

While We're Waiting

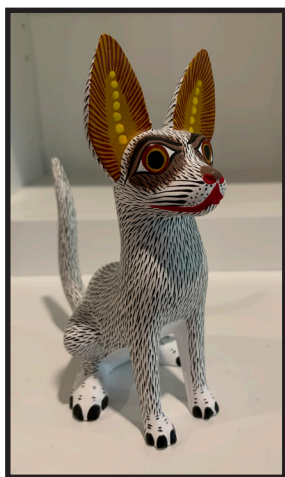
A Dunwoody Village publication by residents, for residents.
Issue 6 August 10, 2020

ANIMAL CARVINGS FROM OAXACA

Nancy Dechert

In 1994, our daughter Tracy moved to Austin Texas to prepare for graduate school. During Skip's and my first visit to her, she gave me a present. It was a whimsical wood carving of a lizard, brightly painted in intricate patterns of red. I was delighted and intrigued. This was my introduction to animal folk art from Oaxaca, Mexico. Our next visit with Tracy was in San Antonio, and she and I each bought ourselves an "alebrije." That was the beginning of my collection of what our son calls my "crazy Mexican creatures."

The origins of this particular folk art began in the 1930's with an artist names Pedro Linares. He had a fever dream of a forest in which normal elements such as trees and rocks were turned into fantastical animals. Linares began recreating these images in paper mache, which caught the attention of collectors. Then, an artist named Manuel Jimenez started carving these figures from the wood of the copal tree. This was the beginning of an industry that today involves over 150 families. Generally, the men do the carving and the women the painting. Sadly, the success of the craft has led to the depletion of the copal trees.



Photos: Nancy Dechert

No two of these imaginative animals are alike. Many are signed by the artist, usually the head of the family, and have removable

parts. The porcupine shown here is designed with removable quills. The most intricate figures are very expensive. Many of mine were gifts, but I have bought them in places as diverse as a Women's Exchange in Dedham MA and the Penn Museum of Archaeology.

I own 22. My 80th birthday is approaching and I am thinking of asking my family for at least one crazy Mexican creature. But not the magnificent coyote on Etsy that costs \$1441.19!!



THE BASKET

Jean Hogan

On a quick trip to our storage locker the other day, I found myself facing an appalling array of STUFF. Since I was only there looking for a particular tool, I decided, maybe later, when I had more time...then, something caught my eye.

I reached down and pulled out the tattered handles of a large old basket, battered from many years of summers on the beach at Lake Dunmore, Vermont. What a surprise to find it here, at least 60 years later. Why hadn't it been tossed out by now? It was always with me in those summer days, filled with spare diapers, keys, books, Band-Aids, needlework, etc. My kids always seemed to be rummaging through it. It stood by my beach chair like a faithful servant, waiting for the next intruder. I decided to take it with me and drop it off at the trash room on the way back to our apartment.

Looking down into the basket's shadowy depths, I noticed a golf ball size object wrapped in some tired layers of paper towels. Curious! As I carefully opened it up, I came across an interesting, although somewhat muddy quartz crystal clump. It was my daughter's "diamonds." She used to pack it carefully in paper towels and carry it with her every time we took a trip, refusing adamantly to believe us that they were not diamonds, just crystals.

continued on page 2

The Basket, continued from page 1

Then, as I was putting this back, I touched another small, wrapped object, somehow lost in the many folds of the lining of the basket. Laboriously I unrolled an excessively long roll of toilet paper until—surprise, out popped a tiny tooth. Ah! Yes! The tragedy of the “lost baby tooth.” We had looked desperately for that tooth, fearing that it was shed in vain, for unless we could put it under her pillow that night, how could the Tooth Fairy know to bring a reward? There it had been hiding all these years in the unknowable depths of—THE BASKET. Actually, the Good Fairy did find out somehow and brought a reward, but she never got the tooth. We suspect that somehow, my daughter wrapped it up and dropped it into the basket without telling us.

