

# the ACORN

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**The ACORN is a publication for Trinity Oaks residents, written, photographed and published by residents. If you would like to submit an article or photograph, conduct an interview, or offer any expertise you have to assist with The ACORN, please contact Frankie McWhorter or Jim Ryser .**

***Thank You for every kindness and act of caring and support offered by staff, friends, and neighbors during this time. We are blessed to be a part of this community. As Willie Nelson said:***

***“When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around.”***

### It's All about Attitude

We began working on the spring issue of The ACORN in January when Carolyn Gresham offered to share her creative writing talent and asked about a theme. Thinking of the joys of the season and the flourish of flowers and new growth, I replied "what makes me happy". She immediately went to work and in a few days her essay was ready. You will find it included here.

On the first Monday of February, I sat in with the members of Memoirs Class, as I often do, to listen as they share their essays in hopes of hearing some to share with you. When I mentioned the theme for this issue, several commented that happiness is at times hard to find given life circumstances, and little did any of us know how prophetic this comment would be with the appearance of a new virus.

During the class, Frankie Ritch shared an essay about an interesting cat in her life, and realizing the joy our animals bring, I decided you needed to hear her story. Also, Malcolm Bullock read an essay he was completing about Assisted Living in which he captured his own attitude toward life. I knew it had to be shared.

Then in early March, life changed for all of us with COVID 19. Our daily routines and way of life was upended. Those things that usually make us happy -- long conversation with friends over dinner, trips and family visits, bridge and bingo, church and daily devotions, wine down and special events -- were put on hold. Our days became filled with ordering groceries on line, watching TV, keeping a distance and staying at home to be safe while learning new phrases like "social distancing".

In conversations with some of you when we talked by phone or in side-walk visits (at a distance) as we walked this beautiful



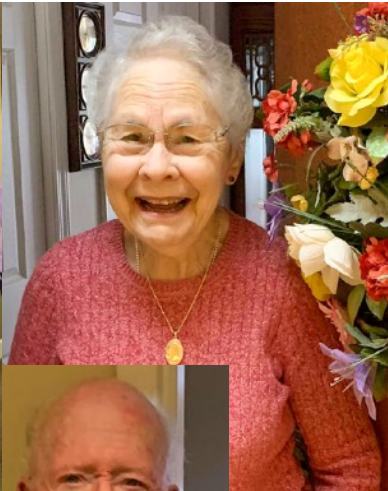
Frankie McWhorter

campus, I began to notice more and more of you who have found the secret of happiness by being content.

Being content means seeing the beauty in each new day. It is being thankful and having gratitude that we have a safe place to live, food to eat and people who are doing their best to care for us. This attitude is quite evident in the essay written by Malcolm. He stated that Assisted Living is not a "prison", and while losing independence and moving can be difficult for some, with his acceptance of the situation and appreciation for those who help him to live a full life, he has found happiness, because he is content.

And in this issue, you too will read an autobiography of Char Molrine who also has learned that happiness comes in doing for others.

As you read The ACORN, it is my hope that our lives as residents of Trinity Oaks are back to some normalcy and that we can once again do all those things we love to do. But I hope too that we have all learned to be thankful everyday for what we have: a home where people know our name and care about us; a place that is safe and secure and staffed by people with great big hearts. I hope that every day we find the sunshine and say thank you to Our Maker for what we have!



# Life In Assisted Living - Trinity Oaks

By Rev. Malcolm Bullock

I am giving my personal view of life in the Assisted Living Unit of Trinity Oaks where I have resided for almost a year. My approach to this topic is expressed in a popular song in the 1940's - "Accentuate the Positive". Someone entering the Assisted Living Unit with a negative attitude could still have such an attitude six months later. It has been attributed to Winston Churchill that he said "Of all the forms of government known, democracy is the best." Whether he said this I do not know, but of all the facilities known to me for older adults in Rowan County, Trinity Oaks Assisted Living Unit is tops.

Let me share some reasons I say this. First, our state has graded the Assisted Living Unit with excellence from 96 to 100+ for a number of years. Our cleaning ladies, Dora and Gloria are great in cleaning our apartments and are quite helpful in adjusting to our schedules with cleaning.

Our menu of activities is given out monthly and weekly. This list includes Monday-Friday daily stretches and morning devotions and on other days chair aerobics, noodle ball, brain games, and bingo. Life in the Assisted Living Unit is by no means a prison as residents are afforded the option of having their meals on the unit or eating downstairs and in participation



Rev. Malcolm Bullock

in many other activities as health permits.

