



# Medford Leas LIFE

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FEBRUARY 2004

## SECURITY AT MEDFORD LEAS

by Kay Cooley

"We take care of everything from soup to nuts," **Todd Jones** says of Medford Leas security staff. "When we get an emergency call we sometimes don't know what it's for, so we have to be prepared for anything."

The 'we' Todd refers to are the four members of the Security Department: **Barbara Bohn, Nancy Horner, Evan Margerum**, and Todd. Todd and Evan work from 1:00 to 11:00 p.m., Nancy and Barbara from 11:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. All emergency calls are routed to them during those hours. (The Maintenance and Health Center staffs cover the 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. period.) Each team is on seven days, then off seven.

What sorts of emergencies arise? "Off hooks" – telephones in apartments improperly returned to their off position – automatically create an emergency signal that is always answered, even if forgetfulness or carelessness is the cause. Fire alarms also get a rapid response. Lights, heating, and air conditioning not working; clogged toilets; oxygen supplies running low – these are the most common situations that trigger responses from the security staff.

"There's always something new to learn," Todd says, such as getting critters back outdoors that have slipped into a residence. Once it was finding a resident who slipped out of her apartment and couldn't be found. After a search

failed to turn her up, a call to the police promptly brought four squad cars to the campus. Finally, she was seen on the second floor Haddon monitors outside an entry trying to get into the building and was safely escorted back home.

The monitors, located in a room opposite the elevators, show every entry to the Community building. When the Reception desk is closed, the security person on duty watches them and takes all emergency calls there. If he or she must leave, a designated nurse takes over. The monitors are never left unattended.

Security staff may also handle 911 calls. In a medical emergency they may assist responding personnel to get as close as possible to the site where they are needed. If it's a report of suspicious characters seen on the grounds, they meet the police.

Evan's most challenging emergency was the carport fire a couple of years ago. As the staffer on duty, he called 911. Soon firemen and police were on the scene as well top Management staff. He helped evacuate to the Activities Room residents who lived in courts potentially threatened by the blaze.

Todd's greatest satisfaction in the job he has held for four years is the appreciation of residents when their crises are resolved. "Their eyes light up with gratitude," he says. And when we think about what the Security staff does for us, so do ours.

## FINDING A REVOLUTIONARY WAR ANCESTOR

by Ellen Stimler

At a Luncheon on January 17, 2004, **Polly Schnepf**, a resident of Lumberton Leas, was installed as a member of the Mt. Holly chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, based on a membership certificate she had received from the DAR's national office last October. Her acceptance into the DAR had required documentary proof that one of her ancestors by the name of Hannah Ogden had "rendered material support to the cause of American Independence during the Revolutionary War."

How Polly managed to reach this goal is a story of determination, patience, painstaking hard work, and some luck, over a period of ten years.

Polly's mother, Esther Alice Long, mentioned on several occasions that she had relatives by the name of Ogden going back to the American Revolution and that an Ogden family history was at the Pennsylvania Historical Society. She hoped someone would look into it but that she didn't feel up to it. After Esther died in 1979, Polly felt guilty about not having done anything about it, but her own family responsibilities caused her to put off the project. However, in 1993, Polly was determined to get started. Logically, the first thing would be to get her mother's birth certificate, but there was none! Without that, all further progress was blocked.

Polly learned that Esther was born in the family home and that the attending physician had simply not reported the birth. Esther's sister went to the church where Esther had been baptized. Fortunately, the church still had that record, and the pastor supplied a hand-written certification of Esther's baptism and birth on December 28, 1908. This wasn't enough for the DAR. They needed proof that Esther was the child of her claimed parents, John and Sarah Long of West Philadelphia. Polly had to go to the 1910 census records to see whether Esther was listed there as a member of the Long family. Not knowing what street they lived on, Polly spent about six hours a

day for two weeks at the National Archives, going through microfilm records until her eyes hurt, and until she located the Long family, with Esther listed among five girls.

The Ogden family history, titled "The Quaker Ogdens in America" at the Pennsylvania Historical Society, gave Polly the names and important dates of all the ancestors of her mother, going back to one David Ogden who lived from 1655 to 1705. Based on this outline, Polly had to document her ancestry going back eight generations to one Aaron Ogden who was believed to have fought in the Revolutionary War.

Feeling pretty proud of her achievement, Polly submitted all this documentation to the DAR. However, Polly got a letter from the DAR that Aaron Ogden failed to show up when his militia unit was called to muster, and they suggested that Polly explore some other ancestor! Polly was so discouraged by this response that she just gave up the whole project for two years.

Then suddenly everything came together. When the Mt. Holly chapter found out that Polly's application had been rejected, they apparently got back to the national office. Shortly thereafter Polly got a big package from them stating that they had done some research on her application and learned that Aaron Ogden's mother had made financial contributions to the Revolutionary War effort. Based on that documentation, they issued Polly a membership certificate citing Hannah Ogden as her ancestor and patriot.

After this success, Polly is already thinking of her next project: To document that David Ogden sailed on the "Welcome" with William Penn, which would make her eligible for membership in the Welcome Society of Philadelphia.

Polly is a member of the MLRA Family History Group and received much encouragement and support from them during her ordeal. **Russell Haley**, chair of the Group, said that Polly's achievement was particularly noteworthy "because she was able to connect to a female patriot."

