



NO TIME FOR TERROR

by Joan Seiffert

I was so very eager to spend time with Carl Whitaker, a brilliant family therapy teacher, practitioner, and all-around wise man who was presenting a weekend workshop in Richmond VA. I had arrived there after a surprising plane ride, one reminiscent of my mother's history. Born in 1903, she had told me the story of being a passenger in an open cockpit bi-plane. My arrival in Richmond was not as noteworthy as my mother's trip, but it had its moments. This part of my life could be called "No Time for Terror."

I was working in a department of psychiatry in a business-adjacent health care facility in Winston-Salem NC. One of my colleagues was also interested in Whitaker's approach to family therapy since our department was responsible for the 38,000 employees and their families for mental health needs.

Wayne suggested that we could fly, said he had a pilot's license, and we could rent a plane to take us to Richmond. Sounded good to me, a sort of small adventure. I knew Wayne well, also his wife, Linda. We four had gone tent camping together with our dogs. Wayne and I had been working together in the clinic for years. His psychotherapy knowledge was wide and deep.

Odd that I hadn't known that he was a pilot. And therein lies the story. I don't know whose anxiety was in charge the morning my husband drove me and my "one small bag," as directed by Wayne, to the small private airport where our craft was located. I do recall that my husband kept missing the turn that we needed to take us there. Maybe he was being anxious for me.

I was excited. It was a lovely day, clear blue skies. I had taken many commercial flights; I was a seasoned passenger. I was cool. Maybe

even "chill," as kids say. We finally found the road and turned in to what looked like a football field. Wayne was standing beside a very small airplane. I had never been that close to such a small craft. We did our quick hellos, followed by quicker good-byes, and then it was time to get on board.

No waiting, no ticket-stamping, no flight attendant. No coffee. No bathroom.

I must have stepped up on the wing as there was no ladder and opened a small door, first heaving my small bag onto the passenger seat, then stuffing it in the really small space behind the very small seat. This flight was not going to be a big deal I kept telling myself, just another life experience. I did recall that in USAF pilot training, the student gets twenty-two hours to solo or washes out.

We settled in and buckled up. Wayne was busy with the takeoff routine. I was noticing that "the stick" as I had heard it called, looked like a thick vertical gadget with lights and buttons. I was quiet, taking it in. Excited, maybe just a little bit scared. Where did my "chill" go?

And then we were moving. It seemed like a short runway. Soon we were lifting into the air. Flying! I recall my deep thankful breath and looking out the window. How small the ground looked as we rose. I relaxed a bit, awestruck. I remembered the Peter Pan story and a song about flying. Except that was a *song* about flying, and it took place in a theater, on a stage. On the ground. Yes, we were up in the air, off the ground. There were no signs that said *Turn here to Virginia*.

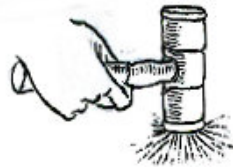
I confess I don't recall what happened next. Did we receive a weather warning? I don't remember a radio message, but I noticed the light outside beginning to change. The clear

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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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R.A. President's Podium

By Elizabeth Gillis

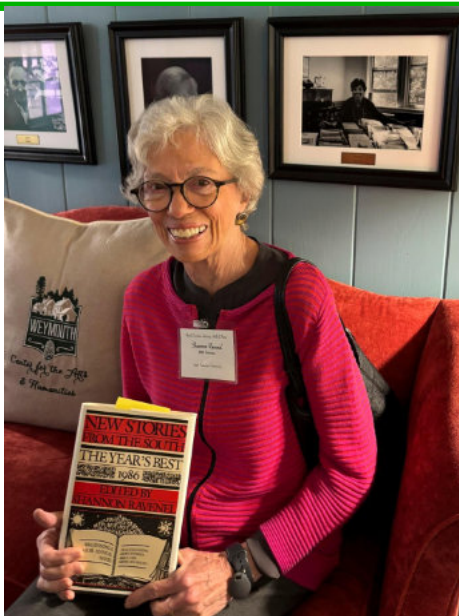
The Residents' Association successfully completed the seven week series *Life at the Forest*, hosted by a sub-committee of the Activities Committee. In last month's issue of *The Forester*, Irwin Abrams wrote about what would be highlighted in each session. I am going to tell you what goes on behind the scene to prepare for each session.

First, Susan Smith has been the chair of *Life at the Forest* for the last several years, and the RA and the Activity Committee thank her for her leadership. The committee meets once a month to plan for each session and discuss anything that might need to be changed or updated. The committee members are Irma Kahn, Irwin Abrams, Forrest Dixon, Daniel Langmeyer, and Elizabeth Gillis.

Each member has a responsibility. Susan reaches out to all senior TFAD staff to make they are available for the session where they are asked to speak. That can be difficult due to the many responsibilities our senior staff have. Irwin Abrams gets a list of new residents from Marketing and sends out the emails inviting residents to attend. Daniel Langmeyer reminds participants who are presenting and assigns committee members as the moderator of a particular session. Irma Kahn and Forrest Dixon welcome attendees and keep a list of who attended each session. Elizabeth Gillis does whatever needs to do to help. It is really a group effort to set the dates and plan each session.

All residents are invited to attend any of the sessions, but new residents are individually invited. Marketing provides the committee with the names and email addresses of new residents. Residents already living at The Forest are welcome to attend any of the sessions because staff may have changed or they missed a session when they were new. It took me two years of living here to attend the various sessions, but what a difference it made in my

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Shannon Ravenel Purvis was inducted into the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame on October 4, at the Weymouth Center for the Arts & Humanities in Southern Pines. She was an editor for many years at the famed Algonquin Press in Chapel Hill. See the article on Shannon's career in this past March *Forester*.

In Memoriam

Louise "Lou" McCutcheon October 7, 2026



Our Library: An Open Book (And More!)

By Diane Strauss

This month, two of the topics covered in the October column are updated: our September 18th book sale and censorship and its impact on libraries and the people who frequent them. Fortunately, our library's doing well on both fronts.

Time to Crow: Our Really, Really Big Book Sale!

