

THE  ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER  
100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

January 2016 "For the residents, by the residents" Vol. XVII No. 1

*Hail and Farewell*



*"Thank you, Mark, and God Speed"*

# TRIBUTE TO MARK BONDI

We, the residents of Sherwood Oaks, are deeply grateful for the leadership of Mark Bondi who has served our community for sixteen years as Chief Executive Officer with energy, wisdom, and vision.

Mark's professional skills matched with his personal attributes have contributed to his effectiveness and administrative success. He has performed with humility, an open and mutual communication style, and by involving residents in both planning and decision making. He has fostered and welcomed active participation in governance by offering his listening ear to suggestions that evoked from him, if not always agreement, a respectful response.

The changes initiated and accomplished during Mark's tenure bear eloquent testimony to his planning skills which have contributed to Sherwood Oaks' status as the premier retirement community in western Pennsylvania.

During Marks's administration the following major steps were initiated and accomplished:

- \*The welcome area of the Center as well as the Dining Room were renovated;
- \*Older patio homes have been and continue to be updated;
- \*Thirteen new homes in the 600 area were planned, built, and sold;
- \*The Lakeside Apartment building was constructed;
- \*CURA was engaged to provide food services;
- \*The Oak Grove Center building was built for persons with memory impairment;
- \*The Fitness Center was expanded to include an exercise space in the Oak Grove Center;
- \*A fairer cost contract with Armstrong was negotiated;
- \*The Skilled Nursing unit was updated and now provides private rooms.

As we anticipate Mark's departure, we are thankful that his new position does not require a complete absence from Sherwood Oaks and will include regular oversight visits.

We extend congratulations as well as our sincerest best wishes to Mark as he assumes a broader supervisory oversight role for the UPMC retirement communities in our region. For all his years of service to us as well as to those residents no longer here, and for his continuing friendship and service, we will be forever grateful.

Thank you, Mark, and God speed!

Given by Bill Paul for  
The Sherwood Oaks Family  
December 15, 2015

*Although it is not the custom of THE ACORN to report on events past, the tribute to Mark Bondi on the occasion of his move to be President of UPMC Senior Communities was NOT an ordinary goodbye. It deserves mention. Bill Paul spoke for all of us; comments about Mark's contributions, written by Madelin Clements and voiced by residents who worked on those various projects, traced his 16 years with us. It is a history of care, growth and health for Sherwood Oaks. Thank you, Mark.*

## WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

Reports and actions at the December SORA Board meeting included:

### **Treasurers' Reports –**

Gary Brandenberger reported income of \$66,612 in November to the Employee Appreciation Fund, for a total of \$142,600, which was distributed to 298 employees at their Christmas Party. This represents 79% participation by residents.

### **Liaison Reports:**

Continued Learning Committee: Eight speakers and one substitute have been scheduled for the March sessions; six residents will speak about their careers. After discussion about material for a Great Decisions course, it was decided to ask Marketing if they would sponsor a program.

Health Affairs: A collection for unused and expired medications will be held on January 13 and 14, 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM and 5:00 to 7:00 PM. It was noted that Betty Wright, our Community Nurse, keeps copies of Medical Powers of Attorney and Annette McPeek keeps copies of Financial Powers of Attorney on file. First Aid and CPR courses will be offered to residents in 2016.

Security and Transportation Committee: Penn Power has been asked to review and upgrade systems to minimize future problems, such as the outage on Nov. 4 which affected more than half the campus and caused considerable damage to the power distribution and alarm systems.

Two new kneeling buses with a Ford chassis and Champion body have been ordered and should be delivered in the Spring. Because the weekly bus run to

Shop and Save is usually full, an afternoon run is being considered.

Maintenance Committee: Walkway painting has been suspended for the season. Four patio homes are being prepared for move-ins in December and February. The new Guest Suite #197 is being completed.

Management Report: given by Annette McPeek, CFO. Occupancy is strong in the apartments and patio homes at over 90%. Personal Care is full; there are some openings in the Oak Grove Center. Our Skilled Nursing Facility has been full for several weeks and one Sherwood Oaks resident had to spend a day-and-a-half elsewhere but has returned. Currently Skilled Nursing has four beds available.

Each year we like to gather resident input before we form our capital and operating budgets. Some of this comes from the resident satisfaction survey but this year we plan to do a separate survey about the budgets. This will be sent to all residents in December and reviewed with the SORA Board for their recommendations.

New Business: The Board approved a change to the mission statement for the Health Affairs Committee as follows: "The Health Affairs Committee promotes wellness of Sherwood Oaks residents in support of the Administration's overall health and wellness philosophy."

The Board voted that the Bake Sale become a recognized Activity under SORA.

*Betty Eichler, Reporter*





**ANNA MARIE CAMPBELL**

**103**

*Interviewed by Connie Brandenberger*

Friendliness! That was the answer that Anna Marie gave to the question: "What do you like best about Sherwood Oaks?" She couldn't be more pleased with her patio home, the surroundings, the availability of service, the food and the welcoming attitude of the residents.

