dark sky. I heard Paul's words as if spoken directly to me, telling me how to behave as a husband. "When one loves someone," I said aloud, almost to myself, "everything Paul wrote about love seems redundant."

Shirin turned to me with a knowing smile. "The way you're applying Paul's words is too narrow."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You need to look beyond Romeo and Juliet."

Her words startled me. "Romeo and Juliet's love was an overwhelming force! When you're in love like that, everything Paul says happens naturally."

Her eyes glinted. "That overwhelming force led to devastating consequences."

Her words hit me hard. "What? What did you say?"

She stayed quiet, letting the weight of her observation settle. Outside, the storm raged on. Inside, her words created their own weather.

I wrestled with what she meant. Romeo and Juliet's love ended in tragedy—young lives lost, violence renewed. Their passion was genuine, but blind to everything beyond itself. It could not heal generations of family hatred.

Was Shirin suggesting that Paul's words pointed to something very different from romance? But what could be broader than the love between husband and wife? The question lingered, unfinished. The rain would stop, but her challenge would stay with me for years.

Part II: What Agape Looks Like

September 25, 2011. Waltham, Massachusetts

We sat in our living room, sunlight slanting across teacups. After forty-five years, our silences had grown warm and comfortable. But that afternoon, I needed to return to her words from our wedding day.

"Your words on our wedding day never left me," I said. "You told me to look beyond Romeo and Juliet. I've wrestled with that for decades. What did

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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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Publish in *The Forester*

This monthly magazine is by and for the residents of The Forest at Duke. The editors welcome original contributions from all TFAD residents: stories, memoir pieces, essays, poetry, illustrations, cartoons, short videos, and photos. Past pieces have ranged widely in theme and style, though we do discourage pieces with determined opinions on religion and politics. Photos, graphics, and eye-catching illustrations can add interest and clarity to your written words—so include them if you have them. Aim for about 750 words per piece.

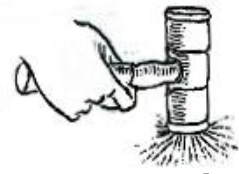
The editors can provide advice and suggestions. Submissions should be sent as digital files (ideally in Word format) attached to email addressed to Managing Editor, Lisa Camel, at Forestermanager@icloud.com. Due to space constraints, not every submission may see print immediately, but we will do our best to bring as much to our readership as we can.

The Forester is also looking for interested residents to work on our staff. If you like to write, edit, or proofread, just contact Lisa—we'd love to meet you. ☘

In Memoriam

Dr. Madison Spach	September 25, 2025
Jo Anne "Jo" Mooney	October 2, 2025
Nella "Nell" Barlow	October 10, 2025
John LeBar	October 17, 2025

President's Podium



by James Freedman

My first posting to the Forester's *President's Podium* was in the December 2023 issue, the first month of my two year term as your Residents' Association President. I explained that I had accepted the position as a form of insurance, to assure TFAD continued to satisfy my changing needs and requirements. I acknowledged the fact that my needs had changed from when I came to The Forest in 2014 and recognized the fact my needs and view of the world would be quite different in 2025, when compared to 2023.

That "prediction" has come true. The world around us has dramatically changed over the past two years, as well as our overall capabilities, and I've personally experienced a noticeable shift in my needs and desires. Fortunately, The Forest has changed as well, and in a positive way, to allow all of us to not only exist but to enjoy or at least embrace the changes we have experienced. Your Association has played a major role in affecting those changes.

Construction had just started in 2015, not long after my arrival at The Forest, with the renovation of the Community Center. After just a short respite, construction of the newly-named Cohen Health Center was initiated and was completed and populated shortly after the start of my term. The demolition of the old Health Center and the construction of The Terraces commenced almost immediately and has been a dominant factor in our lives up to the present. The Residents' Association has continued to play a key role in providing the resident views, needs, and interests over the past two years to the Administration as it has implemented changes that will define the future of The Forest. The good news is the new construction is now over. The bad news is that some work is still required. We can still expect renovation and repairs to be implemented for a considerable time that will have an impact on our daily routines.

