

Meadowood Anthology



A publication by and for the residents
of Meadowood Retirement Community

Vol. 6, No. 1 ❖ Winter 2011

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The *Meadowood Anthology* is a quarterly publication by and for the residents of Meadowood Retirement Community in Bloomington, Indiana, and is made possible by the Meadowood Memorial Fund.

Project Manager: Beth Van Vorst Gray

Editorial Board: Ella Fox, Henry Gray, Gene Merrell, and
Miriam Rosenzweig, Editorial Coordinator

Managing Editor: Alexandra M. Lynch

Contact us: E-mail: meadowoodanthology@live.com

Meadowood Retirement Community (www.meadowoodrc.com)

2455 Tamarack Trail

Bloomington, IN 47408

(812) 336-7060

Find all editions of *Meadowood Anthology* online at:

<http://www.meadowoodrc.com/MeadowoodAnthology.html>

The Best of Winter

Two winter poems...

Stopping By a Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.



Winter Twilight

By Ann Porter

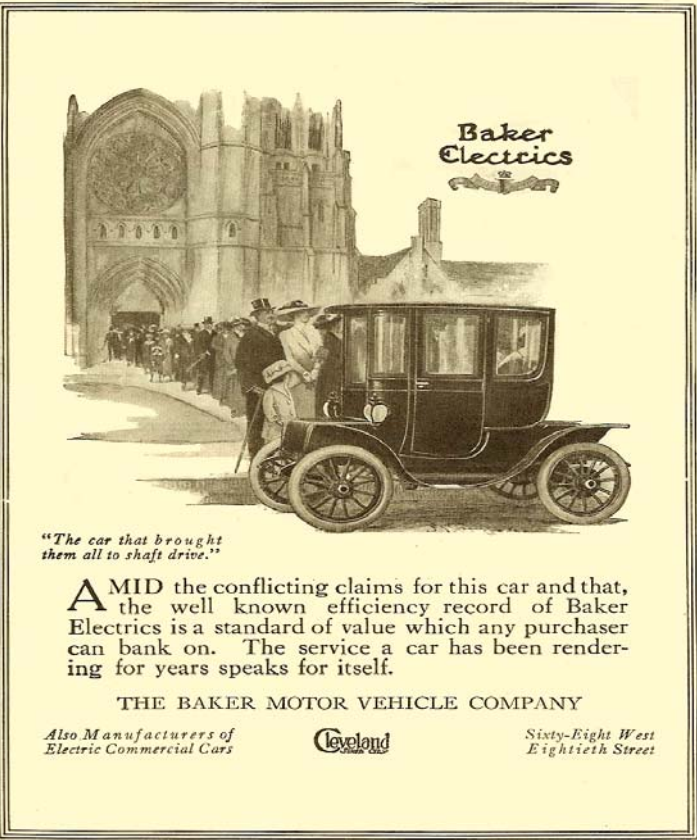
On a clear winter's evening
The crescent moon

And the round squirrels' nest
In the bare oak

Are equal planets.

Betty Bain's Electric Car


May 1912 Cosmopolitan Magazine



"The car that brought them all to shaft drive."

AMID the conflicting claims for this car and that, the well known efficiency record of Baker Electric is a standard of value which any purchaser can bank on. The service a car has been rendering for years speaks for itself.

THE BAKER MOTOR VEHICLE COMPANY

Also Manufacturers of  *Sixty-Eight West*
Electric Commercial Cars *Eightieth Street*

110 When you write, please mention the Cosmopolitan

Electric automobiles are not a development of the 21st Century. When Betty Bain was a little girl in the 1920s, she had the opportunity to ride in an electric car, depicted above. When Betty and her family arrived in Milwaukee by train to celebrate Christmas with her maternal grandparents, her grandmother met them at the station in her big, black electric car. Her grandfather, a physician, had his own and made house calls with it.

The cars were kept in an old carriage house and had to be recharged with a generator every night. Top speed of these cars was 20 miles per hour. Production of electric cars ended in the 1930s, when gasoline-powered engines replaced them. ❖

Only At Meadowood

By Barbara Restle

“It takes a village to raise a child,” as Hillary Clinton so ably pointed out, but it took an entire community with a great heart to save one little puppy from the harsh weather this Christmas.

At 5:30 a.m., two days before Christmas this year, the Baldwins were awakened by a loud knock on their front door. At their front entrance stood their smiling paper-delivery lady holding their newspaper in one hand and a “Snoopy-looking” puppy in her other. “Good Morning! I do believe if you take the puppy you will also have an alternative use for your paper.”

The temperature was in the mid-twenties with four inches of new snow on the ground. Bill Baldwin looked for human footprints in the snow and other than the paper-lady's prints found nothing. The puppy was shivering with the cold. Honey and Bill fed the puppy hamburger meat which the puppy quickly devoured and it was then placed in the basement.

I made the mistake of going to lunch on that fateful day and between the time I entered the cloak room to put on my jacket and make my exit, Honey and Bill Baldwin, and Don and Ginnie Tyte had extracted a promise from me that I would “Take a look at the puppy.”

