



## Jeannette Rinehart

Of all Jeannette Rinehart's many interests, her most cherished pastime involves learning anything and everything about lemurs.

Rinehart graduated from Duke University in 1951 and received a bachelor of arts in sociology. She moved to Hagerstown, Maryland, before the Duke Lemur Center opened in 1966.



"The Duke Lemur Center was not there when I was a student and I knew nothing about lemurs, but I do love anything with four feet, so I had to go see it," said Rinehart. When she and her husband Theron returned to Duke for her 30th reunion, they visited the Lemur Center for a quick tour. "I was enthralled. From then on, I watched for anything about the Center in literature from Duke and enjoyed anything I saw on TV or elsewhere that had to do with lemurs."

Inspired, she returned in 2010 for a more extensive tour of the center, which houses, studies and cares for the largest and most diverse collection of lemurs—Earth's most threatened group of mammals—outside of Madagascar.

"It was a fascinating and rewarding experience said Rinehart. "I met fabulously interesting people, learned about the center's workings, and even spent time in the forest with ring-tailed lemurs and sifaka."

"There are so many super special venues at Duke, and the Lemur Center deserves to be high on the list of extraordinary places," said Rinehart. "It is unique in all the world. Duke students have an opportunity to work with and learn about lemurs, their place in this world, and Madagascar, the only place on Earth where lemurs are native. It is an experience available only at Duke."

When Rinehart's mother passed away in 1995, followed by her husband of 43 years in 1997, she chose to establish two life income gifts—a charitable gift annuity and a charitable remainder trust—to fulfill some of her personal and financial needs. Her gifts will ultimately provide unrestricted support for the Duke Lemur Center.

“I have learned how important it is to give back,” said Rinehart. “I also learned how rewarding the giver feels when she can support a special interest—or more than one.” In addition to her life income gifts, Rinehart continues to donate to the center on a regular basis as special needs arise. All of these gifts will ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy the places (and primates!) that make Duke one-of-a-kind.

“When physical hands-on is not possible, contributing financially is the next best thing to being there,” said Rinehart. “Above all, supporting the Lemur Center is just such fun! I have hosted center representatives for organizations and schools in Hagerstown, thereby enabling the community to learn about lemurs and the unique studies at Duke.”

**Why did you decide to attend Duke?**

I didn't decide to attend Duke—my father did! My father was an avid Duke football fan. In 1942, Duke was invited to the Rose Bowl in California, but because World War II had begun, the game was moved to what was considered a safer location—Durham, North Carolina. Afterwards, my father said that when his little girl was ready to go to college, he wanted her to go to Duke. When I graduated from high school after the war, Duke was the only place I applied. We were thrilled when I was accepted.

**How would you describe your student experience?**

On my first day on Duke's East Campus, I felt absolutely wonderful and somehow immediately at home. I was grateful to be there and to my parents for making it possible. My student experience was overwhelming at first, extremely broadening in mind and spirit, and awakening to a world of opportunities. My great joy at Duke was in drama: Duke Players, Hoof 'n Horn, and all the classes I could enroll in pertaining to drama, with a brief detour in a naval history course. The influence of my Duke education shaped my entire life.

**What aspirations do you have for the Duke Lemur Center?**

I think it's important that more people understand the outstanding value of the Duke Lemur Center, from the opportunities it offers students to its accomplishments in conservation and research. I do my best to educate people about these spectacular creatures. I have urged anyone I know coming to North Carolina to visit the Lemur Center.

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