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President's Podium

(Continued from [Page 2](#))

Your Association's emphasis under my tenure has been on continued open communications between residents and Administration and on successful integration of The Terraces into the TFAD community, and I feel that positive progress has been made in both areas:

- Communications have improved over the past two years, with the increased use of technology. A summary report of monthly association activities has been made available on the Cubigo and RA websites, shortly after each board meeting, that announces key highlights and changes covered by each Association committee, keeping residents up to date. Assistance was provided to field test Cubigo to help optimize its usability.
- Early planning meetings were held between the RA board and the administrative executive team to define and address issues that would affect the smooth introduction of The Terraces residents as well as the lives of current residents. Assignments were then given to individual association committees to assist the administration in addressing those issues. Work is still ongoing with mentoring, the establishment of caucus committees, and community integration efforts; and work will continue until all issues and problems are addressed. This could not have been done without the time, effort and commitment of your board and the many volunteers on the committees and subcommittees that define the Residents' Association.

It has been a pleasure working with so many talented and dedicated people, and one I have enjoyed thoroughly. I would also like to acknowledge the open and frank dialogue that was established with Anita Holt and her executive team, since communication is a two-way street. As a result I feel The Forest is in a strong position to meet not only my needs, but all our needs, as we continue to move forward. Is the job finished? Not at all, but there is a strong team in place to continue to represent and advocate for the community and a strong administrative team to manage the corporation. All indications are that we are in a strong financial position as we move forward. More importantly, we

have preserved one of the major attractions of The Forest, its sense of community and openness, while expanding our population by almost 25%.

As I've often stated, I urge all residents, both newcomers and more established residents, to get involved in your Association. It fulfills an important role in protecting your future. After all, the Residents' Association is you. 🌿

Drumming for Peace

by Ellen Baer

Drums in the auditorium—and a dragon! It was quite a show that took place on October 10, at the end of Active Aging Week, making all of us feel younger and more connected to the rest of the world. Takumi Kato and his family are on a mission to spread peace by giving one thousand performances in all fifty states in five years. He's not just an ordinary dad who likes to play the drums: he's a world champion drummer who has won more prizes than I can list and played before more luminaries than I can name, including emperors and empresses, crown princes and prime ministers. It's clear that as an audience we were in exceptionally good company.



The tradition of taiko drumming goes back more than a thousand years in Japan, and Takumi, born in Japan in 1981, has spent a lifetime training and performing. He also plays the flute and the violin and in 2020 he was a torch runner and musical composer for the Tokyo Olympics. At home he was busy too, teaching his three sons to play the drums

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Sun Days

by Carolyn Cone Weaver

People shake their heads when they learn I once taught sailing. You? Indeed. My first real job. Really tough duty: I walked ten minutes to work through our tree-lined neighborhood, wore shorts and boat shoes, and smelled like the baby oil we slathered over ourselves to get that nice even tan. I worked regular hours, unlike babysitting. I got paid more, too, though not much—even in mid-1950s dollars.

Our village was situated on a bay off Long Island Sound. On bright, breezy summer days, generations from toddlers to grandparents and all ages between gathered at the dock on the rocky beach to play, swim, and sail. My family had a nineteen-foot Lightning-class sailboat—a Firefly. We were “Lightning Bugs” after all. And because we lived just four blocks from the dock, I spent my growing-up summer days on or in the water.

The local sailing club always needed camp counselors, and I had the experience. So for two of my summers during college, they hired me along with three friends to lead the nine-to-twelve-year-old group. The club provided Blue Jays, 14-foot boats moored in the bay, for our lessons. Every morning my friends and I rowed out to the Blue Jays and towed them back to the dock, two counselors per rowboat, towing two Jays each. A tough pull even on a calm day but when the wind kicked up and we had to row through the chop, the rowboat bucked like a coin-operated bronco.

We conducted our on-shore lessons—rules of the road, navigation, knot-tying—on the dock and actual sailing lessons on the bay. Rough weather was the only thing that kept us ashore. Most days were dazzling. Each morning the campers helped rig and raise the mainsails and jibs, white as the clouds above us. Each boat carried three or four campers plus a counselor. Once under sail, the four boats’ bows cut through water spangled blue reflected from the sky. Sun sparkled in our wake.

We rotated the job of skipper among the girls

and boys. Each took a turn at the tiller, tending the sheets, learning the difference between coming-about and jibing and how and when to tack. Serious, in-the-moment exercises, not to be taken lightly by either campers or counselors. Every day—every minute—we were responsible for these young people’s lives.

The campers also had to learn how to bring the boat to a stop alongside the float at the end of the dock, a teeth-gritting feat in the best of circumstances. The day my little group practiced the maneuver for the first time we were in my family’s Firefly instead of a Jay. I demonstrated how to approach the float at a ninety degree angle, push the tiller hard to starboard, and turn the bow into the wind. Done correctly, we’d stop dead in the water with our starboard side lined up against the float.