So now, I’m rethinking my decision to hurry and toss out the basket. That’s why storerooms keep so many secrets and memories, after all. Isn’t it?



NEWTOWN SQUARE 40 YEARS AGO

Mary Alice Hamilton

When we moved to Strafford/Wayne 40 years ago, a neighbor suggested that we go to Newtown Square to Gentile’s for the best produce ever. It was a much longer drive than it is now from Dunwoody!

Joseph and Mary Gentile began the family business in 1954 close to Broomall’s old sawmill. Joe and Mary’s personal touch and reputation were on every product they sold and the produce operation enjoyed a strong local following for fresh, homegrown vegetables. In 1960, the original Gentile’s Produce Market was opened for year-round sales with the help of their seven children working in the market.

The success of Gentile’s Market surged as three major chain stores went on strike in the late 1960’s. At that time, the Gentile Family was required to work 24 hours a day to maintain the availability of their products. In 1970, the family branched out and opened the current location in Newtown Square. Although Joe passed away in 1994 and Mary in 2007, all nine of their children continue to operate the market.



MARIAN GILMORE TURNS 100!

Linda Banks (proud daughter)

What are the odds that, in the COVID age, one person could have two back-to-back birthday celebrations? Marian Gilmore did just that. Dunwoody’s youngest centenarian had a double event to mark her July 19, 2020 birthday.

Party #1 served a picnic box lunch to her friends in Dunwoody with Duke Ellington and Frank Sinatra playing in the background.

Party #2 was a boisterous surprise drive-by parade of friends and family. Noisemakers, balloons and decorated cars passed by in Lap One. Lap Two had everyone raise a champagne toast as Marian joined in with her favorite...a Margarita, straight up, ice on the side, salted glass of course. In the last Lap, everyone received gift bags with birthday cakes and party favors.

Marian’s son Tom was by her side, masked at a safe remove, and daughter Linda (a Dunwoody rehab alum) led the parade with granddaughter Nadine at the wheel.

Marian’s dual event tempered her disappointment at the cancellation of the family’s original plans for a major countywide gathering at the Warren Inne. But with her customary positive forward thinking attitude, she looks ahead to scheduling her 101st there in 2021.

Much appreciation goes out to the nurses and activities staff who joined in at every stage of the fun.



A REMINDER...

It’s not too soon to request an application for a mail-in ballot for the November election.

Check out www.votespa.com for information.

SNOW, SLEET OR COVID-19, DINING SERVICES DELIVERS!

Dee Owen

Covid-19 snuck in quietly and completely disrupted our lives. The residents put their plans on hold, hunkered down and wondered when it all would end. One of the few high spots of the day continues to be the arrival of dinner.

Speaking of disruption, in Dining Services it was a completely different story.

“We basically had 48 hours to change from table service to home delivery,” says Dining Services Director John Alberici. “We didn’t have enough paper and plastic supplies to support home delivery and we had to alter the menus.”

We made it “in the nick of time,” adds Chef Jamie Campbell, who made an emergency trip to a supplier to get the containers. Jrhon Bryant set up an assembly-line system in the dining room and with help from the waiters and waitresses devised a way to pack the dinner bags efficiently.

This operation is complex. Each day the staff prepares and delivers 250 meals on average for independent living and 200 more for residents in assisted living and medical. An added challenge, says Jamie, is the dietary needs of some residents—from low salt to gluten-free and more. In addition,

the grocery side of the operation expanded its offerings to meet residents’ need for staples, from peanut butter to laundry detergent.

One way to sum up our dining service in this time of pandemic is to call it “a work in progress.” The cooks expanded the new limited menu from two entrees to four, added salad and bread and, best of all, listened to feedback from the residents. Some items aren’t possible: hamburgers and fried oysters don’t travel well. Nonetheless, we appreciate the variety they have added to the menu, especially the lemonade, iced tea, and dessert choices.