Our September sale was the biggest and most profitable ever. Heartfelt thanks to all of you who made this happen. That includes our generous donors and those who came to look, buy, and debate faves and deplorables with other readers. Rave reviews to Jim Klausman for creating and managing the sale and the stalwart library volunteers who assisted, packing books in cartons, unpacking and arranging them for display on the hall and living room tables, providing assistance during the sale, and then repacking the unsold books for donation to the Durham County Library.

That's impressive, but it's not all. Some of our volunteers are unsung heroes—they work behind the scenes for months before the sale. Volunteers periodically weed the collections, removing books that haven't been checked out for five or more years with a goal of freeing shelf space for new additions to the library.

Donations are handled differently. They are first noted in a roster of donations by type, then examined to determine whether they should be considered for addition to the library, if not already held, or shelved in the workroom for the next sale. This is followed by a sort of book beauty contest: anything stained, mildewed, or containing highlighting, underlining or handwritten notes is dumped.

Records of weeded-out books need to be removed from the library catalog, while records of donations to be added to the library need to be processed and added to the catalog. You may have come across many of them recently in

our new books sections, because they've been processed in record time.

Kudos also to TFAD Community Life staff. They prepared signage, assisted with publicity, and helped during the sale itself. And don't forget Glenn Arrington, the best barge-lifter and bale-toter around! He was responsible for setting up tables in the hall and living rooms and hauling books to and from the sale. That's some heavy lifting.

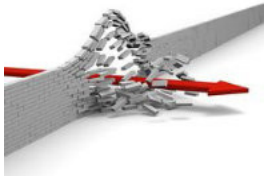
Enough. All of the above may seem like an overlong Oscar acceptance speech, but it's important that those of you mentioned above know how much you and the work you do are appreciated. Thank you!

Libraries and the Freedom to Read Whatever You Want

At the Library Committee's suggestion, staff member Amari Pettiford was nice enough to arrange for a community screening of the documentary *The Librarians* which focused on censorship of books held by libraries. This librarian felt both outraged and uplifted. No surprise. Required in most schools of library and information science is a course called Collection Development. We learn how to design acquisition policies that reflect the interests and needs of the communities we serve, and we adhere to these thoughtfully designed policies.

Every class also covers censorship and book banning. In libraries, particularly public libraries and public school libraries, such attempts have become increasingly commonplace. Parents may feel that a particular work is unsuitable for their child and should be removed from the library so that no one can read it. Others are politically motivated. Not surprisingly, the main targets are books that deal with LGBTQ and race issues. Some librarians who have hesitated to comply with such demands or have tried to mitigate

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A Cell Rewrites its Resume

By Howard Goldsweig

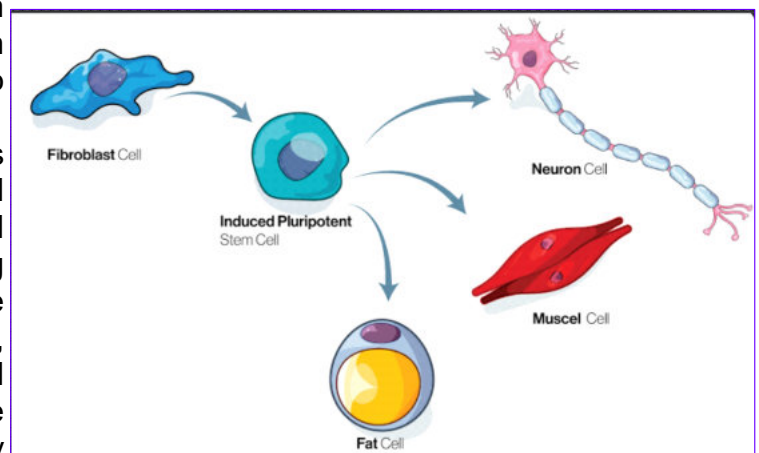
Every cell in your body carries the same genetic instructions, yet a skin cell and a brain cell behave nothing alike. The difference isn't what genes each holds, but which genes it reads and which it ignores. For most of the twentieth century, biologists assumed that arrangement was permanent—once a cell became skin, it stayed skin, the way baked cake doesn't turn back into batter. In 1962, a young British biologist named John Gurdon used a frog to blow up that assumption.

Gurdon took a single cell from a frog's intestinal lining—by every rule then known a cell permanently committed to being intestine—and removed its nucleus, the compartment holding its DNA. He inserted it into a frog egg whose own genetic material had been destroyed, asking a used-up cell to build an entire animal from scratch. It should have failed. Instead, the egg divided, and divided again, into an ordinary tadpole. The "finished" cell hadn't lost the recipe for a frog; it had merely stopped reading it. A cell's identity, Gurdon showed, is not a life sentence—it is a decision at a point in time, and decisions can be reversed.

It took forty-four more years for biologists to refine Gurdon's landmark work. In 2006, Shinya Yamanaka at Kyoto University in Japan introduced four genes into an adult mouse skin cell and watched it forget itself, reverting to something like an embryonic cell—capable of becoming anything: neuron or heart muscle or liver. Do this to human skin, taken with nothing more dramatic than a punch biopsy, and you have, in a dish, raw material for nearly any tissue in the body. In 2012, Gurdon and Yamanaka shared a Nobel Prize for showing, four decades apart, that a cell's resume can be shredded and rewritten.

The rewriting is now almost routine, and faster. Some labs skip genes altogether and use small molecules to nudge a skin cell (fibroblast)—or as of last year, a finger-stick of blood—toward *pluripotency* (meaning it can

transform into any type of cell in the entire body). Other scientists skip pluripotency entirely, flipping a skin cell directly into a different adult cell type without the embryonic detour. It's quicker, though the results are often unfinished—recognizably neurons or heart cells, but not yet fluent in the job.



