

FLORA  
FROM PAGE 1

If you want more of an adventure, you can take a mountain hike just by traveling a few minutes north to Occoneechee Mountain on the edge of Hillsborough. It's now part of the state park system, and once you make the steep walk up to the looking-off place, you'll have a being-in-the-mountains sensation.

This is one of my favorite local natural areas and I frequently take out-of-town visitors there to get a flavor of Western North Carolina without the long drive. You may be surprised to discover an extensive shrub layer of the evergreen mountain laurel, *Kalmia angustifolia*, with a few rhododendron, *Rhododendron catabiense*, here and there and a groundcover of galax, *Galax aphylla*, an evergreen-leaved wildflower common throughout the Carolina mountain regions. Visitors appreciate learning that these isolated pockets of mountain species in our eastern Piedmont are small "relict" plant



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE  
Sue Morgan, foreground, sharing a real mountain experience at nearby Occoneechee Mountain with her family visiting from England.

communities of former Ice Age boreal forests, left in place clinging to coolish, north-facing, rocky creek and river bluffs.

Whether you stay close to home or travel a few miles away, take time at this turning over of the year for a woods

walk. And even if you are accompanied by a few other folks, stop and be silent for at least 60 seconds, hear the sounds the forest makes, and let that guide you into the New Year.



Cat Baby, 1967

What better way to start the New Year than with a Cat Baby story? For the newcomer wondering who is Cat Baby — think about the movie *Radio* and you'll get the picture. From the mid-'50s until his passing at age 58 in 1993, George "Cat Baby" Cannada of Carrboro was the unofficial beloved team mascot of Chapel Hill High School football. Here we see him posing proudly with an unidentified CHHS cheerleader during a fall 1967 football game that I was covering for Jim Shumaker's *Chapel Hill Weekly*.

The longtime paper "boy" famously called himself — and everybody else in town, regardless of their station — "Cat Baby." He also used the short but drawn out version "Caaaaat!" as both a greeting and an exclamation. Ask anybody who grew up here and they're liable to have a Cat Baby story. This is one of Charlie Byrd's favorites: In the early '70s, John Boone of Carrboro took George to Washington D.C., and as they drove past the White House Boone said to George, "Look, Cat; that's where the president lives!" To which George exclaimed, "[Bleep!] I didn't know Mr. Friday lived up here! CAT!"



A THOUSAND WORDS  
BY JOCK LAUTERER

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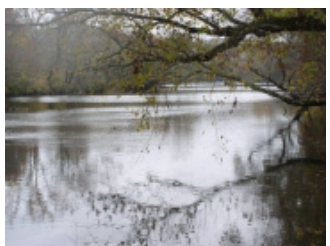
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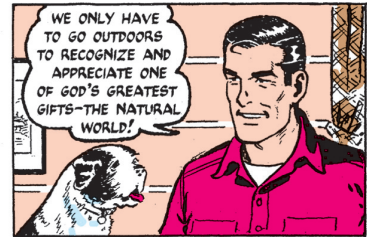
**LET'S HOPE THAT 2009 WILL BRING PEACE AND HAPPINESS...**



**WE SHOULD ALL REFLECT ON HOW FORTUNATE WE ARE TO LIVE IN SUCH A GREAT COUNTRY!**



**WE ONLY HAVE TO GO OUTDOORS TO RECOGNIZE AND APPRECIATE ONE OF GOD'S GREATEST GIFTS—THE NATURAL WORLD!**



**AND THAT WE WILL DO OUR SHARE IN PRESERVING WHAT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN**



**GOD BLESS AMERICA, OUR HOME SWEET HOME**



**LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY A BETTER AND MORE SECURE PLACE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**puzzle solutions**

9	7	4	6	2	1	3	5	8
8	6	1	3	5	7	4	9	2
3	5	2	9	8	4	7	1	6
5	2	9	8	4	6	1	7	3
7	3	6	5	1	9	2	8	4
4	1	8	2	7	3	5	6	9
6	4	5	7	9	2	8	3	1
2	8	3	1	6	5	9	4	7
1	9	7	4	3	8	6	2	5

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ELAL	ANTA	INGE	ANGELA
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**CRYPTOQUOTE ANSWER:**

My wife and I will have to be guided by the spirit of the law - Moses Carey on the right