## MEET OUR NONAGENARIANS

by Maggie Woodard

**Mary Hansen**, 93 years old, makes us want to follow in her footsteps when we reach our nineties! She credits her superb health and general fitness to the aerobic classes she took for 20 years before coming to Medford Leas. She is slim, her posture is excellent, and she kicks higher than anyone in the 8:30 a.m. exercise class.



Mary Hansen photo by Margery Rubin

Travel has always been a big interest, and she plans to take a trip to the western states, one of the few areas she has not visited. Her husband was of Norwegian seafaring ancestry and wanted to travel to far places. Together they traveled so extensively there is hardly a place in the world she has not seen. Her favorite trips were to the South Pacific islands.

Family is very important to her. She is fortunate that her two daughters, son, nine grandchildren and 16 great-grands live nearby. A stone house in New York State, built in the early 1700's by remote grandparents, remains in the larger family and is the site of almost yearly family reunions. She plans a visit there this year.

Mary also enjoys duplicate bridge and movies and likes to read. Following in her mother's footsteps, she usually eats breakfast and lunch with a book propped up in front of her. She likes travel books and good novels. Life is good for Mary Hansen.

## GREAT DECISIONS SCHEDULE

by Stanley Brush

The Great Decisions lecture-discussion series will begin on February 12, when the topic will be "U.S. and Europe," to be presented by **Peter Obbard**. The line-up for the remaining sessions is as follows:

- Feb. 19 The Philippines **Carmelita Aseron**
- Feb. 26 Weapons of Mass Destruction  
**Walter Zwarg**
- Mar. 4 Diversity of Islam **Joe Wray**
- Mar. 11 Latin America **Frances Lax**
- Mar. 18 The Media, Public, Diplomacy  
**Allyn Rickett**
- Mar. 25 Reform in Middle East  
**Chuck Woodard**

Sessions are on Thursdays in the Auditorium and begin at 11 a.m. Discussion guides with background information on each topic are available at the front desk for \$11.00.



## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

December's Employee of the Month was **Jon Brewin** of the Dining Services Department. He started working here in August 1996 while in high school. He came back in October 2002 after obtaining a bachelor's degree from Liberty University in Bible studies. Always willing to help out in a pinch, he also gives his time on Sundays teaching Bible studies to teenagers. His hope is to obtain a full-time job as a youth pastor.

Congratulations, Jon, and many thanks for your good work at Medford Leas!

**TRIP FOR MANET EXHIBIT**

by Ellen Stimler

The MLRA Gallery Committee has arranged a special visit to the Philadelphia Museum of Art for the exhibit titled "Manet and the Sea," which opens on February 15. The date for our private tour of the show is Tuesday, March 23, from 10 to 11 a.m. before the museum opens to the public.

After the guided tour, residents can, of course, continue to view the paintings at their leisure. The brochure announcing the show states that Manet's seascapes "shattered established traditions of French marine painting and electrified a host of future Impressionist masters." The works displayed were drawn from 60 public and private collections in the U.S. and abroad and include ocean, lake, and river views of such other artists as Monet, Renoir, Courbet, and Whistler.

A sign-up flyer will be placed in residents' mailboxes in a few weeks. Meanwhile, save the March 23 date on your calendars.



**CDC PROGRESS**

by Kitty Katzell

While everyone was off enjoying Christmas and New Year's holidays, the resident-members of CDC continued to have meetings. We all know the need for completion is urgent. The new medical building is needed, and plans need to be approved by the township before things can start.

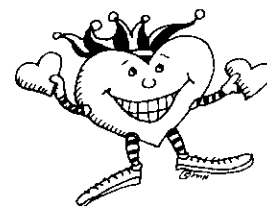
As soon as approval is received from the township, work can begin on construction of new independent living units (ILUs) to accommodate new residents who want to move to Medford Leas. Some units becoming vacant in the courts are being occupied by residents moving to the Medford campus from Woolman Commons. Others that become vacant will need to be occupied by residents who must move from the apartments which will be displaced by the new medical building.

The next construction after the new ILUs would be the new medical building, with its 96 beds: 24 for memory support assisted living, 24 for sub-acute nursing care, like the present Woolman; and 48 for long-term nursing care. Sixteen of the 48 long-term nursing care beds might be used for memory support patients who need nursing care.

Those things would be accomplished in what we see as the first phase. A second and later phase would include the renovation of the Estaugh Building and the Community Center, including dining rooms, and the construction of a Fitness, Wellness, and Aquatic Center.

All of this construction is likely to be spread over several years, so we realize that it is important for it to get started. But, still to be done are things like obtaining Township approval, arranging financing, and completing work on design and space issues that are still before the CDC.

When the completed plans are ready to be presented to residents and the Estaugh Board, they will be plans that the resident members of CDC can support and which we believe will meet with current and future residents' approval.



Happy Valentine's Day

## FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

by Russell Haley

The roots of the Medford Leas Family History Group date back to September 2001. As a relative newcomer with a primary hobby of family history research, I spotted the absence of such an interest group at Medford Leas and received permission from the MLRA Board to start one.

Based on sufficient resident interest as established in a brief survey, the first meeting was held on December 12, 2001, and monthly meetings on the fourth Wednesday at 3 p.m. have been held since then.

Meetings usually include a semi-formal presentation of a topic, followed by members' voluntary reports on their recent research experiences, which in turn may elicit advice from the group on any problems encountered. Forthcoming events of interest are also noted, along with new developments in the field. A handout on the topic discussed, usually about four pages long, is given to attendees.

