

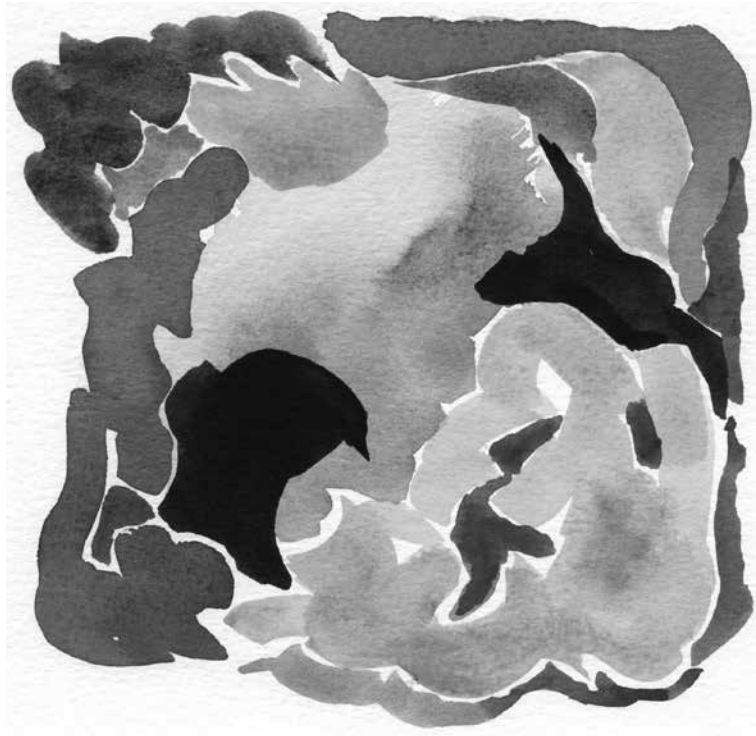


CARLETON-WILLARD

# VILLAGER



JUNE 2025 ❁ VOLUME 43 ❁ NUMBER 2



Why do I get a thrill from the intense colors that noisily abut each other as I build a watercolor painting? Why do these unidentifiable shapes and arbitrary colors appear so magical and enchanted? Looking back, I'm sure these responses were sparked by the contents of an old cabinet in our 2nd grade classroom: I had long been very curious about what was inside. One day when we had a substitute teacher (always a great opportunity for mischief) I inched over to the mystery cabinet and opened it. Dusty shelves, blackboard erasers, papers, a few pencils. And then a small container. Inside were hundreds of tiny sticks, their soft wood infused with the full spectrum of color. A universe of colors, arbitrarily jumbled together. I ran my fingers through the sticks and magically new compositions formed. Too quickly I replaced the cover, put the box back in the cabinet and closed the door. I have never seen anything like them since.

*Ann Gabhart*



THE CARLETON-WILLARD

# VILLAGER

Published quarterly by and for the residents and administration of Carleton-Willard Village, a continuing care retirement community at 100 Old Billerica Road, Bedford, Massachusetts 01730.

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An archive of *Villagers* from past years is located in the Carleton-Willard Village library.

## The Editors' Corner



When I arrived at CWV I was welcomed by many friendly faces. With each introduction, I answered the basic questions: Where did I move from? Did I have family nearby? Often there were strands of commonality. Someone had lived in a town where I once lived or had gone to the same college as my husband. Another person had taught young children or shared my fondness for cats. And so it went: meeting, greeting, looking for common experience and points of connection.

In those first weeks, while I desperately tried to remember names and faces, there were numerous friendly interactions, and what made many of them memorable were the stories – stories of moments remembered and shared. One night at dinner there was a conversation about wedding dresses. Sharing these stories, some funny, some nostalgic, touched a chord with each of us and brought us closer.

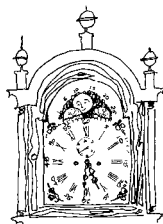
In this issue of the *Villager* we have asked for your stories, moments remembered, to share with each other. Sharing our stories builds connections with readers, and the act of writing about remembered moments can help us see our past experience in a new or different way.

So, read on. Whether it's a tale of how a severely disabled child learned to swim, the memory of a childhood encounter with an historic general, or the search for spotted salamanders on a dark spring night, these are tales to make you laugh, or wonder, and to help you know your friends and neighbors a little better. We hope you enjoy reading, and maybe you will be inspired to write a story of your own for another edition of the *Villager*.

*Betsy Campbell*  
*Submissions Editor*



## *From the President and CEO*



### **Memories and Moments: The Essence of Life**

I feel life is a collection of moments that transform into lasting memories. These moments, whether big or little, shape our identity, connect us to others, and provide meaning to our existence. While the stress from daily life may blur some of these experiences, certain memories stand out as beacons — reminders of joy, love, challenges, and growth.

Memories are powerful because they anchor us to our past. When I reflect on my childhood during simpler times, it can evoke laughter with the thought of a carefree afternoon or bring sadness through the remembrance of a grandparent that is no longer with us.

Some of my favorite childhood memories include leaving the house during summer vacation and heading out into the woods with friends and not returning until the streetlights came on. Yet, in today's world, I would not let my children out of my sight for a minute! The fond childhood memories of spending countless babysitting hours with my grandparents and all the stories they would tell me about their lives and memories are moments I will never forget.

The beauty of memories is that they are ours to create and cherish. By being present and mindful, we can fully embrace life's experiences as they unfold. One of my favorite memories is our many family trips to Disney World with our two children. I cherish this time with loved ones, celebrating birthdays and anniversaries, and finding gratitude in everyday encounters ensures that the moments we live become memories worth revisiting.

In the end, it is these memories that bring meaning to our lives. They comfort us during difficult times, inspire us to pursue our goals, and remind us of the connections that define who we are. By valuing the present and embracing the power of the past, we give ourselves the greatest gift — a life well-lived and well-remembered.

Christopher J. Golen  
President and CEO



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**Illustrations** – Tim Martin, Barbara Munkres, Anne Schmalz, Virginia Steel

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## It Was a Dark and Stormy Night...

It was a rainy afternoon in mid-March when the call came. "We think this is the night," my friend said. I hastily replanned my evening and dug out my warm, waterproof clothing and boots. The temperature was about 45 degrees. We met, four of us, in a dark parking lot on the edge of an industrial development. On one side of us, lights and sounds from highways and businesses gave the impression of a busy urban area. On the other side, however, were patches of field and forest. We left our cars and tramped through the dark along a winding road. By a large glacial boulder, we turned off into the woods; soon I could see the outlines of a small pond. Even in the dark its beauty was evident. Mosses spread along the banks and even partly across the water. With flashlights, we probed the dark depths. There were small creatures in the water, such as fairy shrimp, but so far, none of the creatures we were seeking. For this was the night we were hoping to see some dark slender shapes with yellow spots... the spotted salamanders, migrating to temporary ponds for their courtship and mating rituals.



