

Anne Wilmoth Cates '53

What characterizes Anne Cates is that she takes nurturing care of what's in her own backyard – quite literally.

She and her husband, John Allen, turned their three-acre Chapel Hill backyard into a small park for wild animals and achieved National Wildlife Federation designation for their efforts. To earn the habitat designation a yard must provide food, water, protective covering and places where wildlife can raise their young.

About these efforts, Anne said, "In a community where it seems there is a new house or condominium going up just about every day, the yard provides a refuge for animals being squeezed out of their homes."

Fortunately for the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, and for her alma mater, as their daughters grew up, Anne began to expand her concept of "backyard."

In Anne resides a vast community spirit and love of Chapel Hill which began when she first visited here at age 13 with a YMCA group from her hometown, Winston-Salem.

Years later, Anne and others felt that a proper place with a spiritual atmosphere was needed where people of all walks of life could gather for recreation and fun.

A committee was formed with an ambitious goal – to raise money to build a YMCA for Chapel Hill-Carrboro. Anne served as treasurer of the committee; the money was raised; the facility was built. Later, Anne was chosen to serve as president.

And there has been much for Anne to nurture at the University. She has served two terms on the Board of Visitors where she has headed the Admissions Task Force. She has been a director of the Arts and Sciences Foundation and she is chairman of the Bicentennial Campaign Kick-Off Celebration. Next year she will take office as the first woman president of the Educational Foundation.

No one who works at the Alumni Association thinks of Anne Cates as a visitor. When asked recently how long she has served as assistant treasurer, Anne laughed and said, "Too many years to count." When the Association undertook to realize the long-held dream of an Alumni Center, Anne went to work again to help provide a needed nurturing place.

And now that our alumni home nears completion, she's chairing the Alumni Center Committee, shaping decisions on interior design, furnishings, food service and use policy. How fitting and fortunate for Carolina alumni – present and future.

Anne Cates works to provide nurturing environments. And through those touched by her care, the world is her backyard.