What this has produced, so far, is not a cure but a promising rough draft. Patient-derived stem cells let researchers grow a person's own Parkinson's, or arrhythmia, in a dish, and test drugs on it before touching the patient. More than a thousand people worldwide have received experimental infusions of stem-cell-derived neurons (brain), islet cells (pancreas), or retinal cells (eye), without major disaster. But no such therapy—least of all one made from a patient's own skin—has earned the FDA's actual blessing, the approval that turns an experiment into a prescription. The furthest along, a fertility treatment that matures eggs outside the body, is in late-stage trials; treatments to regrow a damaged brain or a failing pancreas remain, by most estimates, a decade off.

All of this work leaves medicine in a hopeful holding pattern: the trick undeniably works, in the tadpole and in the petri dish. Whether it works reliably in us is still being answered, one cautious infusion at a time. ¶

The Abbie Chronicles: Lost

By Vikram Rao

Six months into my comfortable, even cosseted, tenure in the Phillips household, the dog-sitter lost me in the park.

I had been fending for myself for going on three months. My current shelter was the best of the many I had sought. Winter was still with us, and warmth was a priority. A key feature of the crawl space was that the house was poorly insulated, at least in the flooring, so the space was relatively warm. Not sure what the summer would bring, but I was hoping for a more conventional home before then. A feature of the entry was that it was too small for use by raccoons. They too sought the warmth of areas such as mine, and I had a minor horror of sharing space with one or more of them. But reason, and their rotundity, said that was unlikely.

In one area I found raccoons to be a blessing. They were strong enough to knock over the garbage cans belonging to the apartment complex across the alley. The residents were inclined to a lot of takeout, so half-eaten meals were plentiful. I ate what the raccoons left behind. Commonly that would be pepperoni pizzas. But it was infrequent enough to that I had to seek other sources of food also.

A reliable source was a complex of eating establishments. A bit of a trek into a more gentrified area, but worth it. All of them were pet-friendly, especially in the outdoor seating. The water bowls distributed strategically were kept filled and a major convenience for me. That they were for the patrons' pets was not my concern, and the management did nothing to dissuade me. A quizzical look from time to time, but I had a collar with a visible tag, and nobody was going to lower the boom on the leash requirement. This latitude also allowed me to settle down under tables on the lookout for dropped food. Kids were the best bet.

Once I became a regular at some of the eateries, there was little doubt that I was homeless. Some waitstaff would give me food from the plates being taken back to the kitchen. This resulted in sustenance, but that was about it.

A little girl from the apartments across the way discovered me. She kept a water bowl filled just outside the entrance to my abode. She had read the

tag with my name on it and called it out when she came to visit. She invariably brought Greenies as a treat. She also loved to groom me, and I quite looked forward to that.

On one occasion on my trek to the eateries, I went past a small family. The boy said, "Oh look, Mum, cute doggie."

"Chi, Chi, Chi, that is a pie dog," said the Mum, sternly. This nomenclature was new to me. Perhaps pi from the Greek alphabet was a classification of rank, possibly even distinction. Chi, Chi, Chi was possibly an incantation. Mum's next utterance dispelled those thoughts.

"You know perfectly well that pie dogs are dirty and carry disease. They do not generally bite, but you are not to go near him!" I looked them over and knew they were Indians, of the South Asian kind. The use of "Mum" was explained as well. "Pie dog" was clearly some Indianism to designate a homeless dog. Good thing the girl next door was not Indian, else my Greenie supply would be in jeopardy.

Said girl next door had a change of heart one day and reported my presence to her mother. The mother's reaction was very gratifying. "Why, it is a border collie," she exclaimed. "With a collar and name tag. Abbie. We can't keep her, dear."

"I know, Mom," said the girl, "that is why I did not bring her home. I have been minding her for weeks."

"She looks very thin. What have you been feeding her?" asked the mom.

"I give her water. And Greenies," said the girl, proudly.

"Just Greenies?" exclaimed the mom. "No wonder she is so thin! But you did great with the water, that is so important."

"She is definitely somebody's dog," continued the mom, "I can't understand why they did not put a phone number on the dog tag. In any case, I think I will take her to K9 Angels. They are wonderful and will know how to locate her owners from the chip." Fat chance of that, I thought to myself. The Phillips' never got around to chipping me.

K9 Angels took me in. They had me looked over by a vet, who pronounced me healthy except for

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The Abbie Chronicles

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low weight. "She may be on the low side for body weight anyway, but the poor nutrition at critical stages probably stunted her further. Don't know how long she has been on the loose, but no serious issues. No heartworm, which would have been the greatest concern, and cost. Teeth in decent shape. She looks well groomed," he concluded.

"Yes," he was told, "the young girl who brought her in was brushing her every few days. She told us that Abbie was living under a house and that she visited her often. Resourceful girl."

"No chip on her," continued the vet. "Unusual, given the likelihood that she is a pedigreed dog. Suggest we chip her after she is adopted."



Then began a comfortable stay at the shelter. K9 had a policy of accepting volunteers on the weekends. Some of these were prospective adopters who used these stints as means to evaluate potential adoptees. The place already had a procedure allowing them to take a dog home for a week to assess mutual compatibility. Great model especially for older dogs. One day, I chanced to overhear the following conversation.

"Yeah, my brother and I found this dog wandering on Alabama. She was 3-legged but moving well. Fearful of the traffic, I caught and held her. No collar. So, my brother rushed back to our apartment to get a collar and leash," said Mitchell to an assembled group of caregivers taking a break.

"We took her home and then took her to a vet. She said she was healthy, and the leg had been surgically amputated, skillfully. Teeth in great shape and nails clipped. An owned and lost dog, for sure. Then she scanned the chip. The address was in California, and the phone number was no longer in service. Useless," continued Mitchell.

"We decided to keep her, and provisionally named her Jane Dog, as in Jane Doe, for unknown. We started taking her out to eat with us. Then, at the Bodega, the owner sees her and says, 'Oh, that is Lucy.'"

"I basically went into denial," said Mitchell. "We had seen some faded signs that in retrospect might have been Jane Dog, but the owner had failed to mention the one defining characteristic, that of a missing leg. Obviously, a good-for-nothing owner not deserving of Jane Dog."

"After a day or two of that," continued Mitchell, "I gave in and called the guy. Told him that I would keep Jane Dog if he was in the least ambivalent."