Suddenly, from the other end of the pond, we heard a call...two of our "hunters" had discovered several groups of the salamanders. Peering into the water, we could see perhaps 10 to 15 salamanders in a group, swimming in patterns of circles or figure eights, passing close by each other at each turn. As we watched, some of the salamanders would break away from the group and swim to the surface to breathe air.

We recalled that these are land creatures, who live during the rest of the year in forested areas among the leaf litter and under logs.

Eventually the males would deposit small packets of sperm on the dead leaves at the bottom of the pond. Then the females would pick up these "spermatophores" and place them in their genital openings, where fertilization would take place. Later the females would deposit the eggs on twigs or grass stems in the water.

Life in the vernal pond is fast-paced. It must be, for the eggs of these animals must develop and hatch, and the young larvae must grow to adulthood and leave before the pond dries up with summer's heat. Why would the salamanders "choose" such a chancy place to breed? One reason may be the temporary ponds harbor fewer predators, such as fish, which prey on the larvae of the salamander, than permanent ponds do.

Perhaps it is fortunate that these temporary ponds are little known, and that they come alive under conditions that many people find uncomfortable: on dark, rainy nights in March! Such ponds are fragile; too many boots would rile the waters and disturb the fairy shrimp and others with delicate breathing apparatus.

As my friends and I returned down the dark winding road, we were damp but happy; our evening's efforts had been rewarded with one of spring's rare sights, the migration of the spotted salamanders.

*Barbara Munkres*

## An Unforgettable Day on Moose Pond

Have you ever had to make a split-second decision which involved life and death? Let me tell you about one I made.

During the summer of 1986 our oldest grandchildren, Joseph and Esther, ages 6 and 5, flew from Great Falls, Montana to Logan Airport. As we departed for the Rounds' family property on Moose Pond, in Bridgton, Maine, we told them that we were going to "Camp Gramp," a name coined by my husband Austin's daughter



Martha after I asked how we could keep them busy for two weeks. She suggested, "You can swim, hike, pick blueberries, ride in the canoe, have them collect firewood, sing around the campfire telling stories and make S'mores."

On the third day at Camp Gramp, Austin decided to use the windsurfer, a retirement gift from his sons. After years of sailing boats measuring 36 and 42 feet, respectively, out of Gloucester Harbor, how difficult could it be to sail a windsurfer on a lake? As it turned out, balancing on a moving board while steering and turning by means of a wishbone apparatus attached to the mast was an altogether different type of challenge.



He donned a lifejacket and paddled out of our cove to where he could catch the wind. I placed paddles into our canoe on the shore as a precaution, lest he need help. Earlier attempts to windsurf had been very pleasurable. On this day, however, the wind proved to be stronger than previously and sailing became a challenge. He easily made it to the opposite shore of the lake, made a neat turn and started back to us. About halfway to our cove a sudden change in wind direction sent him into the water. The mast landed across the board and the gust of wind started the surfer moving quickly away from Austin. Austin was not a strong swimmer and although he moved as fast as possible, the windsurfer moved faster down the lake, carried by the strong wind.

I made a swift but critical decision. On the one hand my husband was in danger of drowning; on the other hand, I was responsible for two young children. I said "Grampa needs my help and I must take the canoe and meet him on the

lake. You must promise that you will wait on the shore and not go into the water." Uttering a brief prayer, I climbed into the canoe and paddled furiously. Once I cleared the cove, I found myself battling small whitecaps. With the assistance of the wind, I soon caught up to Austin and assisted him into the canoe. With both of us paddling, we caught up to the windsurfer, tied it to the canoe and paddled furiously back to our cove.

As we approached the shore, my heart sank. The children were nowhere to be seen. I jumped out of the canoe and began calling their names, only to be met by silence. The most terrifying scenario passed through my mind. I ran up the hill to the cabin and flung open the door, where I found the children totally absorbed in making peanut butter sandwiches. Relief washed over me. I said "Joseph and Esther. Thank you for obeying me and not going into the water. Don't you think we should ask Grandpa to drive us to town for an ice cream cone?"

*Maureen Rounds*

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## Memories of School

Mrs. Larsen, Mrs. Malden, Mrs. Neary  
Their names persist forever  
Indelible across the years  
Engraved, incised; their mark is permanent.

Their names persist forever  
First grade, fifth, then sixth  
Engraved, incised; their mark is permanent.  
We were young; we were pliant.

First grade, fifth, then sixth  
Walking silently in line  
We were young; we were pliant  
Among those harried giants.

Walking silently in line  
Indelible across the years  
Among those harried giants  
Mrs. Larsen, Mrs. Malden, Mrs. Neary.

*Marjorie Roemer*



## Cat Bones

*a True Story by Sonja Strong*

As young first-time homeowners do, my husband Jon and I were spending the evening painting the walls of our bedroom. About ten o'clock we heard a loud shriek through the open window. Our precious cat ("Pussy Galore") shrieked in the most awful way! She had been an indoor cat for three years in our Beacon Hill apartment, but this was her first outing in our Wayland woods.

We ran outside, scared that she had been hit by a car. Soon we discovered that she had climbed a very skinny sapling that was swaying under her weight. Every time it swayed, she howled anew. We were so relieved that she hadn't been hit by a car!

Our call to the Wayland fire department gave us a new family memory. I remember saying: "This is Mrs. Strong and we are new to Wayland and our cat is new to the woods. She has climbed a tree and doesn't know how to get down. Can you help us?" His reply will live forever in my memory.

"Mrs. Strong, welcome to Wayland. We hope you will enjoy living here. The Fire Department no longer rescues pets from trees, but your cat will figure it out by herself and you will find her on your doorstep in the morning. No one has ever found cat bones in a tree!"

Jon and I loved the honest and warm reply and remind everyone that there is proof that cats do, in fact, learn how to climb down from a tree!

*Sonja Strong*



## The General

One sunny day in June, I was playing on the patio with my brother, Naji, when my mother's lively voice caught my attention. She was calling excitedly to my father as she ran up the cement steps from the lower terrace to the garden and patio above. She spoke in short, rapid exhalations. "Philip, Philip, where are you? Come quickly! My father, praying that no calamity had befallen his family, emerged from the arched doorway.

"While I was in town, I ran into the mayor." Mother continued, wiping perspiration from her brow and upper lip. "He said he was just on his way to our house with a special request. Philip, you'll never guess what he wanted."

"For heaven's sake, Soosan, tell me what this is all about!"

"General Charles de Gaulle is leaving Algeria and returning to France to form a provisional government."

"Of course I know that, but what does that have to do with us?"

"It seems that he will be stopping in Lebanon on his way to France and is coming to Zahle for some meeting or another."

"Really?" exclaimed my father. "I didn't know that Zahle was such an important place! Perhaps he is coming to enjoy the delicious food at the charming cafes on the shores of the Berdowni River, the Wadi."

Now my parents had my full attention. At the age of five, the name of Charles de Gaulle meant nothing to me. It was mention of the Wadi that caused me to listen intently.

