

# THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER  
100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066  
[www.sherwood-oaks.com](http://www.sherwood-oaks.com)

April 2021 “For the residents, by the residents” Vol. 22, No. 4

*“At last, we’re together again ...*



Photo by Roberta Breninghouse

*... if, initially, only while waiting  
to be vaccinated!”*

*Gentle Readers:*

*Talk about a Shot in the Arm!*

*On March 4, we all got our second vaccination.*

*On March 14, Daylight Savings Time began. (March 14 is also "Pi Day," but who remembered that?)*

*March 17 was St. Patrick's Day.*

*March 20 was the Vernal Equinox.*

*On March 27, Passover began.*

*But let's get back to March 17: The Sherwood Oaks Dining Room opened daily for both lunch and dinner!*

*All that should indeed put "Vigor in your figure, hustle in your muscle, and yumyum in your tumtum." ... Ruth read that slogan daily in an ad on a Manhattan subway back in 1955 on her way to work. ... But to return to our story:*

*New things are happening, and some old things are happening, too, such as eating with friends, dining with new neighbors, recognizing neighbors we have not seen for months, taking twilight walks after supper. Of course, we do not know how long it will take for "average" to become "normal." But we all have had a shot in the arm, which can translate to energy and safety and, perhaps, hope and contentment. Fingers crossed!*

*Ruth Becker and Rosemary Coffey*

Now look throughout this issue for some internet puns to show how wonderful our language is!

*Prison is just one word to you, but for some people it's a whole sentence.*

*Writing my name in cursive is my signature move.*

## APRIL CALENDAR

April Fools' Day	April 1
Good Friday	April 2
Passover (end)	April 3
Easter Sunday	April 4
Earth Day	April 22
Arbor Day	April 30

## THE ACORN

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Submissions for the April issue must be sent to the Editors no later than

**April 15, 2021.**

## REMINDER!

Please take a look at photos of residents at the time of their middle adult years on p. 7, and see how many you recognize before you confirm your guesses with the identification box on p. 11. We look forward to seeing your photos **showing your hobbies (travel included)** for the May issue! Email to [rosemarycoffey@aol.com](mailto:rosemarycoffey@aol.com) or put in *The Acorn* mailbox by April 15.

## ALEX CARUSO

By Carole Fox - #733  
& Loretta Lippert - #737



Alex, a member of our Transportation and Security Dept., was hired in January of 2020. He graduated from Waynesburg University with a degree in Criminal Justice.

Alex was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in the Adams Ridge area in Mars, PA. When Alex was 12 years old, his father (who worked for US Steel) was asked to transfer to a steel plant in Belgrade, Serbia. Alex's family, which included an older brother, all agreed to make the move to Serbia. The family spent 2½ years in Belgrade, from where they took many trips, visiting about 20 countries in Europe.

While in Serbia, Alex attended an international school where there were only 24 students in his grade. He learned to speak Serbian and was amazed to realize that most of his classmates spoke English, with some of them knowing addi-

tional languages too. He said that when the students took school trips, they usually went to another country. Alex added that his experience in Serbia was a wonderful learning opportunity. When his family returned to Mars, PA, Alex entered his freshman year of high school.

After college graduation, Alex worked at Sherwood Oaks for several years, during which time he said he really enjoyed his job and the people. He was then hired by a large private security company (G4S), where he worked security details in varied environments, such as banks and corporations, securing valuable items that were being transported, etc.

When his company lost a big contract, Alex started looking for a new opportunity. His good prior experience at Sherwood Oaks prompted him to apply for a job in Security. Alex also has his commercial bus license, so is able to drive our big bus. Alex said he's looking forward to driving us on some of the memorable trips we used to take prior to COVID-19. He said he really enjoys the friendly relationships he can develop with residents while driving the bus.

Alex noted that he enjoys hiking in the outdoors and going to the shooting range. As for indoor activities, he plays online games and board games with his friends.

Alex is looking forward to the days when COVID is gone, and he can freely enjoy interacting with the residents and staff once again.



*What do you say to comfort a friend who's struggling with grammar? There, their, they're.*

## JIM REKOWSKI

By Denton Bond - #736  
& Terry Neely - #351



Jim Rekowski was raised in this area and graduated from Shaler High School in 1975. He was active in sports, with football being a big influence on his life. Jim's wife works for R. J. Reynolds in their sales department, while their son is enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh, where he excels in chemistry with an interest in the medical profession.

Jim's early employment was with US Airways in Flight Operations and later in Pre-Scheduling. He worked for thirty-one years for what was the largest employer in Pennsylvania at the time.

Employed here for the past four years, Jim starts his day by checking the AERIAL system for residents. Jim has been trained in the standard skill areas of CPR, First Aid, and AED (Automated External Defibrillator), and he has the CDL to operate the Big Bus.

Jim enjoys talking with residents here as they share their life experiences. He loves to ask, "Who has been the most interesting person that you have met?" He points out that we have a huge number of really talented residents.

This security officer pursues a variety of interests. The position of offensive line coach has kept him busy for many years; indeed, Jim starts his fifteenth year of coaching at Stowe Rocks, Ambridge, and, mostly, Seneca Valley schools, an activity that has "kept him feeling young." As he mentors these teens, he enjoys being the "elder statesman" on the coaching staff.

In addition, physical conditioning continues to be a priority in his life, as he works out three times per week. Weight training has been a lifelong interest, as "early on" he was into body-building competition. In good weather, he can get in three or four miles per day just doing the campus rounds.

Other interests revolve around his antique cars, especially the 2002 Corvette and a Harley motorcycle. Several trips west, with stops at Sturgess and the Black Hills, have been highlights in his travels.