A torrent of sobs was followed by, "I am on my way, now."

"And that was that," finished Mitchell.

Pretty cool guy, this Mitchell, I thought. Hope he picks me. And he did. 🌿

[Cf Mayle, P. A Good Year (2006, Vintage) and Mayle, P. A Dog's Life (1996 Penguin Books Ltd.)]

R.A. President's Podium.

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own understanding of living at The Forest and who does what. Attendees have the opportunity to hear the CEO, COO, and CFO, in addition to senior staff and the Directors of the standing committees of the Residents' Association.

Attendance so far has been quite good, with each session averaging 75 to 85 residents. This series will be repeated in the spring. The committee has worked together to take care of the organization, record-keeping, emailing, keeping a list of new residents, and sending out invitations. If you have not attended any of the sessions, come join us. You will definitely learn something new about living at The Forest at Duke, a great place to live. 🌿

NO TIME FOR TERROR

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blue of the sky was fading. Wayne was looking around for something and his usually relaxed countenance had changed. The faded blue outside had turned grey. Wayne shook open a small folded map, thrust it at me saying, "Find us a place to put down."

I sat for a moment with the map on my lap, not quite realizing what he was asking me to do. I was a passenger. This aeronautical map was unfamiliar to me, and I wasn't even good with a road map. No pulling off the road here to check. He was saying something to me about not being "instrument rated." That there was a storm ahead of us. I finally got it: We were going to have to land, and I had to tell him where! There was no time for my terror.

But a map is still a map. And we were still in an airplane up in the sky and would obviously need a large open empty space, I figured, without houses or trees. I looked at the map in my lap. I saw such a space. I did not see a sign on the map that said *This Is A Place to Land*.

I glanced at Wayne who was busy with windshield wipers and blowing rain. He seemed to be wrestling with the stick. I guessed the language that I didn't speak would be about degrees, latitude, and longitude. Somehow, either I instantly became a cartographer or Wayne was able to instruct me. More likely luck was with us. There was a windshield wiper noise and a lot of rain. And we were going down, quickly.

Wayne found the spot, a small commercial airport. I held my breath; it was bumpy, and I was quietly scared. Finally we landed. Right next to us in a larger plane was a woman pilot. She said she could take us to Richmond. I grabbed my small bag and Wayne and I loaded onto her plane. I remember a set of steps. We got to Richmond. At this point I asked Wayne how many hours he had logged. "Twenty-two," he said.

On Sunday, when we returned on our plane, landing peacefully in Winston-Salem, I was wiser and Wayne now had twenty-four hours of flight time. ☸

Alienation of Affection

by Sherrill Blazer

It took me by surprise. I was not actively seeking a new relationship after so many years together. We had a wonderful personal relationship, solving the world's problems and even intimate ones. However, this long-distance commitment had to change at my age. Every six weeks had become cumbersome now that I am not as comfortable driving as I once was, especially in I-40 traffic.

Previously, the distance was nothing to receive the satisfaction that I desired and needed. But now my eyes are roving, so online I go. I was "two timing" as I visited "the other person," but as usual, online relationships are always better than the real deal. I visited "the other" and learned that cheating is never worth it!

That was disappointing, and the original excitement of "the other" disappeared abruptly.

Now my dilemma. Do I go crawling back to my first love asking for forgiveness—maybe a bit of groveling with remorse, guilt, and insecurity? I could imagine my original love thinking like King George III in the *Hamilton* production, slobbering to the colonists: "You belong to me...you will see...you will be back...back...back...."

But this time, that was right. The very next day after the clandestine meeting with "the other" I went right back, driving 45 minutes to see my original hairdresser who was none the wiser. She did not know how close I came to jilting her for another. And, I must say, I received the best haircut that I have had in a long time. She is a keeper as long as I can comfortably drive to Apex to her hair salon! ☸

Welcome New Resident

Katherine Topulos

Apartment #2025

LL: 919-490-0760 \Cell: 919-306-4578

Ktop20@gmail.com

A warm welcome to Katherine Topulos, a long time Durham resident who has been accompanied on her move to The Forest by her 15-year-old poodle, Hugo. Katherine grew up in Easthampton MA and obtained a bachelor's degree in French from Wellesley College in 1971 and a master's degree in Linguistics from Brown University in 1974.

After college she lived in France for a year before returning to New York where she held various administrative jobs until she decided to pursue a



Master of Library Science degree at Columbia University. She worked as a librarian for several years until her interest in becoming a law librarian took her back to school to obtain a JD degree from the law school at Boston College in 1991. A career as a law librarian proved to be a

good fit for her. In 1994 or 1995, she took a job at the Duke Law Library, thus her move to Durham.

Among the subjects she taught at the Duke Law School was a course on how to use the internet to do legal research. In addition, she taught a course in foreign and international law research. After Katherine took early retirement from Duke in 2008, she moved over to the UNC Law School where she taught American law and legal research to foreign students until retiring.

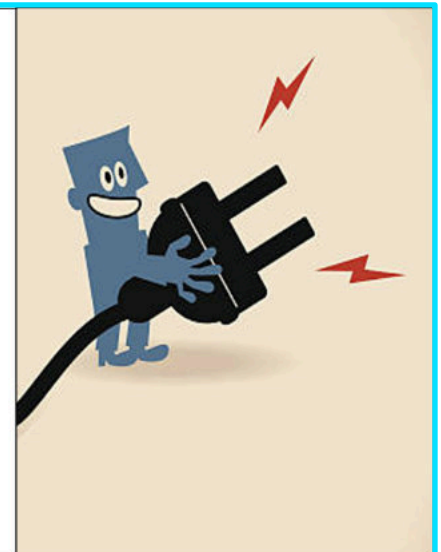
Katherine has volunteered as an ESL tutor, and she is in a book group in Chapel Hill. Her hobbies include French language and culture, travel, reading, and attending theatrical performances and concerts.