Has anyone at Meadowood ever been able to say “No” to Ginny Tyte? Beware – it is her eyes; bemused with a touch of friendly authority, beseeching and in this case also ardent. Add also that sweet beguiling smile of Don's. Peering sideways at Honey and Bill, I found that for the first time since I have known them, I sensed a faint feeling of consternation.

I drove to the Baldwin's home and within a few moments I had a still-shivering puppy in my arms and headed home to my neat and clean little cottage. As this is being written it is no longer neat, but the housekeeping ladies will politely work their magic. One of my computer wires had been chewed in half but it is not an emergency as it is only to the audio portion of my PC. What if it had been a wire somewhere in the house carrying 220 volts?

Within minutes of my dialing David Bennett with an SOS request, Carl, from maintenance, was at my door with screwdriver and electric drill. The two of us constructed a gate between the kitchen and my eating area using the collapsible kiddy fences left over from the time my toddler grandchildren visited me in my country home that had a killer two-story spiral staircase. After constructing our kennel, Carl said, “That should do it. It sure is a cute puppy.”

I added, “Adorable, absolutely adorable. Thank you very much Carl. You have saved many a puppy accident in my home.”

As he gave one more look at a puppy clearly puzzled by the confinement huddling on a bathmat in the corner, Carl's furrowed brow appeared to deepen. "Well, good luck, I've got others waiting on me. Do I want a puppy? No. I have three dogs as it is."

The puppy obviously needed a bed and proper food and treats. Arriving back home after one hour of shopping, puppy was in the middle of the living room chewing on one of my slippers. Puppy was a good climber. One more SOS call to David Bennett—he understood the problem, having also brought home a puppy six months ago. "I know about puppies." Within five minutes Justin and Ray from maintenance were at my front door and, with the aid of plywood donated by the Tytes, reconstructed the fence. "That sure is one cute pup. No! Sorry we both have dogs at home. It's a male isn't it?"

"Oh I haven't looked yet, I don't know."

"Do you have a name for it yet? The pup should have a name."

"Oh, yes. You're right. How does Benny sound?"

"Well, good luck, it sure is cute. We better get back to what we were working on."

Benny ate his Purina Puppy Chow, drank a little water and curled up in his new cushy puppy bed along with his now threadbare slipper. With a sigh of relief I was now able to keep my late afternoon

volunteer appointment at the Shalom Homeless Center. No, none of the volunteers wanted a Christmas puppy.

After parking my car in the garage, I opened the door into my computer room and was greeted by a joyous excited Benny jumping up to welcome me with the second slipper in shreds beside him— apparently after chewing up the audio computer wire for an appetizer. Too late to call for reinforcement, in order to get any sleep that night I found some more plywood, bored a few holes in the wood and attached it with wire to the existing non-functioning fence. Getting in and out of the kitchen area for my bedtime glass of milk was like running an obstacle course. Oh well, at least this time Benny is truly secured.

Next day during lunch Carl Brorson's name was mentioned as our resident carpenter. Within a very short time, after one more phone call, Carl Brorson arrived and with more tinkering, (this time several hours of it) Carl said, "That should finally keep Benny out of trouble."

While I was picking up my mail at the box in front of my home, my neighbor Marguerite Rust walked over and said she could give me a collar for the puppy which was necessary for the daily walks. Daily walks! As she handed me the collar, Ginnie Gest walked over and said she had some bright colored fabric and she could sew a little coat for the puppy to keep it warm this winter. My neighbors are the Bayers, and their

kitchen door was mud-streaked by Benny. The chain I had attached to him was too long and he had jumped up on their door for attention. Thoughtfully, Bob found a strong tool to shorten the chain. “That sure is a cute puppy. She's a female. What's her name?”

“Her name?”

“Yes her name.”

“Oh, it's Benny.”

“That's a boy's name.”

“Oh, well I'll spell it with an 'ie' ending, sure why not?”

Eighteen days later, after falling in love with this fun-filled little warm body, often dozing comfortably on my lap while I watched the evening's bad news, there was a loud knock on my kitchen door. “Barbara, this is my son, Bob Bayer, and he wants to take a look at Bennie.”

Forty-eight hours later Bennie is lovingly carried into son Bob's truck for the trip to Fort Wayne. I handed Bob a large shopping bag with remnants of what had been slippers, food for a week, a leash and her bed which her little body was already spilling out of.

With dampening eyes and a newly-emerging lump in the throat, I am a little sad. ❖



Bennie being busy

A Book Commentary

By Jane Layman

Wait Till Next Year, A Memoir

By Doris Kearns Goodwin

Doris Kearns Goodwin is a historian and biographer of great acclaim, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for *No Ordinary Time*, her account of the war years with the Roosevelts in the White House. I consider this one of the best books I ever read. I always urge others to read it when the subject comes up. So I approached this book with some misgivings—how can a historian of great repute slide down off her pedestal to write about such a mundane subject as baseball?

I needn't have worried as she did the same outstanding job she has always done with her writing.

The book starts in 1949 when Doris was six years old growing up in Rockville Center, NY, and takes the reader to the end of her high school years; the epilogue ends with her later life and her eventual career as a historian.