Jim is a personable guy who enjoys life's opportunities. We are blessed to have him spend five days a week here with the Sherwood Oaks Family.



*In response to our Off-the-Cuff survey, Joe & Peg Rychcik (#297) wrote: "Looking forward to resuming game nights with friends – it's hard to keep Over-the-HillPOLY all to ourselves!"*

## WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

(SO Residents Association)

By Jean Henderson, Secretary - #611

**NOTE: Complete minutes are always available for review on the SORA mail-room bulletin board, on the SO APP, and in the SORA Library binder.**

Summary of reports and actions from the March 2, 2021, board meeting:

TREASURERS: Memorial/Special Projects Fund balance is \$116,139.83. Employee Appreciation Fund balance is \$16,545.50. The SORA bank balance is \$60,327.53.

### LIAISON REPORTS:

Memorial/Special Projects. \$4000 was approved for Library track lighting. \$500 was approved for a ZOOM account and equipment for Sherwood Neighbors. \$500 was approved to honor Jerry Andree's retirement from Cranberry Twp.

Curio Cabinets. Next to be featured will be birds of prey and dinosaur ancestors.

Pool: Both changing rooms will be open to men and women with signage and assistance from interns.

Library. Paperback Room has two new shelves: Recent Donations and Spirituality. Mary Bouwkamp is the new chair of the Book Selection Committee.

Dining Services. New hires are being trained for dining room service.

Focus on the World. The January Food Bank collection was \$1925.

Bells. A Spring concert is being planned for showing on Channel 901.

Sherwood Gifts. January sales were \$700. A new safe was purchased.

ADMINISTRATION: Annette McPeck reported that the Butler County positivity rate was 4.7%, which will allow the main

dining room to open soon for lunch and dinner. COVID-19 vaccinations are near completion. **Masks should be worn, and social distancing practiced, even after immunization.**

Amy McNear, Oak Grove CNA, won the 2020 UPMC ACES award.

### OTHER BUSINESS:

The Nominating Committee was appointed/elected by the Board: Mary Lou Fox, chair; Al Brahm, Board representative; Wally Christy, LaVonne McCandlish, and Joan Reynolds, at-large residents. Feasibility Task Forces reported: Auditorium/Stage improvements; WiFi Update; and Extension of Fence Line Trail Bridge.

The next SORA Board meeting was set for Tuesday, April 6, 2021. The quarterly residents' meeting on March 9, 2021, would not be held in person. Written reports would be distributed.

## EARTH DAY 2021

By Bruce Cooper - #715

This year, Earth Day will be celebrated on April 22. You can find information about activities occurring throughout the day at <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021/>.

President Biden will be hosting a climate summit with world leaders that day as well.

To celebrate, in case you missed them or would just like to view them again, we will be showing the first three in the series of climate change documentaries on Channel 901 on April 22 as follows:

- *Chasing Ice* at 10:00 am;
- *Chasing Coral* at 4:00 pm;
- *Racing Extinction* at 7:30 pm.

Please plan to tune in.

## COMMUNITY? IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK

By Dennis Lynch - #355 & Jan Wendt - #158

Because Sherwood Oaks is the kind of place it is, each of you might tell a similar story about how we come to each other's aid to provide a ride, water someone's plants, feed someone's cat, or lend a listening ear. That's what neighbors do.

But here is an odyssey of unusual teamwork, of folks joining to help a longtime resident as her health declined and death approached. It starts, as good neighboring often does, with the courtyard. "Good fences make good neighbors," penned Frost. Here, good courtyards do it, too!

When her cancer returned early last year and Lila's energy began to wane, a longtime friend across the way started fetching her mail every day and dropping it off, along with the newspaper. Another neighbor, two doors down, cheerfully offered rides to the drugstore and chiropractor. Still others, long admirers of Lila's wit and energy for life, made a point of stopping by for visits and lunches. For her, loneliness was almost as debilitating as the disease itself.

Lila's circle also included a local step-daughter and a former son-in-law, as well as three grown children living out of state. In addition, there was her loyal housekeeper, who popped in regularly to take out trash, refill the bird feeders, and "check on you."

By late Fall, side effects of a last-ditch oral chemo had taken a heavy toll on Lila's energy and appetite. Another friend from a nearby courtyard started doing laundry weekly, then staying for lunch and a chat. The rest of "the team" did grocery duty and took Lila out on the days she was up to it.

Over the months, an e-mail chain developed to keep family and neighbors in touch and avoid duplications. By Christmas, it was

clear that Lila's decline was accelerating: very poor appetite, more sleeping, unusual household clutter, trouble navigating finances and everyday decisions. Checkup visits from all on "the team" were increased to provide more frequent monitoring for safety.

Making the move to Personal Care or Skilled Nursing can be tough, but early in the new year her family, the hospice nurse, and "the team" agreed it just wasn't safe for Lila to stay home. Before her children could travel to Cranberry, "the team" and local family cleaned out the fridge, packed up necessities, and stayed to support Lila as she said goodbye to the home she loved.

In Skilled Nursing, Covid restrictions mandated that only one of "the team" could visit in person. That faithful friend continued the e-mail chain, "The Lila Log," to give family and friends a window into Lila's life as her 97th birthday approached.

On the Big Day, "the team" planned to gather outside her window and sing. They brought along a "97" poster and a spray of balloons. But the snow pile outside her window was too deep, so Skilled Nursing Administrator Epiphany Lehman arranged for Lila to be wheeled to the ambulance entrance. The pitch was blown, and the singing commenced. Lila was engaged in the entire exchange.

The staff in Skilled Nursing, along with hospice, now part of "the team," made the next couple of weeks peaceful and comfortable. Two of "the team" from the courtyard were with Lila to see her across the finish line as she took her last breaths.