Anna Marie moved here in October after living in Latrobe for 60 years. She was born in Greensburg and graduated from nursing school in Latrobe as a cadet nurse. She pursued her career for 40 years and retired as the nurse for Vulcan Mold and Iron Company in Latrobe.

It was in Latrobe that she met her husband to whom she was married for 54 years. He was in the insurance business

and they retired at the same time in 1984. They enjoyed retirement, traveling to many interesting countries, including England, Ireland, Hong Kong, Korea, etc.

Anna Marie has two children, a daughter living in New Jersey and a son in Colorado Springs. She is the proud grandmother of two grandchildren and great grandmother of five.

So why would she move to Pennsylvania when her family is out of state? We have Kathleen Sarver, a Sherwood Oaks resident, to thank for that. Kathleen and Anna Marie went through nursing school together and have been long-time friends. After visiting many other CCRCs, she knew Sherwood Oaks was the right fit for her.

There are two other residents in her patio home. They are her friends, Rufus and Rachel – beautiful, friendly cats.

Anna Marie is already in a fitness routine and plans to become involved in other activities. She loves to read mystery novels and work on jigsaw puzzles, many of which she has framed and displays in her home. She has been a caregiver all of her life and intends to continue this here at Sherwood Oaks. (Yellow Jackets, take note!)

A warm welcome to Anna Marie!



## DOROTHY CORBIN

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*Interviewed by Betty Eichler*

Dorothy moved to Sherwood Oaks on November 2, and is she glad she did! About two weeks later, she was in the hospital for surgery. In due time she returned to our Skilled Nursing Unit and is thrilled with the care she receives and the therapy that is helping her heal. She will probably be back in her patio home before you read this. In fact, just before our interview, she was taken there to see if any adjustments need to be made to assure her safety and comfort. Imagine her surprise to see that her son and daughter-in-law had set up and decorated a Christmas tree – the first she has had for a while and all completely new!

Dorothy grew up and graduated from high school in Garrett, Indiana. An only child, she says she missed the give and take of siblings and had to learn some of that later on. At the age of sixteen, she started working for the local telephone company to earn her own spending money. She began her college education at Albion College in Michigan, transferred after two years and earned her Bachelor's Degree at Indiana University. She taught high school business courses for three years in Columbia City, Indiana, then was a substitute teacher in Akron, Ohio, while her children were small. After teaching for three years at Northwest in Canal Fulton, Ohio, she taught at the new R. G. Druze Vocational School in Massillon, Ohio, until her retirement. During her career, she worked with three student teachers, one a former Ohio State Patrol officer. She is gratified that all three student teachers went on to successful teaching careers.

Of course, she had to keep up with changing technology: from manual typewriter to electric typewriter to word processor and from

the Comptometer to adding machine to computer. She completed graduate courses at Ashland, Akron and Kent universities, all in Ohio. Teachers were required to visit every student in their home. She remembers one student in particular who sat in the front row and always fell asleep in class. She investigated and learned that the girl worked late every evening in the local tea room, earning the only income her family had.

"My computer is my friend," says Dorothy. She uses it for email and word processing and to track her finances and keep up with the news. Her biggest concern when she arrived here was that she couldn't find her computer paper! She can't wait to get back to her patio home and catch up with work, correspondence and reading.

About twenty years ago, Dorothy met Judy Stough at a Bridge group in Mansfield, Ohio. Later, they both attended quilting classes and several retreats together. When Judy moved to Sherwood Oaks earlier this year, Dorothy came to visit. She was impressed with the campus and facilities, especially the Library, and decided to come here herself. Sherwood Oaks is about six hours away from each of her sons and her five grandchildren. "And my grandchildren are my pride and joy."

Dorothy already feels very comfortable at Sherwood Oaks. During her first few weeks, before she was hospitalized, she said every evening some other residents would stop at her table to introduce themselves and welcome her. "I'm looking forward to my new life at Sherwood Oaks and this new journey in my life." Her positive attitude is welcomed in our community.



**DOLORES ROSCOE**

**321**

*Interviewed by Peggy Meister*

Dolores (Dee) Roscoe came to us from Bradford Park in Beaver County. She moved here in early November.

Dee was born in Mayport, PA. Her family moved to the North Hills when she was four years old. She took piano lessons as a child. She graduated from Perry High School, where she sang in the choir. Her class was the last of the "country" kids from Ross and McCandless who were "farmed to Perry" before North Allegheny had a high school. If you hear Dave Meister call out, "Hi, Hankey," it is because he was at Perry at the same time.

For 26 years, she was the choir director at Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church. She led adult and children's choirs and

began their hand bell program. Dee has already joined the Sherwood Oaks Chorus and Bell Choir, participating in the Christmas program.

Dee also sings with the Cranberry Civic Chorale, which entertains in nursing facilities in the area. Her group presented a program here last spring. She and Jane Lavender sang some years ago in a women's chorus in the area.