What makes this such a good read is her recall of what her oh-so-innocent childhood was like. Her father gave her a baseball score book and taught her how

to keep score—not just hits, runs, errors, but the statistics found in box scores in the newspaper. She learned how to record every pitch, every play, the direction of throws and other minutiae which enabled her to recreate in exquisite detail a complete game. At one point she says that to this day she cannot attend a game without keeping score.

She developed a hero-worshipping affection for Jackie Robinson. The reader cannot help feeling emotional when she describes getting his autograph with a short exchange of words. She uses the tale of his breaking into Big League Baseball as the first black player as a yardstick of how the world was changing. She describes an incident when he was first playing and the fans and other players were taunting him during a game in Cincinnati. Pee Wee Reese, the Dodger shortstop, called time, walked over to Robinson, put a hand on his shoulder, exchanged a few words with him and walked away. It quieted the crowd and maybe avoided an ugly scene.

But baseball is only the canvas upon which this memoir of an American child growing up in the late 1940s through the 1950s is painted. That the young Doris was so enthralled by the world of baseball may seem strange to today's readers but in that era, following major league baseball was truly the American pastime. The essence of family life in a small town neighborhood before television, when kids had the freedom to play outside in the safety of their block, and to follow sports on the radio, and

girls wearing dresses to grade school is presented as an almost idyllic existence. I did not remember that the Dodgers had lost the World Series to the Yankees so many times until she describes the World Series of 1955 when they went into the seventh game tied and how her classmates were smuggling radios into classrooms to follow the game. After lunch, the students were ordered back to their homerooms where the game was turned on. Smart principal in that school. The Dodgers won (next year had finally come), and the celebration all over Brooklyn was euphoric.

As she matures and goes on to junior high school, she lauds the teachers who broadened her personal horizons when the Civil Rights Movement was happening. There is much history in her description of the McCarthy hearings, the execution of the Rosenbergs, Sputnik, the pathetic attempt by public schools to do drills to protect children from an atomic bomb attack and the calling out of federal troops to integrate the Southern schools.

We go from the happily unconcerned days of childhood to the complications and stresses of the adult world where people die, wars happen, the Brooklyn Dodgers (the focus of her intense devotion for so many years) move to California, and to her, nothing will ever be the same again.

Author's Note: This book is available in the Meadowood Library.

Other Kearns titles available as well:

No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II

Lyndon Johnson: An American Dream

The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys: An American Saga ❖

♪ The flowers that bloom in the Spring tra la...! ♪

...And YOUR writing and art for our Spring Issue...

...Great things to look forward to!

You are encouraged to submit your writing or art to the *Meadowood Anthology*. You may drop your work by the front desk or e-mail it to Beth Van Vorst Gray at bvangray@comcast.net.

Deadline for Spring issue:
April 8, 2011.

My Teachable Moments in an Ominous World

By Miriam Rosenzweig

In April 1933, shortly before my eighth birthday, my family took a train from Munich, where we lived, to Vienna. That was not unusual because my mother's parents, brothers and their families all lived in Vienna, and we had often gone there for visits. But after a while, I realized that this trip was different. My parents never talked about going home, and I began asking questions about our return. My mother explained that a very bad man, named Hitler, who wanted to harm us, had become the ruler of Germany. Munich was part of Germany, and we would never go back.

That's a lot to swallow for an eight-year-old. But, as it turned out, my transition to my new surroundings was easy and enjoyable. I had cousins who were my age, and there was a lot of visiting and playing together, and it made them feel important to educate me in the ways of Vienna and about our family. One cousin, who was a few years older than I, told me that our grandfather was the inventor of plywood, and that he made plywood in a large factory in Vienna. Several years passed before I learned that this was a vast exaggeration of my grandfather's accomplishments. He did have a plywood factory in the city, but he

did not invent the process by which it is made. Laminated wood had been found in the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs and there are 17th century records, showing the French and English working wood along the general principles of plywood: the gluing together of several sheets of wood with the grain running crosswise from one sheet to next. My grandfather's contributions were some time-saving improvements in the gluing process. His factory thrived, and he became a wealthy man.

When he reached late middle age, my grandfather's memory began to fade. His condition worsened rapidly, and at that time he gave the factory to his four children, three sons and my mother. The brothers assumed management, and, not wanting a silent partner, they bought my mother's portion of the factory from her. This infusion propelled us into a somewhat higher rung of the middle class and its life style.

We lived in a large apartment in an affluent part of the city. It had ample space to house my parents, their four children, my father's library, a cook and a maid. Our maid Paula was young, pretty and gentle. One of her duties was to get me off to school every morning. School started at eight and was a half hour's walk from our house. That meant I had to get up early, and my parents were nowhere in sight at that time. Paula combed and braided my long hair, gave me breakfast and prepared the mid-morning snack I took to school. She was there for me when my mother was not, and I felt close to her. One day, I

returned from school to find Paula in tears and sobbing “I didn't do it.” My mother had found sheets missing from the linen closet and accused Paula of stealing them. Her suspicions were not absurd. It was a common occurrence for the service staff to steal linen, silver and china from their employers. They sold these items through fences, often their boyfriends. I don't know what rules of evidence my mother used to accuse Paula and to find her guilty, but she was gone the next day. I was deeply shaken and unhappy about this turn of events, and in my heart I felt Paula was innocent.