The Wadi was my favorite place in Zahle. Wadi means valley. This Wadi, a narrow slot between two mountains with a river flowing through it, was a cool haven even on the hottest days. Its thriving cafes and restaurants were always filled with happy revelers, delicious food, and good music. Near the entrance, vendors sold ice cream, balloons, candy, toys, and all sorts of baubles. For us children, an outing to the Wadi was a rare treat and I hoped that the conversation between my parents would eventually lead us there.

"Or maybe", my mother replied, drily, "he is



coming here because Zahle is so deeply involved in French-Lebanese politics.”

“But I haven’t told you the most exciting news! There will be a reception for General de Gaulle at Hotel Kadri and the mayor wants our little girl to present the general with a bouquet of flowers!”

For the next week, Zahle was abuzz with excited anticipation. As word passed from person to person, a mood of energetic excitement floated up the slope of the mountain and into our home. For me, excited anticipation was mixed with anxiety. I was not sure exactly what would be expected of me.

On the appointed day, I was thoroughly scrubbed, my hair washed and combed into Shirley Temple curls. I was dressed in a simple blue dress trimmed in white. With white Mary Jane shoes on my feet and a gigantic white taffeta ribbon anchored to my curls, I was ready to go. The blue cotton of my favorite dress felt soft and cool against my skin. The clip that held my ribbon together gripped my hair tightly yet did not hurt. I felt pretty and proud. Outwardly, I may have looked calm but a flutter of anxiety filled me.

Leaving my brothers at home, my parents and I started our trip to town.

Before we knew it, we were climbing the broad stone steps that led to the hotel terrace.

Built in the early 20th century with stone walls, a red-tiled roof, and a fountained courtyard, Hotel Kadri was and still is a fine example of traditional Lebanese architecture. My parents and I made our way across the terrace. We passed through an arched wooden doorway and entered the reception hall.

After walking a short distance and turning right, we found ourselves in a very large reception room filled with people.

It seemed to me that the entire population of Zahle had squeezed into that hotel reception room. The mayor was there, of course, standing proudly in his freshly pressed business suit. The rest of the crowd, which seemed like hundreds of people, blended into a hazy blur of faces.

At the front of the room, a very tall, powerful-looking man faced the crowd. He wore a blue suit with a black belt encircling his waist. A long, muscular neck supported a proud face



*The author’s parents, Philip and Soosan Maloof, with their children, Mouna, Naji and Sami, in Zahle, 1944.*

with a prominent nose. That must be General de Gaulle, I thought. Suddenly I was nervous again. General de Gaulle was making a forceful speech in a voice more tenor than baritone. My entire life I had listened to Mother and her friends speaking in French, so I had no difficulty recognizing, though not understanding, the language.

A self-important looking man thrust a bouquet of flowers into my hands. It was a gigantic, artful arrangement of red roses, white carnations and deep blue iris, all tied together with a blue ribbon. Mother whispered in my ear: “The man who is speaking is General de Gaulle. When he finishes, hand the flowers to him and say ‘Ahlan wa sahlan’ to welcome him.

The speech ended. I started to walk toward the general. The lovely fragrance of roses and carnations was having a strange effect on me. A tickle in my throat was followed by a loud “Achoo!” as I sneezed. My nose started to run.

I never got to say “Ahlan wa sahlan.” Tears of mortification and sorrow slid down my cheeks. I looked foolish in front of the entire town. I had disappointed Mother and Father.

Seeing my distress, the general took one or two steps towards me. He smiled kindly at me as he reached into his pocket. Bending down, he used a large white handkerchief to gently dry my eyes and my nose. Then, graciously accepting the flowers, he kissed my cheek, saying, “Merci, ma petite. Les fleurs sont très jolies.”

*Mouna Anderson*



## Needs Improvement

Several months ago, I was looking at the Scrapbook my mom made for me when I was growing up and found my grade school report cards. Reading some of them I noted that my behavior was not always exemplary. Apparently, my shortcomings were in the category called “deportment.” How one conducted oneself in the classroom. My typical grade was “Needs Improvement.” Upon reflection, one incident came to mind that would help explain why my teacher gave me this rating. The example of my questionable deportment happened when I was in third grade and is memorable because it resulted in not just one but two punishments.

One day our teacher, Mrs. Schomburg, was called out of the classroom for a brief period which left the class unsupervised. Somehow, someone threw a peanut at another kid. Soon more and more peanuts were airborne. A mini-food fight quickly broke out with many of the kids getting involved. It was deliciously naughty to be doing this in the classroom.

While this class warfare was raging, the door burst open and in blew Mrs. Schomburg looking more like Mrs. “Stormburg.” As the peanuts froze mid-air and then dropped harmlessly to the floor, an eerie calm came over the room. “Alright, who started this?” was her angry opening salvo. No one answered. No one wanted to be the one to rat out the culprit. “Okay,” she continued forcefully. “If you don’t tell me who started it, you all will stay after school today. So, point to who started it.” Faster than you could shell a peanut, all my classmates including my friends simultaneously turned and pointed their little third-grade fingers accusingly at...moi! Busted, big time.

I had to stay after school that day and probably had to sweep up all those peanuts. When I got home I had to explain to mom why I was late. “I’m going to have to tell your father about this,” she informed me. When dad got home I indeed got punished a second time. I think it was a good firm talking to, but probably not a spanking which was used for more serious offenses.

Looking back, I wish I had wanted to grow up to be a lawyer because then I might have known enough to plead my case with dad and rationally explain to him the legal concept of double jeopardy, “the prosecution of a person twice for the same offense.” I’m sure my plea, had I made it, would have fallen on deaf ears.

*John Cloninger*

## King Canute of Jones Beach

My brother Toby and I were two teenagers walking along Jones Beach, on the south shore of Long Island. As we neared the waterline, Toby planted one foot in the sand and declared,

“This wave wouldn’t dare touch me.” The wave sank into the sand safely before reaching Toby’s foot, Toby took another step forward and renewed his challenge to the next wave. It came closer but still sank into the sand before it could wet

Toby’s foot. Emboldened, Toby took another step seaward and again boasted, “This wave wouldn’t dare touch me.” The third wave was stronger. It was clearly going to reach Toby’s foot, but as the wave approached Toby’s toes, it split into two tongues. They passed on either side of Toby’s foot, joined together behind his heel, and sank into the sand. The wave never touched him.

