

While We're Waiting

A Dunwoody Village publication by residents, for residents.

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Villagers Are Walking – and Reconnecting with Neighbors

Dee Owen

Spring at Dunwoody--nothing could be finer. When crocuses bloom, residents go out to walk and rejoice in spring's splendor. That's especially important this year.

"Walking is a great way to banish the Covid 19 confinement blues," says Erin Price, Dunwoody's social services supervisor. "We haven't taken a survey, but people who walk regularly seem more optimistic and better able to cope with solitude. We all need social connections. Seeing neighbors and chatting will elevate your mood. The exercise and vitamin D that comes with sunshine will raise your endorphins."

Erin has suggestions for all residents:

- Change your environment. Sit on your patio or balcony and get some sunshine and fresh air. Have a chat with friends and neighbors as they pass by. Enjoy Dunwoody's beautiful plantings.
- If you are uncomfortable walking, sit outside on a bench. It's a great place to read.
- Take your scooter out for a spin. Park it in the sun or take a ride down one of the paved paths. If your battery goes dead, don't worry. The security guards will help you.

One afternoon we stopped to ask friends why they love walking. Peggy McEwen said just the anticipation of walking is "a thrill." Her walking partner Eileen Cooper loves the exercise and their daily chat. Sue Hilger, who walks with husband, Joe, uses a FitBit to measure her steps. Her goal is 10,000 a day. Stella Gabuzda's doctor told her to walk for health and she's been walking ever since. Diane Mankin has few close neighbors and is walking more just to see people. Newbie Joan Staley is delighted watching spring evolve in the gardens and woodlands. Fellow nature lover Carol Savar walks "to clear her head." Joan Keator discovered

the pleasure of walking when her water aerobics class was canceled.

All our walkers agreed that seeing people was the best reason for walking, during this period of solitude. If you don't like long walks, rendezvous with a friend at one of the new circles of chairs. The chairs are perfectly placed for conversation—and more. Several yoga enthusiasts were seen using the chairs for an impromptu class.

"Go out," Erin adds. "You'll enjoy it---we promise. Wear a mask at all times. Stay six to ten feet away from others. Sorry, no hugging."



Photo: Dennis Degnan



MEMORIES

Helen Dodson

I was looking to accomplish something meaningful and long lasting with the free time I now have on my hands. I had finished cleaning out my closets and storage areas. My photographs and pictures were mostly culled and stored away. Perhaps now it was time to consider writing my memories to give to my children and grandchildren.

When I was nine years old my grandfather came to live with us. I enjoyed being with him. We played checkers or pinochle. He was a sweet gentleman and kind to us children. I knew he was good with numbers and had worked at a bank but I didn't know much else. It was only long after his death that I learned something of what it must have been like growing up in post-Civil War Texas and what he had made of his life. I wish I knew more. I wish he had written it down for me.

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My Great Grandfather, whom I never knew, did write down his memories. He began, "As I am now past my eighty-fourth year, and have witnessed many important changes and events in the political, moral and scientific world,...I think it well for my children to know something of my life ... and something of my ancestors, whose characters and worth are their heritage. ..." He went on to write about his life. I am so glad to have his memories.

My grandchildren probably have little idea of what times were like when I was growing up. What a gift for my grandchildren if I write my memories for them.



MUSIC INSPIRES ME

Chris Beck

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything."— Plato.

During these challenging times, many types of music touch my soul. "When you sing, you pray twice," said Andre Bocelli. How I wish I could sing! This great Italian tenor's Easter concert in Milan's empty Duomo cathedral inspired listeners of all faiths. His remarkable voice transformed me into another space, as do many symphonies.

At the other end of the spectrum, John Denver has always inspired me. Over 50 years ago, Leif and I first heard him, then as John Deutchendorf, at The Main Point in Bryn Mawr and were extremely impressed. Little did we know he would adopt John Denver as his stage name! Over the years, as we spent a lot of time in Colorado, I grew to love his music even more. His celebration of the natural world always gave its beauty more meaning.