When she was not making music, Dee worked in offices, first with an optometrist, then as a secretary for the Swindel & Dressler Engineering firm. She left them to assist in a general practitioner's office and retired when the doctor did. After that she worked for the Marshall Township Sanitary Authority. Her husband worked for J & L in the welded tube department.

Dee and her husband traveled the country widely with their travel trailer. Sometimes they took Dee's parents along. They especially enjoyed trips to Colorado, Myrtle Beach and California. The first California trip with the trailer was memorable because of trouble on the road: trailer in tow, parents in the back seat of the car, one minor automotive annoyance after another. Ask Dee. They were glad to get home safely.

I hope everyone will introduce themselves to Dee and help her feel like she has a new family. So far, her time has been fine, - except when her car was out of commission in the midst of this busy concert season. Cranberry Civic Chorale friends came to her rescue!

*Dear Readers,*

*Because it is January, this issue of THE ACORN features a few Sherwood Oaks folks who are Snow Birds, who take off to winter in other climes, at other sites, for other sports.*

*We have not had a chance to interview all of this noble flock, but hope that they will all send post cards (via carrier pigeon?) from their distant perches to tell us, maybe even to crow, about their activities.*

*rbb & scd*

## **SHERWOOD OAKS SNOW BIRDS**

**Fred and Ruth Reubi** have the best of both worlds - summer months plus the fall and winter holidays here at Sherwood and our cooler months in Summerfield, FL, in their gated community called Stonecrest, which borders The Villages. Fred enjoys senior softball and also couples shuffleboard with Ruth, who sings in the chorus, acts and dances with the theater guild, volunteers at their church with St. Vincent DePaul Society, (a society serving the poor), attends garden club and ladies lunch as well. Together they travel around to a myriad of activities similar to ours...but on their golf cart! Watch that speed limit, you two!

*Jean Henderson*

**Jim & Sally Donnell** are “Serial Snowbirds” who travel south to spend their annual five-week vacation in two different locations in Florida. The first two weeks are spent on Longboat Key on the west coast near Sarasota. From there they go farther south and spend the last three weeks on Sanibel Island, near Fort Myers.

Being experienced snow-birds, they pack their car and travel south via the auto train, the advantage being they can take more luggage than would be possible via air and have their car available for their travels in Florida. They reserve adjacent compartments so that they each can have a comfortable and accessible lower bunk.

The Donnells enjoy Longboat Key for the cultural offerings available in Sarasota --- theaters, concerts, fine restaurants, shopping on St. Armands Circle, etc. In addition, both Sally and Jim have many friends in the area, including a college classmate of Jim's, Sally's cousin and many Pittsburghers as well as friends from Sherwood Oaks --- Alick and Jean Kennedy, Dave and Peggy Meister and Betty Polley.

From Longboat Key they move on for three weeks of sun, sand and family at their time-share at Tortuga Beach Club on Sanibel Island. Sally's children and spouses, three grandchildren, Jim's two daughters, one husband and two friends are all annual visitors. Since both of Sally's sons love to cook, Sally and Jim have as “restful” a vacation as one can have under those circumstances.

*Mike Rose*

**Keith and Sally Saylor:** Blame it all on good ole' Georgia Tech! Years ago, Keith and Sally Saylor's sons spent their Spring Breaks with their parents on Amelia Island, a barrier island in the northeast corner of FL, not too far away from Tech...and Keith and Sally have been going back to Amelia for years since. March is their month of

choice, when family members can visit on long weekends.

Visiting nearby Fernandina Beach, with its great shops, restaurants and Victorian homes, is a special treat for them. Walking on the beach and watching the surf fill their days, along with golf. Wonder if Keith's the local 'pro' down there, too???

*Jean Henderson*

**Jean Bell** wasn't interested in spending time in FL back in 1985 when her husband suggested she go down to Cape Coral to see a newly constructed patio home in an 8-unit complex he had discovered on a business trip south. But she agreed to check it out. Now, thirty years later, she can't wait to return! She says each year as she unlocks the door, she sends a thank-you "heavenward" to Don for insisting they invest in this property. The warm weather, Pittsburgh friends who were there and golfing were the big attractions initially — the weather is still at the top of her list but she plays less golf these days. And while some of those early snow-bird friends are gone, some remain, plus lots of new friends made through the years. Residents in her complex gather daily around the pool or for late-day cocktails; so she enjoys a real sense of community there. Opportunities for boating, beaching, shopping, enjoying fine restaurants and theater abound. Jean says she has stopped extolling the joys of FL's west coast — "there are too many people moving in and changing the small town character of Cape Coral!"

Day after Christmas we'll see Jean in her packed car heading out the gate for

warmer climes. After Don's death, she drove herself south for many years but now her older daughter drives with her and spends a week before flying home. "And what do you do about your Christmas decorations when you leave so soon after the holidays?" "They stay up until April! One of my daughters will pack them away before I get home!" Lucky Jean - all that and four months in the sun!