I feel exceedingly fortunate to be a resident in a medical unit where I receive such wonderful care from our director, JoAnn Martin, and her very caring staff. I had known JoAnn several years prior to entering the unit as she had given me allergy shots monthly. Recently, I quoted her to my family physician regarding an observation she had made and he, who has known her well for a number of years, replied, "I would believe almost anything she would say!" JoAnn gives off an aura of serenity and compassion and confidence. I have told her that I hope that I will pass on to glory while she is still in charge.

JoAnn has secured a wonderful team of staff members who seem to work together most harmoniously:

- One staff member, Bobbie, now retired, directed activities many of which have been mentioned earlier; other such activities include: manicures, pedicures, haircuts, and shaves (as needed), as well as organizing and planning trips.
- Lynn, the new staff member directing activities is following this role very enthusiastically.
- Eunice, on arriving in the early morning, is like "a breath of fresh air" with her cheerful words and uplifting spirits. She is often singing as she moves around.
- Innes does many things for us. A native of Mexico, she frequently enters our dining area singing and dancing. Sometimes she directs our stretching class where she keeps us laughing.
- Cathy, upon entering our room at night, exudes comfort, care and assurance. I have said the sight of her with her smile causes me to think of the retirement home in eastern North Carolina named " Mama's Touch", a touch she certainly has.

- A highly intelligent young man named Tyler helps us at night, is well liked by all, and full of fun. He is very responsive and realizes quickly our needs whether a bit of conversation or a kind word to put us back to sleep.

I have not mentioned every member of the team in Assisted Living because of space limitations, but there are many, many others who are exceptionally caring and competent. They fill our days and nights with the assurance that we are being cared for by a staff committed to doing their very best with kindness and compassion.

Our spiritual needs are met as well with Sunday Service in the SER led by our Chaplain Brenda Bynum. We too gather daily for group devotionals often conducted by Pastor Staley, who is himself a resident of Assisted Living.

I have not regretted for a moment having moved to the Assisted Living Unit but rather feel most fortunate to be there and highly recommend it to anyone considering relocating there.

My feelings can best be expressed in the words of the Psalmist (Psalm 102: 1)

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His holy name."*

*A native of Fairmont, N.C., Malcolm is a graduate of Presbyterian College, Clinton, S.C. and Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA. He served as pastor of churches in Georgia and the Carolinas including Unity Presbyterian Church, Woodleaf; Thyatira Presbyterian Church; and Hopewell Presbyterian Church, Huntersville. He also was associate pastor at First Presbyterian of Salisbury. With his wife Sally he was a missionary in Taiwan from 1963-1967. He has been a resident of Trinity Oaks since 2013.*

# What Makes Me Happy?

By Carolyn Gresham

What makes me happy? Let me tell you. First let's start with the morning. I really feel like royalty to awake slowly with lots of stretches. Pile a couple of pillows on top of each other and gently bury my head at just the right angle to see TV. I then reach over to the nightstand for my glasses, phone and that wonderful cup of coffee that Bob leaves me as he goes to work. For the next hour or so I am enchanted with the world of social media and the Today Show.

Finally I will mosey out of bed and start my day with a little grooming followed by a breakfast that must include cheese because that is the happy food from heaven. I like an egg, cereal and some fruit or berries. Next I do a little housework and try to find joy in the mundane life of being a homemaker.

Sometime during my day I must pick up a paint brush and work on some art. I could not be happier than when I am creating. Sometimes I walk away in disgust when something doesn't look right. I will put my painting on an easel and every time I walk through the room, I look at it. Sometimes the "ah ha" moment happens and I can fix my problem. It also makes me happy to go to "A Slice of Art" and show my friends what I have done and sometimes other eyes will show me a fresh way to fix my problem. Yes, that class is wonderful and it makes me happy.

Going to lunch at a quaint little café always makes me happy. Having a big, hot juicy hamburger that sizzles and runs down your



Carolyn Gresham

elbows is just about as good as it gets. Some crunchy chips and a large Coke are certainly at the top of my list with that meal. I remember a saying from my childhood that always comes to mind "I wish I had a rubber belly and could just keep on eating."

And then there is the "happy place!" There is nothing like curling up in the big swing at our beach house and watching the boats go by, spying on a big blue heron or have a pelican wink at me as he glides by my third floor perch. Walking on the beach and carefully concealing my phone as I take pictures of children playing in the surf brings me happiness. You know I might paint those children someday if some parent doesn't take my phone away and throw it into the ocean.