My grandparents too, lived in a large apartment, and they owned a summer house in an outlying district of the city. By the time we arrived in Vienna, my grandfather's mental capacities had vanished completely. I remember him as a friendly old man with a bushy mustache, who never said anything that made sense. It was my grandmother who reigned as queen of the household. Members of the close and extended family spent much time at their house. I remember sitting at a long dining room table where lots of people had gathered for the mid-day meal, or for afternoon coffee. The meals were excellent and the baked goods, accompanying coffee, fabulous. Cooking and baking was done by a cook, who had long been employed by my grandparents. The meals were served by a maid. On some occasions, when the adults were engaged in lively conversation, and there were no suitable playmates present, I brought my own entertainment. One day, I brought Charles and Mary Lamb's "Tales

from Shakespeare,” translated into German. While I was reading, the maid looked over my shoulder and saw the word “Shakespeare.” She was unfamiliar with it and began sounding it out: “S- ha- kes- pe- a -re.” I told her it was pronounced Shakespeare. Then she said: “You are so young, and already you know more than I will ever know.” The profound sadness in her voice stayed with me for a long time and led me to a new insight into the human condition. Not everyone is satisfied with her station in life.

My grandparents' summer home had an attached servants' apartment for the caretaker and his family. They saw to it that the house was clean and habitable at all times and the grounds cared for. When our family arrived in Vienna, we stayed there until we found our apartment. The place was paradise for young children. There was a large lawn, where my older sister taught us acrobatic tricks. Some areas had shrubbery, ideal for playing hide-and-seek, and there was a plum tree I could climb in season to pick fruit that went directly from tree to mouth.

During the summer months, my grandparents lived there in the same way as they did in the city. The help moved with them, and many relatives dropped in for coffee or dinner. My grandmother had an older brother Alfred, in his eighties when I knew him. At that time, I began wondering about the characteristics of old age. I had observed that I never saw my grandparents jump and that their hands and arms sometimes trembled. Was that the case with all old

people? One day, when Alfred was visiting, I cornered him and said: “Uncle Alfred, since you are old, I bet you can't jump anymore.” He told me to jump as high as I could. Then he jumped higher than I. That was baffling, but I continued the test and said: “I bet you can't hold your arm out straight without trembling.” My great-uncle, who was a slender, wiry little man, extended his arm ramrod straight without the slightest tremor. I was perplexed. Are there no reliable characteristics of old age? Whenever I thought of this incident in later years, I was embarrassed. How could I possibly have been so rude? But I also remember the smile on Alfred's face and suspect that he was highly amused.

In April 1938, shortly before my 13th birthday and exactly five years after our exodus from Munich, my family was on the run once again. This time, I was old enough to know why. Germany had annexed Austria, and Hitler was after us again. When one of my uncles was incarcerated, the danger became immediate and real. We left a few weeks later. After spending some months in Switzerland, awaiting our immigration visas, we took a boat to New York, where we settled. This time integration into my new surroundings was not so easy. I had to learn a new language, which made school difficult, and we did not enjoy the welcoming arms of our extended family, whose members had now become dispersed across three continents. My acculturation came slowly, and sometimes I feel that it is still a work in progress. ❖

How'd I Get So Old So Fast?

By J.D. Mulholland

Sometime during the last 75 years my mother warned me that I should really enjoy my children while they were home because pretty soon they'd be all grown up and not around anymore. She was right.

And sometime during the last 75 years various people would tell me that the first thing to go is your eyes. They were right, too.

Others say what really is an old age problem is that your legs are the first thing to go. Those who say that are also right.

There are a lot of things that remind you that time has flown by quickly. One thing is when you become the oldest living member of your immediate family. “Wow, I'm it now,” you say to yourself. And since every other family member who headed the family was old, that means that I must be old now.

Here's another category that lets you know you're aging. I call it “the last time to do a thing” category. Some things hit you “boom” just like that. I knew that when I attended a high school event in which a daughter of mine participated. It was a sporting event, and there I was sitting on the bleachers where I had sat so many times before. But – this was the

last time I would sit there -- the last time ever. I hated to see it end. But as they say, all good things must come to an end.

The last time I played an organized basketball game I sprained my ankle and I just knew "This was it -- no more basketball for me." The year was 1948. We had a pickup team of Clarkson business administration students who were all ex-GI's. We were the "Shootin' Stars." We had a winning record when we went into Hogansburg to play a game which we won. I was on the right wing, took a shot, and came down, twisting my ankle. Fortunately, the lady who lived next door in Potsdam was a nurse and she took good care of me for a few days.

I could go on with many more "lasts". Some are good "lasts," some are sad "lasts," but they all let you know that time moves on. There was my discharge from the Army, graduations, the last big band job, the end of tennis, and of course the ultimate, the last day at work -- retirement. But don't get me wrong. Lasts can be sad, but a better way of looking at them is to realize that they are the beginning of something else. The last high school event of a daughter means college events to look forward to. The last basketball played means "on to tennis." The end of tennis means "on to golf." The last day of work means on to volunteering, and more recreational times, and more time to spend reading books, and not just reading work-related items or grading papers.