A professional article she wrote in 1992, "A Common Lawyer's Bookshelf Recreated" published in the *Law Library Journal* (Vol. 84, No. 2) was named article of the year. In 2008, she co-authored with Marci Hoffman an article titled "Tyranny of the Available" published in the *Syracuse Journal of International Law and Commerce*.

Katherine's family includes her brother and his family who live in Massachusetts. 🌱

This November 2026, *THE FORESTER* is in its 33rd year of publication. It's currently published nine months of the year by residents, for residents, to share information and photographs that inform and enlighten.

But we really need YOU to take a part in turning residents' writing and their ideas into a finished publication by reporting, copy editing, layout, and photo editing. If you have an interest or experience in writing or editing, we especially need you. But we're eager to bring novices up to speed as well! Talk with current staff (our names are all on the masthead) about tasks you might want to do.



The Encore Store—What's It All About?

by Alice Alexander and Kathleen Allen

As manager Kathleen Allen says, “Encore accepts unwanted/unneeded ‘stuff’ from donors and sells it for outrageously low prices to folks who want it or need it. Sometimes we even give it away FREE. Win-Win.”

Since its inception in 1996, the Encore Store at The Forest has provided a valued service in accepting furniture and household items for sale to staff and residents. The service is resident-led, under the auspices of the Residents’ Association and in collaboration with TFAD. The mission is clear:

- Serve residents and families in donating items. What happens when a resident passes, downsizes, or moves to the Health Center, leaving family overwhelmed with unneeded furniture and possessions? What happens to your old easy chair when you replace it? Kathleen and her team swoop in and offer assistance, accepting furniture and sellable items, sometimes even having a sale right in the home. They find everything from vacated homes left in immaculate condition, to others with which the family can’t deal, turning in keys “as is,” and every condition in between. All manageable!
- Provide staff (and residents) with affordable needed/wanted, good quality items. Offering team members furniture and household goods at “ridiculously” low prices is an amazing benefit. Employees make up 90% of customers, with many waiting in line for the start of sales. Residents can feel good about donating beloved items.
- Avoid items going into the dumpsters. By facilitating re-use, we avoid adding to our landfills. The environment benefits.
- Raise funds for the TFAD Benevolent Fund. While the Encore Store’s goal is not to make money, we do, and all proceeds go to the Benevolent Fund to help financially-challenged residents.

So how does it all work?

To donate furniture or household items,

contact the Encore Manager, currently Kathleen Allen. Everyone should understand that items will be sold at low prices; once the Encore Store accepts an item, the donor has no involvement in the sale.

Likely you have seen Kathleen pushing a loaded cart through the halls. Nothing is too difficult, especially with the help of our strong, friendly housemen. Shaun and Gerald help in the main building, Rodrigo in the Health Center, and Savon in the Terraces.

Donors call often asking “Are you interested in ‘xyz?’” Kathleen finds that except for furniture, it is easiest to simply pick up the items at the donor’s apartment with a cart or at their cottage with her car. Donated goods cannot be left in the hall outside the Encore store since that’s a potential fire hazard.

The Encore Store is a Residents’ Association committee. We do not fall anywhere in the TFAD corporate organizational scheme. We do operate alongside Marketing, Housekeeping, Community Life, Security, and public relations functions. The physical store is located in the Community Center basement, floor “1.”

Sales are usually in the basement store, as determined by merchandise present. Sales are also held in apartments or cottages if there is a significant amount of merchandise; this prevents moving items to the store unnecessarily. Opening hours vary, rotating to accommodate team member departments and their staff availability. Depending upon job duties, every employee can’t line up at 8:00 AM for the best ‘stuff’. Recognizing this, we try to be fair.

If a resident is interested, we provide tax donation forms, which are turned in to TFAD Administration, and an official donation receipt is sent. Donors value their items themselves for tax time. We do not supply selling prices.

A “want list,” where employees and residents ask us to watch for ‘item X’ has been helpful. TVs and beds are frequent requests from team members, and residents may be looking for smaller

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Encore Store

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furniture to accommodate new homes.

Unsellable items are rarely discarded. At sales, a cart loaded with 'free/take it' small items is placed in the hall. This is quite popular! Unsellable basic furniture goes to a local charity which provides it to needy clients, and small items go to local thrift shops.

What's not accepted? The Encore Store does not take clothing, books (offer books to The Forest Library or to Books Among Friends/

Durham Public Library), food (offer to a food bank), towels (offer to local veterinarians), coat hangers (take to local tailors). Some items we are able to offer the Forest Gift Shop, such as scarves, jewelry, or special display items. Very little goes to waste or is discarded.

For an early history of how the Encore Store came to be, see the original article on its beginning (below). ☸

The Encore Store 1996-2002

From "Memories From The Forest: The First Decade" Deborah Carey and Carolyn Vail

In the winter of 1996, Kathy Crapo approached the Residents' Association Board about a resale store at The Forest of good quality home furnishings. The idea evidently had been successful at other life care facilities. Deborah Carey and Carolyn Vail found themselves sitting around a kitchen table with Beth Upchurch, activities chair of the Board at that time, DeEtte Strawbridge and Evebell Dunham, outlining the dos and don'ts of this infant idea. The donations were to come from the residents; the money was to go to the Benevolent Fund; the store would be under the auspices of The Forest for its tax exempt status; and the donor was to put his own price on his gift for tax purposes. And so the store was off and running.

Bob Dunham came forth with the name Encore Store and designed the logo for our receipt. He also put together five bookcases. He was our master mechanic and Mr. Fix-It after that. A student desk came from Duke. Dr. Kornegay donated a long wooden table, which at one time had been his examining table! Milt Skolaut gave us an oversized cabinet with French doors and a metal bookcase. Evebell and Bob Dunham used shower curtains as wall coverings in this tiny room adjacent to the health care storage. Then we were ready for business that first September. Starting on a small scale with donations and customers, the store has grown into an overwhelming morale booster for our employees. Some months there may be thirty customers in line for the doors to open. To alleviate disappointment over who is first in line to buy the most choice objects, a bid system was suggested by Vicki Barringer. Some like it, some don't, but it works. As donations have grown, Max and the maintenance staff have helped with moving items to the shop. TROSA sometimes is called in to help. Housekeeping keeps us clean. By now the committee knows what will and will not sell, so it is important to see what the donor would like to contribute. A letter acknowledging the gifts comes from Vicki Barringer. This year's committee "gofers" are Jennifer Bowes, Jenn Van Brunt, Ginny Putnam, Bette Gallie, Betty Gray, Ruth Dillon and Bloss Vail. Evebell continues as our interior designer. All of us want to thank the residents.