We were contending with a brisk northerly breeze, so to turn into the wind we had to sail toward the swimmers’ float. Ordinarily that wouldn’t be a problem. But as one of my campers rehearsed the exercise, a little girl, too far away from the swimmers’ float, popped up in the water just ahead of us, and the Firefly was going fast. To miss the child I had to make a split-second decision: crash head-on into the boat float or crash at an angle into the ramp next to the dock? I grabbed the tiller and steered for the narrow gap. “Get down!” I shouted to the children in the boat, and “Look out!” to the swimmers.

People on the dock above us gaped as the Firefly’s forestay crashed into the ramp. We caromed backwards, heeling to starboard. The mast hit the dock. The boom swung over the campers cowering in the cockpit. All of them—the little girl in the water, my campers—were safe. The Firefly had minor damage. As for me, my heart had crawled up into my throat during that minute, but I was otherwise fine.

Now, not only do I have tales to tell disbelieving acquaintances, I have lasting souvenirs of those sun days seventy-plus years ago. As the dermatologist removes another basal cell carcinoma—seven, so far—he asks: “Have you spent much time in the sun?”

“I taught sailing,” I say. ☿



Senior Games, October 6



Welcome New Residents

Norma S. Gindes

Apt. 4046 201 951-5140

normagindes@gmail.com

Welcome to Norma, who moved into The Forest in May of this year and brings to us a strong background of volunteerism and excellence in healthcare leadership. Norma was born in New York City; she grew up in Queens and lived and worked in Manhattan in her early twenties. After



graduating from the State University of New York at Oswego, her first job was as a copy editor for the *Journal of Cell Biology* at Rockefeller University. She went on to work in publishing for ten years at Amphoto, a photography publisher; Springer-Verlag; and McGraw Hill, before settling down with her husband Bob and beginning a family. They bought a house in Teaneck NJ and had two energetic sons who have grown into incredible loving men, wonderful husbands, and fathers of a total of five children—all of them living in Durham!

Norma returned to school to pursue a career in Social Work and earned an MSW from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work at Yeshiva University. It was then that she began a career in non-profit healthcare management, working at a number of nonprofits including Beth Abraham Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing, United Hospital Fund, and Bergen Volunteer Medical Initiative—all

with a mission of improving healthcare for the underserved in New York and New Jersey.

In tandem with her career in healthcare, Norma served as a volunteer in organizations in New York and New Jersey. She was President of the Northern New Jersey Region of Hadassah and went on to serve on the National Board of the organization and on the Hadassah Medical Board in Israel. She has served in a leadership role in the Association for Volunteer Administrators in New York, and in 2001 she served on the committee to celebrate the International Year of the Volunteer in New York City, including the official opening of the IYV by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in November 2000.

Norma and Bob moved to Durham in 2014 to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Adapting to the slower pace of the Triangle, they still found lots of opportunities to volunteer, meet new friends, and spend valuable time with their grandkids. When you see Norma at The Forest, please say hello and introduce yourself—she is interested in meeting new residents and learning more about you! 🌿



Repositioned Community Table in Heartwood

Beyond Romeo and Juliet

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you mean?"

Shirin set down her teacup. "Do you remember what Paul actually wrote? He wasn't describing romantic love at all. He was telling the Corinthians how to treat everyone—strangers, difficult people, even enemies."

"But surely he meant—"

"He meant exactly what he said. The Greeks had different words for love: *Eros*—romantic passion. *Storge*—the affection within families. *Philia*—the bond of friendship and loyalty."

"They all sound like love to me," I said.

"They are. But they're all loves we feel toward people already close to us. Paul was describing *agape*, which is a love we *enact*, often toward people we don't know at all. It reaches beyond our circle."

Something shifted in me. "So when I thought Paul's words would naturally flow from being in love with you..."

Shirin interrupted me. "You were thinking of *eros*. But *agape* isn't a feeling that sweeps over you. It manifests itself in deliberate acts of caring—acts that often require skill or courage, usually for people outside our closest circle." She let the thought hang in the air, as though waiting for me to remember.

I thought of my cousin Camila, in hospice-care in Canada. "Every time we visited, her nails were beautifully painted. A local nail technician came every Saturday to give free manicures to patients."

Shirin nodded. "That's *agape*. She didn't know them, but week after week, she showed up."

