

# THE ACORN

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

Summer 2022 “For the residents, by the residents” Vol. 41, No. 6

*It's spring at Sherwood Oaks!*



Photo by Rabe Marsh

*See pp. 12-13 for more glimpses of the  
season's glory.*

Gentle Readers:

Here we are again, dealing with what may seem like daily changes in what we can or cannot do, depending on the latest Covid-19 statistics. It is very trying, at best.

But it may well be something we're just going to have to get used to, annoying though it may be. What is surely most important is that we follow the ever-changing instructions in order to stay as healthy and safe as we possibly can. Sherwood Oaks has faithfully seen to our vaccinations and boosters, and done what it could to protect us from illness. May that continue.

In the meantime, let us find time to rejoice! Spring is here (as you will be reminded by the many photos thereof in this issue), and soon the evening campfires will resume. We will be cheered by summer flowers and warmer weather. Do take the time to be grateful, friends, as well as careful.

– The Editors

### *IN MEMORIAM*

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

*Fu-Mei Lin*

*April 26, 2022*

*Jane Wright*

*April 26, 2022*

*Louis Zegarelli*

*May 1, 2022*

*Mamie Petroff*

*May 12, 2022*

*Anthony Dorsch*

*May 18, 2022*

*Norman Stephen*

*May 18, 2022*

*Elizabeth Fox*

*May 18, 2022*

*Mary McCrea*

*May 21, 2022*

### **SUMMER CALENDAR**

D Day, WWII	June 6
Flag Day	June 14
Juneteenth	June 20
First Day of Summer	June 18
Father's Day	June 19
Independence Day	July 4
Islamic New Year	July 30
V-J Day, WWII	Aug. 15

### ***THE ACORN***

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Annette McPeck

Submissions for the September issue must be sent to the Editor no later than

**August 1, 2022.**

### **DATE CHANGE!**

Please note that submissions for the September issue must be in our hands by **August 1, 2022**. This is a major change from the usual date of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, but it's because we expect the September issue to be extensive, as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary. If your copy is ready any time after July 15, please send it on so that we can get started putting the issue together. In the meantime, we wish you all a wonderful summer and look forward to hearing from you soon again.

– The Editors

## **RICHARD and LYNN COX - #333**

By Harriet Burress - #112



Photos by Mike Mills

It is certainly a pleasure to welcome to Sherwood Oaks Richard and Lynn Cox, who bring with them talents and abilities which hopefully they will share with many of our community's interest groups. Having resided in the Highland Park area of Pittsburgh for 34 years, they now occupy Patio Home 333. Their one daughter, who also lives in Pittsburgh, is a musician and works in the restaurant industry.

Richard was the lead faculty member in the graduate archival education program at the University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences, now the School of Computing and Information, until his retirement on January 1, 2018. Prior to joining the faculty in 1998, Richard worked as an archivist in Maryland, Alabama, and New York. He came into that field because of his interest in American history, with undergraduate and master's degrees in history from Towson State University and the University of Maryland, respectively. He later earned a PhD in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh.

Richard authored and edited 18 books over the course of his career, winning the Waldo G. Leland Award three times for having one of them recognized as the best book for that year by the Society of American Archivists. In 2020 he was honored

with a Festschrift that featured some of his paintings. He was named a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, the highest recognition for professional contributions to the archival field, held numerous professional service positions, and participated in many international conferences and activities in South America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

Lynn and Richard, both Baltimore natives, have known each other since elementary school; they are looking forward to their 50th wedding anniversary in a few years. Lynn received her BA in art history from Goucher College in Baltimore and worked in museum curation/collection management. Her career changed after she earned her MA in church ministry from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and became a Minister of Education and Care. After retiring, Lynn served on a team at their church that leads a weekly prayer time online, was an occasional Bible Study leader and speaker, and volunteered for Fair Districts PA in 2020.

Richard enjoys reading American history and art history and watching classic movies. He also paints with acrylics, focusing on land and seascapes inspired by his visits to New England (especially Maine), the Southwest, and the Chesapeake Bay region. Among Lynn's interests and hobbies are reading, knitting – "I'm an eternally intermediate knitter" – having coffee with friends old and new, sewing, visiting museums, container gardening, and discussing books.