A full set of these topical notes, dating back to our earliest meetings, is now available in a loose-leaf notebook in the Medford Leas Library. Residents interested in the topics, which cover the major resources and research facilities in the field, are encouraged to make copies of them.

At last count, 55 different residents attended one or more session of the group's monthly meetings. The topic for the January 28 meeting was "Overcoming Roadblocks and Brick Walls," which is "Family History speak" for solving intractable problems. At the February 25 session, the main topic will be "Searching Forward in Time."



## BOOKS WE ENJOYED READING

*Ed. Note: In this space we share comments on books we found worth reading and we encourage our readers to send us brief reviews of the books they especially liked.*



### ***Driving By Moonlight***

by Kristin Henderson

Paperback (309 pages)

Seal Press

The author, a feature writer for *the Washington Post*, tells us a true story built around an 8000-mile journey across the country taken right after September 11, 2001. This journey is spiritual but interweaves three major themes, each richly and achingly detailed.

Kristin Henderson's marriage is a good one but has serious strains, among them her consuming need to have a child and her eight years of excruciating struggles with infertility.

Her Quakerism and her devotion to it are challenged by the destruction of the World Trade Center and damage to the Pentagon. Is her belief in the Peace Testimony slipping away as she tries harder and harder to hold on to it?

Added to this is that her husband is not only a Lutheran minister but a Marine Corps chaplain who has been sent to Afghanistan. As he heads east on a troop ship, she heads west in her Corvette.

She has to agonize about his personal faith and how it interacts with her own personal dilemma. This could sound like a soap opera, but Henderson is such a superb writer that the story rises above that. The book is frequently funny and often insightful. It is a memorable reading experience.

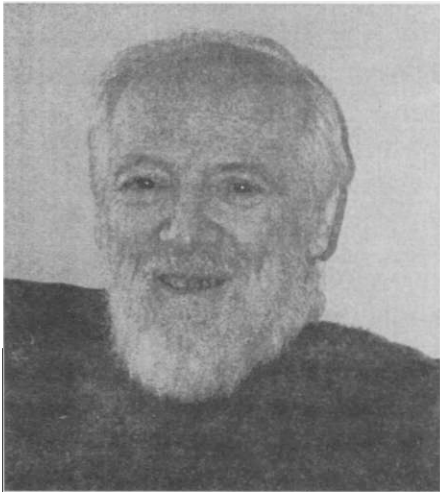
by George Rubin

## A MAN IN MOTION

by George Rubin

*Ed. Note: This is one of a series of Medford Leas residents who participate in volunteer services in the wider community.*

**Winston Riley III (Toby)** will talk anytime and anywhere about his volunteer work. Residents at Medford Leas and at Woolman Commons know he is around when they spot his bright red motorscooter.



Toby Riley photo by Margery Rubin

After college Toby was drafted into the military, then he went on to get an advanced degree in decision science. His focus has always been on technical and computer skills. He has put this knowledge to good use with jobs in Washington DC and overseas in Paris, London, and Geneva. He states that, "Scientific methodology is a solid means for discerning solid truth when possible, and Quakerism in most other arenas." This has been integrated into his personal philosophy. "It is on this basis that I am Quaker, a unionist (after working with the International Labor Organization), a techie, and a peace activist," says Toby.

His major volunteer work is with the Alternative to Violence Project (AVP), a program that helps every person self-learn how to use the tools of nonviolence in conflict situations. In

1995 Toby attended his first AVP workshop. He found himself so enthusiastic about the effectiveness of these experiential workshops using non-violence in all conflict situations that he went on to an advanced AVP workshop and then training for trainers at the Federal Correction Institution (FCI) at Ft. Dix, New Jersey. For the last 6 years he has facilitated AVP workshops at FCI monthly in both English and Spanish. Toby has also done AVP work at Trenton State Prison (New Jersey's maximum security prison), and the Garden State Youth Correctional Facility at Yardville, among others. He has co-facilitated workshops in El Salvador and Cuba. In 2002 he co-facilitated 2 workshops in Kaduna and Kano, Nigeria. Toby finds working with prisoners most rewarding, especially when he sees how changed they are by the AVP experience. Toby said, "Today there are AVP workshops taking place in at least 45 states and 35 countries."

Toby is also the coordinator of the New Jersey affinity group of an ambitious international program called the Nonviolence Peaceforce, which sends trained individuals into conflict areas around the world to reduce deadly conflict through non-violent action.

Toby believes more residents would profit from participation in AVP workshops where age is not a hindrance and in the Nonviolence Peaceforce. He is a man always in motion and believes in the life experience where nonviolence "takes away the occasion for war."



## VISITORS NEEDED

by Maggie Woodard

Whenever someone moves to an apartment in Assisted Living, almost his or her first words are "There's no one to talk to!" **Maggie Woodard**, as a new member of the Mental Health Committee, has suggested reviving the tradition of residents visiting people living in Haddon I and II. The committee, the co-chairs of the Health Volunteers, and the Nurse Manager, **Doris Ferris**, have welcomed the project. Ms. Ferris named seven residents (one man and six women) who would very much like visitors.

It was reported that several residents had thought of visiting people in Haddon but were fearful they lacked the necessary skills. **NO SPECIAL SKILLS ARE NEEDED!** Think of it as visiting a friend, dropping by to "chat" one or more times a week and staying as long as comfortable. (It could be as little as ten minutes.) If it seems appropriate, one might take the person for a walk, a luncheon "date" in the coffee shop, or a program in the Auditorium. However, acting on the latter ideas is not necessary. Just visits, being "someone to talk to" would be most appreciated.