Thinking about what makes me happy, makes me want to spend the day telling you about the simple things that make me happy. I hope you will think about what brings you joy and makes you happy too.





# Important Cats in My Life

By Frankie Ritch

At Mother and Dad's first home, a six room bungalow we later called the little house, I don't remember any cats, just a beloved pony and a collie dog. When we moved to what we referred to as the big house, the first animals were two black and white wiggly shepherd pups that arrived in a crate by train. Gradually cats and kittens drifted in, my favorite being Frisky, a splotchy, playful creature that climbed my favorite tree's ivy vines to a crook where limbs branched out creating a sitting area for the two of us.

Our most cuddly cat was Mama cat, so named when brother Billy and I determined it was time for her to deliver and brought her inside for the night, making for her a temporary bed in an empty wicker laundry basket. The next morning we were greeted by the proud, purring parent of six tiny kittens.

It wasn't long before we had thirteen cats and kittens, all considered mine for care. About this time an adult friend, wanting to take a trip, asked me to keep her several cats. My cats probably had fleas but not enough for me to notice until her fleas arrived. Not being familiar with fleas and this being before the promotion of flea repellents, I attempted to remove each pesky flea with tweezers, a frustrating experience that damaged my enthusiasm for flea attracting animals until my own children were of animal owning age.



Frankie Ritch

Their cat I remember most and most favorably was a sleek black beauty that my daughter Fran brought in one day, emaciated and unkempt as if abandoned. After posting "Cat Found" notices with no results and affection growing, we discussed names. Since I had laughingly said earlier, "Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look," Cassius became his moniker.

That Thanksgiving we made arrangements for a neighbor to feed this outdoor cat for four days and went our carefree way. Upon returning we saw Cassius in the window, having no doubt slipped in while we were loading the car, causing me to panic visualizing the mess and destruction we would find inside. Instead, this well behaved, people pleasing cat had clawed open a sack of cat food, had drunk from an open commode and had toileted in the tub. No mess, no destruction, just our surprise and thankfulness!

## AROUND CAMPUS - Residents and Staff



Trinity Oaks is part of the 2020 Salisbury Sculpture Show and Tour that includes sculptures downtown, on college campuses and this year, for the first time, on our campus. Two sculptures are scheduled to be installed here in May. The annual show and tour is sponsored by the City of Salisbury and the Rowan Arts Council and receives a stipend from entities where sculptures are installed. The sculptures are in a variety of styles and materials and were selected competitively from applications received from artists across the East Coast of the United States.

The two sculptures to be installed at Trinity Oaks were selected by a committee as most suitable in style and design for our location. One, to be placed on the grassy knoll near the Health and Rehab sign, is named Flatlander and is a bright yellow powder coated creation in aluminum that is highly visible, distinctive and eye catching. It is 132 inches tall and 48 wide and rests on a 36 inch base.

The second sculpture at Trinity Oaks is a serene and alluring but whimsical art work named The Forest at Night. Made of steel and painted royal blue with aqua and a bit of rose, it will be located on the grassy area to the right of the Lodge entrance. This 400 pound work of art measures 132 inches high, 72 inches wide and has a 15 inch base.

Brochures for a the self-guided tour, always popular with visitors and local residents, contains information about all sculptures in the show including those at Trinity Oaks. They will be available at the Visitor's Center on Innes Street, Rowan Library, Rowan Museum and various other area locations such as galleries and restaurants.

# An Autobiography

by Char Molrine 2020 Recipient of the Elizabeth Duncan Koontz Humanitarian Award

I was raised in a small Mississippi River town in Minnesota. Hastings was a rural suburb of the Twin Cities and my father was a country doctor. My mother had been a high school teacher and as a wife and mother was involved in many community activities. Because of my parent's involvement in the community, I became



Char Molrine

aware of how we all need to help one another to be a healthy community.

My husband and I met when I visited my sister in Southern California. Ron had graduated from UCLA and had finished his first year of Episcopal Seminary in

Alexandria, Virginia. We were married two years later and spent our first ten years in California where three of our children -- Charlotte, Deborah and Ronald-- were born.

Ron was called to build a church in Erie, Pennsylvania, and Julie, our youngest child, was born there. When she entered first grade, I finished my Bachelor's Degree and began teaching first grade. Ron was called to Allentown, Pennsylvania, to build another church and I obtained a Master's Degree from Lehigh University in education and commendations in special education. I continued to take courses in elementary education and earned three certificates: a Principal's, an Elementary Supervisor's and a Guidance Counselor. I choose guidance and loved every minute of the variety of experiences and the wide breadth of exposure to everyone in the school community. Most of my career was in lower socio-economic demographics and this

provided a greater understanding of the entire community.

