



By JoAnne Ferguson

Welcome to the dog days of summer in North Carolina. August is usually a hot and very humid month, calling for beach days, boat rides, fishing, eating seafood and staying cool in our air conditioned homes. This month the Women's Club is on summer break, but we are hoping to begin again in September. The COVID-19 pandemic has made us aware of our health and the health of others. We will be monitoring the governor's guidance for large gatherings as we get closer to our September meeting time. Meanwhile, stay healthy, safe and cool.

Our meetings each month give us a chance to hear a speaker, catch up with each other and discuss our various charities. I always enjoy the last few moments of each meeting, which are dedicated to a presentation on famous women. Pauly Brown, and sometimes Barbara Baccolo, present these women in an interesting and fun way, and it tends to be the highlight of the meeting every month—and sometimes Pauly dresses up like the women she is telling us about. There are several that I remember fondly.

One such woman is Dorcus Reilly, who was born in 1926 in Woodbury, New Jersey. In 1955 she worked in the Campbell's Food kitchen and is famous for creating the Green Bean Casserole, a culinary classic consisting of just six ingredients that include a can of Campbell's cream of mushroom soup. Ms. Reilly's original handwritten recipe card is in the archives of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Can you imagine what we would do at Thanksgiving without Ms. Reilly's Green Bean Casserole? It's a Thanksgiving staple.

Betty White is a modern icon in the entertainment industry. I know, you think you know everything about Betty White, but maybe not all. She is an American actress and comedian born on January 17, 1922, in Oak Park, Illinois, and her career in television has spanned 80 years. Growing up, she always wanted to be a forest ranger. At that time, women were not allowed to practice in this field. Since that wasn't going to work out, she turned to the entertainment industry. Since high school, she has performed in many plays, TV shows, movies and commercials. When she first tried to become an actress, she was told she was not photogenic, so she worked in radio. The program was "The Betty White Show." She participated in game shows on television and met her husband, Allen Ludden, there. During her career, Betty won a Grammy and eight Emmy awards. She also has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. She has been very successful and is still acting. Her most recent role will be televised at Christmas on the Hallmark Channel. Betty turned 98 this past April.

Women today work in many different vocations, but prior to WWII this wasn't so. Most women did not work outside the home. By 1942 there were positions unfilled in factories due to men fighting in the war. These industries were essential to the war effort, and employees were desperately needed—so Rosie the Riveter was invented. She was based on a female munitions factory worker, but was really fictitious. She became the iconic image of a factory worker, and her picture was used as a recruitment tool to get middle-class wives and mothers into the workforce. You probably have seen her picture in various publications from that time. She

was strong, had big muscles, looked fierce and wore a red polka dot bandana around her head. She became the symbol for women in the workforce and women's independence. You can see how this may have been the beginning—or certainly the progression—of the women's movement.

Once the war was over, these women were expected to leave their jobs and return to their roles as wives and mothers; however, even though many went home, some women stayed in the workforce and enjoyed and thrived on their financial and personal independence. The impact of Rosie the Riveter changed the workplace forever. Women continued to exert their independence, and their role in society was changed forever. Today women have many opportunities, but I can't help but think that without Rosie we may not have progressed as fast and far as we have.

I hope I've enticed some of you to come to our meetings in the fall. We really do have fun and do good work around our community. We still have a few more days left of summer break. Take time to do the activities you enjoy, and even though it's hot and humid, it will be cold before we know it. Be safe, everyone.

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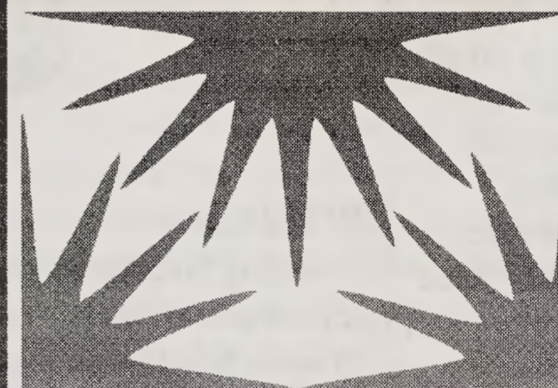
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