During these months of COVID-19, John Denver's music has inspired me in a different way. Since I have to work hard and consistently to keep my legs strong, I miss my regular sessions with my personal trainer. I try to walk as much as I can, but the uneven pavement makes it difficult to walk outside. Walking from end to end in our country house gets extremely boring. John Denver to the rescue! The distraction of trying to sing along to his songs takes me back to mountains and Aspen groves, and I keep walking.

SAYING "NO"

Bobbi Potts

Back in March, I received a chain letter from a woman I know. The letter invited me to choose a quotation, poem or thought that I believed could be inspirational, for 20 other women. I groaned and set the letter aside.

I really did not want to saddle 20 women with this same task and have them resent me for passing along the assignment. Nor did I want to let down the woman who sent me the letter.

Having spent over 25 years teaching assertive communication skills to people preparing to re-enter the work force, I knew it was time to embrace my right to say "no" to an unwelcome request. I bravely emailed the woman, stating that I would not be completing the assignment, as it would take more time than I had to spend on it.

She responded that she, too, hated getting chain letters and did not want to be resented for sending one to others. However, she lacked the backbone to say "no."

The teacher in me dictated that I demonstrate the courage to say "no." Process: ask myself, what is the worst that can happen if I say "no?" How likely is it that the worst will happen? What is most likely to happen? Can I live with the consequences of saying "no?"

I believe that we each have the right to choose when we are willing to fulfill a request and when we are not. Anticipating consequences of our choices can help us find the courage to say what we really mean.





LEN SPAULDING

Dolores Broberg

When Len moved into C123 on February 26, it was all ready for him. It is comfortably furnished with some of his favorite pieces. On the wall hangs a highly prized portrait of daughter Kate. It was commissioned by Grandma Leila, painted by one of his nieces and captures the essence of this accomplished and caring young woman who flew in from her Amsterdam home to engineer her dad's move to Dunwoody.

Len and his two sisters grew up in Princeton, a small town in Central Illinois. He graduated in 1972 from the University of Cincinnati as a PhD chemist. Len then worked in various research laboratories for 56 years until his retirement in 2014. His experience included both large firms such as Exxon and small ones such as the Colonial Laboratory, his last employer.

Sara and Len met in college. She operated her own consulting company as a community developer for non-profits. Len and Sara married in 1964 and had one daughter. Kate is a retired ballerina who now edits and publishes scientific writings and lives in The Netherlands with husband Zak, an illustrator for digital games.

Len and Sara established their family home in Newark, Delaware, close enough for Kate and her folks to visit Grandma Leila Mullin who lived for 25 years at Dunwoody, some of those years in Apartment C125.

When, as a widower, he chose to move here, Len knew what to expect and that his interests and lifestyle will mesh with ours. He is an avid bridge player, likes to read, enjoys fishing and has considerable knowledge and appreciation for antiques. If you want to reach Len, call 610-325-1043.

INSECT COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

Eloise Smyrl

Anyone who has been outside walking over the past weeks has surely noticed the strips of yellow flypaper circling the trunks of many of our trees. As the days have passed, the strips have been filling up with small, black spotted insects, the nymphs of the Spotted Lanternfly.

This highly invasive insect has been wreaking havoc on various tree species, including maples and fruit trees. They are a terrible menace. Soon we will be seeing the adults all around us. Feel free to squash them!

Many thanks to Bill Hohlfield and his crew for their proactive work. It is true that there is some sad collateral damage when birds get stuck on the paper, but in the long run, birds depend on healthy trees and species survival will be safeguarded if we can decrease the number of these wretched insects.



Photo: Pete Smyrl



Mike, one of Dunwoody's mail carriers, always has a quick joke or one-liner to brighten everyone's day as he delivers the mail to the residents and staff. His quick wit and optimistic outlook is infectious.

Did you hear about the guy whose doctor told him his sugar was too high?

He went home and moved it to a lower shelf.

Keep smiling!