Anyone interested in volunteering to become a visitor, please call Maggie Woodard at 3663.



## RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

by Kitty Katzell

It is widely known that Medford Leas is a Quaker facility, but you may be unaware of some of the religious observances that take place here.

The Quaker Worship group gathers every Sunday from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. in the Activities Room for a period of worship. Anyone

interested in Quaker worship is invited to attend. On most Sundays, 30 to 50 people are present, and many regular attendees are not Quakers. Every Sunday afternoon, a vespers service is held at 4:00 p.m. in the Activities Room. The services are ecumenical and the speakers are ministers or members of different faiths, including Assembly of God, Baptist, Jewish, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Unitarian. Each service includes singing, scripture readings, a talk on a spiritual topic, and prayer. Services are over before 5:00 p.m. Attendance is usually 30 to 50 residents.

The monthly calendar of events indicates the dates, times, and locations when special religious events are held. These include mass conducted by a Roman Catholic priest, and communion services led by the Moorestown Presbyterian Church, the Medford United Methodist Church, and the Protestant Community Church, also known as the Cathedral of the Woods.

At the time of Passover, a Seder is held, at which residents and their guests are welcome. For the Jewish New Year, abbreviated services are held for Rosh Hashanah and for Yom Kippur. An annual Christmas Eve service is held in the Auditorium, with readings of scripture passages related to the birth of Jesus interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols.

In addition, many local churches will arrange transportation for residents to attend their services. All it takes usually is a phone call to the church office.



## NEWS FROM LUMBERTON LEAS

by Maggie Heineman

Past issues of *Lumberton Leas News* are available in the Medford Leas Library, in a loose-leaf notebook on the shelves to your left as you enter the library. They are also archived on the web at [leaswebsite.home.comcast.net](http://leaswebsite.home.comcast.net).

Each month the newsletter has a restaurant review, a featured recipe, and the "Monthly Migraine" puzzles created by **Herb Heineman**, editor and production manager of *Lumberton Leas News*.

Another monthly feature is "Council Chatter" a column by LLRA Council President **Barbara Lewis**. Barbara reports that in total \$5,000 was distributed from Lumberton Leas to local groups: the local Police Officers Association, which benefits a variety of youth programs; the Lumberton Emergency Squad; the Fire Department; and the Medford Lakes Cabulance Service. Other council news: a wind screen will be installed at the front door of the Community Center, Medford Leas Marketing will conduct an Open House on January 22, and **Ruth and Robert Rosvold** of Cinnaminson will move to Lumberton Leas on January 15.

Did you miss **Joe Wray's** talk *Treasures of Eastern Turkey: A Trip from Antioch to Ararat – and Back* when he spoke at Medford Leas last year? There's another opportunity at the Lumberton Leas Forum on February 19 at 7:30 p.m. On February 21 at 11 a.m., in the Lumberton Leas Community Center, The Extended Hand Ministries and Medford Leas will celebrate the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our cooperation in helping the homeless..

On December 10, the Iraqi National Symphony and the US National Symphony Orchestra played a joint concert at Kennedy Center. The President and First Lady were there; so were Herb and **Maggie Heineman**. A full-page article about this very interesting event appeared in the December issue of the newsletter.

Last fall Boy Scouts worked to improve the trails and site. One of the Scouts, Prashast Gandia, a senior at Cherokee High School, developed this project as part of his work toward Eagle Scout status.

Also from *Lumberton Leas News*:

### Brief Encounter by Rita Keiper

"Look here, Mr. Finch, you are the cutest, with your lovely head, your rose-colored chest, delicate markings, but my husband is very territorial and you must leave this bedroom."

But Mr. Finch was very happy where he was and I could tell he wasn't leaving. So I called the police. They called the township who sent a white knight to the rescue. Mr. Finch still wasn't leaving, so the two of them did a ballet chase around the room until, suddenly, Mr. Finch flew out the open window.

I was sorry to see him leave, but a house is no place for a House Finch

## ART GALLERY NEWS

by Helen L. Vukasin

For the month of February the Art Gallery in the lobby of the Auditorium will feature the water colors of Dorothy Flanagan of Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. Ms. Flanagan has studied with Thelma McCarthy and Jane Miluski. She is a Quaker and was a co-founder and co-director of Stratford Friends School.

About her work, Ms. Flanagan says, "My vision is to be able to play and paint with color and light. When painting, the rest of my cares and concerns fall away, it gives me energy and fills my spirit."

There will be an opening reception on Tuesday, February 3, 3-4:30 p.m. Ms. Flanagan will say a few words about the paintings at 3:30 p.m.

At Lumberton Leas, the present exhibit of the work of **Alice Skidmore Culbreth** and **Rita Keiper** will continue until after the Open House on January 22.

At the end of the month a new show featuring the work of **Toby Sullivan** will open at Lumberton Leas. Toby is a resident of Medford Leas with a great deal of professional experience. She started her career at the University of Pennsylvania Museum casting African sculpture from originals. She has studied silversmithing, jewelry, and ceramics. She has exhibited her paintings and etchings extensively in New York State. Toby's work is incredibly creative and utilizes a variety of media.

