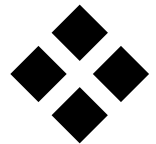


Meadowood Anthology



A publication by and for the residents
of Meadowood Retirement Community

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Meadowood Anthology

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Editorial Board: Ledford Carter, Ed DeJean, Virginia Gest, Barbara Restle, Jan Skinner

Managing Editor: Sandy Lynch (slynch06@hotmail.com)

Contact us:

Meadowood Retirement Community (www.meadowoodrc.com)
2455 Tamarack Trail
Bloomington, IN 47408 (812) 336-7060

From the Editor

How to Submit Items to the Anthology...

It's easy to submit your contribution of writing, poetry, or art to the *Meadowood Anthology*.

1. You can deliver it in person to the Front Desk.
2. You can send it from the comfort of your computer – by e-mail to: jan.skinner@meadowoodrc.com.

The best way to get your documents to us is to ATTACH them to an e-mail note. If your document is on your computer, you can send it by e-mail. To Attach a document, open an e-mail note, click on the image of a paperclip (or the word ATTACH). This will open your list of documents and you'll click to select the one to send. That's it!

It's safe and easy and saves the editor lots of typing.
Thanks!

Sandy Lynch
Editor

Nothing

By Henry H. Gray

For the past few days I have had nothing on my mind. That is to say, nothing has been puzzling me, and a lot of my thinking has led to nothing. It seems that nothing can be defined only by something. In other words, nothing is nothing in the absence of something, or perhaps anything, or everything. A few other words are like that. Darkness is the absence of light; silence is the absence of sound. There can be no nothing without something.

Without realizing it, human beings had nothing for a long time but still knew nothing about nothing. The Greeks didn't wander about asking each other "Do you know what nothing is?" The Romans had numbers but no nothing. After a lot of thought, the Muslims finally found nothing, but they called it zero. One cannot really do nothing. The small boy who said he went out and did nothing really isn't thinking about nothing. Nothing is like McAvity, it isn't there.

I've tried hard to think about nothing, but it's difficult because there is nothing there to think about. It's like trying to achieve absolute zero. You can't get there. And what will you do when you do get there? This brings up another thought. When I was ten or twelve I was told, in answer to a question, "We're

half way there." In a sudden epiphany (is there any other kind?) I realized that if we again got half way there, and again, and again, we would never get there! I have yet to put this gem of wisdom to any real use; I hope somebody can. But it's not nothing.

I read not long ago that the Ark of the Covenant is in safekeeping in Ethiopia. No one is allowed to see it. It is simply there; no use asking questions. So it might as well be nothing. I also read of an Eastern holy man who told a visiting engineer that the world rested on the back of a huge turtle. The engineer asked what that turtle stood on. *An even larger turtle*, was the reply. After a few more such questions the holy man put up his hand. "Stop!" he said. "I know what you're thinking, but it's no use. It's turtles all the way down!" In other words, it's turtles or nothing.

Nothing is not chaos; chaos is the absence of order in something. Astrophysicists are still looking into that one, but even they haven't found nothing. Atheism is another word that is defined only by contrast with something else. That is, atheists think that God is nothing. Perhaps that is the best proof that God exists.

As you see, I really have nothing on my mind. Sometimes I have nothing to say, but it seems I will always have nothing to think about.



A Funny Thing Happened Before the Concert...

by Joseph Rezits

If one has prepared thoroughly for a recital or concert performance, one can usually count on a certain degree of predictability. Of course there are many variables, such as the state of one's "nerves," acoustic properties of the hall, the response of the audience, and, for pianists, the challenge of using different instruments for different occasions. However, above and beyond the above, there are sometimes bizarre, totally unexpected elements that turn an otherwise "normal" performance into an adventure.