"And at your mother's assisted living facility," I added, "her friend came every Sunday with a hymnal, just to sing. Over time, half the residents joined in."

"Another act of *agape*. A gift of presence, freely given."

"There are so many others," I continued. "Doctors volunteering abroad. Strangers stopping to help in snowstorms."

"Or those who give part of themselves," she added, "like people who donate kidneys to save someone they'll never meet." Then she paused. "Do

you remember Fontainebleau, France, —the cherries?"

That memory was sharp. While eating cherries, a pit slid down Shirin's breathing channel. She began choking. I froze, paralyzed by fear. But our daughter Renuka rushed in, wrapped her arms around her mother, and used the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge the pit and save her life.

"Her action was effective because she had both knowledge and courage," Shirin said softly. "That's what sets *agape* apart. It is more than feeling compassion. You need skill and preparation." She went on:

"Remember what Renuka did afterward. Cherry pitters for every household. CPR training for the family. She turned a frightening moment into lasting preparation."

I said with wonder: "*Agape* acts with infrastructure! "Still, something puzzled me. "Why do we call *agape* a form of love? Aren't *agape* acts simply good deeds?"

Shirin considered this carefully. "That's the crucial question. Think about Jesus's parables. The shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep to search for the one that's lost and the Samaritan who stops for a wounded stranger when others passed by. What makes these stories about love rather than just duty or kindness?"

"I'm not sure."

"The shepherd is the *owner* of those sheep, not just a hired hand. His search is driven by the conviction that every sheep matters. He doesn't think, 'I have ninety-nine others.' He thinks, 'This



[Don Chand at Resident Readers.](#)

[Oct. 1](#)

(photo by Sanford Berg)

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Beyond Romeo and Juliet

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one is my sheep, and I will not abandon it.' The Samaritan sees the stranger's suffering as mattering to him personally, even though they shared nothing—neither ethnicity nor prior friendship."

I thought about the nail technician returning week after week to the hospice. "Is her act called love because it sees *the person, not just the need*?"

"Exactly. Kindness can become a habit, almost mechanical. You can be kind while remaining distant. But *agape* creates connection. However short the moment, it says: *You matter—not because I know you, not because helping you benefits me, but because your humanity demands my attention.*"

I leaned back, finally understanding. *Agape* is love put into action. It is practical, caring, and honors the humanity of others. It expands beyond our private circle and grows stronger the more widely it is shared.

Part III: From Drops to Rivers

August 25, 2025. Durham, North Carolina

Shirin has been gone for three years now, but her insights live on. Hanging on my wall is our wedding picture. Looking at her face, I read Swami Paramananda's words aloud.

Love cannot be forced—it must come freely. But if you lack this rare gift, both in its human and divine forms, what do you truly have?

Without love, you are missing everything that gives life meaning."

Why do we love? Because we have allowed ourselves to become channels through which love can flow.

I imagined Shirin's response, as though she were beside me once more.

"The Swami spoke of love in 'human and divine forms,'" she would have said. "That reminds me of *bhakti*—a Sanskrit word for devotional love, the kind of love a devotee feels for God. In *bhakti*, the relationship between devotee and divine is deeply personal. It shares qualities with *eros*, *storge*, and *philia*. They all are loves rooted in close

relationships."

"So, *bhakti* is another felt love?" I might have asked.

"Yes. But here's the question: Can *bhakti* inspire *agape*? When devotional love overflows into service to strangers, when love for God spills into love for God's creation—which includes all people—then felt love becomes training for enacted love."

I remembered Shirin's visit to Gomukh, the glacier where the Ganges begins. "The Ganga starts so silently you could miss it," she once told me. "Drops seeping from the glacier, catching the mountain light. Just below, those drops unite into the Bhagirathi—clear, cold, strong enough to carve valleys."



Gomukh Glacier

Now, sitting before her photograph, I understood more deeply. Individual acts of *agape* are like those first drops. The nail technician's Saturday visits. The church friend's hymns. Renuka's Heimlich maneuver. Each one precious, each one necessary. But alone, they remain scattered gestures.

"If each act of *agape* is like those first drops," I asked aloud, "what carries them into a river?"

I could imagine her pause. "Society's infrastructure becomes the channel."

"Infrastructure? You mean organizations?"