*scd*

**Dave and Peggy Meister** - "Fore". You are likely to hear that from many Sherwood Oaks Snow Birds who head to Florida, Peggy and Dave Meister among them. January through March they spend in Bradenton. Why Bradenton? Having checked out other parts of Florida since 2001, about six years ago they found a community of owners and renters from Pittsburgh. "So we always had someone to play golf with." Mind you, there is also swimming, yoga, tai chi and journal-keeping to occupy body, soul and spirit.

The differences between winter here and winter there, in addition to no need for heavy coats and boots, are, of course, sunshine, warm breezes, but also, no built-in medical care or meals. However, they cope.

*rbb*

**Janet Potter** has spent family holidays and vacations in Florida since 1981. But she does not seem like a migrant snow bird: her involvement and enjoyment border on permanent nesting, citizenship, almost. Since the Potters bought-in to their place before it was built, they helped write the community rules: Dogs are welcome. Walking to the beach,



riding bikes to the library, restaurants and cultural events do more than save energy (no parking space needed!). A smaller energy footprint and your own footprints are related!

Four generations of Potters have walked and biked around Old Naples. Now, Old Naples is growing. Florida Gulf Coast University began with adult education classes. The Naples Council on World Affairs is one of the largest chapters in the US. Retired State Department employees, military officers and foreign policy journalists help account for that.

In January, Janet will not drive down to Naples. She will fly (like a bird!). She learned of the possibility of having her car hauled from here to there... you know, those huge trucks that remind you of grasshoppers on steroids when you pass them on the road...Former Naples and Sherwood Oaks neighbor, Lew Hoover, helped her learn about that option. In April both the car and Janet will come home.

Before that, one of Janet's grand-daughters and two college friends will spend Spring Break, 2016, with Janet. Since Janet's mother and mother-in-law used to spend time there with the family, that makes four generations!

*rbb*

**Diane and Terry Neely** - Not all snow birds fly toward sand, sun and surf. Some aim for snow. Take Terry and Diane Neely, for instance. In January they will head to Canaan Valley, West Virginia, for a weekend of cross-country skiing...but that is not quite as exciting

as their February trip to Craftsbury Outdoor Center in Vermont. Mind you, Diane has been skiing since she was in her late 30's; Terry began skiing with his daughters when they were just 3, 4 and 5 year olds. A Crawford County neighbor from Switzerland maintained a cross-country ski area on his property.

But let's begin at the beginning, 1996. Monika Dalrymple (yes, OUR OWN Monika Dalrymple), who was in charge of the Sierra Club cross country ski weekend in Canaan Valley, asked Diane if there was room in her car for another participant, Terry. Certainly. At the last minute, Terry had to cancel. However, two weeks later, at a downhill event in Maine, Diane and Terry actually met face-to-face.

Each year Diane and Terry enjoy the Sierra Club weekend in Canaan Valley. Some winters they add a weekend trip to Wilderness Lodge in Erie County, PA. It is old skiing friends, the time away, the lure of the outdoors, the exhilaration of exercise which entice them.

But the real exciting event is the Vermont week. It is sponsored by Road Scholar at Craftsbury Outdoor Center, a multi-sport Olympic training center. The Neelys have attended for six years. Dorm living, morning ski lessons, free time to ski in the afternoon, yoga classes, movies and discussions...the origins of skiing (in China!), for example, are supported by a diet of world-class food for athletes.

What's not to like? Ask them if there would be room in their car for you.

*rbb*



Photo by Diane Neely

## CATHARSIS

Slippered in ermine, crowned with clouds  
 Straining for the sky;  
 Majestic, standing ramrod straight  
 The regal pines glide by.

Suspended between God and man  
 Free of fear and dread  
 Bathed in peace ... but still aware  
 Of that slender thread.

Skis touch snow and glide with ease  
 To that pensive place  
 Where beauty blends with danger  
 On the mountain's face.

Strategy completed  
 Tactics laid to plan  
 Battle gear checked one more time  
 Nature versus man.

Through blinding speed and flying flakes  
 The enemy is grand  
 Never wavering from his aim  
 He takes an honest stand.

In the basin far below  
 With battle lines erased  
 Heart beat slows and muscles sag  
 The enemy was faced.

He fought a noble battle  
 In defeat his mettle shone  
 If man resembled mountain,  
 He would not walk alone.

## I DIDN'T PROMISE TO LOVE, HONOR, & SKI

In 1958, my husband, Bob, and I, being non-athletes, promised to love, honor and be un-athletic for the rest of our life. Twenty years later this here-to-for faithful husband stood on a pair of skis and blatantly broke that vow. At first it was funny. He brought home stories of sliding down hills backwards on all fours, of crashing into a class of three-year olds, and that of struggling to get off of his back with some shred of dignity while three people heaved and pushed him to his feet. I doubted that this new love would be a threat to our marriage.