Now, this kind of cooperation in helping a friend can't always happen, for a variety of reasons. But Sherwood Oaks certainly provides the atmosphere where true community can blossom and thrive. In this instance, it was life-giving, for Lila **and** for "the team."



1

Here we are in our middle adult years ... how many of us do you recognize?  
See p. 11 for the answers when you're ready!



6



2



4



7



3



5



8

## THE TRUE STORY OF BUNNY BUNNY

By Terry Neely - #351

Every year as Easter nears and the Easter Bunny's picture is everywhere, I remember his distant cousin, Bunny Bunny. Although what species of rabbit the Easter Bunny belongs to is under debate, Bunny Bunny was clearly an Eastern Cottontail or *Sylvilagus Floridanus*. He was, in truth, a bit bigger and chubbier than the average cottontail, but the reason for that will become clear as you read on.



Bunny Bunny lived under the llama barn on Brier Hill Farm. This was actually a very good place for his burrow. The ground was soft and dry, and the barn kept the cold away in the winter. Also, it was a very safe place for Bunny Bunny. The llamas' pasture encircled the barn, and the llamas chased away any foxes, coyotes, or other predators that came near. Fortunately, they liked Bunny Bunny.

Bunny Bunny spent most of his time lying in the warm sunshine eating the tasty low-growing clover. The llamas were much taller, so they ate the tall, sweet, green grasses that grew in the pasture and left the clover alone. When the llamas weren't eating, they would playfully chase each other around the pasture, but they were always careful not to step on Bunny Bunny.

Bunny Bunny thought the llamas had funny names. They were five boys: Fog, Wynd, Stormy, Stetson, and Chaco. There were

other llamas before, but these five were the ones Bunny Bunny considered his friends.



Sometimes, their owners would load the llamas into their trailer and go off to the forest to hike for the day. Bunny Bunny liked these quiet days when he could just eat clover and take a nap.

When the llamas got back from their hike, each one was given his own bowl of a special grain mix that was kept in a big metal container in their barn. They got their own bowls because they didn't like to share and would get into a big tussle if one tried to eat the other's grain. Now this is the most amazing part of my story.



Bunny Bunny loved the llamas' grain. It was sweet and crunchy and made his tummy feel so good that he couldn't resist. When Bunny Bunny saw the llamas eating their grain, he would hop over to the nearest bowl, climb inside, and eat his fill. And the llamas would let him. Wow! They wouldn't let anyone else near their bowls without a tussle, but they liked Bunny Bunny enough to share with him.

Over the years, Bunny Bunny grew big and heavy and happy from eating all that llama grain. I've often wondered what happened to Bunny Bunny after we moved to Sherwood Oaks. I'd like to think that, as he grew old, he would hold his little grand-bunnies on his big belly and tell them stories of his time with the llamas.



## LEARNING TO LOVE, AGAIN

By Robert Typanski - #190

We would plan, when the time was right,  
to go and relearn how to say:

"You give me reason to love each day."

It would be a place with memories,  
where we could love and spoon.  
It would be that second honeymoon.

We would use silly words that  
haven't crossed our lips for years –  
words like *honeybunch* and *dear*.

Here we are, but not because we  
planned.

We were told that we should act  
like our feet are stuck in sand.

So we should take this time to do  
what we have always wanted to  
and show that love is here to stay.

Others are alone, but also face  
isolation to stay put and refrain  
from contact with anyone or place.

This doesn't have to hold despair;  
it gives them time to reflect on days  
when they were a loving pair.

We can use these times to renew our  
lives,  
both those who are two and those who  
are one,  
and recall those days ...  
of love and fun.

## CHANNEL 901 IS "ON THE AIR" AT SHERWOOD OAKS

By Jason Lyle – #293

SORA New Technology Task Force

Sherwood Oaks' new slideshow/information resource quietly became "live" on Armstrong Cable Channel 901 on Thursday, March 4. This companion channel to Channel 900 was created to feature daily information slides, primarily for residents in Personal Care and Skilled Nursing, including notices of floor staffing, activities, and meal menus of the day. Channel 901 is also the new destination for watching movies and documentaries scheduled by our SORA committees and activities. Hopes and suggestions for additional video content such as Sherwood Oaks chapel, exercise classes, and SORA quarterly meetings are in the exploration and planning stages. Since making videos to show on Channel 901 takes teamwork, anyone willing to have fun learning how to do it is most welcome, indeed!

Channel 900 will continue to be the familiar informative slideshow we have come to rely upon for our daily campus news in the comfort of our homes. Did you notice that the two channel slideshows are no longer silent? They now feature commercial-free, non-stop background music all day and night. With a playlist of more than 590 songs (so far), you could listen continuously for more than 35 hours without hearing a single song repeated. No radio station or internet music streaming service can match that kind of variety!

Please explore and enjoy both Channel 900 and the new Channel 901. If you are interested in learning more about how to become a part of the technical team needed to make our own videos for Channel 901, please drop me a note to my mailroom cubbyhole at #293. Cheers!

## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #715

Third in the series of documentaries on climate change is *Racing Extinction*, which will be shown April 12 on Channel 901 at 10:00 am, 4:00 pm, and 7:30 pm. The program lasts about 90 minutes and has closed captioning.

In the 4-billion-year history of Earth, there have been five mass extinctions, when almost all life on the planet died. We are all aware, for instance, that 65 million years ago an asteroid crashed near the Yucatan Peninsula, killing off all the dinosaurs as well as most other life.

Now, we face a sixth mass extinction. Either directly by hunting endangered species or indirectly by heating the planet through the burning of fossil fuels, "humanity has become the asteroid."