As of September 1, 2002, the Encore Store has given \$36,080 to the Benevolent Fund. ☸

Hold the Plastic: How to Cut Down on Takeout Containers

by Adrienne Munich and Susan Martin, members of the Green Team

5,320—that's how many plastic takeout containers for dinners, desserts, and salads are used on average every month at The Forest by residents and team members—and that doesn't even include the 20,000+ containers used for ice cream, soup and drinks.

These containers can't be recycled, and they can't be handed back for our own reuse. Each time we ask to take home food, the kitchen is required to supply a new, unrecyclable container, and we're left with throwing the ones we've used in our trash. They're used only once, but because they're plastic, they last forever. What to do?

One answer: supply yourself with your own takeout containers. While the TFAD dining venues can't serve your meal directly into your own container, and you



can't use your own container at salad bar (neither is allowed by the health department), if you intend to take all or some of your food away, order your meals to be served on plates and then transfer the food to your own containers. Heartwood has a transfer area (see) where you can do this. Or if you've eaten some food at a table, you could also transfer what you want to take away right there (if your dining partners don't object) or wrap up an item or two in a napkin.



Many of us already bring our own equipment. Here's testimony and a tutorial from a TFAD resident about how you can practice environmental responsibility without much effort:

When I moved into the Forest at Duke, I sometimes had meals "for here" and sometimes "to go." And I began accumulating a stack of plastic to-go containers that were not recyclable, as I soon found out. I had seen a sign in Heartwood that said "Food Transfer Station" with an arrow, I but had no idea what that was for.

Someone filled me in that you could order your meal "for here" then go to the Food Transfer Station and move your meal from the plate it came on to your own container. No plastic to-go containers needed.

I gave it a try, and it turned out to be pretty easy. There are spoons there to use and a bin for your dirty plate. So now I bring my Forest at Duke insulated bag with my own container (which I bought at the TFAD Gift Shop) inside to pretty much every meal. I hang the bag on my coat closet door so I won't forget to take it with me. If I decide to take food out, I'm all set.

If you haven't experimented with our neighbor's method, will you give it a try? Imagine doing it all the time!

In the past, before The Terraces was occupied, the Green Team from those days had called attention to the waste takeout containers produced. They

had major success in eliminating Styrofoam containers, and they investigated compostable ones, as well as the reusable containers given out at Carol Woods, but finding appropriate, earth-friendly takeout containers has been a challenge. As a result, there continue to be many, many plastic containers from Heartwood used every month.



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Hold the Plastic

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We can build on the Green Team efforts from those years and take it one step further by working hard to reduce the number of plastic containers we use and remembering the consequences of all that plastic. While it's true that residents aren't the only ones who use TFAD's containers, we can start with ourselves. If everyone avoided a TFAD takeout container only one day a week, it would make a huge difference—and maybe even reduce some costs. Everyone can be proud of reducing the waste in our beautiful residence in this extraordinarily lovely, still green, city of Durham, North Carolina.

Here are the actual numbers provided by Nathan Summers of takeout containers by month:

Item	Monthly
3 compartment containers	3600
1 compartment containers	1000 (6x6 for desserts)
1 compartment containers	720 (8x8 for salads)
Soup cup	4000
20 oz Drinking cups	8640
Coffee cups	8000



Sharron Parker adding a single-use plastic container to her installation “Drowning in Plastic,” erected in the entrance rotunda of The Forest at Duke in mid March 2024.

[See the lead article in the April 2024 Forester.](#)

TFAD Library

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them have been fired, and some have even been threatened physically.

Fortunately, our library at TFAD has not had to deal with such behavior. We are, after all, adults who can simply refrain from reading books we find offensive, and so we do not presume to make them inaccessible to other resident readers. Residents here are intelligent and well educated. Finally, the library has an Acquisitions Committee that has worked hard to revise the earlier Acquisition Development policy and procedures to incorporate changing interests and needs. Congrats to us all. 🌿

Years ago when I was going through a very hard time, I started a journal entry labeled “TG” for “Today’s Gift” with the sort of entries you would expect—“first crocus” and so on. But even more important, when I couldn’t think of a single thing on a given day, I always wrote, “Missed it” to remind myself that there is always a gift, even if I hadn’t noticed it. *(Dory Adams)*

The Hijra Community in India

by Don Chand

Emmy and I often stop in a bookstore next to Gugelhupf, and invariably I find a book or two written by an Indian author. Two years ago, I came across A. Revathi's *The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*. I knew the word "Hijra," and when I picked up the book, I immediately realized the author must be a transgender woman.

Growing up on Thompson Road in New Delhi, I saw gender as static, which is fixed at birth and is unchanging for life. I held that view even as I watched groups of five or six Hijras come to my mom's maternity center, seeking the address of a home where a boy had just been born. These Hijras wore saris and had distinctive mannerisms. They would sing and dance, and families gave them money in return. My mom said they came to bless the baby, which I could not understand. It did not occur to me to ask where they lived or what happened to them afterward. It took this book, not proximity, to reveal to me the lives of the Hijras, and to raise questions I had never thought to ask.

Long before the modern concept of transgender identity existed, Indian tradition had already found ways to recognize people who did not fit neatly into "man" or "woman." Revathi recounts a story connecting the Hijra community to Lord Rama:

When Rama left for exile, at the border of the forest he asked the people of Ayodhya to return home. When he came back years later, he found the Hijras still waiting. "Swami," they explained, "you said men, women, and children should return. But you did not ask us to go. We belong neither to mankind nor to womankind. So, we remained here." Moved by their sincerity, Rama granted them a boon: "Whatever you speak will be true."