Richard became a Christian in high school through Young Life, and both he and Lynn remain committed in their faith. They hope to find a "church home" close by.

May we all extend a warm welcome to Richard and Lynn!



## MARKIE & ED MCCARTHY - #607

By Kathie McCormick - #188



Photos by Mike Mills

Markie and Ed McCarthy have a myriad of interests and have had lots of experiences! They moved to Sherwood Oaks from their home of 44 years in East Pittsburgh. They are now enjoying their new home and new friends.

They have two children and five grandchildren. Their son Brian, who has a son and a daughter, is a fireman in San Francisco. Elissa, their daughter and the mother of three girls, lives in Connecticut. She deals with PTSD issues as part of her work at the VA.

Markie, who was a lawyer, specialized in environmental issues while working in federal courts as a law clerk. She earned a degree in math and psychology from Lake Erie College and a degree in public health from the University of Pittsburgh. When her children were in school, she went on to get her law degree, also at Pitt.

Ed is a dentist – specifically, a prosthodontist! He is an expert in dentures, dental implants, bridgework, etc. He attended Allegheny College, went on to the University of Pittsburgh for his DMD, and then did a residency in maxillofacial prosthodontics. He is retired from his private practice, but he is still teaching classes in the dental school at the University of Pittsburgh. In fact, it was Ed's mentor, Howard Charlebois, who introduced the couple to Sherwood Oaks. Markie and Ed

met during their college years – through mutual friends. The rest is history!

Ed has a passion for fly fishing and ties his own flies. His patio has great natural light for his hobby and is well-equipped. He has fished in rivers and streams of PA and has traveled to such places as Belize, the Bahamas, and Alaska to pursue his sport. Markie will join him if he puts the flies on the line and tells her where to cast.

Markie likes cross-country skiing, furniture refinishing, preserving little animals that have been found deceased, and painting. The walls of their patio home are adorned with some of her beautiful works of art.

One hobby that they have shared includes geo-caching, an outdoor treasure-hunting activity that uses GPS-enabled devices. They even pursued this activity in Machu Picchu! Another is windsurfing, both locally and in such places as Hawai'i, Texas, and the Outer Banks.

The McCarthys also have a place in Chautauqua, where they often spent weekends before retirement. Now they like to go there for the whole summer.

When I asked how Markie got her name, she said that her mother had a roommate in college named Margaret who used "Markie" as her nickname. So when her daughter was born and named Margaret (also the name of one of her grandmothers), this led to her being called Markie!

Ed is growing his beard until he returns to teaching this fall! He did not expect his hiatus to be so long, but the amputation of his left leg (due to vascular issues) intervened. He received his prosthesis in December of 2021 and is actively pursuing rehab. After all, he needs to return to fly fishing and teaching!

Do welcome Ed and Markie to the Sherwood Oaks community. They are delightful people, and you will find it fun to get to know them.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES . . .

By Joe and Peg Rychcik - #297

The gardens in Sherwood Oaks provide a stunning array of colorful blooms. In addition to the groundskeepers, we appreciate the residents who are part of the Landscape Committee, who diligently plant, weed, and prune the flowers for our enjoyment from spring through fall. Each garden is distinctive and unique, and any resident is welcome to join this wonderful group of gardeners.



Rusty (Jean) Sweitzer, R. D. Lyle,  
Lila Cornell Planting Spring Bulbs - 2004

An article in the December 1988 issue of THE ACORN shares the story about how the 300-pound solid brass bell from one of the last gigantic steam engines came to stand in the Perennial Garden at the edge of the Croquet (formerly Wimbledon) Court.

This unique treasure was donated by early Sherwood Oaks resident Dick Hood, retired Secretary and Treasurer, and Assistant to President Fred Okie (also a resident) of the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad.