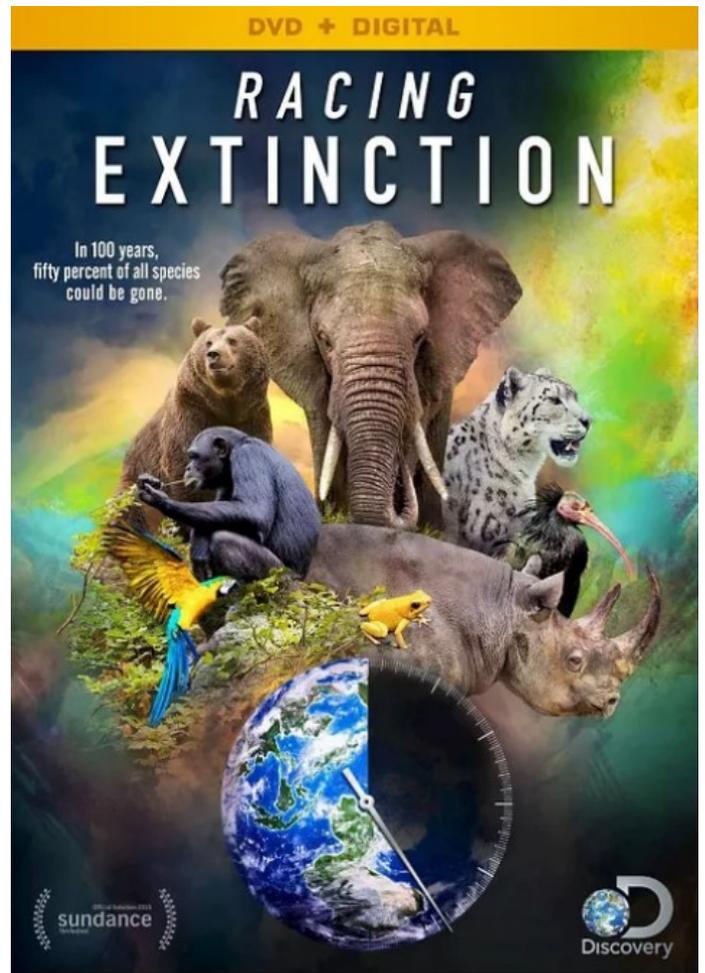
*Racing Extinction* takes us all over the world to show how we humans are affecting both the biosphere and the atmosphere to the detriment of all species, with predictions that half of them will go extinct by the end of this century – that is, unless we change our ways and treat the planet as finite in its capacity to support life.

Look for more information about *Racing Extinction* on the Focus on the World bulletin board in early April.

### Current "Carbon Tax" Legislation

Learn more about the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend bill, with 86 co-sponsors in the House, plus over 940 businesses, 130 local governments, and 240 non-profits, at [www.energyinnovationact.org](http://www.energyinnovationact.org). For constantly updated information on the climate crisis, follow the Slippery Rock chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby on Facebook at @CCLSlipperyRock.

## FOCUS ON THE WORLD



**MONDAY/ APRIL 12**

**10:00 AM, 4:00 PM, 7:30 PM  
CHANNEL 901**

A team of artists and activists exposes the hidden world of extinction with never-before-seen images that will change the way we see the planet. Two worlds drive extinction across the globe, potentially resulting in the loss of half of all species. The international wildlife trade creates bogus markets at the expense of creatures that have survived on this planet for millions of years. And the other surrounds us, hiding in plain sight — a world that the oil and gas companies don't want the rest of us to see.

## FARM GARDEN

By Betty Eichler - #355

The Farm Garden, behind the Summer House, is a pleasant, peaceful place where residents can grow their own vegetables and flowers. The thirty-nine beds are at a comfortable working height and filled with rich growing soil. At present, there are half a dozen beds available for new gardeners. The whole garden area is protected by a high fence to keep deer, rabbits, and other garden pests away. Water is available at several convenient outlets.

The Grounds Department provides soil testing and fertilizer as requested and covers the paths with wood chips. Each Gardener is responsible for planting, watering, and weeding his or her beds. Each person decides what to grow. Will it be beans, peas, carrots, cucumbers, onions, rhubarb, tomatoes, flowers, or ...?

One never knows from one summer to the next which crops will do well and which may produce very little. Nature can be fickle. Do not be tempted to think gardening is easy! It takes time and attention, but provides good exercise and lots of fresh air and sometimes even sunshine. If you are interested in having a raised bed, or if you have questions, please contact Betty Eichler, Farm Garden Chairperson, at 8355 or Box 355.

## KEY TO RESIDENTS' MIDDLING ADULT PHOTOS

1. Jane Naylor	2. Agnes Peebles
3. Mary Sombo	4. The Lavenders
5. Monika Dalrymple	6. Carol Kaufmann
7. Anne & Jno Hunt	8. Julie Eden
9. (wedding photo)	

## THE DISCRIMINATING SHOPPER

By Kathleen Schartner - #218

When I think of my granddaughter Bethany, my thoughts turn to shopping – not just an ordinary day of randomly looking around and purchasing something without much thought, but the determined and grueling work of finding the only item that will meet the expectations of the world's most discriminating shopper.

Our most memorable such expedition when Bethany was a teenager was to the Ross Park Mall in search of boots – not just some ordinary boots, but the exact color, heel, height, and mysterious aura that meant that the search for the perfect boots was over. My hopes dimmed, as we discarded boots, left and right, with hardly a glance, in every shoe store except for the DSW. For those who are not in the know regarding boots, this store is the mother lode of boots ... endless rows of boots. We walked those rows, I in despair and Bethany in anticipation. Finally, with shouts of joy, she found the exact boots just waiting there for her. We located her size and purchased them with no last-minute doubts.