"Yes. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity, the Carter Center, Doctors Without Borders. But also, schools, religious traditions like Sikh *langar*—the communal kitchens that feed anyone who

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Beyond Romeo and Juliet

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comes. Laws that protect the vulnerable. International agreements on human rights. These are the channels that gather individual drops of compassion and sustain them as rivers of care."

This was the truth I had been moving toward for decades. Individual compassion matters deeply—it is the water itself. But without channels, that water evaporates. We need Institutions to multiply the power of individual compassion. I thought of our own community. Even here at The Forest, as The Terraces open, I've seen committees working for months to welcome new residents. Individuals offering invitations. Volunteers giving time. Committees planning behind the scenes. Together with staff, they form a river of care.

Individual acts of *agape* need intentional structures to become rivers of love. At their best, institutions sustain compassion and carry it where it is needed most. Looking at Shirin's face in our wedding photograph, I understood her meaning. She had asked me to look beyond romance, toward a love that sees the worth of every person.

Today I understand that acts of *agape*, when sustained by communities and institutions, gather strength like drops forming rivers. And here's what that understanding asks of us: each act of compassion we offer—whether to a new neighbor, a struggling friend, or a stranger in need—becomes a drop in that river. And when we build structures that sustain that care—committees, programs, traditions of welcome—we become the channels that carry those drops forward. This is Shirin's gift to me: not just understanding what *agape* means, but seeing how it flows through our lives, gathering force, shaping the landscape of our shared humanity. ¶



Who Demands This Much Choice?

by Phil Baer

That title comes from a *Calvin and Hobbes* comic strip, in which Calvin's father, grocery shopping, is confronted by the peanut butter display. The strip begins with him saying: "Look at all this peanut butter! There must be three sizes of five brands of four consistencies! *Who demands this much choice?* I know! I'll quit my job and devote my life to choosing peanut butter! Is "CHUNKY" chunky enough? Or do I need *EXTRA CHUNKY*?" At the end of the strip, Calvin looks in the bag and asks: "Hey, where's the peanut butter?!"

As a twice-weekly grocery store shopper for the past sixty years, I've watched this multitude of choices balloon in every aisle over that time. I've often played the part of Calvin's father, and watched countless others do the same, muttering some version of "Who demands this much choice?" while trying to choose that special container of whatever. I've decided the answer must be "Well, all of us."



If you want to experience an overwhelming multitude of choices, I suggest you go to the yogurt cooler. The first time I ever ate yogurt, or even heard of it, was in 1962. I was studying in France, spending a weekend at the home of a French *ami*, and he asked his *mère* if we could run down to the corner *epicerie* to buy his favorite dessert, something he called "yow-urt". I didn't hate it, but it certainly didn't qualify as dessert. Now, decades later, I've learned to tolerate it, and Ellen likes it, so at the nearby supermarket where I shop I regularly find myself searching and cursing the display of

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Centenarians at the Forest: Rose Boyarsky

by Sherrill Blazer

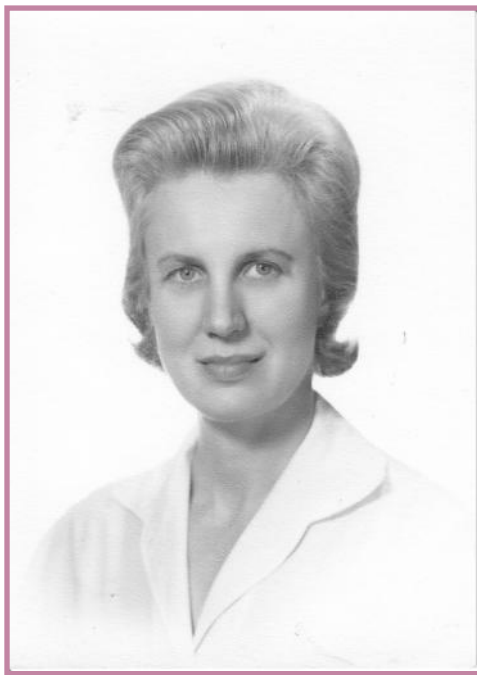
Many of our TFAD Centenarians were born as WWI began, or soon thereafter when Germany was recovering from a humiliating loss from the First World War. This was fertile ground for Adolf Hitler to rise to power. Rose Boyarsky, child of Jewish parents, was born during this time, in March of 1924, in Jersey City, NJ. She had one younger sister, and her parents were American-born citizens. Her father was a businessman who constructed window and door screens with wooden frames, and her mother was the bookkeeper. Her childhood years were normal. She lived in a multi-ethnic neighborhood.