The bell was from a Texas-type Steam Engine 642 and was one of six engines purchased by Bessemer from Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1943. Engine 642, which weighed 455 tons, had ten drive wheels and 96,700 pounds of traction power. Its starting load was 22,000 gallons of water and 23 tons of coal. Engine 642 was used as a freight locomotive hauling iron ore from Port Conneaut, Ohio, to steel mills in the Monongahela Valley. The ore arrived in Conneaut after traveling the Great Lakes from Minnesota.

In that bygone era, the bell would ring as it traveled through small towns to announce its arrival, and as a warning at crossings. Children would come to watch the passing train and wave to the Engineer. Eventually, diesel power became more economical. Engine 642 was scrapped in 1954, but not before this fine brass bell was removed. We are fortunate to have this historic memento of the Steam Age displayed at Sherwood Oaks.





Dick Hood and Dela Peabody ring the bell as part of "Let Freedom Ring" Day – July 4, 1998

Sherwood Oaks. It was placed on a stone pedestal and prominently displayed in the rock garden in front of Oak Lodge. Ralph said, "When Sally and Norman's daughter visited Sherwood Oaks to attend Margaret McCoy's memorial service, she saw the sundial and remembered it in her parents' yard. She was very happy to see it so well placed."



You may have passed this sundial located along the walkway by Oak Lodge.



Ralph Peabody also wrote, in his September 2012 historical reflections, about the large Japanese Lantern currently in the garden area along the walkway to the Gallery/Scooter Room porch at the Community Center:



Its story was written by Ralph Peabody during the 30<sup>th</sup>-Anniversary celebration of Sherwood Oaks in September 2012. The sundial had been in the patio home garden of Sherwood Oaks founders Norman and Sally Dewees. Following Norman's transfer to the Medical Unit, Rusty (Jean) Sweitzer dug the sundial out of the ground and gave it to



Ralph said, "When Fred and Opel Okie moved to Sherwood Oaks, they gave us the Lantern. It had been a personal gift to the Okies from Emperor Hirohito of Japan."

The December 1989 issue of *The Acorn* stated, "It had previously been a focal point in two different gardens in Sewickley."



Before the additions to the Community Center were constructed in 2005, the Japanese Lantern had been placed near the entrance in an oriental-inspired garden developed by residents Art and Irene Croll. Experts in Japanese gardening were consulted to find plants fitting for this contemplative setting. Art made the ornamental bridge over the dry creek bed. Just beyond the bridge on the garden knoll, the Lantern stood prominently by the trees.

The gardens at Sherwood Oaks not only provide beauty to our campus, but also remind us of so many special features that enrich our history. We can certainly celebrate again the wonderful contributions that residents have made to make Sherwood Oaks so special in its 40<sup>th</sup> year!

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***"The years between 50 and 70 are the hardest. You are always being asked to do things, and yet you are not decrepit enough to turn them down." – T. S. Eliot***

## **COMING ATTRACTION . . . FROM THE ARCHIVES**

By Joe and Peg Rychcik - #297

The Curio Cabinets in the Community Center Lobby will be hosting a special display. Beginning this June, photographs related to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sherwood Oaks will be featured monthly, highlighting each decade. These will culminate with Sherwood Oaks' earliest years this September, as part of our community's 40<sup>th</sup>-Anniversary Celebration.

Be sure to stop by and see this changing display each month!



## **RESIDENTS' GALLERY WALL**

By Joni Pun - #304

Many residents have remarked that they are enjoying the current exhibition that, rather than showcasing our works of art, features paintings and stitchery done by relatives. It has proven so popular that I believe we will make it a yearly practice for May and June.

Meanwhile, I hope that some of you are doing paintings and sketches of scenes at Sherwood Oaks, as it has been decided that the Gallery should feature our home as part of our 40th anniversary celebration. A few residents also commented that they had works depicting Sherwood Oaks years ago, which they had purchased from people who are no longer with us; obviously, we would welcome those as well. Please get in touch with me before July so that we can plan accordingly (tel. 8304).