Upon leaving the store, we espied Bethany's grandfather, who had patiently observed the boot search from a comfortable chair in the hall. A look of astonishment covered his face upon seeing Bethany actually carrying a package. As she returned to her home with boots in hand, the only person happier than we were was her mother, Cindy. I suspected that she had spent most of the time we were gone in prayer.

*Why is "dark" spelled with a k and not a c? Because you can't see in the dark.*

## **THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS** **FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE AND DVDs**

Everywhere You Don't Belong	Bump, Gabriel	c. 2020	F BUM
The Four Winds	Hannah, Kristin	c. 2021	F HAN
How Much of These Hills Is Gold	Zhang, C Pam	c. 2020	F ZHA
The Law of Innocence	Connelly, Michael	c. 2020	F CON
The Return	Sparks, Nicholas	c. 2020	F SPA L.T.
The Sentinel	Child, Lee	c. 2020	F CHI
The Weight of Years	Dodson, DeAnna	c. 2020	F DOD

## **NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES**

Leadership in Turbulent Times	Goodwin, Doris Kearns	c. 2018	BIO GOO
The Boys in the Cave: Deep Inside the Impossible Rescue in Thailand	Gutman, Matt	c. 2018	796.525 GUT
Dancing in the Mosque: An Afghan Mother's Letter to Her Son	Qaderi, Humeira	c. 2020	891.55 QAD
Front Row at the Trump Show	Karl, Jonathan	c. 2020	973.933 KAR
The Hope of Glory: Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross	Meacham, Jon	c. 2020	232.963 MEA
The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World	Wulf, Andrea	c. 2015	509.2 WUL
Keep Sharp: Build a Better Brain at Any Age	Gupta, Sanjay	c. 2021	153.4 GUP
The Last Days of John Lennon	Patterson, James	c. 2020	782.421 PAT
Pandemic 1918	Arnold, Catharine	c. 2018	614.5 ARN



### **LITERATURE ABOUT LOSS**

By Jean Henderson - #611

Remember to take advantage of the books and pamphlets dealing with loss in the Paperback Room in our Library. No need to check them out – just borrow and return.

### **RECENT DONATIONS BY RESIDENTS TO THE LIBRARY PAPERBACK ROOM**

Compiled by Jean Henderson - #611

<i>The Alice Network</i> by Kate Quinn	Fiction
<i>American Primitive</i> by Mary Oliver	Poetry

<i>The Cross and the Prodigal</i> by Kenneth E. Bailey	Spirituality
<i>A Lesson Before Dying</i> by Ernest Gaines	Fiction
<i>The Little Paris Bookshop</i> by Nina George	Fiction
<i>Manhattan Beach</i> by Jennifer Egan	Fiction
<i>Mere Christianity</i> by C. S. Lewis	Spirituality
<i>A Nervous Splendor: Vienna 1888/1889</i> by Frederic Morton	Non-fiction
<i>Pachinko</i> by Min Jin Lee	Fiction
<i>This is the Story of a Happy Marriage</i> by Ann Patchett	Memoir

## **I U-sta (pronounced You-sta)**

By Ellen Brierly - #734

This is a malady that affects everyone eventually. The older we get, the more we U-sta. For instance, I U-sta strip the bedding off of four beds, toss it in the washing machine, change the linens, gather the dirty clothes belonging to the five of us, and wash and dry and iron. Then I cleaned the three bathrooms, vacuumed the carpets, and took care of anything else that caught my attention.

Now, I wash the bedding on a separate day from our clothes and try not to wear anything that is going to need to be ironed. I am slowly training my husband to do the same.

I U-sta love to drive. I had a volunteer position that carried me to seven different states. I loved to jump in my little "two-seater" Escort and buzz down the highway.

Now I shudder at the thought of driving a lethal weapon while attempting to get from here to there. Neuropathy in my feet adds danger to the picture. Indeed, my feet aren't always aware of whether they are on the brake or the gas pedal. Consequently, I have given up driving, much to the delight of my family and any unsuspecting soul planning to have a fun day.

I U-sta enjoy entertaining and delighted in cooking all the food. I had a reputation when it came to pies, as I could make an excellent pie crust. Now, my arthritic hands make it difficult to roll out a crust, and I find that, those few times I have been called upon to make even a simple dish, I have to refer to the recipe a countless number of times.

Of course, there are some good U-stas, too. I U-sta allow myself to accept guilt when I really didn't need to. I could get embarrassed over trivial and not so trivial events. Then God gave me three children to raise, and that erased the guilt. I just didn't have the time or energy to feel guilty.

The best U-sta is that I U-sta be unaware of *you*. I didn't even know you existed. Now I live in this wonderful place and have met so many of you precious people!

## **COMING SOON**

By Joni Pun - #304

Subject to SORA approval, as of the end of May, the wall in the scooter room nearest the mailroom will become available for residents to display art works or crafts that were not necessarily done in a class. Since many residents work at home on beautiful projects, we would love to showcase them. The works are not limited to paintings, but can include stitchery, weavings, wood-working, signs, etc. The only requirements are that they be done by the resident and that they are not too heavy to be hung. We hope to have 10 examples from residents, changing the display every month or two, so that there is always something interesting to see. Your name and a brief description can be included, if desired. If you are interested, please call Joni Pun at 8304 or Ann Ferguson at 8269 to make the arrangements for your work to be shown.