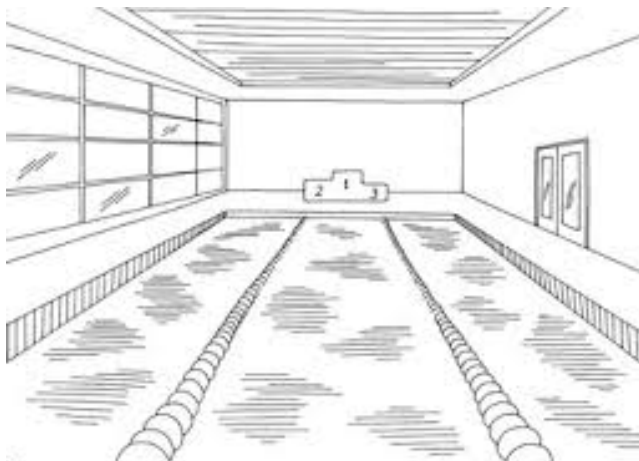
*Bob Berger*





## Swimming – but with only one limb?

“Just keep him happy” the camp director instructs, as she leads me toward the swimming pool, alive with excited first day campers. “Unfortunately, he’s got his heart set on learning to swim,” she continues, “but there’s no way that’s going to happen, not with him missing both of his arms and one of his legs.”



I barely hear the last of her instructions, caught up as I am by the sight of my new charge, a six-year-old boy, balancing his torso on a towel, his one stubby leg stretching out beside a pile of prostheses.

This is Geoff’s first afternoon at Hidden Valley, the Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund Camp which caters to both poor and handicapped children from New York City. Every child at Hidden Valley has their own heart-wrenching story. I have just been told that Geoff was a Thalidomide baby, born missing three limbs as a result of a drug prescribed to his mother to counteract intense morning sickness.

After a quick introduction Geoff and I are in the shallow end of the pool, my hands tightly holding his torso as he jumps up and down in the water. But suddenly the jumping stops, Geoff stands and his dark eyes connect directly with mine. Although this happened over 70 years ago, I can still hear every word of the question he shouted up at me.

“When do you teach me how to swim?”

My chest tightens. Apparently no one has even hinted to him that swimming is out of the question for a child with only one limb. And I definitely am not going to be the one to deliver this crushing news. So we embark on the impossible.

With my hands steadying him, Geoff can float – better than many in fact, given that he is missing three heavy limbs. But when I release him to float on his own, the imbalance in his body’s weight causes him to roll over and over in the water. Not good, not good at all.

It isn’t me that solves the rolling – it’s Geoff. He understands the problem immediately and soon he has a remedy – tensing and bending his torso to counteract the roll. Within days he is a master floater, and just as quickly he masters breathing – easily turning his head in and out of the water.

Now we are left with the real challenge – forward propulsion. Again I have no ideas, but Geoff has plenty. He starts with a combination of kicking styles to make his body move forward. I can’t begin to describe his technique – a combination of traditional flutter kick, butterfly kick and modified side stroke kick. There is no formula for it, but it works! By the end of week 3, Geoff is motoring across the pool with no help – just my excited shouts of encouragement.

The weekend after his return to the city, Geoff’s whole family head to Coney Island, previously a bittersweet destination. This trip is different. Even before towels and umbrellas define the family’s picnic spot, Geoff strips off his prostheses, struggles to stand on his only leg, and hops waist deep into the water. With the whole family holding their breath, he dives forward into the waves and swims and swims. His older brothers join him while his parents stand openmouthed on the shore, tears in their eyes and grins on their faces.

*Jeannie Smith*





## A Magical Experience

Music, especially singing, has been an important part of my life for as long as I can remember – singing picnics with my family, Camp Merestead songs, school and church choirs, musicals and in the last 20 years singing with Chorus North Shore. Several summers ago, I went with 40 members of this group on a concert tour in Italy. It was important and exciting for me to go to Europe as a performing singer, and not as a tourist. I have been wanting to share this story with Carleton-Willard because it is about a retirement home in Italy. If you happen to have seen the English film “Quartet,” which stars Maggie Smith and other fine actors, my experience will be easier to explain.

In that film, a palatial home is reserved for indigent, retired musicians; it is endowed by various rich enthusiasts who like to see a life of dedicated musicianship protected and rewarded. The actual model for this place is Casa Verdi, a handsome Palladian mansion built by Verdi in the middle of Milan. It was made available to musicians, particularly singers, who wished to end their days in comfort and in the company of other musicians.

Our Chorus North Shore group was invited to sing there on a sunny afternoon. The concert hall was an imposing salon with tall windows and glittering chandeliers. We shuffled about uncertainly in our formal concert attire, nervous about performing before this audience, many of whom had performed at La Scala and the Metropolitan Opera. An interesting variety of elderly men and women were wheeled in, then introduced to us by a pleasant translator who spoke both English and Italian. There was Toscanini’s favorite trumpet player; here someone who had sung with Maria Callas or Renata Tebaldi. A retired singer in the audience was 103. One soprano, upon being introduced, rose and delivered a fragment of a swooping aria in a clear, lovely voice. When forty or fifty of this audience were assembled and identified, our accompanist crossed to the piano, our director faced us whispering a few words of encouragement and we began to sing.



There was Mozart and Mendelssohn – and polite applause. When we reached the Italian composers, however, the atmosphere

changed. Vivaldi’s “Gloria” created a stir. Then came the Brindisi – or drinking song – from Verdi’s “Traviata”. Our young tenor and soprano did a great job, and everyone seemed to enjoy this rousing piece. The applause was impressive. But what followed was even more reassuring: the famous “Pensiero” from Verdi’s “Nabucco.” This is almost a national song in Italy, and our director turned and invited the audience to join us. Every member of the audience sang with us, several with tears in their eyes. We closed the concert with three American spirituals. By this time, we could do nothing wrong. There was another wave of applause.

The translator conveyed to us the appreciation of groups and individuals. One soprano in the audience even engaged our tenor in an informal duet. “I have sung with a diva,” he whispered. A woman in a wheelchair grabbed me by the wrists, pulled my face down close to hers and spoke a dozen sentences of impassioned Italian. I think she liked us and wanted us to come back!

Finally, the audience drifted away, and our guide took us down the stairs to the courtyard to see the tombs of Verdi and his wife. In the last days of his life, Verdi was asked which of his works most pleased him. “The building of Casa Verdi,” he said. As we crossed back from the courtyard to the street, we noticed a white fan waving goodbye to us from a third-floor window; it was the woman who was 103 years old. It was clear to us all that we had experienced the magic of music. It was a moment that I cherish and one that will remain part of me for the rest of my life.

*Patsy Colhoun*





## A Game of Moments

For most of us, events have a prelude and an epilogue. Put another way, there is usually anticipation, the event itself, and then the memory of it. With severe memory loss (I try to use the horrible term “dementia” sparingly), things are different. Anticipation is only a flicker on the screen and recollection is a blank screen, leaving you with only the moment itself. Life becomes a game of moments.

At Ross-Worthen, the memory care unit here where my wife is cared for by a remarkable team of people, the caregivers are good at the game of moments. They facilitate them, they notice them when they happen, and they enjoy and share them. During a music session a nursing assistant gets a resident up to dance with her. As they get started, awkwardly for a few seconds and then happily, the moves come back to the resident along with a big smile.