“There were a few bumps at the beginning,” admits Jrhon. “We gave the servers maps to help them find their way to the apartments, but it took time for them to learn to navigate through the maze. Some residents didn’t get what they ordered or meals came late, but now we’ve got it right.”

“There was anxiety and nervousness in the first weeks,” says John. “Our first priority is taking care of the residents, but at the same time the staff was concerned about their families’ health and their own. It took a while but we’ve settled into a routine.”

We can look forward to more changes, according to John. “We’re adding fresh fruit and vegetables as they come into season and hope to host more special events, like the July 4th ice cream treats.”

On behalf of all the residents, we thank you – the chefs, the dishwashers, the dining room staff and the guys and gals in transportation who take meals to the people in Penrose. **You are awesome!**

See you soon, we hope.



Staff prepare trays in the kitchen for the care center, while a team assembles residential orders in the Lincoln Dining Room. Chef Jaime delivers packaged fruit platters for residential delivery.



Photos: Monica Knauss



Photos: Eloise Smyrl

THE LIFE OF A CATTAIL

Eloise Smyrl

Yellow cattail flowers are tiny but very numerous, packed along the stalk. They are not particularly showy or attractive. The familiar stage of the cattail is the brown stalk loaded with thousands of seeds that are as small as a grain of pepper. Yes, it looks like a cat's tail!

When dry, the cattails explode and seed fluff flies through the air. Sometimes children help spread the fluff!



LOCKDOWN LIMERICKS

Barbara Keyser

There was a gal from Newtown Square
Who was very fond of her dark hair.
But day by day,
Covid turned it gray.
She moaned, "I'll try to not despair."

We have a skilled nurse here named Cindy
And a great social worker named Mindy.
They are joined by sweet Ellen,
Who's rarely heard yellin',
And Olivia, who's lovely—not spindly.

Dunwoody has a great dining service.
Eating meals here should not make you nervous.
To John, Jrhon and Leah:
Please never say "See ya!"
We know for sure how strong your verve is.

The cleaning staff here works quite hard,
And we hold them in such high regard.
They wield a mean mop,
Cleaning bottom to top.
"Out, damn spots!" in the words of the Bard.

Kathy B.'s an admin of renown.
You'll never see her with a frown.
Delivering newspapers
Was one of her capers.
She and Connie have the best show in town.

WHIMSEY

Dot Ward

I'm really fond of Barbara Fritchey
I'll bet she scratched when she got itchy.

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

Helen Dodson

When I'm asked how I am doing surviving the shutdown, it is so easy to recall those things I am doing without. I certainly miss our evening dinners in the Lincoln Room with the interesting people at Dunwoody. I miss the live entertainment in the auditorium, the poetry class that was interrupted mid-course, the use of the swimming pool and the game room. I am probably going to miss being with my three grandsons at the North Carolina outer banks at our annual week at the beach.

But when I think about what I have not lost I am grateful. I didn't have my one and only shot at senior year of high school end abruptly with no prom, no Senior Week, and no graduation ceremony. I didn't have my long planned wedding celebration postponed indefinitely. I didn't have my restaurant or catering business that I had poured my life into for the past thirty or more years go into bankruptcy. I didn't see my job in the service industry vanish as stores and restaurants shut down or have my house foreclosed on because I couldn't pay the mortgage. And I didn't have to rely on the food bank because I didn't have enough money coming in to cover all my expenses.

I am grateful for all those people who continue to work despite the pandemic so that I have health care, and groceries, and mail. I am grateful for Zoom, Face Time and Skype so that I still maintain contact with church, clubs, family and friends. I am grateful for the uninterrupted time to work on projects. I am even grateful for the opportunity to try wearing my hair in a longer fuller style, something I would not have done otherwise.

If I were to think another moment or two, I might remember more. The pandemic has slowed life down enough that I can remember to practice gratitude.