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## WELCOME TO COURTS

**Geraldine (Geri) Dickerson** will live in Apt. 75 after her move from Woolman Commons, where she has worked closely with her cousin, the **Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis**, in starting and expanding the activities of the Extended Hand Ministries.

After graduating from West Philadelphia High School, Geri worked at the Christian Street YMCA as Executive Secretary for a year and then went on to the Bell Telephone Company as a customer representative. She joined the Air Force in 1957, became a flight stewardess, and flew the Pacific out of Travis Air Force Base in California, working on flights carrying airmen and their dependents to their assignments. On one VIP flight, she had the experience of Bob Hope's Christmas Tour with Jane Mansfield and her entourage as passengers.

Geri married Don Dickerson, an Air Force officer, and together they raised two children, moving around to whatever bases Don's assignment took them. After a divorce, Geri continued her education and earned a B.A. in

business administration and an M.Ed. in pupil personnel. She worked as a guidance counselor and substitute teacher. Then her grown children persuaded her to join them in California, where she held a position as an engineering administrator for seven years. After her retirement she moved back East and joined forces with Barbara.

In whatever spare time she has, Geri likes to knit, crochet, sew, play bridge, read, and travel.

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## EATING HABITS OF BIRDS

by Gertrude Marshall

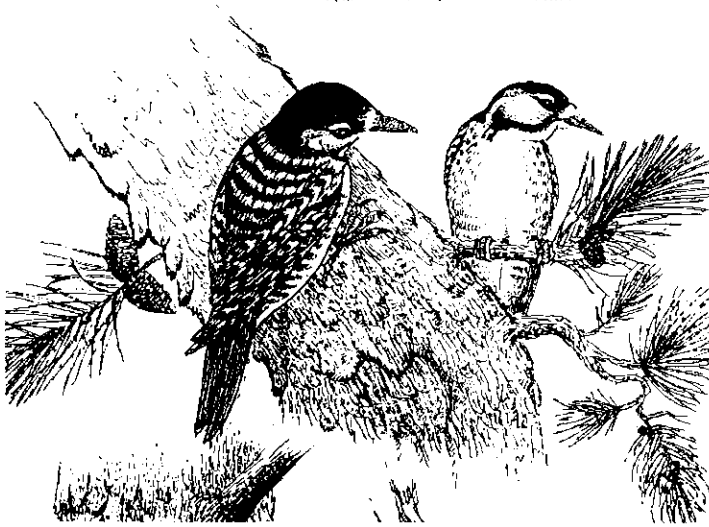
An older friend made the remark that "Eating is one of the few pleasures of the elderly." In this respect, the local bird population exhibits some of the same characteristics as humans, selecting among various choices and displaying varying eating habits. Finches love thistle seed. The juncos and sparrows will eat regular seed mix off the ground but prefer oil sunflower seed. Chickadees fly in, grab a seed and fly off, all in a second. House Finches will stay on a feeder, eating for several minutes, unless a hawk flies in to scare them. Woodpeckers love suet and will peck at it for a minute or so.

In one of the courts, there are four hawthorn trees which show bright red berries after the leaves are gone, providing winter color as well as food. Both robins (the northern ones which winter here) and cedar waxwings love the hawthorn berries; they start at the top of the trees and slowly, over a period of weeks, eat their way down. By January first, the top halves of the trees are clear of berries, and by February the trees are bare. The robins also like the crab apples in the main parking lot, and as spring approaches the little apples have fermented, resulting occasionally in tipsy robins. Food is a necessity as well as a pleasure, and in this respect humans are much like the other creatures around us.

## WINTER 2004 BIRD COUNT AT MEDFORD LEAS - LUMBERTON LEAS

by Miriam O. Swartz

Winter bird counts were conducted at Medford Leas and Lumberton Leas on the first and second Mondays in January, respectively.



US Fish and Wildlife Service [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

Monday January 5, was a very gray, rainy day and not conducive to strolling on the campus looking for birds. With the help of 14 residents of Medford Leas watching their bird feeders on that day, we obtained a good idea of what birds were in the neighborhood or flying overhead. Twenty-nine different species of birds were sighted, and a total of 667 birds.

How did 2004 compare with last year? We saw more Cardinals, Carolina Chickadees, Mallard Ducks, Goldfinches, House Finches and Canada Geese. Some of the species we saw this year that were not visible in 2003 were Carolina Wrens, Fox Sparrows and Song Sparrows, Purple Finches, Hairy Woodpeckers, and two kinds of hawks, Northern Harriers and Sharp Shinned. There were a few birds that we did not see this year, Rock Doves (pigeons), Red-tailed Hawks, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Cedar Waxwings.

On Monday, January 12, five Lumberton Leas residents and two Bird Club members from Medford Leas met at the Community Center. Two residents phoned in what they saw at their feeders. It was a cold, gray day but no rain. We walked to the lookout over Monarch Lake, walked the perimeter path, down the Willow trail, continued on the perimeter path and back to the Community Center. We, like the census takers at Medford Leas, saw 29 different species of birds in a total of 856 sightings. The one species we saw the most of were Canada Geese. We counted hundreds here and at our earlier count at Medford Leas. We saw more Cardinals, Coots, Mallard Ducks, House Finches, Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated Sparrows and Red-bellied Woodpeckers than last year. We were surprised not to see any White-breasted Nuthatches. Crows and several species of ducks: Redhead, Gadwall and Ruddy, were also missing this year. The birds that were new in this year's count were Goldfinches, Bluebirds, Red-tail Hawks, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Downy Woodpeckers, Great Blue Herons, both Song and English Sparrows, and a Flicker. At the end of the morning as we were looking in hollow trees hoping to see an owl, we saw the furry face of a raccoon looking at us, possibly wondering what we were doing.