Another time, as the residents collectively brainstorm a list of things you do or might do before bed, a caregiver gives a hint: “What do you wear to bed?” A resident responds: “It’s nobody’s business!” The caregiver laughs loudly and says “I agree!” and then everyone else has a good laugh too. People who usually have little to say and might seem out of it can surprise you with humor and insight. A sense of humor is important in the game of moments.

So too is storytelling, the theme of this issue of the *Villager*. It is through storytelling that we share the moments with those who weren’t there to witness them. It builds a sense of belonging in the community – team spirit if you will – by bringing others in. When I retired early from my job as a lawyer and

began to write memoirs from home, my wife and I were together most of the time, sharing meals, walks and our bed, for a decade, but now we live apart because her caregiving needs are too much for me to handle. Storytelling helps fill the gap. It multiplies the event, and sometimes, with a little judicious editing, it might even improve upon it by distilling things down to the fun parts, or maybe to the parts that matter. When my wife has a good day in Ross-Worthen, I hear about it. When she sings “Edelweiss” as a duet with the music therapist, I feel as though I was there, even though maybe I wasn’t.

Another time I missed was when a traveling musician came in to perform, and my wife, whose filter used to be good, apparently whispered quite loudly that he was off key. The caregiver telling me the story smiled and whispered, quietly: “She was right.” Hopefully the musician took it all in good humor. My wife may have lost

most of her memory, but not her sense of pitch.

I had dinner the other night with a friend whose wife of many years had Alzheimer’s, and also eventually the cancer that ended her life. She became non-verbal and largely non-responsive along the way. I had watched my friend caring for her, always loving and devoted despite the lack of response. He told me about a day very late in the process when his wife, out of the blue and out of character, turned to him and said: “I love you.” Imagine that. I let that sink in, marveled with him at the beauty of that moment,

so well earned over a lifetime together. Now I take advantage of the pages of the *Villager* to share that with you.

*Dick Belin*





## Hamilton Hall Series

The eight lectures in the Hamilton Hall series did not disappoint. China, AI, Economy, Religion, Journalism, Global Migration, and The State of the World 2025 were very interesting topics delivered by articulate speakers. Of particular interest was the talk by Charles Sennott about “Can Democracy Survive in a Post-truth World?”, because journalism is a focus of this year’s Barbara Doyle Lecture Series. He defined “post-truth” as the reliance on emotion and fiction in place of science and facts. Certainly thought-provoking!



## Greenland – A Journey into The Land of Ice

Photojournalist Barry Pell’s presentation barely scratched the surface of Greenland’s history, population, and economy. The earth’s largest island, Greenland was visited by Viking Eric the Red after he was exiled from Iceland in 982 AD. The climate appeared hospitable during the summer months and, wanting to establish a colony, he named it “Greenland”. Now, it is an autonomous territory in the Kingdom of Denmark. Population 56,000, Greenland is the world’s least densely populated country. Its main industry is fishing. Global warming is causing the ice sheet over the middle of the island to shrink, exposing its vast mineral resources.

## A Most Unusual Concert

Concert pianist Frederick Moyer has performed all over the world and has played at CWV for over 30 years. Fred is a prolific inventor of technological aids for his performances. As he played, the “Moyer-Cam” he invented projected a video of the keyboard onto the underside of the open lid of the piano, so that we could watch his hands move across the keys. The main piece Fred played for us was the Grieg Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16. But it wasn’t just the piano we heard. Fred’s unique software program provided a recorded orchestral accompaniment to the piano. And to top it off, Fred played an Oscar Peterson Jazz Trio.

## At Symphony Hall

Those of us who went to Boston’s Symphony Hall recently were treated to a spectacular concert. The main event was a performance of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the 36-year-old violinist, Ray Chen. Chen, a native of Taiwan, had been on the Forbes List of 30 Most Influential Asians under 30. The conductor, Teddy Abrams, is 37 years old. Abrams was Musical America’s 2022 Conductor of the Year. The long first movement of the concerto was played with such gusto and musicality, that the audience rose as one with a standing ovation. And the applause at the end was deafening. We all agreed that it was a privilege to be there.

## Dinner with the Rabbi

Once every month, we are treated to a visit from Rabbi Susan Abramson of Temple Beth Shalom in Burlington. Everyone is welcome and residents of many faiths attend. The dinner table is set elegantly by our Chaplain, Alexx Wood. Rabbi Abramson always tells us a story, often centered on a Jewish holiday occurring at about that time. In March, the Rabbi talked about the holiday of Purim, which celebrates Queen Esther. The Rabbi showed a hilarious video takeoff she had made about the treats we eat for Purim—Hamantaschen—Haman’s pockets. Haman is the bad guy in the story of Esther. And every time his name was mentioned, all of us created a racket with our “groggers” (ratchet noisemakers) to drown him out!

# Happenings

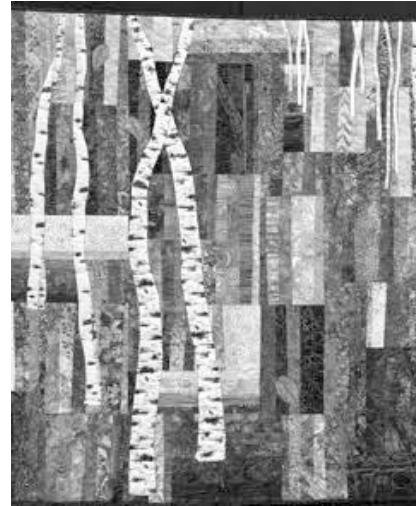
## The Panama Canal

The Panama Canal is one of the wonders of the modern world. Photojournalist Barry Pell presented a captivating slide show/lecture on the canal. With Theodore Roosevelt's support, the Americans built a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. But there was a mountain in the way. It was a formidable task and many workers died of malaria and yellow fever. Despite these hardships, the canal was completed in 1914. Transit of the 51-mile canal is accomplished by a series of locks, which raise ships 85 feet from sea level and then lower them again 85 feet, back to sea level. The locks are filled with fresh water from artificial Lake Gatun at the top. Going through the canal offers amazing sights.



## Kennedy Library

Nothing was missing from this extraordinary journey through the early '60's at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum. The I.M. Pei building facing the ocean at Columbia Point is itself a masterpiece. The exhibit covers everything: the family, the boats, the 1960 convention, the campaign, the Kennedy-Nixon debate, the inauguration and all the history-making events to follow. We got to see home movies, the children dancing in the Oval Office, Jackie's gowns, and more. It was a deeply satisfying experience. As Kennedy himself remarked: "The freedom to search out and use the knowledge of the past is a great source of strength for our democratic institutions."



## Concord Quilt Show

On March 22 a group from CWV enjoyed "Quilts 250 – Stitching in the Spirit of Democracy" – a quilt show sponsored by the Concord 250 Celebrations Committee. The 250 quilts in the show ranged from contemporary to traditional in style and technique. There were protest quilts, flag quilts, antique quilts – quilts picturing animals, street scenes and landscapes – even a picture of the Concord Bridge. We were dazzled by the panorama of colors, shapes and images in a breathtaking display of artistic talent and quilting skill. More than one of us left the show describing the experience as "mind boggling!" Thanks to the Offsite Committee and trip coordinators Weezie Johnson and Jane Eastman for getting us there.