On the 11th of January, 1950, I had the good fortune to appear as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting. By the terms of an undisclosed agreement, the Lester piano had replaced Steinway as the official piano of the Philadelphia Orchestra, effective January 1, 1950. The Lester Piano Company, a Philadelphia-based organization, provided a specially-constructed 9-foot concert grand for use by the orchestra. Under the agreement, it was to be used as an instrument of the orchestra when a piano part was indicated in orchestral scores, but the Lester Company also

seemed quite eager for this concert instrument to be used as a personal choice by a soloist. Since I was the orchestra's first piano soloist in 1950, I became the target of a highly concerted effort to influence me to make that choice. I was truly in quandary. I wanted to use the Steinway because that was the piano I preferred, yet I did not want to "make any waves" with the Philadelphia Orchestra administration.

Then the light finally appeared to me. Since I was waiting for a confirmation of my invitation from the Steinway Company to become a Steinway Artist, I decided to attempt to accelerate the process. I rushed over to the Stetson Piano Company (the Philadelphia Steinway dealer) and pleaded, "Do it now!" so that I could tell "them" I am not allowed, under our agreement, to perform on another make of piano. They kindly consented and I was able to relate this reassuring information (reassuring to me, at least) to the Philadelphia Orchestra and to the Lester Piano Company. Reinforcing my end of the agreement, I procured a rubber stamp containing the inscription "Mr. Rezits plays the Steinway Piano"-- and this message was carefully inserted on all the printed programs underneath the legend "The Lester Grand is the official piano of the Philadelphia Orchestra." Despite this elaborate plan, on the evening of the performance, the Lester Grand was positioned backstage next to the Steinway -- in case I might

change my mind at the last minute. My father remained backstage near the two pianos--just to make sure that no “mistake” was made.

A scant two weeks after my appearance with the Philadelphia Orchestra, I was scheduled to perform the same Saint-Saëns concerto with the Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra. This fine orchestra was composed of members of the community as well as from the State Teachers College, now known as Indiana State University. It was an unseasonably warm day in late January and the community was adjusting in the expected way--opening windows, turning off the heat and so on. Although my memory is a bit vague about the building in which the concert hall was situated, I well remember that down somewhere in the subterranean regions there was a swimming pool. Since the heat of the day produced less than ideal temperature and humidity conditions in the pool area, the moist air was allowed to escape-- providing an opportunity for droplets to find their way into the concert hall.

As we arrived at the hall for the afternoon rehearsal and opened the doors, clouds of moist air greeted us. Of course I immediately walked over to the piano to see how it was affected by this surprising development. Dear reader, have you ever seen a wet piano?--one that is dripping (crying?) on the inside as well as the outside? Well, that's the way it was, and of course the order of the

day was to clean it up. Some keys were already sticking on the way down, and when they arrived at the bottom of the keybed, they were reluctant to come up. Some high-power fans were brought in and I trust that every other means that could possibly be harnessed was brought into play. I cannot recall whether or not a rehearsal took place at that time. But I well remember that--miracle of miracles--by concert time that evening the piano was dry, worked perfectly, and the concert went on as scheduled.

I cannot conclude this narration without recounting my favorite albeit brief “adventure” story from my colleague Menahem Pressler:

We [The Beaux Arts Trio] had rehearsed, and I found that one key was broken. I called the person in charge, and she said, ‘Oh, we have a wonderful tuner, and you mustn't worry about it. It will be all right. Well, we didn't worry. We came in the evening to the hall, and on the piano I found a little note. It said, ‘Yes, I found out that key was broken. I couldn't do anything with it. DON'T USE THAT NOTE TOO MUCH!’”



Memories of War:
A Series

The Training of a WW II Pilot

By Eugene A. Merrell

My interest in flying began after Pearl Harbor when a low flying military plane circled the campus of Arizona State Teachers College. The pilot waved his arm and from the reaction of the girls nearby I figured that being a pilot must have its advantages. That summer I traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I qualified for Aviation Cadet Training and enlisted on August 19, 1942. I was given a deferment to finish college but that never happened. The following April, I was aboard a troop train going to Wichita Falls, Texas, for basic military training. I spent the next month learning basic military skills and living on the flight line in Hanger 4. There were about 1,500 of us living in that hanger. The transition from civilian life to military life was not easy. When I completed basic training I was classified as an Aviation Student and transferred to the College Training Detachment (CTD) at Texas A&M University.