My understanding of issues that affect the well being of a community was heightened when the school district asked me to teach a variety of extra credit courses for teachers so as to acquaint them with a variety of issues. The issues included problems children often face in their daily lives: chemical addiction, changing family structure, and different learning styles.

Another experience that expanded my sense of community was that during our children's high school years, we were the host family to nine exchange students. Our two oldest daughters also were exchange students and experienced finishing high school in Brazil and Argentina. What wonderful years! Our hearts were enlarged to be a family to young people who represented seven different countries!

When our children left the nest, I had time to begin to volunteer in the wider community: Rape Crisis Council, Guardian ad Litem, Red Cross, Rowan Helping Ministry, editing a residential newspaper, organizing groups when necessary, hospital work, chairperson of Trinity Oaks Scholarship Committee, and the literacy council. The literacy work had begun when we retired to Williamsburg, Virginia, and for 23 years I have had the privilege to help energetic and eager folk who want to be the best they can be and who want to claim their new country. What a privilege!

The enriching nature of being a volunteer is what I personally have learned. It is like being in a classroom every day! It is such a meaningful experience to be able to grow and learn with others. I am overwhelmed and humbled by this honor. I am grateful for each person with whom I have worked and organization for which I have volunteered. It has been so very rewarding and so much fun!



# Pastor's Reflections . . . .

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by The Rt.Revd. William (Bill) Gregg, Ph. D



There is, I suppose, a certain irony in the theme of this edition of *The Acorn*, happiness and contentedness. Yet, it is perhaps even more poignant and apt than may at first seem. When life goes well without

complications, emergencies, changes, interruptions, sickness, new aches and pains, as it does from time to time, we forget our happiness and contentedness. We are, after all, in our “golden years,” blissfully busy with all kinds of things we *want* to do *when* we want to do them, and as we want to do them. Such truly must be what happiness and contentedness is.

And now, COVID-19 or the novel coronavirus.

We find ourselves in the midst of a pandemic for which no one was prepared, many were slow to respond, and some still think is a hoax. But our reality is that we are in a stay-at-home world, essentially cut-off from everything outside our bubble here at Trinity Oaks. Our daily routines have been radically altered. We cannot go shopping when and where we want, or visit or be visited by those whom we want to see. Grandchildren and children are beyond our reach. There is anxiety, discontent, and unhappiness because of imposed discipline and restraint. There is little comfort in being reminded many times daily that we are “all in this together.” We are stressed and uncertain; we do not know what the future holds or how much longer we must practice physical distancing, order groceries online, stay-in-place, confined to our little

world at Trinity Oaks. Blissful golden years? Really?

**AND YET,**

it seems that many of us see each other more often because so many are out at least once a day to walk. The weather has kept our spirits up, and people have been able to garden, with generous and gracious help from TO staff going to the nursery for us. We chat from opposite sides of the street regularly. We bring a glass of wine outside and talk loudly to each other at the intersection of the street and remind each other to “Mind your 6!” We laugh with each other, not a forced or anxious laugh, but in the delight of each other, of good humor and graciousness, and in enjoying gentle company. We are mindful of each other in new, deeper ways. We have something other than the latest visit to the doctor to chat about – napkins, you know, *are* softer than paper towels.... Our little world is beautiful in the spring. Fresh, green leaves punctuated with white and pink dogwood flowers and the red bud’s lacey delicateness. We are more mindful of each other and how grateful we are to be in this place and with the people here. It is not perfect. But it is real and infused with love and caring. We have each other, and that is God’s particular gift to us in these days. In and through each other, we see and know that God is here. God does care and will be with us as we navigate into what may be a very precarious and uncertain future. And we are here, for and with each other. God is here for and with us, in and through us. So, there is hope. And in this, we may be thankful, content, and happy.

# Library News

-- Check shelves by author for all new-comers which are added regularly--

GREAT THANKS to everyone who has helped increase our selections with donations. Immediate growth in Large Print has been my aim. Writers are added throughout the collections as they can be found.