## Master Class

In March, three groups of musicians from the Lexington Music Club presented a selection of classical chamber music pieces. After each group played their piece, Calvin Wersma, a professional violinist, conducted a master class analyzing each piece and coaching the group. Wersma's skill as a teacher and musician was striking. Listening to these musicians was a fascinating learning experience for the audience, hearing how the musicians moved from playing just the notes as written on the score toward their own phrasing and interpretation of the music.





## Memories of Old Quarry Road

For the first 6 years of my life, I lived in Cedar Grove, New Jersey, on Old Quarry Road which, indeed, did go through an old quarry. Our street was a short dead end, and we lived at number 20 which was the last house on the left as you were heading in. Those houses on both sides of the street were surrounded by woods for quite a distance. Across the street from us lived my friend Rusty, who was two years older than I. Alone, with no parental supervision, the two of us used to wander all over those woods, in some cases for a couple of miles if you knew the correct paths, as we did.

Our house at the end of the street was at the bottom of the hill. I used to ride my tricycle down the hill and turn into our driveway dragging my toe a bit to slow down enough to make the sharp turn into the driveway without falling off or having the tricycle fall over. I ruined a lot of shoes that way and, years later, my mother told me that I was the only one who could make that turn consistently without falling.

Rusty and I often took the short walk up the road to the old quarry where there were 40' cliffs on either side of the road. There were paths you could follow to get up to the top on either side of the quarry. From the top, on a clear day, you had a gorgeous view of the New York City skyline about 15 miles away. We also used to climb on the rocks where there had been a rock slide, and we were able to get to the top that way. We did a little climbing on the sheer cliffs as well, but usually not too high.

One day, I climbed about two thirds of the way up the 40' cliff. I got to a point where I could see no way to go higher. I looked for my hand holds and foot holds to go back down, but could not find them either. I felt trapped. About 6' below me was a little ledge that was about a foot and a half wide. Below that was a drop of about 20'. The only way I could figure out how to get down was to jump to that ledge. If I fell off that ledge there were a bunch of boulders on the ground below that would almost surely have killed me if I had fallen from 20' onto them. I was petrified, but I made the jump and did not fall off. Then I was able to get down from there.

That experience gave me a nervousness about heights that I carry with me to this day 75 years later. I cannot walk to the edge of a cliff to look down. My chest gets tight and, I get extremely nervous even 3' from the edge of the cliff. Even on a walkway at the top of a tall building, I get nervous if the walkway does not have a high enough railing or wall.

I still look back on that day and those days and, from my current perspective, am amazed that our parents let us go wandering around out there 'in the wild.'

*Bill Adams*



## Proposals

Sometimes the smallest details have meaning. Though most people don't care much about grammar, even grammatical detail matters. My husband's marriage proposal was all about grammar, purely linguistic. We were talking in the most detached terms about getting married: "If we got married...if we didn't have teaching contracts in different states." It was all in the subjunctive, everything we said. Then suddenly I realized that he had changed the mood. Think grammar here. He was saying: "When we get married." It was the indicative. That was his proposal. There was no bended knee, no ring in a velvet box, no rose petals, no drama, no romantic story to put on Facebook. Not even a yes from me. We just agreed to get married. Neither of us was completely sure we had made a commitment until we walked the next day to a payphone and called our parents. Only that made everything definite.

That's the way it was in the olden days of the 70's, before cellphones and social media. My generation of friends had no fairytale proposals. One liberated friend reversed things and asked her boyfriend to marry her, but I don't think it was on bended knee with champagne. Another gave her live-in boyfriend a gentle ultimatum. She offered to support him while he got the graduate degree he really wanted...but only if they got married first.



Another friend moved out of her boyfriend's apartment house – they lived next door to each other – because she was buying her own place. She figured he would not be able to do without her, and she was right. She claims he would never have thought of marriage if she hadn't quietly abandoned him first.

Fast forward forty years to our children's proposals. Both our son and our son-in-law planned their proposals in detail. The location had to be romantic and meaningful; they had to have the rings in hand; bended knees were obligatory; pictures ended up on Facebook. And both had already asked for the blessings of their brides' parents, leaving the parents wondering when they would actually pop the question and bursting with a secret they could not tell.



Our son postponed his proposal until a trusted friend could ferry the ring from Boston to London where he and his girlfriend were working. When they returned from St. James Park where he had proposed, there were rose

petals strewn on the apartment floor and a bottle of champagne chilling on the table, placed there by friends in the know. Our son-in-law proposed in the middle of the Weeks footbridge over the Charles, a romantic spot in the middle of the 12-mile walk he and our daughter had taken on their first date. Our nephew proposed to his bride on skates—and bended knee—at Rockefeller Center. He had organized friends of the bride to video the entire event. In a posh restaurant where we were dining recently, we wondered why the entire waitstaff was suddenly standing in a line by the kitchen door. Then we realized they were watching a proposal at a nearby table, one they had known was coming. The bride was the last to know. She said yes, but I worried about the duress of the public situation.

I still cherish our “proposal.” It was down-to-earth and sensible. It reflected our situation and us – no time and no money, but lots of love. It still reflects the nature of our marriage: Work together and talk things out. And it gave me a story to tell for forty years of language teaching, a story about the crucial difference between subjunctive and indicative. Grammar won the day.

*Susan Adams*

## Visiting Celia's Garden

One of my hobbies is visiting famous gardens. The Celia Thaxter flower garden exists today much as it did more than one hundred years ago. It is located on Appledore Island, part of the Isles of Shoals, ten miles off the coast of New Hampshire. Celia Thaxter was a 19th century poet and writer who grew up on the Isles of Shoals where her father ran a large hotel. She is best known for her book, “An Island Garden,” that describes individual plants and details the progress of the seasons in a gardener's year. The book was republished in 2003 with beautiful pictures of paintings by the famous artist Childe Hassam. Celia's hospitality attracted many literary giants and artists of the time to her island home and garden, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sarah Orne Jewett, and William Morris.



In 1977 the garden was reconstructed according to original plans described in Celia's book and is now cared for by volunteers. Getting to the garden is a challenge! It is open only two days a week in the three months of summer. Visitors must take a boat from Portsmouth NH, and reservations are necessary. My children made reservations half a year ahead for a Saturday in June. We were lucky to have perfect weather, a fine boat ride, and an exceptionally good guide. The garden was in full bloom with poppies, hollyhocks, tea roses, sweet peas and bachelor's buttons. The perfection of the garden was well worth the challenge of getting there.