My first hint of trouble came when Bob decided that I should join him on the slopes. I had cared for my body for forty-six years and I loved everything just as it was placed; but he was persistent. I finally consented to give it a try, but consent was not enough. I now discovered that I had to be properly attired in order to participate in this sport. First, there was the full suit of long underwear, followed by a long-sleeved turtleneck shirt, ski pants, a ski jacket, wool socks, glove liners, ski gloves, ski cap and a long wool scarf. I certainly could not move, and I was suspicious that one could not attend to normal bodily functions while so dressed.

Upon arrival at the ski lodge, we learned that a class had just started and that I could join them if I hurried. Four people grabbed my body, stuffed my feet into cement blocks, snapped me into at least 12 feet of skis, stuck two poles in my hand and shoved me down a ramp that led to an outside ditch. There I wallowed until the teacher rescued me and introduced me to five 10-year old classmates.

It was soon apparent that I was the only one who could not handle her ski poles. They were firmly planted in the snow so that I would neither maim, render helpless, nor kill my teacher, my small friends or myself.

The lesson began and I did surprisingly well on the almost flat slope. I snowplowed, stopped and even turned. Our teacher announced that we were ready for the rope tow. Well, some of the class was ready. I didn't realize that getting up the hill was going to be as much of a challenge as getting down. However, I learned three don'ts about the rope tow. Don't try to sit on it. Don't lean on it for support, and Don't continue to hold onto it after you have fallen.

The beginner's slope was more threatening from the top than it had been from the bottom, especially when I learned I was expected to ski down it without falling.

The base had become icy and I was terrified. My classmates glided down the hill with grace, while I frantically hugged the nearest tree and declared my intentions of remaining there until spring thaw. The teacher, by now a mere shadow of the confident girl who had rescued me from the ditch, pried my fingers away and gave me a push. My eyes glued to the tips of my skis as they edged ever closer and then crossed. I had only enough time to panic before I fell.

I do not know who considered themselves the biggest failure that day, the teacher or me, but I do know that we both quit!

*Ellen Brierly*



John Becker

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February ACORN deadline:  
Friday, January 15.

*Please Note: The deadline date varies from month to month depending on the printer's schedule.*

All submissions to the editors,  
**preferably online**, at the above  
email addresses.

*\*With much appreciation to Sallie Shipley for her original sketch on the front cover.*

## SHERWOOD GIFTS

T'was the night of the Egnog  
Party  
And all through our town  
Not a creature was stirring  
**Then suddenly, a LOUD sound!**

Around 11:00 on the evening of Dec. 4 an unexplained event occurred. All was quiet at the Center when suddenly there was a LOUD BANG. Upon investigation, the reason for the noise could not be found until Security checked the front window of our shop. The large window to the right of the door had a strange hole in the center surrounded by a collection of spider web cracks. Some shards of glass had fallen into the shop and onto the table located under the window. But nothing could be found that might have caused the damage. The security cameras that viewed the window both before and after the accident were checked. Security reviewed the damage, but no reason can be established for the cause.

A glass company has been notified and new glass will be installed soon. A BIG shout of thanks to Security, House-keeping and Maintenance for investigating, cleaning up, washing the tablecloth and ordering new glass. All is well!

Any and all leads in the investigation will be gladly welcomed.

Our pre-Christmas Granny's Attic Patio Home sale was a huge success. The patio show room (#156) will reopen at noon on Wednesday, January 6, restocked with a fresh collection of items.

About \$300 was gained from the special jewelry sale on Bake Sale Day. Many thanks to all the residents and families who have so generously donated items to the shop.

Come by to browse, chat and check out our new items.

*Marianne Davis*

## Grab and Go Book Club

**January 12** - Joan Rycheck leads our discussion about a young veterinarian student, Jacob Jankowski, and his experiences with a traveling circus in Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen.

Upcoming selections are:

**Feb 9** - The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. Kathleen Schartner, moderator.

**March 8** - The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. Marianne Davis, moderator.

**April 12** - Sara's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay. Sally Donnell, moderator.

**May 10** - Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline. Beverly Sanker, moderator.

The "G 'n G Book Club" meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00 PM in the Conference Room. A reminder will be in the weekly bulletin as well as on the electronic bulletin board.

For more information, call Judy Batson #149 or Barbara Christie #237.

## CURIO CABINETS



### PROGRAM

*featuring Lisa Bliel*  
Thursday January 28,  
7:15 PM in the Auditorium

Lisa Bliel has been singing professionally for over 25 years. She attended Carnegie Mellon University where she majored in Classical Vocal Performance. Since then, she has worked as a vocalist in practically every facet of the music business... from music theater roles to jingle singer, rock bands to wedding ceremonies, back-up singer to voice teacher...she's even delivered singing telegrams! She was a featured member of WQED-TV's "Live From Studio A" house band and also appeared on the nationally-televised "Rock, Rhythm and Doo-wop" and "Red, White and Rock", performing with Frankie Avalon, Connie Francis and Frankie Valli, among others. Lisa currently sings with the band Cityscape.