US Fish and Wildlife Service [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

## THE JOYS AND REWARDS OF FAMILY HISTORY

by Gordon Beckhart

As a child, I never thought to ask about my ancestors. I knew all about my parents and grandparents, and that was enough for me. However, as I matured, several events aroused my interest in family history.

First, a lady from Oregon, who was visiting nearby, phoned saying her hobby was looking in local phone books for Beckharts. She rarely found any and was delighted to have found me. I invited her to visit my family. The next day she arrived – amazingly she knew about Dad and his father. She told me about our great-grandfather, who had fathered 12 children, and how he had provided for the education of his younger children by buying a farm in Kansas. Eventually I located the original agreement which contained this scheme for the education of the children.

The second event was reading a letter Dad had from his uncle. This letter told of an ancestor immigrating from Northern Ireland. At sea, he discovered a plot by the captain to sell the passengers into slavery. The ancestor's name was *McLean*. He and the other passengers took over the ship, and my ancestor navigated it to Philadelphia.

In my naïve zeal, I thought tombstones would provide solid evidence of dead ancestors, so I searched for gravestones. They were not easy to find. Topographic maps were often an essential aid in finding a graveyard. Sometimes even they failed. I found many ancestral stones had disintegrated due to acid rain or vandalism, or had just been stolen! Eventually, I found my great-grandfather's tomb in a small windblown town in Kansas.

Shortly before her last illness, my mother received a letter from a man tracing the descendants of a Hans Wenger, and Mother was one of them. She asked me to answer it, and through further correspondence I discovered my Swiss Mennonite ancestors.

Now I had enthusiasm but did not have a clue on how to proceed. However, being a history buff, I thought it best to find out how early settlers lived. I took a cooking course on how to cook on an open hearth. I also took an Elderhostel course at Sturbridge Village on how folks lived in 1820 – never did master the art of spinning yarn. However, we did learn how they dressed and talked.

Gradually, I learned to visit county courthouses and transcribe original paper records. Some courthouses have well-preserved documents and helpful clerks. In others the archives are so fragile that a hefty sneeze would destroy them all.

Identifying ancestors has been a little easier due to my unusual family names – Beckart, Haggott, Mangold, Frankenberger, Gamble, McLean – no Smiths or Joneses. I even have a line of well-documented Quakers, including Mary Newport who ran a famous bakery in Philadelphia.

I began to think I had found all worth knowing. The roots of some lines went back to the first records kept in the early 1500s. Then I made contact with a distant cousin who told me about several cases of old family letters owned by a lady who lived in Philadelphia and who was astounded to find she had a living relative. The cases, the equivalent of several file drawers, were in her garage, and she was glad to be rid of them.

The letters started about 1800 and, with a few gaps, ran till the early 1900s. Many are faded, torn, but still legible, with odd spelling and expressions. An 1800 letter revealed stark realities of life: a young wife, pregnant, alone, with young children in a New Hampshire cabin for the winter – husband had left to seek work and earn hard cash to support the farm – he would return in the Spring “if he lived.”

There were stories of the gold rush -- none struck it rich but several returned with enough nuggets to make wedding rings for their brides. A lot of the history of our country is in these letters. I think I will have a very busy retirement.

## WE THE PEOPLE

by George Rubin

The exhibit at the groundbreaking new National Constitution Center in Philadelphia is designed to take visitors through important events in our nation's history and explain in unique interactive media how the Constitution is as important today as it was 216 years ago.



George Washington

The visit starts in the large Richard and Helen DeVos exhibit hall. Inside the immense Kimmel amphitheater a 20-minute program called "Freedom Rising" is presented with a live actor and many multimedia features; it is an inspiring experience. After this introductory program, the visitor walks through wonderful architecture and breathtaking views in the Center's permanent exhibits which take one through important events of our nation's history. At one exhibit called The American National Tree, if a finger is pressed against a face on the tree, the selected person's biography, written and spoken, will appear. Walking along the exhibits that explain each age of our history from 1765 up to today allows the visitors to experience how "we the people" have dealt with all the changes in our history, including slavery, civil rights, the Vietnam war, President Nixon's resignation, and even the controversial Patriot Act.

Special installations allow people to vote for their favorite president, take the presidential oath of office, sit in a mock-up of the Supreme Court, and understand once again the balance of power as it is written into the Constitution. A highlight is a walk through the Signers Hall to

marvel at the life-sized statues of 42 delegates who participated in the writing and signing of the Constitution. There are over 100 interactive and multimedia exhibits, photographs, film, sculpture, text, and artifacts to experience. If it's time to rest those weary feet, a proper lunch can be had in the Delegates Dining Room or a snack in the Citizens Café.

At the end of the visit the words "We The People" will be an insistent reminder that we all have the important task to see that the American Constitution continues to be a living, growing document.