*Harriet Hathaway*



# PROFILES



## *Welcome New Residents*

**Nancy Goodwin**  
from Arlington

**Richard Perkins**  
from Topsfield

**Les and Karen Rudnick**  
from Lexington

**Jared “Jerry” Wolf**  
from Bedford

**Frances Morong**  
from Cambridge

**Judy Cole**  
from Lexington

**Karin Ahlgren**  
from Bedford











## *In Memory*

Josephine Flammia	1/4
Holly Cheever	2/7
S. Brown Pulliam	2/22
Linda Hersey	2/27
Emily Rockwood	3/12
Susan Simmons	3/13





*"Libraries are the mainstays of democracy...So keep them, find them, embrace and cherish them." David Baldacci*

## Moments and Memories

Our lives are full of moments and memories. During each day we relish the opportunity to relive them and cherish them. Accomplishments and disappointments, happiness and sadness, welcoming new family members and saying a sorrowful goodbye, all of these are part of who we are.

The Carleton-Willard Library has a substantial collection of autobiographies and memoirs which offer us a glimpse into the life of another person. Here are the titles of some that I have read and thoroughly enjoyed:

*Lazy B* by Sandra Day O'Connor

The first female justice of the Supreme Court tells the story of growing up on the harsh yet beautiful land of the Lazy B ranch in Arizona. We learn how the values of the Lazy B shaped her and her life.

*Pets and the City* by Dr. Amy Attas

Dr. Amy shares all the shocking, heartbreaking and life-affirming experiences she has faced throughout her thirty-year career treating the cats and dogs of New Yorkers from Park Avenue to the projects.

*An Unfinished Love Story* by Doris Kearns Goodwin  
Dick and Doris Goodwin were married for forty-two years and had a substantial collection of letters, diaries, documents and memorabilia that gave them a personal time capsule of the 1960s and an opportunity to make fresh assessments of the central figures of recent times.

*Unraveling* by Peggy Orenstein

During the Covid pandemic, Peggy set out to make a garment from the ground up: learning to shear sheep, spin and dye yarn, and then knitting

herself a sweater. She experienced a year-long journey into some of the major issues of our time: climate anxiety, racial justice, women's rights and, ultimately, the meaning of home.

*The Daughter of Auschwitz* by Tova Friedman

Tova was one of the youngest people to emerge from Auschwitz. She was four when she and her parents were sent to a Nazi labor camp. She was almost six when she and her mother were forced into a packed cattle truck and sent to Auschwitz. She was there for six months, experiencing numerous escapes from death.

*Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom

Mitch Albom rediscovered Morrie Schwartz, his college professor from nearly twenty years ago, in the last months of the older man's life. He visited with Morrie every Tuesday, just as they used to back in college. Their rekindled relationship turned into one final lesson in how to live.

*The Lobster Chronicles* by Linda Greenlaw

After seventeen years at sea, Linda decided to take a break from being a swordboat captain and return home to a tiny island off the Maine coast. There she would pursue a simpler life, move back in with her parents and become a professional lobsterman. All does not go quite as planned.

These seven memoirs are just a few of the offerings in our Autobiography/Memoir collection. The library committee encourages you to read these and to investigate the others. Happy Reading!!

*Katherine F. Graff  
Chair of the Library Committee*



## Among the Newest

*Conclave* by Robert Harris

The Pope is dead. Behind locked doors 118 cardinals gather to choose his successor.

*We All Live Here* by Jojo Moyes

A recently divorced writer juggles a chaotic full house, a struggling career and a confusing romantic life.

*Memorial Days* by Geraldine Brooks

A memoir of grief over the loss of a spouse and a journey towards peace.

*Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConagh

Set on a remote island between Australia and Antarctica, climate change is causing the land to recede under rising seas.

*Raising Hare* by Chloe Dalton

The true story of one woman's unlikely friendship with a wild hare and a meditation on our relationship with the natural world.

*The Dog Who Followed the Moon* by James Norbury

A young lost puppy wanders through a dark forest until rescued by an aging wolf. Together They embark on a journey to follow the moon.

*The Paris Express* by Emma Donoghue

A story centered on the 1895 disaster at the Paris Montparnasse train station, with a fascinating cast of characters.

*Life on the Run* by Sergey Maidukov

A memoir of the author's flight from Ukraine to Poland with his family and millions of other refugees.

*The Jackal's Mistress* by Chris Bohjalian

A gravely wounded Union soldier heals with the ministrations of a southern woman.

*Twist* by Colum McCann

A journalist is assigned to cover the story of the men who repair underwater cables off the west coast of Africa.

*Family Romance* by Jean Strouse

The American artist John Singer Sargent and the twelve portraits that he painted of one English family.

*This is Happiness* by Niall Williams

In a small and forgotten Irish village the rain is stopping and electricity is coming. A portrait of a community full of unencumbered characters.

*Source Code* by Bill Gates

A memoir of how he struggled to fit in and how he became who he is today.

*Three Days in June* by Anne Tyler

A socially awkward mother of the bride navigates the days before and after her daughter's wedding.

*The Ghosts of Rome* by Joseph O'Connor

A World War II thriller about a resistance network based in the Vatican. A countess helps to spirit refugees away from the Nazis.

*On the Hippie Trail* by Rick Steves

Notes from his journal of a trip in 1978 from Istanbul to Katmandu and how he became a travel writer.

*Katherine F. Graff*







## Recent Library Acquisitions

(\* indicates Large Print)

### Autobiography/Memoir

Aciman, Andre	Roman Year (*)
Brooks, Geraldine	Memorial Days
Dalton, Chloe	Raising Hare
Gates, Bill	Source Code
Hepburn, Katharine	Me: Stories of My Life
Maidukov, Sergey	Life on the Run
Miele, Joshua A.	Connecting Dots
Steves, Rick	On the Hippie Trail
Wynn-Williams, Sarah	Careless People

### Biography

Cox, Christopher	Woodrow Wilson
Greenberg, David	John Lewis (*)
Miller, John	The Last Manager
Peri, Camille	A Wilder Shore
Sen, Mayukh	Love, Queenie
Strouse, Jean	Family Romance

### Computer

Weverka, Peter	Windows 10 for Seniors
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### Current Affairs

McLaren, Brian D.	Life After Doom
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### Environment

Lewis, Hannah	Mini Forest Revolution
Shepard, Mark	Restoration Agriculture

### Essays/ Letters

Coates, Ta-Nehisi	The Message
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### Fiction