*Charlie Brown, Chair*  
Program Committee

In addition to the many lovely holiday decorations in the Center, the Curio Cabinets displayed a variety of treasured holiday memorabilia for residents to enjoy. Everyone who contributed deserves our thanks!

Pick up holiday memorabilia:  
Tuesday, January 5th  
10 AM - noon  
4:30 - 5:30 PM

On Thursday, Jan. 7, Bobbie Cleland and Linda Blum will fill the Curio Cabinets with employees' arts and crafts. I'm sure the display will be worth seeing.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*Fran Borrebach*

\* \* \* \*

### EGG NOG PARTY WRAP-UP MEETING

**January 15 - 4 PM in the Auditorium**

Review and evaluation of the December party is the agenda. Anyone - individuals or couples - who may be interested in participating as a host next year - is welcome to attend to learn about the responsibilities and costs involved in hosting the party. If you are interested and cannot attend, contact me or any of this year's committee members.

*Norm Stephen*  
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## THOSE RAILROAD DAYS

*by Donald E. Gowan*

Many, or most, Pennsylvania towns were founded before the railroad came; their locations determined by rivers, lakes, trails, or roads. My hometown, however, came into existence because of a railroad, the Illinois Central, which was extended westward from Chicago to Sioux City in 1870. The few roads that existed then were very poor, and the railroad provided the only reliable way for the pioneer farmers to get supplies in and produce out. Stations were established about 50 miles east of Sioux City, at Marcus and Meriden (originally named "Hazard"), but in 1889 farmers between those villages petitioned for another stop and it was granted. A siding and depot were constructed, and one land-owner, Adam Cleghorn, granted a plot of land to be the site for a new town named for him, Cleghorn, Iowa. When the town celebrated its centennial in 1990, it acknowledged the railroad by adopting the theme, "A Century on the Right Track," accompanied by a sketch of the old depot.

Eventually the highway came, but during my years there the railroad was an important part of everyone's life. The town never got very large, population about 250; so no one lived farther than three blocks from the tracks. There were four passenger trains a day and freight trains at irregular hours, but the sounds—steam engines and whistles—were part of life and never bothered anyone.

Two of the trains were "locals," west-bound in the morning and eastbound in the afternoon. They stopped at every station for passengers and to discharge and pick up mail. But the "Flyer," east-bound in the morning and west-bound in the evening, did not stop at little towns such as Cleghorn. It did provide mail service, though.

We got delivery in the morning. As the train raced through town, the man in the mail car opened the door and threw or kicked the mailbag out, to be retrieved and taken to the Post Office. More than once, he didn't do that forcefully enough and the bag tumbled under the wheels of the train, leaving shredded mail to be picked up along the track. In the evening the Flyer picked up one bag without slowing down, thanks to a simple contraption. A steel post was set about six feet from the track, and to it were attached two hinged arms which hung vertically until the high school kid who had this job attached the mail bag to the arms and raised them until a catch held them horizontally. The helper then stood back to watch and as the train approached at full speed, the man in the mail car opened the door and this time he swung out a steel arm that slammed into the bag right at its middle. The post shook violently, the arms dropped with a crash, and the man swung in the arm to capture the bag. I don't recall any time that the procedure didn't work. When I was in high school my friend Duane had that job, and sometimes when he was to be gone he gave me the privilege of doing it. It was a little more exciting than most jobs high school kids had, but it did mean that Duane had to stand there by the track in rainstorms and blizzards waiting for the Flyer to be sure the mail got away safely.

When I was quite young, someone got the idea that we should put a penny on the track to see whether the train would squash it. He, or someone else, had heard that a penny on the track could derail a train, but we didn't believe that. Anyway, if it did, it would have been exciting. One of us contributed the penny and after the train had passed it had disappeared. We thought the wheel must have sent it flying; so at another time we tried with another train and another penny, which was very satisfactorily

squashed completely out of shape. So — we had done that. Two pennies gone, and you could buy something with a penny *back then*.

Northwest Iowa had one of the worst winters in history in 1935-36. Ours was a consolidated school district and four school buses brought the farm kids into Cleghorn. But we didn't have school for six weeks during January and February because the buses couldn't get through the country roads. Even the trains had problems at times for some drifts were as high as the engines. The snowplows in those days were V-shaped blades attached to railroad cars which the engine pushed through the drifts. Once, two engines were working on an enormous drift from opposite directions. The engineers couldn't see one another and they collided. My dad went out to see it with his camera in hand and I have pictures of the almost-hidden engines and the two plows, one sliced into the other.

The steam engines were very inefficient; so it was a great improvement when they were replaced by diesel engines. But the arrival of the new engines at the Cleghorn depot was not as impressive as the arrival of a steam engine. You could stand on the platform, close to the track, knowing it was not going to run over you, but when that big, black engine approached, smoking and steaming, you instinctively stepped back anyway.