The commander, a product of the West Point Military Academy, was a strict,

no-nonsense Captain. Except for hazing, his belief in the West Point method of training was reflected throughout the detachment. Our instructors were a mixture of well-qualified college professors and military officers. Classes, physical training and studying kept us busy from the time of Reveille until the welcome notes of Taps were sounded. Breaks were few and far between, but once in a while nice things happened.

One Saturday afternoon I volunteered for an unspecified detail. We changed into clean uniforms and marched to the train station. Only then were we told that we were to meet an incoming group of people who would need help with their luggage. We were not told that it was an organized group of young ladies associated with the USO at Houston. Nor were we told that they were to be guests of the detachment at our party that night. When the train stopped and beautiful ladies started down those steps, the cadets came alive and eagerly made their selection of who needed help the most. I was a little slow on the uptake and was almost left empty-handed. As luck would have it, one of those bundles from heaven was also a little slow. When she appeared, it was obvious that she needed help, and I was there. On the way to the dorm, she asked how to get to the dance. I told her I didn't know how to tell her, but I could come by and take her there. She accepted my offer and smiled. I was very happy to have a date for that night.

She was a very good dancer. It is to be noted that the chaperones from the USO and the detachment officers were very observant and took their responsibilities seriously. Nevertheless, it was a great party. A few weeks later, our class was on its way to the Classification Center at San Antonio, Texas.

At the Classification Center, I went through a suspense-filled month of testing to determine if I met the mental and physical standards established for pilot training. It was common knowledge that, at best, only three out of five of us would complete the Aviation Cadet program. Several in our group were medically disqualified. Others, unable to pass the standards set for pilots, were earmarked for training as Navigators or Bombardiers. Fortunately, I was among those who qualified for pilot training.

There were four phases in the pilot training program, each one lasting nine weeks. They were Preflight, Primary, Basic and Advanced. Preflight concentrated on academics and physical training and discipline. At Primary we continued our studies and were taught the fundamentals of flying in a PT-19, a monoplane with open cockpits and a crude system for pilot-to-student communication. Not long after I had been cleared for solo flight I nearly lost my life. Disregarding any need for instruction or authority I took it upon myself to try some acrobatic maneuvers.

As might be expected, I soon lost control of the aircraft. Losing altitude rapidly I had no idea how to recover. With disaster staring me in the face and only a few seconds left to live I instinctively did something, I know not what, that brought the aircraft under control.

Almost in a state of shock, I returned to the base determined to quit. My instructor met me on the ramp, listened to my story and then literally forced me to get back in the cockpit to finish the period. During take-off my confidence returned. That experience taught me the importance of learning my own limitations and respecting the limitations of the airplanes I would be flying. I owe that instructor a debt I can never repay. Others were not so lucky.

Basic flight training at Enid Army Air Field included flying in a BT-13, a larger more powerful airplane. It was an unforgiving airplane and one that was difficult to fly. The focus was on acrobatics, formation and instrument flying. Mistakes could be fatal. There were also other pitfalls that could cause serious problems.

Foolishly, I violated the unwritten rule that cadets were not to date any of the secretaries in the Cadet Headquarters. A golden opportunity presented itself and I took it. When the news got around, I became the victim of subtle harassment by the officers. I began to wonder if I would be around much

longer. When I left Enid my appreciation for the need to follow rules and regulations was much greater. When the class left for Advanced I was among those selected to attend training in multi-engine aircraft. Although I had wanted to become a fighter pilot I knew that I was lucky to still be in the program. Our ranks were thinning rapidly.

Transitioning into multi-engine aircraft was not easy. The UC-78 had two engines and more than twice as many instruments to monitor. The emergency procedures were more complicated and instrument flying was stressed. Instrument flying continued to be my weakest area. When I had finished taking my last check-ride I was sure I had failed. The flight examiner looked up from his notes and said: "You did okay, you passed." I didn't argue the point. My cadet days ended June 27, 1944, when large formations of base personnel and lower class cadets honored the graduating class of 44-F by passing in review. My mother and my sweetheart pinned the gold bars of a second lieutenant on my collar. The secretary from Enid smiled as she pinned those coveted silver wings above the left pocket of my uniform.