However there is another "but" and that is that each "last" means that you're aging.

That's just the way it is. You're getting older. ❖

More Nonsense Verses

By Henry H. Gray

The Quid

There is not always *quid pro quo*
Though *ipso facto* it might seem so.
Yet every *quo* must have its *quid*
As every *ego* has its *id*.

The Squid

Consider now the lowly squid
Whose *ego* is below his *id*.
For you to see that lowly squid go
Just denigrate its *superego*.

The Lion

The lion feasts on wildebeest
Not knowing it's a gnu.
I'd think he'd find another kind
To dine on, wouldn't you? ❖

Sailing Is So Much Fun

By John W. Fox

Growing up in South Bend, Indiana in the 1920's and 30's, my family was fortunate enough to have a summer cottage about 20 miles away on Diamond Lake in Cassopolis, Michigan. This meant that my brother and I spent all summer long on the water, first, with Johnson outboard motors, and later with a 15-foot. Comet class sailboat and, still later, a 20-foot. Class C inland scow. Naturally, there was a yacht club with racing every weekend and holiday. My father was Commodore and most all of our friends and neighbors were involved with boats.

In my view all boats provide great entertainment but the complexities and challenges of sailing have held my interest over the years.

After World War II, while working in Chicago, I just had to make use of all that water out there in Lake Michigan. There were many yacht clubs and an active racing program in the Chicago area. My choice for a boat was a 30-footer designed by Britton Chance. The boat sailed well, slept five and was a capable small cruiser. We named her Foxy Lady and with her we won a lot of silver trophies. But not always.

In sailing, everything revolves around the direction of the wind, or as sailors might

say “The point of the wind.” To change direction you tack by moving the bow (front) of the boat past the point of the wind so that the force of the wind is against the other side of the sail. When heading down wind to change direction you have to move the stern of the boat past the point of the wind and swing the boom and mainsail from one side of the boat to the other. It is a more radical, stressful maneuver that requires good crew coordination.

On this particular race day the wind was blowing about 25 miles per hour or more (which is quite a bit). We were headed toward the downwind mark on a triangular course. I had two guys for crew, one had some sailing experience, and for the other it was his first time out. Crews are hard to find.

As we turned around the downwind mark, I swung the boom across the boat (everybody ducks) and headed off in the new direction. Everything was strapped in tight. We were flying. This was exhilarating, we were leading our class. However, the forces were too great. The aluminum mast broke about five feet from the top and everything came crashing down. Everything, the mast, sails, stainless steel forestay, backstay, were in the water, on the boat, or under the boat. The boat was a dismasted mess. Fortunately, no one was hurt. The other boats in the race went sailing away – naturally.

Without the stability provided by the mast and sails, the hull rocked violently in the rough seas. Because of all the gear in the

water and under the hull it was not possible to start or use the engine for fear of entangling the propeller. The task at hand was to get everything that was in the water on the boat. Wet sails are heavy. Stays are secured with small bolts and cotter pins which had to be unfastened and hauled aboard under these difficult conditions. We were probably five miles from shore.

Almost immediately the violent action of the hull in rough waters got to my one experienced crew member. He got terribly seasick, lay down on a bunk and was of no help. The other guy and I worked away and after maybe half an hour, we were able to start the engine and head back to the Chicago Yacht Club.

Thus we ended a Sunday afternoon of fun sailing out on Lake Michigan. ❖

Musical Kinship

By Olimpia Barbera

Scientific discoveries about DNA reveal knowledge that helps us connect human characteristics. These discoveries may lead us to a greater understanding of our species, but I contend that stories of people will always tell us more about human relationships than DNA. Stories of musicians and the kinship they develop in the pursuit of their art provide ample proof. This is such a story. It is a story about musicians. It is about the

interpersonal human kinship derived from intertwined music and DNA. It began in Caracas, Venezuela in 1961 and continues to this day.

Moving with my husband as he was transferred among the different Latin American capitols, I always sought friends in the local music circles. In Caracas I met pianist, Abraham Abreu and his American wife, Janet Foxton, a cellist. We quickly became musical friends. The couple had met and married while studying music at Yale University. Upon graduation they returned to Abraham's home in Caracas to concertize and teach. Sometimes I would accompany Janet as she played the cello. Both were accomplished musicians and I felt honored to play with them and enjoyed their friendship. It was not long before Janet began teaching my three children. They were thirteen, twelve and eleven at the time. Eleven-year-old Carlos was small so Janet lent him a cherished three-quarter size violin to play. It was during that period that Janet gave birth to a son, Aldo.

When Aldo was only a year old, Janet became seriously ill and died within a month! We were devastated. Abraham was bereft. The family went into deep mourning and felt that playing music in the home would be sacrilegious. To endure his grief, Abraham would come to our home nearly every day. There behind the closed doors to our music room he would play the piano for hours. His family helped him care for the infant, Aldo. With the tragic death of their teacher, my children did not want to continue their

studies of music. Yet Carlos considered the violin Janet had left with him as a precious treasure. Later, the other two of my children resumed their studies and even played in the Caracas youth orchestra. Eventually our family moved and time passed, but we never forgot.