Photo by Don Gowan's dad

The engines and plows colliding. Winter 1935-36.



## A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

THE ACORN, July 1998

Rare Clock Donated to Sherwood Oaks

“With the passing of Corinne Smith, we learned that she had bequeathed to Sherwood Oaks the American Victorian Jewelers Regulator grandfather clock that stands in the SO lobby.

“We have just learned, ironically, though several of her friends here knew, that Miss Smith's grandfather, H.A. Reineman, made this grandfather clock. He crafted eleven such clocks, and the only other one of its kind possibly in existence today is thought to be in a St. Louis museum.

“A jeweler who lived in the North Hills of Pittsburgh, Mr. Reineman made this clock in 1883. Appraisers who have examined the clock described its mechanism as ‘simple, yet unique.’ The weight is a rolling, ten and a half pound brass sphere engraved with the North and South American Continents. Because of the design, the continents rotate a full 360 degrees as the weight descends. The case is made from Walnut.

Although Corinne Smith was the last of her immediate family, her grandfather's clock gives us all an opportunity to remember her and the contribution she made to Sherwood Oaks.”

## SPOTLIGHT ON NEW BOOKS

### The Book Selection Committee Tom Fararo, Chair

The following new books were purchased and placed on the new book shelf in our library in early December. If a book you seek is not there, you can fill out a reserve slip.

**The Crossing** by Michael Connelly. Fans of this widely admired author of crime fiction will welcome back Harry Bosch from retirement as he goes to work for the Lincoln lawyer.

**The Guilty** by David Baldacci. "With fully-realized character arcs and a twist-laden plot that would make Hitchcock proud, Baldacci's latest is a fantastic thrill-ride for series fans and newcomers alike," writes a reviewer.

**Dark Corners** by Ruth Rendell. One of the most enduring and respected names in mystery fiction, this author's last novel -- she died in May of this year -- is one that reviewers say lives up to her high standards.

**Not on Fire, but Burning** by Greg Hrbek. In this timely speculative novel a catastrophic terrorist attack leads to an America with internment camps for Moslem-Americans. Praising the book, an NPR critic wrote, "the story stays solidly rooted in a propulsive, suspenseful plot, full of lyrical dialogue and gorgeous language."

**Thirteen Ways of Looking** by Colum McCann. This book by "a contemporary

master" contains one novella and three short stories. An earlier novel earned the author a National Book Award.

**The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine** by Alexander McCall Smith. This novel continues the "No 1 Ladies Detective Agency" series and according to Publishers' Weekly, "As usual, Smith's blend of gentle humor and insights into human nature is irresistible."

**Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush** by Jon Meacham. A widely admired biography of the former president.

**The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin** by Steven Lee Myers. Kirkus gave it a star (highly recommended), writing that the book is "A highly effective portrait of a frighteningly powerful autocrat."

**Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg** by Irin Carmon and Shana Knizhnik. The New York Times critic appreciated the numerous photographs and noted that "the authors make this unassuming, most studious woman come pulsing to life."





## ***Worth the Time***

*by Ed Vidt*



## **Star Island**

Carl Hiaason F (Hia) Paperback

Florida at its funniest but also at its worst! Mr. Hiaason wants to educate his readership about the ways that the truly beautiful State of Florida has been destroyed by some of the commercial developers. So, he writes very funny novels about real people and he melds into those novels descriptions of the also “real” ways that the everglades, forests and oceans are being desecrated. His hero is Skink, a former Florida governor who has gone native and is deviously dedicated to making the careless developers sorry they exist. But 22-year-old Pop Star Cherry Pye, one of the book’s leading characters, is hell-bent on enjoying the drug-and-alcohol life that Florida can provide while pursued by paparazzo Bang Abbot — and, at the same time, protected by her motley crew of pop star handlers. A hilarious sendup of Florida life in the fast lane.

## **The Snowball**

Alice Schroeder (B) Sch

This very good book, subtitled "Warren Buffett and the Business of Life," is well worth the time. But, it is a biography of a monomaniacal man. MONEY is his mania. He eats hamburgers and French fries and drinks cherry coke. Period! Wherever he goes in the world, he has people arrange ahead of time for that choice of food and drink. Before he bought out Coca Cola Company, he drank Pepsi! He is friendly and even loving to a few people, such as his first wife Susie and also Astrid, the woman he lived with for years before Susie died and whom he married two years after Susie's death. But enough of the details. Read how small firms with stock prices below book value began his snowball rolling toward 60 billion dollars. It is a fascinating journey.



## **ACTIVITIES IN THE CHAPEL**

Women’s Bible Study  
First and Third Mondays  
10:45-11:45 AM

Men's Bible Study  
Weekly, Wednesdays  
10:00-11:00 AM

Holy Communion, Episcopal Rite  
Second Monday of the month  
11:00 AM

Quaker Meeting for Worship  
Second and Fourth Sundays  
10:30-11:30 AM

**COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY  
ACCESSIONS**

**FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE:**

**Adam in Eden**

Carlos Fuentes © 2012.F/FUE

**All the Light We Cannot See**

Anthony Doerr © 2014.F/DOE/L.T.

