



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Times have changed in the last weeks. Being “home bound” is relaxing in ways, but when I am told to stay home, immediately I want to go somewhere. Anywhere. So, there is at least one trip to the grocery store per week for milk and bananas and that same day, I go to the post office. Both with mask and gloves. I see many who are not wearing theirs and wonder if they have thought through the consequences.

Strange things have also happened at our house – like cleaning drawers and closets. I have found many long-forgotten treasures.

Enjoying the visitors to our yard has taken up time as well. One such visitor began coming a few months ago.

On December 9, in a light snowstorm, a pheasant came to our house and was eating the bird food that had fallen on the ground right along with the sparrows. He is a real giant to the side of them. He continued to do this, and we have enjoyed watching.



I had an experience that Monday I will not soon forget!!!

I was wrapping Christmas presents at the counter in the kitchen when there was a loud,

constant knocking on the front door. I assumed it was the UPS man, so I opened the door and looked down for a package. There stood the pheasant on the top doorstep.

He had been knocking on the door with his beak. We think he was probably pecking at the rooster reflection he could see in the brass kick plate across the bottom of the door.

Whatever he was doing, he startled me and I, in turn, startled him. I screamed and he flew up to eye level with me. He is a large bird and his wingspan was wider than the door opening. I waved my arms. I was afraid he was going to fly into the house.

He hovered there, looking eye to eye with me. His beak was about six inches from my nose. Then he made a sideways dive and flew up over the roof.

It is a wonder both of us didn't have a heart attack.

Then on Wednesday, as we were finishing breakfast, there was a knocking on the front door. Guess who! This time my husband watched him through the door's window. No more just opening the door. He casually walked around the house and enjoyed breakfast in the backyard.

We were gone on Thursday so we don't know what happened, but he was back again knocking on Friday. He is large, even for a pheasant. We have named him Goliath. We think he roosts in our neighbor's pine trees along the sidewalk as we see him there quite often.

It is four months now that our friend has visited almost daily. We usually see him as he eats or perches atop the shop like a weathervane. If we interrupt his eating schedule, he walks to the other side of our fence and squawks at us until we go in the house. We hear the neighbors in both directions have seen him parade down the sidewalk or stop by to argue with their pheasants. He chases the doves, teases the cats, and flaps his large wings if the finches and sparrows are not practicing their social distancing.

Thanks, Goliath, for all of the entertainment!