Twenty-three years later while living in Zionsville, Indiana, I returned to Caracas for a visit. My first telephone contact was with Abraham. He immediately offered to come to the hotel and take me to see his family. I gladly accepted his kind offer. On the way to his home he told me that he had married and now had a second child, a daughter. He stressed that in the presence of his wife I should not talk about Janet or of the past. Even though I was thoroughly shocked, I honored his request. During the visit I learned that their son Aldo was now a student at the Indiana University School of Music. He was there on his third scholarship having previously studied in London and Amsterdam. His unusual specialty was the recorder called "*flauta dobe*."

As soon as I returned home my children and I went to Bloomington to contact Aldo. We had discussed the fact that Aldo did not remember his biological mother and had been raised to think that his real mother was his father's second wife. I felt, and the children agreed, that this denial was wrong. For me, Aldo had the right to know the biological truth about who he was. I felt that my friend Janet's memory deserved to be honored by telling her son the truth. For Aldo not to know

seemed as if we were erasing a member of our family.

We invited Aldo to a family reunion and when the time came we picked him up in Bloomington and brought him to Zionsville. During the ensuing weekend we told him about his biological mother Janet, the brilliant musician that we had known and loved and from whom half his talent came. After telling Aldo about his mother, Carlos presented him the violin that Janet had loaned him so long ago. It was an emotional time. We felt we had done the right thing even though we could not know what response Aldo would have. His happy acceptance of our many invitations to spend weekends and holidays with us put our fears to rest. During the remainder of his time at Indiana University we would pick him up and bring him back to Zionsville. Sometimes Aldo would bring his girlfriend, Patricia, a pianist also studying at Indiana whom he later married.

After completing his studies Aldo taught in music schools of the Boston area. These included the New England Conservatory, the Boston Conservatory, Boston University and Amherst. While there he created an Early Music Institute. His solo and ensemble career grew. Through the years we kept touch with Aldo by buying his recordings and reading the press reviews he would send us from time to time.

Last November my phone rang. It was Aldo. He was bubbling over with enthusiasm and boundless excitement. "Olimpia!" he shouted, "you should hear my daughter. Would you believe that my

eleven-year-old daughter is studying on mother's violin that Carlos gave me?" He could not restrain his happiness and pride. "She is playing beautifully – and on my mother's violin! You have no idea how wonderful it is to see that violin in my daughter's hands – Mother's violin played by a grand-daughter she never knew." He continued by telling me that her teacher had said that the instrument is very special, that it had been restored and the tone was rich. He felt the violin had linked the generations of his family, that it was almost magical.

His excitement could not be dampened. He went on to tell me that he had been prompted to find out all he could about his mother. He had Googled her name and learned where she came from, with whom she had studied and where she concertized. It gave him a much deeper sense of family. He was so proud of that. He finished by saying: "And I owe this knowledge to you."

Aldo's voice remained emotional. I wept with joy and relief. The risk we had taken by telling him about his real mother had become a positive force in his life. I am still reflecting on this amazing story and a quote from the television program *Antiques Roadshow* that "The best things we inherit have nothing to do with DNA." Well, that is true, but it is surely not the whole story. For musicians, and probably all of us, we are proof not only of the power of DNA, but even more, we are sustained by the kinship that the study of music can bring to our lives. ❖

Community Newspaper Editor, Part Two

By Ralph Gray

"Community Newspaper Editor, Part One" published in the Summer 2010 issue of the *Meadowood Anthology*, featured the early years of Beulah Brazelton Gray. She was in the Petersburg High School Class of 1900; taught school for a while, and then married Ed Gray and led the life of isolation then common for farm families. Farm living wasn't much to her liking, however. Part II picks up after a long-desired move back to the small town of Otwell.

Beulah's job as a reporter for the *Otwell Star* did not last long, but it rekindled a desire for authorship that had never died. Over the next few years from her home in Otwell, Beulah occasionally earned a few dollars as a stringer for newspapers in Evansville, Louisville, and Indianapolis. She also widened her circle of friends and correspondents to include fellow writers Bess Ehrmann of Rockport and the nationally known Ida Tarbell and Gene Stratton-Porter. In 1929, as noted above, Beulah took over as editor of the *Otwell Star*, then owned by Albert T. Rumbach, who was also the owner, editor, and publisher of the *Jasper Herald*.

Beulah quickly transformed her tiny weekly newspaper, usually only four but occasionally six or eight pages long, into a trusted and treasured community asset. Virtually nothing appeared in the paper – apart from the “boilerplate” items that filled the inside pages – that did not come from the tiny, battered portable typewriter on which she had taught herself to type. A proficient two- or three-fingered typist, she had mastered the Christopher Columbus method of typing – find a quay (key) and land on it. Over the years she filled her newspaper with countless articles of local, regional, and family history, along with news from Otwell and all of the communities surrounding the village, supplied by “correspondents” she had carefully identified and trained. She developed a fiercely loyal readership, and many people who left the community continued to subscribe to the *Star*.