At age thirteen she witnessed an event that changed the course of aviation. It was a time of many advances in air travel which included airships, such as the Hindenburg. It had already made ten trips to the United States, so it was not unusual for Rose to witness these fascinating ships in the air and one flew so close to her window that she felt that she could touch it. On May 6, 1937, nothing seemed unusual, except a thunderstorm, and this is when the airship met its fate. There were many conspiracy theories, including sabotage, but it was finally determined that lightning had struck the anchor ropes and ignited the very explosive hydrogen which filled the ship. Helium was less explosive but it was too expensive to use. Thirty-six tourists were killed, ending the period of airship travel. Similar events are etched in the memories of The Forest residents, such as the shooting of JFK and the tragedy of 9/11.

Later Rose's family became a "sanctuary" home for many friends and family members. Even before the Nazi regime was full-blown, there were tensions in Germany and other European countries. Hitler blamed the Jews for most problems that his country experienced; hatred was growing. Many emigrated to other countries including the United States. Rose's family housed up to twenty-eight people during the 1930's. Those who lived with them helped in many ways to keep the household running smoothly. As soon as residents became independent in some type of career, they moved out, making room for others. Rose reports little tension

within her family during that time, the ultimate of hospitality.

In a few years, Rose would become the first in her family to attend college. However, she watched many of her Gentile friends accepted at colleges of their choosing while she was skipped. Many schools had a cap of 10% for Jewish students, her first experience of anti-



semitism. But Rose did not give up. The University of Vermont accepted her and since she loved the sciences, she majored in chemistry, an unusual field for women at that time. She later studied at Columbia University. Her choice would lead to another form of discrimination: few women got jobs in a male-dominated field. A university official told Rose and others, "You women better behave yourselves; the only reason you are here is because there is a war and we cannot find enough men."

Rose met Saul Boyarsky in college, and they married in 1945. They had three children, Bill, Gail, and Terry. She stayed home for eighteen years as she raised these young ones while the family moved to many places. First, Nuremberg, Germany, when Saul was in the US Medical Corps, then to Duke University for a residency in Urology, then to New York, then back to Durham, to St. Louis, and back again to Durham when they began their time at TFAD.

They were married for seventy-three years before Saul passed away in 2018. While Saul was working and their children had left home, Rose

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Rose Boyarsky

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pursued a career in Clinical Psychology and worked with Masters and Johnson, pioneers in “sex research.” Later she began her own clinical practice.

Rose retired, they returned to Durham, and she volunteered at Duke Gardens. You will find her name online as a long-time friend on the Sarah P. Duke Gardens website. You can also see fun photos of her there, one looking happy and content sitting on a bench her children donated in her honor. She is also a member of Judea Reform Synagogue and has volunteered there.



Boyarsky Family

After interviewing Rose and researching her and the times of her life, I just continued to think “here, there, everywhere and all at once.” I recently saw a poster with the words, “When someone does not give up, it is very difficult to compete against them.” To me, that captures Rose’s life. Thanks to Rose for such a wonderful example for the rest of us! 🌿



(photo by Bob Shaw)



Our TFAD Library: An Open Book (and More!)

by Diane Strauss

No, But I Read the Book...

It’s common knowledge that such film classics as *Gone With the Wind* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* were adapted from popular novels. Now such adaptations are also standard fare for TV networks and streaming services. Want to compare the video to the print? I recently compiled a list of 100 fiction and nonfiction titles that fall into these categories and then checked them against our library’s holdings. We had seventeen. No surprise there. Our small collection consists primarily of donated items; we can’t afford every best seller made into movies. Curious about some that we do have? Here’s a partial list, including *Killers of the Flower Moon*, *Little Fires Everywhere*, *Caste*, and *The Thursday Murder Club*.

Help Us if You Can

I’ve attributed the paucity of current titles in our collection to our modest budget. We do purchase some current titles, reflecting our commitment to supply the Book Club with at least one copy of the titles they select—good reads all—and some of you have also been kind enough to donate newbies after you’ve finished them. Budget size, though, isn’t the only or even most important factor. Since TFAD first opened, its residents have donated books they no longer needed, wanted, or lacked sufficient space to store. Most library shelves are filled to capacity, containing books that haven’t circulated for at least five or ten years. We have little room to grow; the collection needs to be weeded. We desperately need additional volunteers to share the current workload and help with this forthcoming project. Most hours are flexible, and the rest of us who volunteer here will be most grateful. Please consider joining us.