Presidents Day salute from Abe to George

## WHAT'S NEW IN MAGAZINES

by Ellen Stimler

**Serious birdwatchers who have never been to Alaska** are told that Alaska is *the destination* for numbers and varieties of species. In three separate articles in *Birders World* (Dec. 03, pp. 40, 46, 52) different authors describe in great detail the places where listed species can be observed in season, including winter, along the Inside Passage, the Copper River Delta, and in Denali National Park. Each article has brief tips on places to stay, directions to the birding areas, and references to websites useful for more information. Copper River Delta is said to be "a birding hotspot without equal." Denali, on the other hand, is mainly a crossroad for birds from all over the globe, and less than 100 species are usually seen during a week's stay.

The 2004 drug guide for arthritis sufferers, prepared by 11 physicians who are experts in their fields and volunteered their services for this project, is in the current (Jan/Feb) issue of *Arthritis Today*. The guide contains separate charts of six drug categories currently in use and then lists the prescription drugs available for relief of symptoms in each category, with comments how they help the disease, what the dosage should be, and possible side effects.

**George Soros**, well-known financier and philanthropist, writes in the December *Atlantic Monthly* (p. 63) that the current foreign policy based on American power and supremacy is a radical departure from our historical norms and will have catastrophic consequences for the U.S. and the world community. He argues that a neo-conservative group close to President Bush persuaded him to seize on the events of 9/11 as justification for a "war on terrorism." The measures instituted to pursue this war "changed the course of history" in the U.S. The new Bush doctrine is based on (1) maintenance of military supremacy and (2) the right to preemptive action against nations perceived as a threat to the U.S. These policies are often veiled in "doublespeak" to conceal the true meaning that the sovereignty of the U.S. is superior to that of all other states. Soros says this reminds him of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, where all animals were equal, except that some were "more equal" than all the others. Soros believes that the war on terror can never be won because terrorists are dispersed all over the globe and will never disappear. He pleads for an international cooperative effort "to improve the world by engaging in preventive actions....."

**IN MEMORIAM**

<b>Margaret Barber</b>	<b>December 22</b>
<b>Ella P. Haines</b>	<b>December 26</b>
<b>Frank E. Reilly</b>	<b>January 9</b>

**WOOLMAN GROUND FLOOR REMAKE**

by Bob Minter

Woolman Wing's ground floor is undergoing major reconstruction. Seeing this in its early stages leads to an appreciation of both the scope of the project and the mechanical and electrical systems being installed. This tour (on paper) will provide a beginning point and some background information.

Why is it being done? Medford Leas pioneered in continuing care 30 years ago. Now many newer communities offer more spacious units with features that set a new standard. The guiding principle is toward larger living space that is more pleasant and welcoming to residents.

This project replaces twelve studio apartments with two-bedroom, two-bath units and three one-bedroom, single-bath apartments. Each will provide a good-sized kitchen, large walk-in closets, an apartment-size washer and drier, and expanded floor space. Smoke alarms and a sprinkler fire protection system are included. New landscaping shields the view from vehicular traffic while allowing easy access to assigned parking. Disability access meets the new American Disability Act guidelines while wood entry doors in the corridor lessen the institutional impression.

Even the casual observer should appreciate the detailed design, planning, local building permit and inspections, outside contracting, and utilization of in-house mechanical and electrical specialists. These changes will become apparent to passers-by. They are a part of the ongoing effort to maintain the high standards that make Medford Leas a logical choice for retirement.

When will these new apartments be ready?

Occupancy of one of the two-bedroom units and one of the one-bedroom units is scheduled for early March.

## NEW, LARGER BOOKMOBILE

by Ellen Stimler

**Helen Vukasin** was in the Burlington County Library's new Bookmobile looking for a book when a photographer for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* caught her for a picture to go with a story on the new, larger Bookmobile that stops at Medford Leas almost every Monday from 1:50 to 2:45 p.m. The picture appeared in the Neighbors Section of the January 11 paper.

The big new bus, which cost \$252,000, carries more than 5,000 books, videos, CD's, and DVD's. It is equipped with two laptop computers containing a listing of all the books available in the library's catalog and a photocopier. Residents can not only select books and videos from the shelves in the Bookmobile but can order any book and have it delivered by the Bookmobile when it is available. An attendant on the bus will also accept orders for books that must be requested from out-of-county libraries. It is also possible to order a book by phone (267-9660, Ext. 3041) and request that it be delivered by the Bookmobile.

## WINTER GARDENING

by Kate Haupt

It is January, early in the morning. The sun is shining. There is no wind, only a slight stirring of the air. The air is sweet and gentle. This is what I have been praying for, the conditions which will lure me into the garden with comfort.

Stepping outdoors, I find myself moving in an exploratory fashion. Looking around, it all appears pretty dull and dreary, but wait, over there is a flash of color. The winter pansies beckon. How courageous of them to keep going in spite of the most abysmal weather possible! To encourage the continuance of this miracle, they must be frequently "deadheaded" to fulfill the promise of massive spring bloom. This will encourage the viewer to remember that there

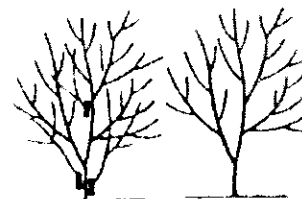
can be better weather ahead. Those perennial stalks can be cut all the way back, making the ground ready for new growth, samples of which already exist with a bit of green and rose tips showing here and there.

What beautiful low-growing green plant is this, trying to cover the brown earth? It is making a nice carpet and the shape of the foliage is fascinating. Great ground cover! However, by spring it will be so thick and luxuriant with roots spreading wide and deep that removal will be labor-intensive. Weeds prosper better than anything else. Out with it!