It became a weekly ritual within the Gray household each Thursday evening, when the unfolded papers were delivered from Jasper, for the family to prepare them for mailing. First the papers had to be folded by hand, then the hand-addressed wrappers had to be sealed (using a homemade flour-based paste) around the single issues going out of town. The local singles had no wrappers, just the subscriber's name at the top of the paper. Finally, the whole batch had to be carried, again by hand, down to the post office. This last step usually occurred around midnight, and the papers were in the post office boxes or the rural mail carriers' pouches every Friday morning.

By 1930, the Gray household (a.k.a. the *Star* staff), which was located in downtown Otwell just across the street from the Methodist Church, included Edward and Beulah, daughter Voris Rosalva (named for her grandfather and usually called Rosie by everyone except her mother), and Rosie's husband, Lee M. Gray, an up-and-coming local businessman. Eventually four sons were born to Rosie and Lee, all of whom appeared on the scene during the time of Beulah's editorship. Sadly this household's number was reduced by one in April 1932 when my grandfather was killed in an automobile wreck in Evansville. News of the tragic accident spread immediately through the community, and dozens of people called at the *Star* office, which was also the family home, to express condolences. Even Indiana gubernatorial hopeful Paul V. McNutt, in Otwell that same weekend to give the commencement address, stopped by to offer his sympathy. (I suspect that his visit at the terrible moment in the family's life helps account for my mother's steadfast devotion to the Democratic party – that and McNutt's movie-star looks.)

It must have surprised the *Star* subscribers when they not only received their next paper on schedule, less than a week after the accident, but also saw that it carried an obituary of the deceased written by the bereaved widow. Beulah offered her readers a full and revealing assessment of her spouse's character and gregarious personality. She touched upon my grandfather's goodness, but she also said

that Ed Gray was a man with “many faults,” some of which were “serious.” When I first read those lines about the grandfather I never met and remembered grandmother’s puritanical views on drinking, I assumed that she was referring to the fact that her husband occasionally consumed alcohol, even though as a boy he had joined the Murphy Movement, a temperance group that called for complete abstention from spirituous liquors. With my knowledge about the couple’s problems early in their marriage, perhaps it was that memory that led to this curious comment. Still, she was a newspaperwoman, and accuracy and honesty were her lodestars. ❖

Goodbye Ma Bell and Others

By Julie King

Seniors starred in the dramatic mid-term election last November. Our age-group represented 34% of all voters, the highest proportion since 1982. *The New Yorker’s* financial columnist, James Surowiecki, called the election “the revolt of the retired,” led by “greedy geezers.” Even if you didn’t like the electoral outcome or being called “a greedy geezer,” you have to be impressed by the numbers. We, as an age group, account for 70% of the U.S. net worth. We control 80% of personal financial assets,

and we own an estimated 50% of all credit cards.

Yet despite that clout, our influence seems to be waning. Senior discounts have disappeared at our local movie theaters. The word “senior” has lost its meaning as corporations, government, and media stock up on **senior** vice-presidents, **senior** analysts, and **senior** producers, all people in their twenties and thirties. Seniors of our age are still reading newspapers. Nevertheless, publishers are rushing into new media, and good old reliable *Newsweek* has merged with *The Daily Beast!*

Now Indiana has joined the parade of states petitioning regulators to close down white page listings. Syracuse University pop culture professor Robert Thompson offered his opinion on this historic moment: “Anybody who doesn’t have access to some kind of online way to look things up now is probably too old to be able to read the print in the white pages anyway.” Professor Thompson later issued an apology for his nasty remark, but the sting remains.

Twenty years ago the telephone was the only practical way to reach someone. But traditional land lines are being disconnected at a fast pace. Mobile phone subscriptions now reach 270 million out of a U.S. population of almost 311 million. Most of us now have cell phones, even if you seldom see us using them while driving or eating in a restaurant.

Not surprisingly, internet use by our generation has doubled in the last year. At least half of us go online every day. We exchange e-mails, check the weather and the stock market, read about politics, catch up on travel tips and health advisories, look at our grandchildren's latest pictures, and print a map for our next hotel stay.

You've heard of Facebook and Twitter. They were the biggest players in the first "Digital Decade" (2000-2009). It brought an explosion of the new modes of communication known as "social networks." The Internet universe now involves at least 1.5 billion people, and Facebook has 500-million members. We may not feel the need to use Facebook to find our high school sweetheart, but there are good reasons to seek out websites designed especially for older users.

Eons.com helps you connect with old and new friends, play brain games, and take part in conversations about books and movies. **Bonzer.org.au** is an online magazine written by and for seniors. Both provide helpful advice about how to navigate through an array of online options.

A website that is especially useful for recent arrivals on the internet is the **Microsoft Guide for Aging Computer Users**. There you'll learn how to adjust views for different eyesight or set volume controls for your hearing. Or you can add a feature which allows you to speak commands rather than typing them. This

site wins applause for its low-tech, jargon-free format.