Drop a note or text me if you’re interested or have any questions at TFAD mailbox #3001 or (919) 614-7559. 🌿

Phil Baer

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Lord-only-knows how many choices of “yow-urt.” It’s about 400 choices, stocked six shelves high in eight double-door cabinets, four-and-a-half feet wide, about fifty choices each, giving us the thirty-six-foot long wall of yogurt shown in the photo. My choice is Greek yogurt, no-fat. Ellen’s choice is non-dairy, made from coconut milk plus twelve other ingredients, all natural, of course.

Food choices are broken down into brands, flavors, sizes, and packaging, followed by textures, additives, dairy/gluten/GMO-free, organic, and a host of other individual health and life-style requirements. And as a result of our desire for these individual preferences, the American supermarket has evolved over my lifetime from small, simple stores into the enormities we now face. If memory serves, when I began grocery shopping, there were only three peanut butter brands, in two or three sizes—I don’t think crunchy was an option. If yogurt was in the dairy case, I wasn’t aware of it—closest thing to it was cottage cheese, one size, one kind. Life was simple, food choices few. Now, according to the Food Marketing Institute (<https://www.fmi.org/our-research/food-industry-facts>) the average supermarket carries 31,795 items.



Think about that the next time you go shopping—you’re faced with 31,795 choices. And, if you have one of those intrepid, high-speed workers filling a cart for your on-line, pick-up order—they have to find the specific items you choose from an array of 31,795.

When I go shopping now, finding the right item is the first challenge, but reaching it is often the second. I’ve only lost about an inch in height over my sixty years of shopping, but shelving has grown about three feet taller, and I’ve often had to ask for help to get something off the top shelves. Stocking higher and higher is the only way to get all those 31,795 items into the stores, because they’ve already reached an average size of 50,000 square feet, about as big as most shoppers want to navigate.

It’s too much, it’s ridiculous, but what made it possible? I blame bar codes. Before bar codes, supermarket checkers were the only choice for checking out, and they had to remember code numbers to punch in. They were human, and there was a limit to their memory. Now, with bar codes, nobody has to remember anything. We can even self-check, just scan and bag, and that has become the preferred way. Checkers are vanishing from the workforce, early casualties of artificial intelligence. With AI, we will have unlimited choices and possibly starve in the store, leaving aisles full of skeletons of human versions of Buridan’s donkey, that hungry beast who couldn’t decide which of two haybales to eat first. 🌱



Jack Gartner with his Elephants Display
Curated by Robyn Sloan
(photo by Sanford Berg)

Getting to Know You

by Ralph Nelson

Orientation

A person moving from one community to another often participates in an orientation to introduce the newcomer to the members, facilities, rules, and customs of the new community. It helps the newcomer learn about the physical and social environment within which she or he will now be living. The objective is to facilitate efficient, effective, and enjoyable communication for the newcomer. At The Forest, we want our relationships to be deeper than saying "Hello," "Please pass the salt," and "Do you think it will rain today?"

Orientation for people moving into Independent Living (IL) at The Forest involves four programs:

1. A mentor educates the newcomer about local activities and stores.
2. Life at the Forest talks are presented by administrators to inform the newcomer about dining, housekeeping, building maintenance, finances, health care, etc.
3. A neighborhood caucus welcomes a newcomer in its area to its occasional social gathering.
4. Campus-wide events are created by the Activities Committee to facilitate social interactions between residents and team members.

Newcomers are also helped by friends met through dining and the activities in which they participate.

Orientation for people moving into the Health Center (HC) and their responsible partners (family or friends) may be delayed until a serious medical condition or a move-in schedule has abated. During that time, help in understanding options, costs, and procedures is provided by a Social Worker and the Resident Navigator. The newcomer may encounter complex feelings. Many valued features of life—furnishings, memorabilia, daily schedule, pain management, medications, clothing, dining companions, food, group activities, daily tasks, future plans, image in the community—are altered. Time once used for home chores and leisure activities is now used for medical visits and rehabilitation.

HC caretaker visitors (medical personnel, HC team members) and even the newcomer's own children cannot provide orientation because they don't have time for long conversations and have not experienced the world as the new HC resident has. An experienced HC resident can serve as a mentor to help the newcomer work within the new environment. Small House team members help the newcomer navigate dining and cleaning activities, while HC Activities team members help the newcomer participate in group activities. Fellow residents, either from the HC or from IL, can empathize with the complex feelings of move-in, understand the full (historic) life of the new HC resident, and take the time to develop active engagement.

