

Life at Windsor Gardens
by Marilyn Reeves

One of the most important things that contributes to a person's sense of well-being is the environment in which one lives.

The year 1962 was not a good one for me. I was twenty years old, and although I was engaged to be married, those wedding bells had already claimed my former roommate Gail, so I found myself living alone in a drab buffet apartment on Capitol Hill. Those days were filled with fear and apprehension, as the Cuban Missile Crisis was in full swing, and I kept wondering how much protection my little desk on the 7th floor of the Petroleum Club Building would offer against a nuclear attack. Adding to my misery was the fact that the windows in my tiny apartment looked out on the blank brick wall of the building next door. How I longed to be able to see trees, flowers, and blue sky!

Fast forward 50 years to my current living environment, and I'm happy to say that my wish has been granted. In addition to all the other perks offered by Windsor Gardens, with its spacious condominiums and myriad classes and social activities to choose from, I now have a beautiful view!

In the spring, my world is a wonderland of apple blossoms. Little song sparrows perch on my railing and entertain me with love songs. Robins hop from place to place listening for subterranean delicacies. Colorful tulips, purple hyacinths, and yellow daffodils are soon followed by the heady aroma of lilac and Russian olive. Delightful ducks practice pirouettes on the golf course pond. Squirrels chase each other up and down tree trunks in pursuit of romance. And – toward evening – little bunny rabbits come out from their hidey-holes to munch on the grass under my window.

Of course, not all wild life is welcome. Coyotes have been moving into the area, and while they are beautiful animals, they are a danger to pets. And I wouldn't care to run across one while out walking on my own.

I also have to face my annual battle with the pigeons. Since I have an open balcony, any pigeon blessed with an average bird brain can see that it would make an ideal place to live! But they soon learn that they have encroached on someone else's property, one who prefers viewing pigeons at a distance ... for obvious reasons.

For those same obvious reasons, there are those who are less enthusiastic about the arrival of the Canada geese each fall than I, who happen to love the geese! There's something mystical and magical about the way they fly in formation, and I am stirred by their call of the wild. A couple of months ago, however, I did get a rather rude reminder of the downside of having them in such close proximity. I was walking along the path to the Center, and a small group of them flew right over me – very close – perhaps twenty feet above my head. I no sooner thought, "They're lovely, but I hope they don't 'get' me," when – sure enough – one of them 'got' me.

So next time, rather than gazing up in awe, perhaps I should duck for cover (if you'll pardon the pun)! Nevertheless, it's a small price to pay to be privy to such beauty in this lovely place called Windsor Gardens ... a place that I call home.