My first assignment as an officer was to Hondo Army Air Field where I was attached to a training unit. This is where I came to terms with instrument flying. After I had learned local procedures and had demonstrated my

competence, I was permitted to fly navigator training missions. Pilots averaged over 100 flying hours a month. Single pilots were usually scheduled for the night, weekend, and holiday missions. My social life continued to be very limited.

World War II was about over when Hondo switched over to training B-29 Flight Engineers. Within a year I had married the secretary from Enid and had been assigned to five different bases including spending 22 miserable days on a troop ship bound for the Philippine Islands. There I was first exposed to the ravages of a brutal war. When I reported to Headquarters 13th Air Force I became chief of a Personnel Classification and Audit Team. Mine was a traveling team. I enjoyed the assignment but was discouraged by the dependent travel situation. I applied for Release from Active Duty and within six months, I was separated from the service at Camp Beale, California. I met up with my beloved wife in Oklahoma City. With the exception of one year I continued to fly military aircraft as a Reserve Officer. I returned to active duty on April 15, 1953 and remained until retirement in 1978.



Sing Along

By Virginia Tyte

“Down by the old mill stream... Where I first met you...with your eyes so blue...dressed in gingham too....”

I am sure that you find the song familiar. This stream is real – the old Blue River Creek near Greenfield, Indiana. The grist mill was built in 1828 and was a working mill until the 1940s. James Whitcomb Riley wrote a poem about the mill pond, “The Old Swimming Hole.”

On a summer day in 1900, two young blades from Greenfield spent a lazy afternoon at the mill pond away from cares and jobs. Earl Smith was a piano player at the local nickelodeon where Charles Gant was manager. Earl hummed a tune and Charlie wrote the words. Charlie was a handsome Phi Gam and a football player on Indiana University’s football team. He had a beautiful baritone voice...and was to be my grandfather.

My grandmother, Jessie, was the youngest Gentry of the Gentry Brothers Dog and Pony fame. She never liked the gingham bit as she said, “I dressed better than that.” She also wasn’t pleased with the blue eyes reference because she had lovely eyes, but “hazel” didn’t rhyme.

You will not see Gant and Smith on the song credits today. They had published several songs together but the song sat

around for a year. Charlie did not want to spend any more money on publishing and he told Earl that he could do what he wanted with it. Earl had a bit of a drinking problem and in 1910 he made a trip to Chicago. During a spree, he sold the song to Tell Taylor...for \$50.00. Taylor put his own name on it and made a fortune. This kind of arrangement was common at this time.

Next time you are at a campfire or picnic or listening to a barbershop quartet or sing along, this song may mean a little more to you. Join the singing, and enjoy the simpler life.



Sympathy for Wiley Coyote

By Walter Taylor

I was in my El Paso office when my wife Nancy called. “There’s something in our house,” she said. “A basket fell out of the loft and almost hit me.”

A basket?

Our living room was twenty-five feet high. It was fronted on one side by three twenty-foot windows, each some three feet wide, giving a view of the Franklin Mountains. On the opposite wall was a railed balcony which we called the loft, and which was used as our study. The basket had fallen out of this loft.

“I locked the doors,” she said. “I’m in the car at the end of the block.”

Locked the doors? I had trouble with that. Whatever it was, why did we want to lock it *in*?

“I think it’s a bird,” she said.

When Nancy was a child, a neighbor kid locked her in a closet with a canary. She is still not fond of birds.

“I’ll be right there,” I said. My office was ten miles away. When I got there, she was still in her car. She had planned to go swimming. “Go ahead,” I told her. “Never fear!” – well, something like that.

I already had an idea of what had happened. There was a window in the loft with no screen, and I had left it open. A bird? But what kind? Surely not a canary.

The first thing I did was open all the doors. Maybe whatever it was would make its own exit. Then I saw what it was. Our tall living room windows were divided by two cross beams, each with a little ledge on the interior side. The Thing was perched on the lower cross beam some seven feet above me.