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Arline Lieberman



Photo: Warren Lieberman

Lots of people have collections. Ours started with a single Japanese style owl, made of stone, that I purchased in Lancaster County 40 years ago just because I loved the look of it. It started a movement and now, at last count, we have upwards of 70 images of owls in materials ranging from silver to pottery and crystal, wood and wax and one of pink rhodonite. We even own one in a scene inside an eggshell made by an artist who created similar ones for Liberace. We found a metal sculptured owl on a street corner in Prague playing the saxophone and brought him home in our suitcase wrapped in some shirts. Some are useful such as the whistle we found at a craft fair, or a candle-holder that our granddaughter gave us.

As I write this, I am wearing a T-shirt another granddaughter made for me that says HOOT and features three stylized owls in luscious colors. What is the fascination with owls? Why did a Frenchman decorate his cave wall with an owl image some 30,000 years ago? What inspired the ancient Greeks to decorate their coins with pictures of owls and the Chinese to decorate their bronze vases with owls? And why did J.K. Rowling use owls as the chief communication method in her Harry Potter books?

Myths and fables have grown up around owls to perpetuate their presence in our literature. A little owl was a companion of Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, which explains why they symbolize learning and

knowledge. Romans, however, were terrified of owls and believed that they portended death.

The physiognomy and habits of owls have also fascinated people. Owls seem to be able to turn their heads around a full 360 degrees. Not true, but they are able to turn 135 degrees in either direction because their eyes are fixed and tubular (not spherical like most mammals,) and this motion allows them to see their prey. The color of owls' eyes identify when it prefers to hunt. Orange eyes indicate twilight hunters, dark brown or black eyes identify nocturnal predators and yellow eyes indicate diurnal or daylight hunters.

Owls do rely more on super hearing for hunting. Some have multiple ears at different heights, which lets them locate prey based on tiny differences in sound waves. Since they are almost silent in flight, they can surprise their prey or even startle a person, adding to their mystery. One barn owl family can eat 3000 rodents in a four-month breeding cycle. This may explain the relationship between owls and farmers; they provide natural pest control at no cost.

So our owl collection is not only a bunch of things that we like to look at, but also a myriad of memories and stimulus to find out more about a bit of the natural world. Do you have a collection? What does it mean to you? Please take some time to write about it and you may see it in print right here.

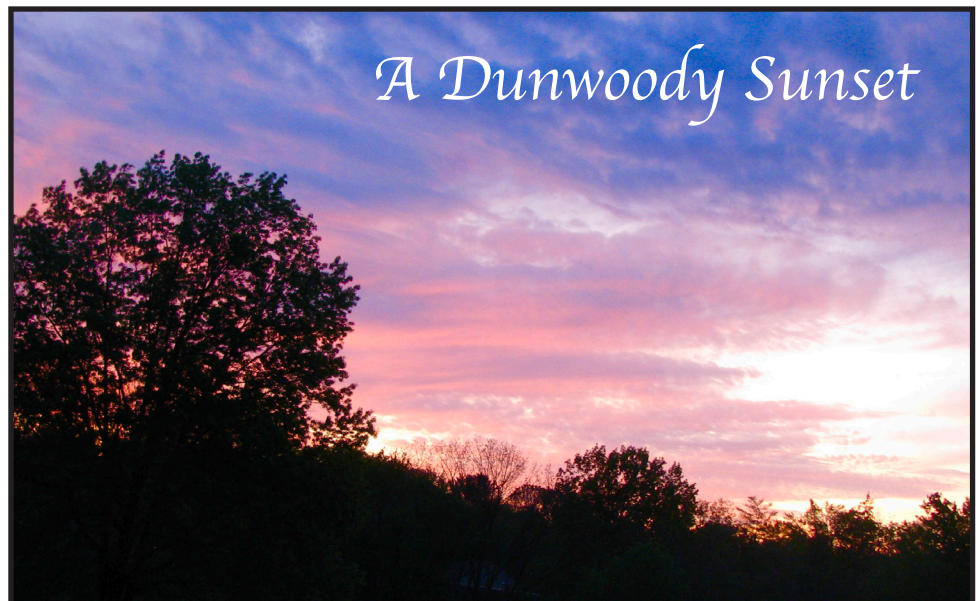


Photo: Warren Lieberman