February--Thanks to Mary Picking and Jack & Jill Connery, numerous titles were added to a variety of library categories. Books below were added via Habitat Restore, Salvation Army, Goodwill, Nazareth Thrift and the Internet:

- **Large Print**: Danielle Steele; Karen Robards; Fern Michaels; Karen Harper (Mary Higgins Clark winner); "Jessica Fletcher"; Michael McGarrity; Edna Buchanan; M. J. Arlidge (International bestselling author); Stephen White; Debbie Macomber; Mary Jane Clark; Margaret Truman; Judith McNaught (award winner); Jan Karon; and David Baldacci; Faith Baldwin.
- **Regular Print**: Janet Evanovich; Lisa Lutz (Edgar & Macavity Awards); Tess Gerritsen, Steve Berry, John Sanford, & J.A. Jance, Jonathan Kellerman; Barbara Delinsky; Jane Heller; Jude Deveraux (18+ NY Times best sellers); Mary Kay Andrews.
- **Animal Bios**: Exceptional true stories for animal lovers - Joey (beautiful story), Dewey (library cat), Homer's Odyssey (unbelievable blind cat), Amazing Gracie (touching), Best Friends, True Story of World's Most Beloved Animal Sanctuary: began the "no-kill" policy which has grown nationwide.

March—Thanks to Claudia Daves, the following were added: Iris Johansen (LARGE PRINT), Janet Evanovich, Janet Dailey, Nora Roberts, Michael Connelly, Jessica Stirling, William Tapply, and Julie Vail. Some were placed in FICTION and others in MYSTERY.

April--Thanks to Bill Grieg, Alice Archer, Russie Hattaway, Holt Aaron, and Norm Johnson, a DVD section was added to be enjoyed during our "home-bound" period.

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LARGE PRINT "POPULAR READS" ARE NEEDED. If you have these to donate, we would very much appreciate them.

DO NOT MISS - Diane Noble (Amanda MacLean): We have many treasures by our multiple award-winning Trinity Oaks author. Each novel is a refreshing gift to yourself! See the window display for choices.

THE BOOKMOBILE arrives the 4th WEDNESDAY of EACH MONTH. Check the weekly schedule. Amanda - RC Library most often brings Large Print, but will bring YOUR REQUEST. Don't miss this opportunity!!!!

THANK YOU for your patience during the library revamp.

Soon, shelves will be re-labeled and items more easily found.

-- Don't forget, paperbacks have been intermingled with hardcover books—.

Holt Aaron & Library committee 843-271-7938  
Shelving: Billy Epley, Frankie Ritch.  
Bulletin Board: Billie Bryant.  
Bookmobile: Donna Loosley, Marie Magaletti

# *We Remember...*

## **Edwin "Ed" John Denker**

**January 8**

*...A Chicago native who made his home in Southern California for more than 80 years, he was a graduate of UCLA and a US Army veteran. He and his wife moved to Trinity Oaks in 2018.*

## **Dr. Trevor George Williams**

**January 31**

*...Born in New Jersey, he had a long and illustrious career as a physician, surgeon, psychiatrist, medical administrator, and director of Broughton Hospital. With an unwavering gaze and often a twinkle in his eye, he was a friend to many with whom he shared his wisdom, wit, artistic talent, humility, and faith.*

## **Sara Elizabeth Kaufman**

**February 6**

*...A devoted homemaker and proud mother and grandmother, she loved gardening and the out of doors. She was lovely lady.*

## **Alta Miller Roseman**

**March 16**

*...A faithful member of her church, she was a strong and gracious woman with a friendly smile and gentle "chuckle". She was a special woman whom it was an honor to know.*

## **Lois Jean Smith Kirk**

**March 30**

*...A native of Pennsylvania, she was a surgical nurse who met her dentist husband while serving in the US Air Force. She loved to entertain and excelled in the culinary arts, was firm in her faith, and a pleasure to know.*

## **Arletta Michael Klutz**

**March 30**

*...Born in Davidson County, she grew up in Rowan County. After earning a degree in biology, she worked in quality control and research for several companies. She loved to read and to garden and was an active volunteer in her church where she was president of the senior group for 15 years.*

## **Rev. Gene W. Bruce**

**April 6**

*...A man who lived his faith and who was a friend to all, he was a native of Rowan County and graduate of Lenoir Rhyne who also received a M.Div from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. He pastored several congregations was chaplain for four National Scout Jamborees and the Philmont Boy Scout Ranch and was the long time chaplain of The Lutheran Home, now Trinity Oaks Health and Rehab. He most recently was intern Pastor of Amity Lutheran Church in Cleveland, NC.*

***"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." - Albert Schweitzer***