*A commander walks into a bar and orders everyone around.*

## WORTH A LOOK

### BOOKS NEW TO OUR LIBRARY

By Barbara Christy - #237

*Dancing in the Mosque* by Homeira Qaderi. Non-fiction. Homeira started protesting early – at age 13 she was teaching children in Afghanistan to read and write. Years later, on the way to the hospital to deliver her son, she defied armed soldiers who were suspicious that her large belly might be a bomb. Refusing to give in to the misogynistic social order, she was forced to leave the country. This powerfully written book is in the form of a letter to the son she had to leave behind. 891.55 QAD

*The Daughters of Kobani* by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon. Non-fiction. In the summer of 2017, despite her journalistic preference to stop covering war zones, the author went to war-torn Syria. There she met a group of Kurdish YPJ women who had been fighting on the front lines since the battle with ISIS began. Followers of a jailed Kurdish leader who believed that women must be equal to men for democracy to survive, these women led soldiers of both sexes into battle for the right to be free. 956.910 LEM

*Satchel: The Life and Times of an American Legend* by Larry Tye. Non-fiction. Few reliable records of the Negro Leagues exist today, which makes this biography of Leroy “Satchel” Paige a treasure. A fascinating account of both an American legend and baseball history, this book is also a glimpse into how the sport was integrated. 796.357 TYE

*The Invention of Nature* by Andrea Wulf. Non-fiction. Alexander von Humboldt was a visionary German naturalist of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century whose legacy lives on

through the counties, towns, lakes, parks, and mountains named for him. His conviction that nature is a complex, interconnected entity drove him to explore wild environments and discover similarities between climate and vegetation zones on different planets. His writings inspired many, including Darwin, Goethe, Thoreau, and John Muir. As an original thinker who predicted human-influenced climate change, von Humboldt is an important piece of our understanding of the world today. 509.2 WUL

*The Survivors* by Jane Harper. Fiction. Kieran Elliott brings his young family to the ocean-front town he grew up in. They’ve come to help move his father into memory care in a nearby facility. But when a body is discovered on the beach, secrets from long ago begin to surface, and Kieran’s guilt about his absent brother must be confronted. F HAR

*Good Neighbors* by Sarah Langan. Fiction. Living in suburbia offers safety and security to these upper-class Long Island families. Or is it an illusion? When a misfit family moves in, tensions begin to build. And when a newly opened sinkhole swallows up the society leader’s daughter, the tensions explode. F LAN

*The Only Good Indians* by Stephen Graham Jones. Fiction. Four Native American men from the Blackfeet Nation, who were childhood friends, have grown away from their culture and traditions. But those same traditions are now fueling revenge seekers, threatening them and their families over a ten-year-old incident from an elk hunt. F JON

*The Opium Prince* by Jasmine Aimaq. Fiction. Daniel Sajadi has spent his life struggling with his bicultural identity – half American, half Afghani. Now he is

leaving Los Angeles for Kabul as head of a US foreign aid agency dedicated to eradicating the poppy fields that feed the world's opiate addiction. In a tragic auto accident, Daniel kills a young girl, but is let off with a warning when a mysterious witness intercedes on his behalf. Learning that the witness is a powerful opium producer, Daniel begins to deal with his guilt, his crumbling marriage, and his recognition that corruption and political life can be intertwined. F AIM

*Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Globe Murders* by Barry Day. Fiction. **Large type.** Florenz Adler has come to England to rebuild Shakespeare's Globe Theater, and Queen Victoria is slated to attend the inaugural performance. But threatening letters promising to ruin the event have sent his daughter, Flora, to Sherlock Holmes for help. F DAT L.T.

*Bertie's Guide to Life and Mothers* by Alexander McCall Smith. Fiction. **Large type.** Seven-year-old Bertie wants nothing so much as to be 18 years old and free from his domineering mother. Meanwhile, Matthew and Elspeth are trying to find an au pair to help care for their triplets, and newly-wed Angus Lordie is sleepwalking into trouble with the law. These characters and more make visiting 44 Scotland Street a good read. F SMI L.T.

*Secrets in Summer* by Nancy Thayer. Fiction. **Large type.** Nantucket resident Darcy is looking forward to the summer season, stargazing at night, meeting her new summer neighbors, and seeing where a new romantic relationship with local carpenter Nash Forester might go. But the new neighbors turn out to be her former husband, his new wife, and his stepdaughter. As she becomes entang-

led in the affairs of an elderly man and attracted to a new summer resident, who is in town to write a book, Darcy confronts choices that could upend her secure island life. F THA

*The Kingdom* by Jo Nesbø. Fiction. Roy and Carl are brothers – and survivors. When Carl returns to town, after an absence of many years, with a beautiful new wife and a head full of exciting business opportunities, Roy falls into his old pattern – protecting his younger brother. Then the bodies begin to mount, tensions surface, and major challengers train their sights on them. Roy recognizes that he will be forced to choose between family and a future for himself. F NES

## THE LIBRARY LOWDOWN

By Jean Henderson - #611

The Good News: Now that our Book Selection Group is in full swing, we have many new books available. Additionally, we have received several donations from residents. Come take a look!

The Bad News – We continue to have a problem with books leaving the library without being checked out. Please be certain to sign your book out with both your name and unit number, and PLEASE never return your book to the shelf. Simply place it in the book return box, and the volunteers will do the rest.

## MISSING BOOKS

*The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett

*The Doctors Blackwell* by Janice Nimura

*Hello Summer* by Mary Kay Andrews

*Masked Prey* by John Sandford

*Takes One to Know One* by Susan Isaacs

## 2020 ACES WINNER and ABOVE & BEYOND WINNER

The Acorn is delighted to join in congratulating Amy McNear, a certified nursing assistant in the Oak Grove Center, who won the 2020 UPMC Award for Commitment and Excellence in Service (ACES). Amy, who has worked here for 17 years, is a role model to her peers for providing optimal care to residents. We are lucky to have such an outstanding employee. Congratulations, Amy!



