

Slow, steady turtles inspire

By Ginny Gregory

Turtles are wonderful creatures. They seem very prehistoric as they amble along carrying their house around with them. I found a baby turtle in my garden once. It was like the turtle every child used to beg for when I was little. You know the kind that went into a terrarium with several small rocks and a jar lid filled with water. It was that turtle in my garden. It was so precious and tiny snuggled between rocks in a dry stack wall. Over the years I have seen a turtle in my garden. I think it is the same one that has grown and keeps reappearing in the garden. How amazing is that?



the first glorious smells of spring? I have had a long time love affair with turtles. They are slow but steady. They have very strong legs. They are very tenacious. Once they have called a place home they do not easily give up on it. I got the most remarkable phone call last week. It was from a woman named Jeff. I was talking with

the windows in the van down as I was driving from one job to the other. The wind was whistling. She said I have a turtle sanctuary I want you to landscape. I thought I had misheard ... I said I think we have a bad connection ... I thought you said turtle. She said, well, that is what I said. My life is never bor-

ing! We chatted, set a time for me to drop by and in two weeks I will be restaging an area for eight rescued box turtles. I will certainly be doing some research as this is my first turtle face lift, but somehow I feel honored. Turtles have brought me such pleasure in my life. From my life as a small child in Rocky Mount with my turtle in a terrarium to my life now in my Blue Moon garden. Turtles have had a role in the journey. Now I get to give something back to them.

Perfect circle.

My daughter gave me a turtle that hangs on my necklace ... the one I wear every day. When I touch my necklace to bring the catch to the back of my neck, I often pause and remember to breathe ... to move slow but steady... to take life step by thoughtful step. My hand grazes my turtle. I see my daughter giving me this gold turtle and I pause to enjoy the moment.

Perfect circle.

Life has a perfect design for us all. Just like the turtle's shell. Pause. Live that perfect life.

Ginny Gregory is the owner and creative energy behind "Beyond The Pail...Creating Gardens and Beyond". She is starting "Beyond The Crate...Finding simplicity out of chaos," an organizing, de-cluttering, downsizing business. For more info, check www.beyondthepail.net

JORDAN LAKE

continued from page 1.

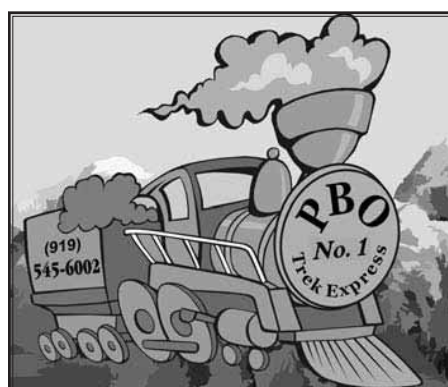
sparks began to fly when Darius Little, who lost the recent City Council primary, came to the microphone. He said "We should not allow a bunch of bitter hens to run the farm."

A public engineer said that the definition of where a lake ends is where it looks like a creek, and he showed pictures of New Hope Creek to imply that the developer's survey is correct. The HRA collected donations to fund a survey defining the end of the lake as the point where the bottom of New Hope Creek is above the lake's normal pool. The NC Division of Water Quality indicated that either method is acceptable.

Chatham's Director of Environmental Resources, Fred Royal, and others spoke out for those who drink from the lake. Development is more limited around Durham's drinking water reservoirs than around Jordan Lake. Many mentioned the Jordan Lake rules, under which Durham has to improve water quality.

Jackie Wagstaff, a former City Council member, characterized the opposition as "a handful of special interest groups." She accused them of lacking "diversity." The Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People is the main proponent, saying that the white developers reached out to them and will provide jobs and tax base. Wagstaff asked where the opponents are when it comes to northeast central Durham's problems. "There are other people in Durham that are not here tonight. Our needs are more critical than that watershed out there, that line."

The volunteer Planning Commission, made up of varying interests, voted 12-0 against the surveys.



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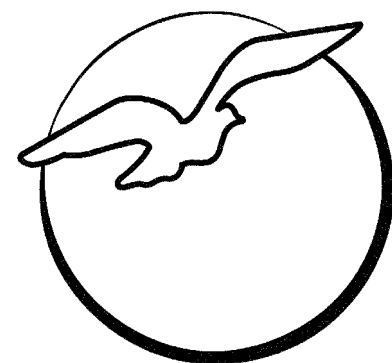
Susan Gomolski, of Kayak Adventures, spoke about the needs of wildlife and how she used to lead trips from the lake up Northeast Creek, but is now barred by silt. She switched to New Hope Creek, but it is also silting up. Kathryn Spann said 751 South could draw business away from downtown. Deborah Gilles, a black former County Commissioner cast doubt on employment promises. The final speaker dramatically showed a graph of predicted nitrogen runoff, and nitrogen from wastewater treatment plants, requiring the paper to be rolled from the front out the door.

Afterward, Bowser said he was for the development, and claimed that only the last speaker mentioned pollution. Heron said, "If the majority of this board had voted to let the County conduct an independent survey for \$85,000, this issue would have been laid to rest" and "We can't let land speculators call the shots."

The vote was taken around 11 p.m., and Bowser, Page, and Howerton approved the changes. There will be more City and County rezoning votes.

The next day Planning Commission member LaDawnna Summers resigned in protest. Constituents accused commissioners of working for the developer and Bowser replied in a public email that "You are one sick person. How does it feel to have Becky [Heron] and Ellen [Reckhow] in your pocket?"

Michael Pollock is a writer living in southern Durham who founded NE Creek Stream Watch. He studied biology and anthropology at UNC and has an interest in Fortean phenomena.



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