I liked this story because it gave the Hijra community a special role in Indian tradition.

Their blessings were believed to carry power. Early in the morning Hijras would visit the bazaars and shopkeepers would give them a rupee or two, hoping for good luck. The Hijras are considered both auspicious and undesirable. A Hijra could be welcomed to bless a newborn child or a wedding, but the door could be closed to her for an ordinary job, housing, or acceptance.

Revathi Tells Her Own Story

Revathi was born the youngest of four boys. From childhood she experienced herself as feminine, but her family did not accept it. The belief that something was wrong with her became something she carried inside, long before any of the physical toll her memoir describes later. She eventually ran away from her home in Tamil Nadu and found her way into a Hijra community in Delhi. To join, she needed an elder to accept her as a *chela*, or student; she then underwent an initiation ceremony and was given a woman's name. That elder became her guru, her guide and protector. The community gave her a new identity, and, more importantly, a sense that she wasn't alone.

A Hijra, then, is someone who belongs to this community, recognized by the society for a sacred role handed down to them through tradition. But it is not a happy world. Outside that ritual role, Hijras are mocked, abused, and left to subsist on the barest minimum. Revathi's memoir describes violence, exploitation, poverty, and difficult choices, including abuse she witnessed among Hijras who had been married.

The most difficult parts of the book for me were her descriptions of the physical suffering after the operation she hoped would bring her body in line with who she knew herself to be, and of how Hijras make a living. The traditional way is to bless births and weddings, which connects directly to what I remember from childhood. But when a society excludes you

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Hijra

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from ordinary employment, your choices narrow. Revathi describes begging and sex work as part of the difficult economic reality some Hijras face.

The book has a positive turn too. Revathi eventually met educated transgender people working for an NGO, a connection that led to an office job of her own. She realized her experience could help others. Eventually, she became an advocate and spokesperson for the Hijra community.

The Road to Legal Recognition

Revathi's book came out in 2010. Four years later, India's Supreme Court took up a case that would change things for the Hijra community, a case known as NALSA. In 2014, the Court ruled a person's gender is theirs to decide, not anyone else's. It ruled that people who don't fit neatly into "man" or "woman," such as Hijras, eunuchs, and transgender people generally, deserve full standing as citizens, with the same rights as everyone else. What mattered, the Court said, was how a person feels about their own gender, not which group they belong to, and not any doctor's exam.

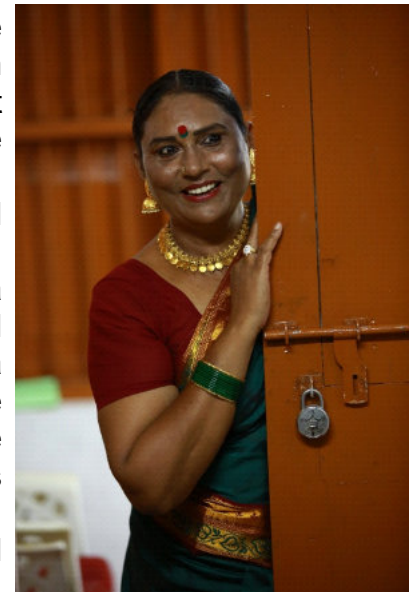
That ruling gave the Hijra community something new: not just a place in tradition, but equal standing under the law. But the story didn't end there.

What Happened in 2026?

In March 2026, Parliament passed a new law that walked much of this back. The earlier law from 2019 had recognized trans men, trans women, genderqueer people, people with intersex variations, and people belonging to traditional communities like Hijra. The 2026 law drops trans men, trans women, and genderqueer people from that list entirely. Hijra remains on it, but with a catch, and the law adds a new category of its own: "eunuch." Under the old rules, a person could simply say who they were. Under the new law, a medical board decides instead.

The new law does add real protections against forced transitions, forced labor, and violence. But it takes away something bigger:

the right to define your own gender. In 2014, that right belonged to the person. In 2026, Parliament handed it back to the state. Even though Hijra is still a recognized category, a Hijra today can only be certified on the government's terms, not her own. That is the real reversal.



What I Learned

Revathi's book taught me two things I had not considered: the psychological toll of growing up believing something about yourself is wrong, and the physical toll of later trying to bring your body in line with who you know yourself to be. Neither shows up in a law that only counts categories.

It also made clear that a special spiritual role is never the whole answer. A society can accept a group for a cultural or spiritual purpose and still deny that group an ordinary life. Rama's acceptance gave the Hijra community a place in the story of old India. Government acceptance as equal citizens is what gives that community a chance at an ordinary life in modern India. It seems a spiritual place in society is not sufficient for an ordinary life; all people need the rights that come with full citizenship. 🍄



Have you spotted the new ladybugs around campus?

Future Directions for the Pollinator Garden at The Forest at Duke

by Dale Pahl, The Pollinator Garden Committee

About five years ago, Forest residents created the Piedmont Pollinator Garden by reclaiming an area along the perimeter drive that had previously been used for storing landscaping materials. Today, this garden is a small gem within The Forest's landscape. It reflects our community's commitment to environmental stewardship while providing habitat and food for pollinators and other wildlife, including bees, butterflies, birds, moths, and flies.

In the Durham community, the pollinator garden has received praise from Dr. Annabel Renwick, the noted Sarah P. Duke Gardens horticulturist who helped create its Piedmont prairie and pollinator areas. More broadly, environmental professionals would recognize the pollinator garden as an excellent example of how a relatively small community project can contribute to the health and diversity of an urban ecosystem.



The Challenge We Face

Forest residents have cared for the pollinator garden throughout the year and have periodically shared articles and photographs with The Forest community about its flowers, pollinators, and birds. Over time, the scope of this work has expanded to include weeding the strips of land immediately adjacent to the garden. This additional work is important because herbicides are used on surrounding grass areas at The Forest to suppress weeds

and herbicide spray-drift could seriously damage the pollinator garden.