Congratulations also to Erin Goldstein, Professional Staff Nurse, who was chosen by UPMC as an Above & Beyond Winner for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2020, for her thoughtfulness in preparing a care package of snacks for a resident and his daughter who were on the way to the hospital to see the resident's wife for the last time.



## SHERWOOD OAKS GOLF GROUP

By Gary Brandenberger - #602

We expect to resume our golf group as soon as weather permits. The Cranberry Highlands Golf Course is once again providing us Thursday morning tee times every week except when the course is closed for events. Our tee times start at about 9:30, and we usually reserve 4 times.

Any Sherwood Oaks resident is welcome to participate. Men and women golfers can play 9 or 18 holes. The course "programs" our golf carts to provide more convenient access on the course. The only request the management asks of us is that we keep up with the pace of play. This has never been a problem in the past.

I will notify you by email over the preceding weekend of the tee times "Cranberry" is assigning us. Please respond as soon as you decide whether you are playing or not. I will arrange the groups by Tuesday afternoon and let you know by email. Unused tee times will be released back to the course.

Please let me know by email if you expect to participate <gbrandenberger@webtv.net>. This will allow me to ensure I have your correct address. It would also be helpful to have your phone numbers for any last-minute changes.

Thanks in advance! Here are my phone numbers for your convenience: H 724-591-5385, C 412-638-5132.



*I'm trying to organize a hide-and-seek tournament, but good players are really hard to find.*

*How much did the pirate pay to get his ears pierced? A buccaneer.*

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME

By Talley Ferguson  
(courtesy of Ann) - #269

When I turned 5 months old on March 11, my mom took me to Countryside Agility in Erie to watch Agility Trials for my birthday. I saw those old dogs run and jump, and I knew I could do it ... just let me go! But Mom told me I was too young, as I had to be at least 15 months old to participate. I would have to have lessons first. One day this would be one of my many jobs.

You see, Shetland Sheep dogs are a herding breed and love to work, with a capital W. Since there are no sheep at Sherwood Oaks, I have to learn to use my energy to focus on my mom (boring!), so I can learn Obedience drills, Rally Obedience, Tricks, and Agility. I also have to learn to be polite.

There will be times when I see my friends and I want to greet them, but Mom says I have to have self-control and they must ask, first, if they may greet *me*. Sometimes Mom will say "No" or put special requirements on these greetings, depending on what she wants me to learn. Between you and me, Mom can be no fun with all those rules.

Meanwhile, I am growing up. I am losing my baby teeth. All of my front teeth have been replaced with adult teeth. My molars are falling out, and I have lost 2 canine teeth. My mouth hurts as these baby teeth come out and new ones grow in. I also am starting to get my adult fur. Someone thought I had had a fur cut, but actually my legs have grown an inch. Now over 13" tall at the shoulders, I am becoming a big boy. I now weigh 11.8 pounds. Just saying!

## RESIDENTS' HANDIWORK AND ACTIVITIES

By Ann Ferguson - #269

Subject to SORA approval, there will be a new table in the lobby to showcase the activities that go on here. This is a way to introduce us to what is offered at Sherwood Oaks, given that we have had so much shut-down time. Each month there'll be a display from a different group. There may be hands-on demos, display items, books to encourage your curiosity, or just friendly reminders about how we stay busy. Each group needs more volunteers! Let me know if you are able to join us.

## LIVING WITH LOSS

By Jean Henderson - #611

**GRIEF GROUP FOR RESIDENTS** – If you would be interested in attending a six-week group this summer, please contact Jan Wendt at #8158. Between 6 and 10 people are needed for the group to be held.

### *IN MEMORIAM*

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

*Sharon Cottrill  
February 22, 2021*

*Betty Queer  
March 19, 2021*

*Chester Ludwicki  
March 20, 2021*

## ON PERFECTION

By Dennis Lynch - #335

I like making lists. On a recent sleepless night, it came to me that I should have a list of favorite “theatrical” moments – that is, moments that happen in live theatre that make the hairs on your neck stand up. The first was a perfect scene in a performance at The Pasadena Playhouse in California, over a half-century ago: 1957. It was a white-tie opening night for *Romeo and Juliet*.

In those days, aspiring actors at the Playhouse had to learn horseback riding and fencing. Girls (there were no women then) also had to wear high heels on Fridays, to learn to walk in them.

You will recall, I’m sure, that there are two great swordfights in the play: Tybalt v. Mercutio and Romeo v. Tybalt. Now, in the course of swordfights in the movies, anybody can fight: to cover mistakes there are changes in angle, long-shots and close-ups, many retakes, stuntmen if needed. What you saw on the screen was always perfection, in spite of what it took to get there.

But on the *Romeo and Juliet* stage, the duelists were live, in front of a large, live audience. There were no retakes.

Tybalt and Mercutio had the best fight. At one point, Mercutio disarmed Tybalt, whose sword fell ‘way down stage right. The two glared at each other. Then Mercutio went downstage, slid his sword under Tybalt’s, and lifted Tybalt’s sword into the air perfectly balanced across his own sword. Tybalt had backed far away to upstage left, which meant that the long diagonal of the stage was between them. Then, with a flick of his wrist, Mercutio threw the sword the length of the stage, hilt-first, to Tybalt – who caught it effortlessly and resumed the fight.

Perfect! Live! In front of the audience. Seven times a week for a month. The fight was staged by Joseph Vince, an Olympic fencer who had a *Salle d’armes* in Hollywood, and

who staged many movie sword fights. One time I had the pleasure of testing my blade against his.