How Has the HC Changed ?

In February of 2023 all HC residents moved from wings in the old Health and Wellness building to nine Small Houses in the new Health Center. Construction of The Terraces destroyed the short walkway that gave easy access for friends in IL to visit HC residents, so social isolation increased in the HC. Food preparation was disrupted, so new procedures were developed to provide nutritious and attractive meal items. The recent completion of The Terraces has provided a new walkway, which should increase visitation and menu choices.

The Forest is now accepting some "outside newcomers" directly into the Health Center. A video with an abbreviated version of the Life at The Forest series helps them and their responsible partners understand how The Forest operates.

The Small House Concept

This concept suggests that the residents of a ten-bedroom unit should form mutual friendships which go beyond politeness to cordial relations—more relaxed and comfortable interactions in which two people might talk about physical experiences (involving fear, exhilaration, or surprise), but possibly not about highly emotional experiences.

The residents of a single Small House may

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Getting to Know You

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vary considerably in cognitive engagement, so it is hard to duplicate such Independent Living activities as caucus meetings and the "community table" for group chatting at meals. Instead, the HC has daily activities open to all HC residents. Some activities are presentations meant to be enjoyed silently (exercise, musicians) or as group responders (sing-alongs). Some activities focus on engagement (puzzles, card games, karaoke, discussions).

Small House team members and interactive Small House residents can act to befriend less-interactive residents



Guided Group Chats

All of us have been young, all of us have learned life lessons that help us cope with life's troubles, and all of us can enjoy spending some time chatting with others instead of worrying about our own issues of pain, separation, and anxiety. A guided group chat can help people share experiences and discover items of mutual interest. This encourages participants to start later one-with-one conversations and to become stronger friends.

The guide could be an HC team member or a resident volunteer. In either case, the guide should receive suitable training for starting a group chat, encouraging all to participate, maintaining the focus and continuity of the conversation, and avoiding personal questions or family situations.

At present there are several guided group chat programs in the Health Center. The primary chat guide is Kaidy Lewis, Artist-in-Residence. The participants are primarily HC residents, with a few IL residents and family members. I have been attending these, and I like the wide participation, HC resident comments based on many decades of experience, and the sharing of memories that the whole group can understand and enjoy. 🌱

Drumming for Peace

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and use other percussionist instruments like cymbals, rain sticks, conch shells, and handbells.

Takumi and his wife Izuna (who sews their costumes) moved the family to the United States in 2022 and settled in Pennsylvania, where they began their musical quest for peace. The family ensemble calls itself "Peaceful Forest," so of course they had to come to The Forest at Duke!



This performance was their 575th, the number proudly declared on a poster on the stage. Takumi and his children, ages 13, 12, and 8, all played like champions, with an extraordinary combination of skill and joy. The 12-year-old also recited the names of the forty states where they have performed, and he never stumbled and didn't use any notes! In addition, the two youngest played the part of the dragon that roamed through the audience at one point during the performance. So, if having a dragon put its mouth around your head brings good fortune, several of our residents are surely in for some luck. 🌱



Recent Events on Campus

Photos by Sanford Berg



Robyn Sloan, Forest Readers, Sept 17



Friday Social Hour
Sept 19



Way off Broadway practice for the Nov 19
Show, Sept 20



Last Saturday Singalong ,
Friday, Sept 26



Celebrating Rosh Hashanah, Sept 25



Durham Fellows String Quartet, Sept 23



Ciompi Quartet, Sept 26



Recent Events

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Rummy, Oct 5



Handwork Gathering, Oct 5



Lynn Langmeyer, Forest Readers, Oct 8



Social Hour, Oct 10



COVID & Flu Shots, Oct 13



Summit Piano Trio, Oct 14

Recent Events

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Jim Lichtenberg, Resident Readers,
Oct 14



Centenarian Celebration, Oct 16



Sri Venkateswara Temple Guided Tour, Oct 16

Recent Events

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Meet & Greet Social Hour, Oct 14



Recent Events

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Bats, Beasts, & Broomsticks, Oct 21



Maureen Johnson, Resident Readers,
Oct 22



Solomon Eichner, Oct 21



Heart of Carolina A Cappella — Zombie Jamboree, Oct 23

Recent Events

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Social Hour with Brother Dan and Tommy Raven, Oct 24