Taking an overview of the landscape, without its usual foliage, the trees and shrubs exhibit the patterns of their branches. How easy it would be to do a bit of pruning while one can really see where it is most needed.



Thinning



Shearing

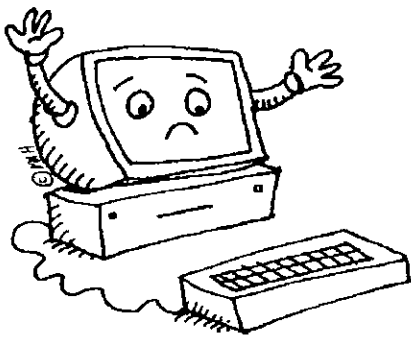
First of all, any dead or dying material needs removal, as it only burdens the health of the tree or shrub. There are numerous branches large and small growing straight up in between the arching branches. These do not get normal foliage and cause congestion within the tree mass, not allowing for circulation of air and light. The suckers need to be removed as they diminish strength and become unsightly.

Well, enough for one day! Another sunny day will come again soon.

## MLRA WEBSITE TO BE BUILT

by Maggie Heineman

In December the MLRA Board of Directors approved a proposal submitted by **Gil Goering, Marty Klaver, Rudy Salati, and Maggie Heineman** to establish an interim committee to develop a prototype website and discussion board and to propose policies, procedures, and a budget for a new MLRA standing committee which would be responsible for the MLRA website.



As convener of the interim committee, I'm inviting all of you to visit [www.mlra.org](http://www.mlra.org) and follow the link to the discussion board (the web forums).

The starter discussion board has forums for books, movies, photography, creative writing, sharing pointers to favorite websites, and seeking help with computer problems. Also there's a "general discussion" forum which is catch-all for topics that don't fit anywhere else.

A separate section of the discussion board has forums where the Interim Website Committee will meet to talk about the content and presentation of the new website and about policies and procedures for the new standing committee. Consider this your invitation to join the Website Committee by coming to the web forums. Also it is in the forums that representatives from the many MLRA committees can tell the Website Committee how they want their committee presented on the web. (If a committee has no one who is able to get to the web, then it may be that the committee

doesn't need a webpage.) Anyone visiting the MLRA web forums is welcome to observe the virtual meetings of the interim website committee.

Most, perhaps all, of the website will be public, but the web forums are password protected, only for the Medford Leas family. When you go to [www.mlra.org](http://www.mlra.org) and follow the link to the discussion board, you will be asked for a password. Between now and March 21, the password is "winter."

The MLRA website at [www.mlra.org](http://www.mlra.org) links to [www.medfordleas.org](http://www.medfordleas.org), the website which was originally developed by Gil Goering and has been turned over to the Medford Leas administration.

If you have trouble accessing the discussion board, send email to [mlra@comcast.net](mailto:mlra@comcast.net).



## NEW TALKING BOOKS

by Myra Binstock

### Fiction

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Carter, J.    | <i>The Hornet's Nest</i>                  |
| Hardy, T.     | <i>Mayor of Casterbridge</i><br>(Donated) |
| Rowling, J.K. | <i>Harry Potter: Goblet of Fire</i>       |
| Rowling, J.K. | <i>Harry Potter: Order of Phoenix</i>     |

### Non-Fiction

- |             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| Clinton, H. | <i>Living History</i> |
| Ivins, M.   | <i>Bushwacked</i>     |

### Mystery and Suspense

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Baldacci, D.  | <i>Simple Truth</i>                            |
| Baldacci, D.  | <i>Split Second</i>                            |
| Kaplow, R.    | <i>The Cat Who Killed Lilian Jackson Braun</i> |
| Kellerman, F. | <i>Street Dreams</i>                           |
| Patterson, J. | <i>The Big Bad Wolf</i>                        |

**CRYPTOGRAM**

By Russell Hill

Here is the solution to the January Cryptogram:

**ELEPHANTS A-PILING TEAK  
IN THE SLUDGY, SQUJGY CREEK,  
WHERE THE SILENCE HUNG THAT HEAVY  
YOU WAS HALF AFRAID TO SPEAK.**

**KIPLING**

The correct solvers were: **Neil and Marian Hartman, Hugh Jenkins, Euseba Kamensky, and Betty Preston.**

The word "squjgy" is not in the dictionary but it was in Kipling's poem, which is what counts. Under the circumstances, I am giving honorable mention to those who put "smudgy" but got everything else right. Kipling replaced some letters with apostrophes, but I took those out in the interest of simplicity.

Following are those who got "honorable mention": **Helen Anderson, Kenneth Anderson, Miriam Angle, Joan Bellman, Ruth Blattenberger, Mort Bregman, Florence Brudon, Marion Burk, Scott Charles, Liz Dill, Lorretta Elkin, Louise Evaul, Mickey Gray, Herb Heineman, Barbara Heizman, Jane Hunter, Helen Peterson, Doris Salati, Bonnie Schilling, Ellen Simler, Miriam Ward, Ellen Wiener, John Winton, Marie Winton, and Gladys Wynkoop.**

Here is the February cryptogram:

**WHUBQDXUC FJYVFDHVEE**

**ABC TJEU UBJW ELVHT**

**WLJH UBCEVFX UBC**

**PVNWUCE FVZNR?C**

**UBV PNQT**

Put answers in Box 45 by Feb. 10

**MEDFORD LEAS LIFE**

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**Deadline for submissions:  
10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding publication**