## **SORA NOMINATING COMMITTEE CANDIDATE LIST**

**For Election Consideration at the June  
14, 2022, Annual Meeting**

### **CONSIDER FOR ELECTION**

**President** – Gary Brandenberger –  
1<sup>st</sup> 1-year term; eligible for 1 more year

**Vice President** – Jean Henderson –  
1<sup>st</sup> 1-year term; eligible for 1 more year

**Secretary** – Dolly O'Toole – 1<sup>st</sup> year;  
no term limit

**SORA Treasurer** – Peter Broeren –  
1<sup>st</sup> year of 2<sup>nd</sup> and final 3-year term

**Board Members – 2<sup>nd</sup> and Final Two-  
Year Term**

Nancy Marshall

**Board Members – 1<sup>st</sup> Two-Year Term**

Kathie McCormick

Peggy Rubel

Dan Cindric

**CONTINUING ON BOARD (no need for  
action at annual meeting in 2022)**

**SORA Operating Treasurer** – Beth  
Brown – 1<sup>st</sup> 3-year term ends June 30,  
2024; eligible for a final 3-year term

**Immediate Past President** – Frank  
Finley – 2-year term ends June 30, 2024

#### **Board Members**

Bruce Cooper – 1<sup>st</sup> 2-year term ends  
June 30, 2023; eligible for 2nd 2-year term

Diane Neely – ditto

Judy Pinyot – ditto

Barbara Scruggs – ditto

Al Brahm – 2<sup>nd</sup> and final 2-year term  
ends June 30, 2023

Frank Weiss – ditto

## **WITH THANKS TO THOSE LEAVING THE BOARD FOR THEIR DEDICATED SERVICE**

Betty Eichler, Mary Lou Fox, Jane  
Paul, and Lee Wierman

### **Nominations “from the floor” – SORA Bylaw 5.03 D.3.c.**

Nominations may be made from the  
Floor by ten (10) or more residents who  
shall, at least ten (10) days before the  
annual meeting, submit to the Secretary  
the written nomination(s) accompanied  
by the written consent of the proposed  
nominee(s) to serve. The secretary shall  
include these nominations on a ballot,  
clearly differentiating them from the  
Committee's nominees.



### **WHITE PRINCESS**



Photo of white squirrel shared by Bob & Carole  
Fletcher - #358



## ANNA SINGER

Featured by SO Program Committee

By Jean Henderson - #346

On **June 9, at 7:00 p.m.**, Sherwood Oaks residents are in for a special treat! Opera singer, music curator, and painter in oil Anna Singer, accompanied by another accomplished performer, Raymond Blackwell, will present a program for us titled "Finding the Light."



As a child, Anna dreamed of becoming an opera singer. She chased her dreams to Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins and later to New York City. In time, her dreams were realized in performances at opera houses in Europe and the US in the lead roles of *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Aida*, *Salome*, and others. After returning to her home town of Pittsburgh, she joined the staff of classical music radio station WQED-FM, where she has been an on-air host and music programmer for over 20 years. Her newest interest has been painting in oil.

Raymond Blackwell has worn many hats in Pittsburgh's musical community for over twenty years. A well-known coach and accompanist, he has been

on the music staff at Pittsburgh Opera and Opera Theater of Pittsburgh; he has also taught at CMU, Slippery Rock, Mercyhurst, and Grove City universities. As a classical singer, he has performed with the Pgh. Opera, Opera Theater of Pgh., and Chatham University concert series. On Sundays, he serves as the baritone soloist for the Sewickley Presbyterian Church.

Join us for a glorious concert with this dynamic duo!

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## CHAPEL NOTES

By Gary Brandenberger - #602  
Chapel Committee

Services begin at 2:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend.

### Sunday, June 5

Rev. John Guest  
Christ Church at Grove Farms

### Sunday, June 12

Rev. Ben Robbins  
Northmont Presbyterian

### Sunday, June 19

Rev. William Dambach  
North Hills U.P.C.