During the past year, however, the number of residents able to participate in caring for the garden has declined as several of the dedicated volunteers who created the garden are no longer able to sustain the physical effort required. In addition, only a small number of volunteers participate in scheduled work activities, despite periodic reminders about the need for hands-on involvement.

Maintaining the garden at its current size and condition requires approximately eight to ten active volunteers able to contribute about two hours of work per month throughout the year. This situation raises an important question: What will be the future of the pollinator garden at The Forest?

We Need Your Ideas—and Your Help

We would like to engage the broader Forest community in a dialogue about the garden's future. During October and November 2026, articles in *The Forester* and other venues will invite your feedback. Your response to the following two questions will be particularly important:

1. *Are you willing to contribute approximately two hours each month to the pollinator garden?*

This commitment could involve working in the garden in one- or two-hour blocks of time and/or contributing to related activities, such as preparing a garden newsletter or helping coordinate seasonal activities including planting, mulching, and weeding. Most importantly, we need to know whether enough residents are willing and able to participate regularly to sustain the garden.

2. *What future direction should we consider for the pollinator garden?*

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Pollinator Garden

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The following are some possibilities. They are presented to stimulate discussion; they are NOT intended as recommendations or a final set of choices.

- *Continue the garden at approximately its current size and level of activity.* This approach would require a sufficient number of Forest residents to assume responsibility for maintaining the garden and its surrounding areas. With rare exceptions, the principal source of this labor would need to be Forest residents. It is not practical to expect The Forest's maintenance staff or its landscaping contractor to provide the significant time, expertise, labor, and resources needed to sustain the garden ecosystem.
- *Reduce the size of the garden.* Another possibility would be reducing the current approximately twenty by fifty foot garden to a smaller area—for example, an oval approximately twelve by thirty feet. A smaller garden reduces the amount of volunteer labor required while retaining many of the garden's environmental and community benefits. Implementing such a change would require short-term assistance from The Forest's staff or a group of volunteers.
- *Strengthen volunteers' ability to manage and sustain the garden.* A third possibility would be increasing training to enable volunteers to manage the garden from season to season and across its life cycle.
- *Redesign the garden.* A fourth possibility would be to empower the new cadre of volunteers to redesign and revitalize the garden as this group assumes a leadership role.
- *Phase out the garden and redirect resident efforts.* If sufficient resident participation cannot be sustained, then

a fifth possibility would be to phase out The Forest's pollinator garden and instead support engagement and volunteer activities in established local pollinator gardens such as those at the North Carolina Botanical Garden and Sarah P. Duke Gardens.

- *Consider other possibilities suggested by Forest residents.* We welcome ideas beyond the possibilities described above. The purpose of this process is to identify a future direction that is both meaningful to the Forest community and realistically sustainable.

What Happens Next?

We need information from you at this stage of planning, and so we ask you to take two actions:

ACTION 1—Share Your Views

Please email your responses to the two questions below to dalepahl@gmail.com and use the subject line: *Future Directions for The Forest's Pollinator Garden*

Question 1: Are you able to commit approximately two hours per month to actively work in the garden throughout the year?

Question 2: What future direction or directions do you recommend for The Forest's pollinator garden?

ACTION 2—Attend a Community Meeting about the Pollinator Garden

Please use the Cubigo activities calendar to sign up for and plan to attend a community meeting that will be scheduled in late November or early December. The date, time, and location for this meeting will be widely publicized via Cubigo news and screen announcements

The goal of the meeting is to develop a future direction that reflects the interests of The Forest community and is supported by a realistic level of resident participation. During this meeting, we will discuss the ideas and recommendations we have received. 🌱



Celebrating The
Forest at Duke's
34th birthday!





Who's the best dog!
Who's the best doggie!
Check out the TFAD Dog
Show from Sept 28.





Way Off Broadway readers
at a practice

Sunday Afternoon Volleyball



New Hope Chamber Players



Table 5 Jazz group



Caucus T-5 hosts a get together with Caucuses E and F



A sing-along in the Health Center on Sept 30



The Mood Enhancers on Aug 28



Ivory and Gold concert Sept 19



Four Seasons concert Sept 11



The Forest
Speaks with
Judge Stephanie
Seymour Sept 28



Charles Hudgens
discusses fire safety
with Caucuses 2T
and 3T Oct1



GAME
NIGHT
SEPT 4





Social Hour Aug 7



Aug 19





Showing your
colors at the
Sept 5
"Tailgate"
Social Hour





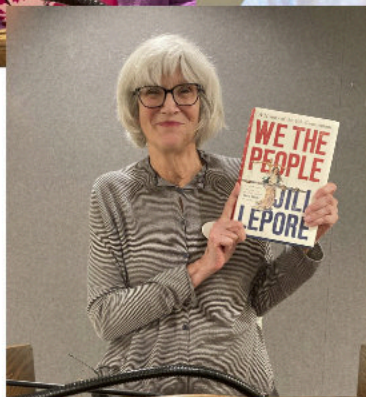
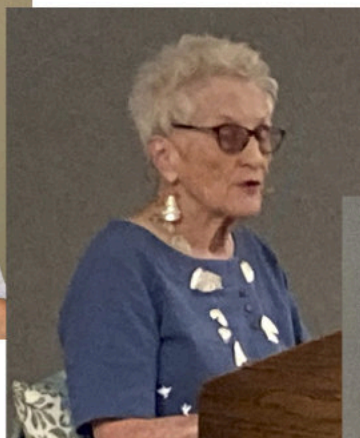
Bonsai class Oct 1



A retrospective of former resident Jo Mooney's work is displayed in the Grove Gallery, thanks to her daughter Vajira Mooney



RESIDENT READERS



Judith Seagal, Jay Williams,
Judith Adler, Kate Berenson,
and Carol Rawls



Grove Gallery reception for
Barbara Rohde on Sept 3



Rosh Hashanah Dinner
on Sept 16





Founding of The Forest at Duke – Celebrating the Crapos family on Sept 15



Graig Meyer, former State Senator and current head of the NC Justice Center speaks at the Thinkers and Doers series on Sept 24





The Library Book sale always brings out the book lovers looking for a good read!



FORESTER photographers at work...