Fencing was taught out in the sunshine on the roof of the Playhouse, six stories up. The teacher was Mr. Vince. My first time there, all the first-year students gathered in a circle around him. When he asked if any of us would care to fight him, foolishly, I raised my hand. The year before, I had flunked out of Stanford, but I had taken fencing. He gave me a mask and a foil (*he was not masked*), stepped back, and said *En garde!* We crossed swords, I feinted, and I was killed. He did not seem to have moved, but the metaphorical blood was running down my chest.

“*Touché,*” I said bravely. We came on guard again, I tried the one other feint I knew, and once again I was dead. I swear he had not moved. “*Touché,*” I said, less confidently. “Thank you for the fight, Mr. Lynch.” He released me, to applause and giggles from the peasants. I returned the equipment to him and, having no honor to defend, left the field.

So, some night, if you are lying awake with a terrible headache and repose is out of the question because of anxiety, I encourage you to make some lists ... of perfect things. It’s a good way to fall asleep.

\* \* \*

While writing this, I came across the following, also dealing with perfection, from the *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 2/27/1668: “... and thence with my wife and Deb. to the King’s House, to see *The Virgin Martyr*, and it is mighty pleasant; not that the play is worth much, but that which did please me beyond any thing in the whole world was the wind-musique when the angel comes down, which is so sweet that it ravished me, and did wrap up my soul so that it made me really sick, just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife; that neither then, nor all the evening going home, and at home, I was able to think of any thing, but remained all night transported, so as I could not believe that ever any musick hath that real command over the soul of a man as this did upon me....”

## GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE

By Jean Henderson - #611

The Chapel Committee will present the annual Good Friday Tenebrae Service on Channel 901 during Holy Week. Watch for specific times. The Office of Tenebrae, meaning darkness or shadows, dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It is characterized by the extinguishing of candles as the service progresses with hymns, prayers, and scripture readings, this year from the Gospel of Luke. Leading the service will be resident Rev. Dr. Jean H. Henderson, musician Timothy Heavner, and resident technician Jason Lyle. Please join us for this somber devotion.

## IT'S GLEANERS FOOD BANK MONTH

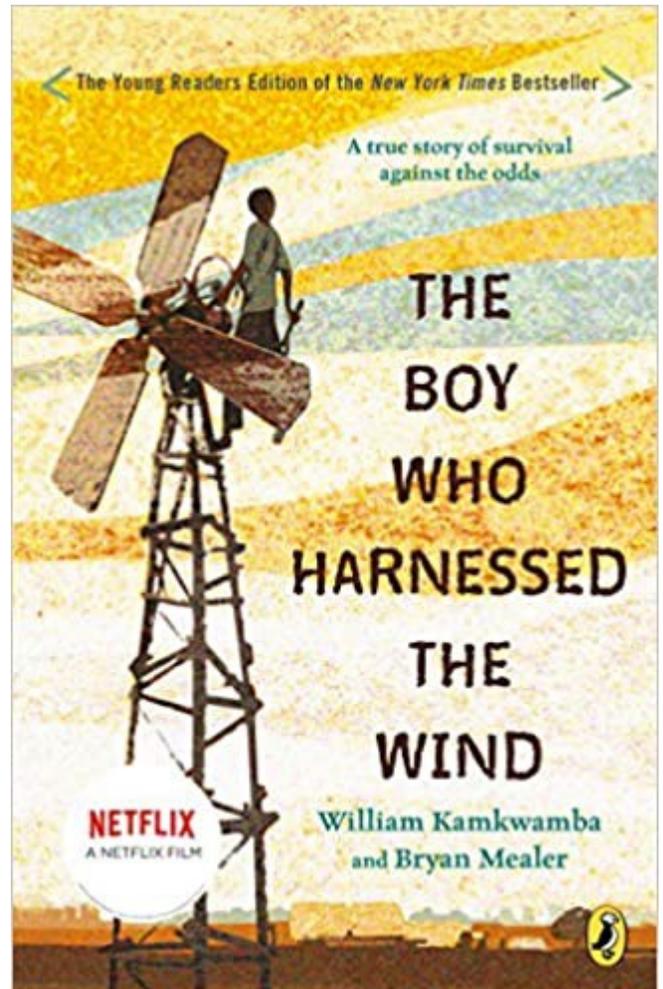
By Agnes Peebles - #324

From *Sunday, April 18*, through *Saturday, April 24*, Focus on the World will once again collect gifts for the Gleaners Food Bank here in Cranberry Township. We hope that soon we may be able to give food as well as monetary support, but that time has not yet come. Checks may be made out to Gleaners Food Bank and placed (in an envelope, please) in mail cubby 348.

To "glean" is to gather up what is left behind after a harvest. Bible scholars will remember Old Testament Ruth, who followed the reapers of grain and gathered what fell to the ground. Many farmers welcome present-day gleaners, after the machines picking vegetables and fruits have gone through the fields and orchards. Gleaners Food Bank offers us an opportunity to take our "leftovers" and use them to satisfy another's hunger. Our combined gifts in January totaled \$1925 ... a good gleaning!

## FOCUS ON THE WORLD

From Carolyn Broeren - #739



When fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba's Malawi village was hit by a drought, everyone's crops began to fail. Without enough money for food, let alone school, William spent his days in the library ... where he figured out how to bring electricity to his village. Persevering against the odds, William built a functioning windmill out of junkyard scraps, thus becoming the local hero who harnessed the wind.

**Showing on Channel 901**

**Thursday April 15, 4 PM & 7:30 PM**

**Friday, April 16, 4 PM & 7:30 PM**

# *Spring at Sherwood Oaks*



Photo by Jan Wendt