Alers, Rochelle	Home and Away (*)
Anderson-Wheeler, Claire	The Gatsby Gambit
Baldacci, David	Strangers in Time (*)
Barnes, Camilla	The Usual Desire to Kill (*)
Benedict, Marie	The Queens of Crime (*)
Blake, Olivie	Gifted and Talented (*)
Bohjalian, Chris	The Jackal's Mistress
Box, C. J.	Battle Mountain
Box, C. J.	Battle Mountain (*)
Brown, Sandra	Blood Moon
Burke, Alafair	The Note
Chen, Karissa	Homeseeking
Coben, Harlan	Nobody's Fool
DeLozier, Elizabeth	Eleanore of Avignon
Donoghue, Emma	The Paris Express
Donoghue, Emma	The Paris Express (*)
Dray, Stephanie	The Women of Chateau Lafayette
Epstein, Allison	Fagin the Thief
Farnsworth, Christopher	Robert B. Parker's Buried Secrets
Farnsworth, Christopher	Robert B. Parker's Buried Secrets (*)
Graves, Sydney	The Arizona Triangle
Grippando, James	Grave Danger
Groff, Lauren	Florida
Harris, Robert	Conclave
Horowitz & Penzler, Eds.	The Best Mystery Stories of The Year 2024 (*)
Jenoff, Pam	Last Twilight in Paris (*)



## Recent Library Acquisitions

(\* indicates Large Print)

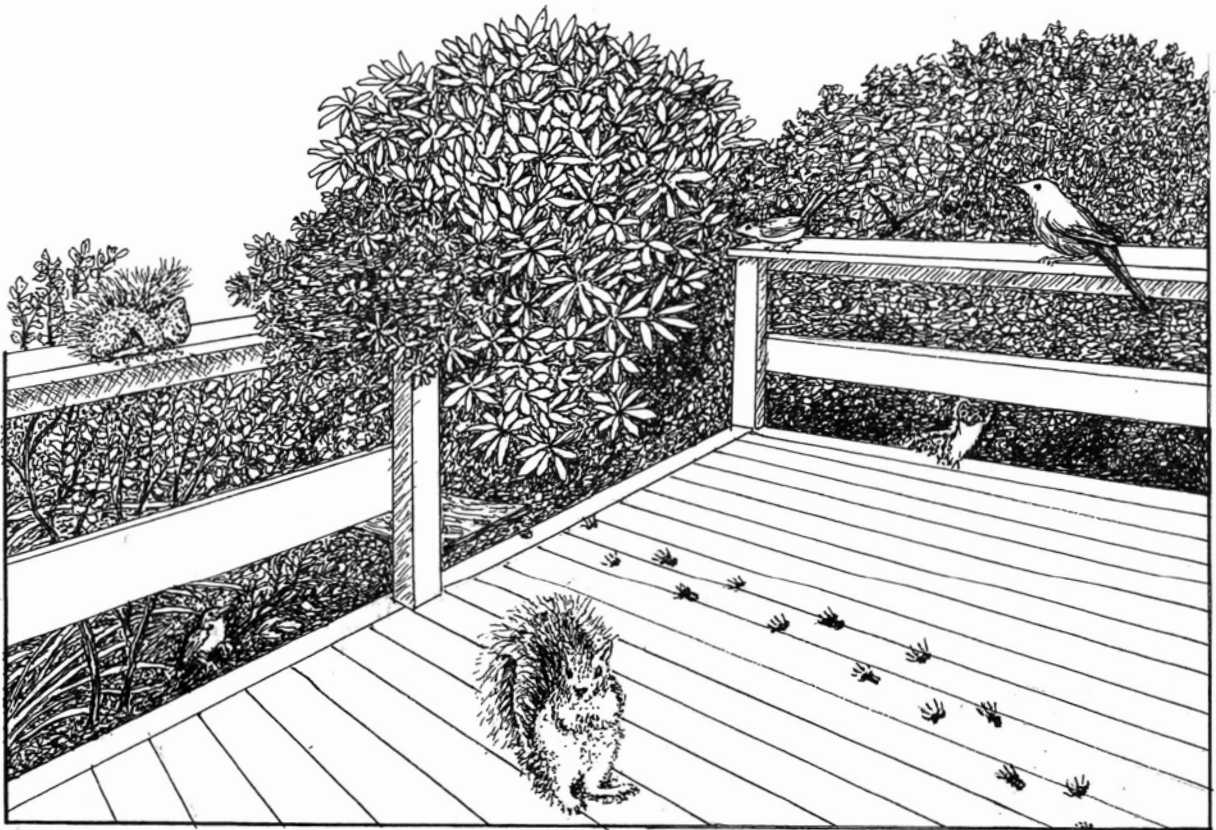
Kellerman, Jonathan	Open Season	Tyler, Anne	Three Days in June
Kushner, Rachel	Creation Lake (*)	Verble, Margaret	Stealing (*)
Lamont, Tom	Going Home	Walker, Martin	A Grave in the Woods (*)
Lange, Tracey	What Happened to the McCrays (*)	Williams, Niall	This is Happiness
Lipman, Elinor	Every Tom, Dick & Harry	Williams, Pip	The Bookbinder
McAllister, Gillian	Famous Last Words	Willig, Lauren	The Girl from Greenwich Street
McCann, Colum	Twist		
McConaghy, Charlotte	Wild Dark Shore	<b>History</b>	
McMahon, John	Head Cases (*)	Kennedy, Pagan	The Secret History of the Rape Kit
Michaelides, Alex	The Fury	Lloyd, Rev. Samuel T. III	Trinity Church
Morris, Heather	Sisters Under the Rising Sun	Nagle, Rebecca	By the Fire We Carry (*)
Moyes, Jojo	We All Live Here	O'Reilly, Bill	Confronting the Presidents
Murray, Victoria Christopher	Harlem Rhapsody	Pearl, Matthew	Save Our Souls
Norbury, James	The Dog Who Followed the Moon	<b>Nature</b>	
O'Connor, Joseph	The Ghosts of Rome	Tallamy, Douglas W.	The Nature of Oaks
Patterson, James	Holmes is Missing		
Patterson, James	The Texas Murders	<b>Poetry</b>	
Perry, Thomas	Pro Bono (*)	Cummings, E. E.	ViVa
Puyana, Alejandro	Freedom is a Feast (*)	Dickinson, Emily	Envelope Poems
Robb, J. D.	Bonded in Death		
Rooney, Sally	Intermezzo	<b>Resident Authors</b>	
Sandford, John	Lethal Prey	Madjid, Hadi	The Braided Hole
Sandford, John	Lethal Prey (*)		
Shamien, Betty	Too Soon	(* indicates Large Print)	
Sittenfeld, Curtis	Show Don't Tell		
Steel, Danielle	Far From Home		
Tiffany, Grace	The Owl Was a Baker's Daughter		
Turow, Scott	Presumed Guilty		

*Katherine F. Graff  
Chair, Library Committee*

## Memorable Moments on my Deck

These events did not all happen at the same time.

Carolina wrens nested in the large geranium on the deck railing, with the adult often pausing opposite the nest before delivering the next caterpillar. When the first fledgling left the nest it managed to perch on a low twig of a shrub. A gray squirrel came to the slider, begging, when my neighbor, who had been feeding the squirrels, was visiting me. A red squirrel stopped dashing around and took a nap on the railing. An inquisitive weasel took a long look around before disappearing. A gray catbird made a meal of holly berries. A raccoon with muddy feet ambled across the deck.





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