

Lovers



Art word by Scott Hooper

"Lovers," painting by Scott Hooper, a local artist and member of Associated Artists of Winston-Salem. View more of his art at www.scotthooperartist.com.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Valentine's Day is February 14. Here are a few fun facts about the holiday from the 1800flowers website:

- *Every year, more than 36 million heart shaped boxes of chocolates are sold across the country.
- *Men spend twice as much as women this year on gifts. The average man spends \$130 on Valentine's Day, while women spend about \$70.
- *Every year, around 9 million people buy their pets a Valentine's Day gift!
- *February 14th is the second largest card giving day of the year, just after Christmas. This year, it's expected that 1 billion cards will be exchanged around the world.
- *Teachers receive the most Valentine's Day cards, followed by kids, mothers, wives and girlfriends.
- *Hallmark was one of the first to mass produce a Valentine's Day card, all the way back in 1913.

For Seniors only poem

Have You Ever Had a Love Like Mine?

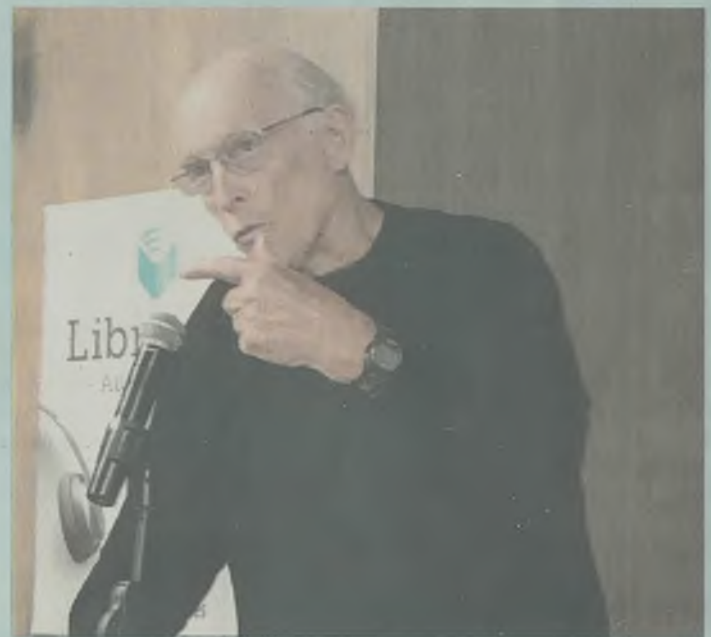
BY BILL GRAMLEY

I remember October in her daddy's woods years ago,
 so why not go walking among those amber trees
 and let the warm wind wave the oaks and sift the sunlight
 onto the moss and twigs beneath our feet? Why not? Why not?
 She and I did just that, hand in hand, easy, natural, lovely.
 Then we saw a beech tree by the branch and ran and carved
 our names upon its smooth gray skin, circled it with
 a heart, so smitten, knife folded, fingers kissed, tender touch,
 our journey engraved and firm, so firm, you know. You know.
 You know.

The leaves are mostly gone now and it's a bit colder this autumn day
 and cloudy, too. And where's that tree?
 There, there it is! Our names? Where? Where are they?
 Oh, yes, I see them up higher, and deeper, too, kind of gnarled and
 burnished like old silverware they are. Still there! Still. Still.

Have you ever had a love like mine, etched with passion on
 a silly old tree? Have you? Have you?
 I was just trying to capture her laughter, her love, her October eyes,
 and if she were here, surely she would kiss my fingers again. Surely.
 Surely. Surely.

Bill Gramley is a retired Moravian minister who has won multiple medals in Senior Games/SilverArts, including track and field and literary arts. He has written two books as well as "Devotional Expressions and Prayer" through the Music and the Arts Ministry Team of Centenary United Methodist Church.



Bill Gramley



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