The roadrunner is a long-beaked, speckled bird that inhabits the desert areas of the Southwest. They can be quite mean. These are not really flying birds; their large wings can take them only twenty or thirty feet high, and cannot keep them airborne. But on the ground they can run at remarkable speeds. Easterners know the roadrunner – if they know it at all, as an animated character who is chased by a coyote named Wiley. Living up to his name, Wiley attempts, rather desperately, to have a roadrunner for lunch. He always fails tragically. He chases Roadrunner off a cliff and he falls – splat! – while his prey flies away. In one sequence, Wiley Coyote hides behind a rock, looks left and right and sees nothing but desert, then steps out – only to be run over by a streetcar.

The roadrunner in our window was a big one, its body about the size and shape of a small football.

Keeping the fate of Wiley Coyote in mind, I set out to get this speckled devil out of the house. And here we get into the kind of

problem that Wiley Coyote faced. Toward the bottom of the wall, next to the windows, was a waist-high shelf that held a small marble bust and three pots created by a student of Quintana, a celebrated Mexican potter. Adjacent to this shelf was a six-foot wet bar with shelves containing glassware and china. The Thing was perched on a ledge above the window farthest from that wall. And beyond that wall was the kitchen with an open door to the outside.

The question was how to get the Thing out that door and outside without having it perch on any of the pots or glassware. It also seemed like a good idea to manage this without getting too close to the Thing itself.

I had a twenty-foot extension pole which I used to dust the window ledges. Moving slowly, I approached the Thing and gave him a gentle nudge on the behind.

Nothing happened. I could feel him thinking, *What the hell is this all about?*

I gave him a harder nudge. His wings unfolded and he flapped his way up to the top ledge on the second window.

I could see that this was not going to be easy. Approaching slowly, I reached high in the air and give him a solid poke on the behind – and held my breath while he winged his way past the pots and the wet bar and into the kitchen. Had he gone out the kitchen door?

Still holding my breath, I carried the pole into the kitchen and found him perched atop a cabinet – ignoring the open door to freedom.

What to do? Frustrated, I reached up with the pole and gave him two solid whacks on the behind. To my consternation, he leaped down to the floor, took one bounce and ran directly toward me, his long beak taking dead aim at my groin – or as my grandson later called it, the “jackpot.”

No time for thought. What followed proved that at age seventy, some of my reflexes had not deserted me. Somehow I managed to get a foot up in front of me, and I kicked the beast squarely on his extended beak. And it worked. I could feel him thinking, *This is no place for me.* He spun and zoomed out the door.

Breathing hard, I closed all the doors.

In retrospect, I realized that I had gotten off lightly. I hadn't fallen off a cliff or been run over by a streetcar. And I got through it all with my jackpot intact. I have always enjoyed watching roadrunners, but I was glad to see the last of this guy. I never saw him again, and I can't remember seeing any others around. Maybe the word got out.

Oh yes. I closed the open window in the loft.

❖

He Hit Me – With Words

By Barbara Restle

Alfred Kazin disconcerted me. He bewildered and perplexed me and I needed to confront his radical literary view of one of my heroes, Henry David Thoreau. By 1949, I had read many of Kazin's book reviews in the *New York Times Book Review* and a few in *The New Republic*, publications to which my parents and friends subscribed. A book review written by him was an electrifying read -- and could be read not only in America but in France.

Years later, as biographies of Kazin appeared, I learned that at nineteen years of age, he reviewed books for any publisher willing to pay. This poor Brooklyn Jewish student at tuition-free City College, sat on benches outside publishers' offices, waiting for the opportunity to review books. Often, the job went to the first in line. Obviously Kazin was an early riser.

I had a good job on Park Avenue in New York City, and was going to night school at Columbia University. I also signed up for Kazin's evening course titled, "American Transcendental Literature," at the New School of Social Science. When I took my seat in class I expected to see Kazin at the far end of middle life. After all, he had just written a masterpiece, the 500-page book, *On Native Ground*, a

history of literary realism in America. What I saw took my breath away. A young vigorous and fast-moving man strode towards the lectern, as if confronting the enemy: us?