A good way to find these websites and others is to go to **Google** and type in "best websites for seniors." You'll see a large number of destinations for the older population, but be advised that many are geared to the baby boom generation (b.1943-1964) with pictures of bronzed, silver-tinted characters straight out of a Cialis commercial.

Still, do we really need all the distractions of the Internet? Consider this *New York Times*' headline: "Digital Devices Deprive Brain of Needed Downtime." Constant internet activity may lower the quality of our sleep. Those of us who feel compelled to stay in touch constantly via our digital devices are putting a strain on our brains. And if there is one thing we don't need it's brain strain.

Our generation has been dubbed the silent generation. So shouldn't we be the first to say a loud "no" to web chatter? How do we do that? By observing the axiom "moderation in all things" which has been attributed variously to Aristotle, Euripides, Plato, or Chaucer. How do I know? From the Internet, of course! ❖

Sonnerick

By Basil Wentworth

As far as I know, this is the only sonnerick ever written. The words can be written either as a sonnet or as a series of limericks. (When recited orally, it doesn't matter.)

Late autumn, and the breeze, now harsh and cold, does freeze my ears and toes, and sting my nose like swarms of angry bees. The leaves, in bold array, grow sparse, and each new day that grows more brief, like furtive thief steals silver from the gray and fattened clouds which, dark with rain, grow grimly stark, with threat of storm to come; to form a Flood without an ark.

In vain we hope and pray for one more pleasant day, a day that will allay the chill, and fill our dreams with May.

Our sages, old and gray, console us in this way: “Despite the chill, the sun shines still behind the clouds,” they say – four score and thirteen million miles away. ❖

Contributors

Betty Myers Bain writes professionally under the name of Elisabeth P. Myers. Her book manuscripts are preserved in the De Grummond Children's Literature Research Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi

Olimpia Barbera was born in Cordoba, Argentina, graduated at the age of 18 years, with Honors, from the Provincial University of Cordoba with a major in piano. During her early career she performed with chamber orchestras in Argentina and Brazil. In Venezuela, Olimpia formed and conducted an orchestra for deaf children, performed for TV, in theaters and schools.

John W. Fox graduated from the Indiana University School of Business in 1941. He was in the Army Air Corps for five years including service in Burma and India, where he and Ella found each other. He was in the advertising agency business in Manhattan for 20 years, then the executive recruiting business in New York and Chicago where he and a partner had their own firm for 11 years locating senior-level people for corporations. He retired to Beaufort, South Carolina for 26 years and moved to Bloomington in 2006.

Henry H. Gray was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, and spent his grade-school years there. Following college he lived and worked in several localities, but returned to Indiana in 1954. Since then he has lived in Bloomington. He is a geologist, and after thirty-three years with the Indiana Geological Survey he is now a Research Affiliate with that organization. A resident of Meadowood since 2005, he spends much of his time now writing and conducting genealogical research.

Ralph D. Gray, a new resident in Meadowood, is Professor Emeritus of history, having taught American and Indiana history in the Indiana University system, chiefly at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) for more than 40 years. He is the author of several books, most recently a history of IUPUI and two books about Indiana author Meredith Nicholson. His wife, Beth Van Vorst Gray, also contributes to the *Meadowood Anthology*.

Jack and **Julie King** divide their time between Meadowood and their home in Northern Wisconsin near Lake Superior. In Bloomington they serve as "Earth Stewards" at First Presbyterian Church.

Jane Layman has been at Meadowood since 2005. As a volunteer, she leads children in literature appreciation at the Arlington Heights School. Jane is a graduate of the University of Connecticut.

Jack D. Mulholland grew up in northern New York State. He earned a Bachelors degree from Clarkson University and an MBA from University of Michigan. Jack began his career as a CPA with Arthur Anderson and Company in New York, and, following various corporate positions including Controller of Mead Johnson in Evansville, Indiana, Jack was Treasurer of Indiana University for 17 years. He retired in 1992.

Barbara Restle was born in Paris France of American parents, and lived in Vienna until the onset of World War II. She graduated from Indiana University with majors in Journalism and Political Science. In the mid-70s she was president of the seven-county Sassafrass Audubon Society. In 1990 she donated most of her Indiana farm to a refuge. She has owned, managed and worked on her farms in Indiana and Mississippi. Flying Cessnas was her greatest fun. She worked on the *Meadowood Anthology* Editorial Board for five years, the last year as Project Manager.

Miriam Rosenzweig has lived in many large cities, Munich, Vienna, New York and Chicago. She finds Bloomington to be a perfect blend of small town living with big city cultural wealth. She is retired as associate editor of the *Indiana Alumni Magazine*.

During their 58-year honeymoon, **Basil Wentworth** and his wife Jocelyn lived in Colombia, Cyprus, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Ethiopia, Israel and Australia, as well as Los Angeles, Cleveland, Seattle and Reston, Virginia. He fits one of Carl Sandburg's definitions of a poet: educated as an engineer, living as a diplomat, he wanted to be a poet. Basil and Jocelyn's principal gifts to the world are two impressive children, and two grandchildren, even more impressive.



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places you've never been before!

Photo of Civita Di Bagnoregio, Italy