**The Choice**

Nicholas Sparks © 2007.F/SPA/L.T.

**Crimson Shore**

Douglas Preston © 2015.F/PRE

**The Crossing**

Michael Connelly © 2015.F/CON

**Dark Corners**

Ruth Rendell © 2015.F/REN

**A Fine Summer's Day**

Charles Todd © 2015.F/TOD

**Foreign Affairs**

Stuart Woods © 2015.F/WOO

**Funny Letters from Famous People**

Charles Osgood © 2003.816.008/OSG/LT

**Girl Waits With Gun**

Amy Stewart © 2015.F/STE

**Go Set A Watchman**

Harper Lee © 2015.F/LEE/L.T.

**The Guilty**

David Baldacci © 2015.F/BAL

**Honeymoon**

James Patterson © 2005.F/PAT

**In Dublin's Fair City**

Rhys Bowen © 2007.F/BOW/L.T.

**Not On Fire, But Burning**

Greg Hrbek © 2015.F/HRB

**Private London**

James Patterson © 2011.F/PAT/L.T.

**Rogue Lawyer**

John Grisham © 2015.F/GRI

**The Shoemaker's Wife**

Adriana Trigiani © 2012.F/TRI

**A Short History of Women**

Kate Walbert © 2009.F/WAL/L.T.

**Takedown Twenty**

Janet Evanovich © 2013.F/EVA

**The Silver Lotus**

Thomas Steinbeck © 2011.F/STE/L.T.

**They Almost Always Come Home**

Cynthia Ruchti © 2010.F/RUC/L.T.

**Thirteen Ways of Looking**

Colum McCann

**Where the Heart Is**

Billie Letts © 1995.F/LET/L.T.

**The Winter Ghosts**

Kate Mosse © 2009.F/MOS

**The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine**

Alexander McCall Smith © 2015.F/SMI

**NON-FICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES**

**25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know**

Barbara Seagram ©1999. 795.41/SEA

**Between the World and Me**

Ta-Nehisi Coates ©2015. 305.8/COA

**Change of Heart: Justice, Mercy...**

**My Sister's Killer**

Jeanne Bishop ©2015. 241.4/BIS

**Consumer Reports Buying Guide**

Consumer Reports ©. REF/640.73/CON

**Destiny and Power**

Jon Meacham ©2015. Bio/BUS

**The New Tsar**

Steven Lee Myers ©2015. Bio/PUT

**Notorious RBG**

Irin Carmon ©2015. Bio/GIN

**Paterno**

Joe Posnanski ©2012. Bio/PAT

**Pittsburgh Born: Pittsburgh Bred**

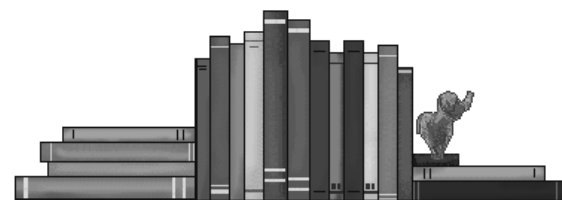
C. Prentiss Orr ©2008. 920/ORR

**Point Count Bidding in Contract Bridge**

Charles H. Goren ©1958. 795.41/GOR

**Profiles in Courage For Our Time**

Caroline Kennedy ©2002.973.09/KEN/L.T.



**Check Out a Library Book**



## CHAPEL NOTES

We enter 2016 with prayers for all our neighbors, near and far, and with thanks for those who minister to us Sunday after Sunday in our chapel services.

January 3 - The Rev. Jean Henderson, Sherwood Oaks resident, will lead the first service of the new year.

January 10 - The Rev. Jack Lolla, Northmont Presbyterian Church. Service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion.

January 17 - The Rev. Bruce Stewart, Sherwood Oaks resident and former president of the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary, Pittsburgh.

January 24 - The Rev. Scott Russell, St. Brendan Episcopal Church.

January 31 - The Rev. Rosalyn S. Kummer, retired pastor, Callery Presbyterian Church.

We invite you to join your neighbors at 2:00 PM each Sunday in the auditorium. Come early and enjoy the musical prelude to the service.

*Agnes Peebles*

## *IN MEMORIAM*

*Memories are precious possessions that time can never destroy. For it is in happy remembrance that the heart finds its greatest joy.*

*Robert Melhado  
November 26, 2015*

*Marjorie Doak  
November 27, 2015*

*Eunice Barres  
December 1, 2015*

*Margaret Dixon  
December 3, 2015*

*Geraldine Strothman  
December 7, 2015*

*Eva Carlson  
December 9, 2015*

*Grace Henderson  
December 10, 2015*

Sherwood Oaks'  
"Real"  
Snow Birds



Photos by Lila Cornell, Sally Donnell and Joe Asin