Quite possibly, he was questioning our presence in his class. That evening, when I had entered the front door of the New School, I was jostled by a wall of loud and rough young people who shoved Communist manifestos into my hands, while shouting the need for unions to work for the greater good of the common man. This raucous scene, however, should not have been totally alien to me. Only ten years earlier, I had found a similar throng of young zealots in Vienna, where I grew up. At that time, young people, wearing swastikas on their sleeves, chanting Nazi-style dogma, marched through the streets of an Austria destined to be annexed to Germany.

Obviously Kazin, entering the New School that evening, for his first lecture to us, had also met these young Communists. I wondered where his sympathies lay. Many years later, I found the answer to that question. I learned that Kazin throughout his life, had cleverly avoided the communist ambience of our post World War II culture, and without losing his position as a socialist and literary radical.

During that semester of lectures on transcendental literature, the class was introduced in depth to our American literary giants: Melville, Hawthorne, Samuel Clemens, Thoreau and Emerson.

Henry David Thoreau had always been my very own passionately admired author. I spent many hours hiking the Green Mountains, the Poconos, the New Jersey Everglades, and any other wild natural land I could reach on weekends, and pretended to view all with the eyes and ears of botanist Thoreau. I had a thoroughly romantic notion of the man who went to jail for his belief in civil disobedience, and eventually died of TB, a poor and unappreciated naturalist.

I listened to Kazin's critical literary approach to my hero, and by the end of one of his lectures, I could not keep still. My inner picture of Thoreau had been compromised; the dissonance I felt had to be addressed. I was hostile to his views, and I didn't stop to ponder the fact that I was confronting a literary giant. Most important to me, I needed to save my perception of Thoreau, whose book, *Walden*, had been on my desk since junior high school.

One evening I waited for the classroom to empty, for Kazin to place his notes into his battered briefcase, and I followed him to the elevator. The doors of the elevator closed behind us, and with simplistic words I delivered my perception of Thoreau as opposed to his. Kazin, responded instantly, explosively, and I suddenly felt imprisoned in the confines of the elevator by a force of nature beyond anything I had ever experienced: Kazin was combustible. The thrust of his message to me, was that Thoreau's thesis was about how to live a life of radical individualism and may my

romanticized cloying notion of Thoreau be damned. I felt as if Kazin had hit me. I was stunned. The doors opened, Kazin briskly disappeared into the wintery shadows of a New York City night. I continued attending his lectures, however, without again defying him. During my many years, I have reread *Walden* with a gratefully deeper level of understanding. I cannot imagine my life without a Thoreau.

Recently, when I tried to explain to a Meadowood friend, how I felt when Kazin condemned my vision of Thoreau, the response was, "He did hit you, Barbara. He hit you with his words."

So what about Kazin? Ten years ago, he died in his early 80's. This week, after locating a first edition of *On Native Ground* by Kazin, I bought it. I will be happy to share this book with anyone who is interested. When I think of Kazin, I remember Thoreau's words, "How near to good is wild." Kazin, to the end, remained untamed, unbowed by our culture of platitudes, by our formulaic points of view. I have a far deeper comprehension of our early American literary figures. And yes, these men are, even today, considered radicals. I would not be at all surprised to find that Kazin, on his deathbed, may have angrily confronted the concept of, and questioned the finality of death, just as our early transcendentalists may have. Yes, I am still smitten with all these men. Most days I walk the hills and streambeds of Griffy Lake watershed with the eyes and ears of Thoreau. ❖

Salt Water

By Jane Layman

I am a displaced person – displaced from the region of my birth and first twenty-one years – Connecticut.

Although the city I lived in was inland, our family spent a month each summer on Long Island Sound in a beach community on the Connecticut side. Later I saw many beautiful beaches, some in New Jersey, some in Florida's panhandle towns, but the rather rocky Connecticut shore was where I learned to love everything about salt water – especially swimming in it.

Some people turn up their noses at its smell, especially at low tide over sand bars and mud flats. *Too fishy*, they say, with disdain. I even heard once that families planning summer weddings in coastal towns will consult the tide charts to insure the dead fish and seaweed smell won't ruin the ceremony.

Almost as great as the water itself is the food it supplies. We ate clams, oysters, all varieties of shellfish including my favorite, soft shell crab, and typical New England fish such as mackerel and cod. My mother made a wonderful clam chowder. We had a treat every summer – steamed clams. At the beach house, we covered the dining room table with several layers of newspaper, dumped piles of steamed clams in the center, outfitted each person with a large shallow plate or bowl, a

custard cup of melted butter, lots of napkins and we went at it.

During the years I spent my winters in Northwest Florida. I had to see the Gulf every day, rain or shine. It was as if I was storing it up for the long months ahead in the Midwest that had become my home. I'd walk down to my bench and just sit and look. The lapping of the waves in calm weather was hypnotic; the crashing surf was music to my ears when it was stormy. Sunset was a favorite time to watch. During the day when the sun was warm, I liked to take off my shoes and walk along the edge of the water. At first the water would be icy, but after a short time it became comfortable. Daydreaming as I walked, my reverie occasionally caused me to overlook an incoming big wave which would crash against my legs, splattering my shorts – a little embarrassing but so delightful it made me laugh out loud.

When people speculate on how they'd spend the money if they won the Lottery, my answer is always the same. I want a beach house on the coast somewhere. To wake each day smelling the wonderful salt air, to watch the waves whenever I want, to go to sleep hearing the surf is my concept of contentment. And for my last day, hour, minute, let me be near the sea.

John F. Kennedy was quoted as saying, "Once you get that sand in your shoes, you can never get it out."

Vive the sand. ❖

No One Weeps But the Widowed Spring

By Esther Gaber

The clouds spoke at the wedding
Of the old man Winter
And the child Bride Spring.
“’Tis not a good match,”
Said one to another,
“He’s aged and worn;
She’s young and so timid.”

But nature had her way
And they were wed.
The old man knew
His days were few,
And took his bride
On a thousand-mile ride
For a honeymoon.

The whole land knew
He would live a while longer.
The clouds (punished for their gossip)
Turned large and black,
Then spread the land with ice and snow.

The last cold blast
Was Winter’s end.
No one weeps but the widowed Spring.

All the flowers will attend
When Spring gives birth
And orphaned Summer enters in.



Thank you to our Contributors

When **Esther Gaber** moved to Meadowood she was glad to hear about the Writers Group. In time she became a member, inspired by a class she had taken with Samuel Yellen of the English department. Esther majored in English and Drama at the University of Pittsburgh.

Henry H. Gray, PhD, was a Geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and with the Ohio and Indiana Geological Surveys. He is noted for his restoration of Franklin antique automobiles.

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.

Eugene A. Merrell retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1978 after six years in the Reserves and 30 years on active duty. He was a Command Pilot on flying status for 31 years, most of which were in positions requiring a pilot qualified staff officer. He served four tours in the Philippines, Korea, and Vietnam where he was awarded

the Bronze Star and Air Medal. After Vietnam, he was assigned to Indiana University as Professor of Aerospace Studies, then to the "elite" 1st Air Transport Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base near the nation's capitol. He retired at Kincheloe AFB, Michigan, and settled in Bloomington.

Barbara Restle adds up to more than 100 percent. She is committed to a healthy environment supported by her interest in science and her experience raising cattle. She has lived in Vienna and among the people of Fiji. She loved piloting single-engine Cessnas. She is devoted to her dog, Sam.

Dr. Walter Taylor is Professor Emeritus of American Literature at the University of Texas at El Paso. His book, *Faulkner's Search for a South*, is a career study of Faulkner's fiction. He and his wife, Nancy Seward, came to Meadowood in 2006.

Virginia Tyte, wife of Don Tyte and mother of their five children, is the daughter of Albert Hoadley, who was an early resident of Meadowood. She is an alumna of Stevens College and Indiana University. Her community service has included presidencies of Bloomington Hospital's Board and auxiliary unit, and a member of the Bloomington Hospital Foundation.