### Sunday, June 26

Rev. David Paul  
Calvin Presbyterian

*"A soft answer turns away wrath,  
but a harsh word stirs up anger."*

*– Proverbs 15:1*

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***"At age 20, we worry about what others think of us ... at age 40, we don't care what they think of us ... at age 60, we discover they haven't been thinking of us at all." – Ann Landers***

## FURRY FELINES OF SHERWOOD OAKS: PART 5

By Kathie McCormick - #188

**C.C.** lives with Frank and Carole Fox in #753. They all moved to Sherwood Oaks in June of 2019.



Frank and Carole gladly returned “home” to the Pittsburgh area after a 28-year absence. Their very favorite place to have lived was in Bradfordwoods!

C.C., didn’t much care what city she lived in as long as her favorite person, Frank, was somewhere close by. Frank says that C.C. loves him best because he was the one that found her at a cat rescue center in Newnan, Georgia. The center was close to their home, which was just outside Atlanta.

The cat story goes like this: In August of 2012, Frank went to his favorite shop for coffee and a donut. While there, he strolled over to a nearby Petco store, which had a selection of abandoned cats that were waiting for a good home. Frank

spotted this large, long-haired beauty and stopped to pet her and have a one-way conversation.

When Frank got home that afternoon, he told Carole that he had found a great cat and that they should go adopt her ASAP! He wasn’t kidding about the ASAP part, as two hours later they were filling out the paperwork to take this large and hairy beauty back home.

They aren’t exactly sure how old C.C. is (12-13 years, perhaps) but in the almost ten years they’ve owned her, she’s been a wonderful pet – even with all that long hair – who still loves Frank best.

Carole likes to tease Frank that she has never heard of anyone else who went out for coffee and a donut and came back with a cat!



Meet **ZACK**, the “Supercat,” who lives with Lorraine Commeret and Dan Zander in #131: faster than a speeding bullet, able to leap tall furniture in a single bound! Look: up on the refrigerator, on the kitchen cabinets, on the grandfather clock – it’s Supercat! Zack, disguised as



a mild-mannered lap cat, who will happily lick your fingers clean (or your beard, if you are of the male bewhiskered persuasion), and who will sprawl, back down, on the floor waiting for a belly-rub, nevertheless fights the never-ending battle to protect hearth and home from bugs and mice. He will also scare off birds, squirrels, and chipmunks from his domain.

This lovable scamp is a blue Tonkinese, a breed that combines characteristics of both Siamese and Burmese. Like a Siamese, he is quite intelligent, vocal, loyal, and capable of extraordinary leaps, but he has the softer, rounder features of the Burmese. Zack comes when called, loves to play catch, and “stays” on command. He not only stops, but “sits.”

Thanks to his voracious appetite for almost anything edible, there are only seven plants in their home, and he must be sent to his room when it’s mealtime for Lorraine and Dan. Yes, he has his own bedroom! The call of “Treats!” sends him trotting there without hesitation.

When his mealtimes approach, he uses several strategies to speed the process. First, there is a steady stare, delivered from 6 to 12 inches away. If that fails, he opts for more aggressive techniques – such as tearing around the house like a maniac or scattering as many objects on the desk as possible.

You have heard the expression that dogs have masters and cats have staff. Lorraine definitely falls into the latter category from Zack’s perspective. Clearly, her primary function is to provide food. Most of his love and loyalty, on the other hand, belong to Dan, whom he follows around like a puppy. But Lorraine and Dan both adore their little beauty!



And here we have **MANDY**, who lives with Rosemary Coffey in #113. She says:

“You have already read about me in my mom’s article based on my mouse-catching episode last month. But you may not know that she named me ‘Mandy’ based on the terms ‘deMANDing’ and ‘MANDatory.’ Actually, I have no trouble living up to either of those adjectives.

“I’ve been with my mom for almost eight years, but I’ve never stopped yelling at her when she’s slow to do what I say. That often involves being stroked, while I’m lying on my perch on the porch, and then having my litter box cleaned ... at least twice a day. Of course, I am very fussy about my food! I also need a lot of toys within reach, so that I can chase them around the living room whenever I feel like it. The bird feeder outside the window provides some entertainment, though it’s annoying that I can’t catch the birds when they dare me to try.

“While I do enjoy being on the bed with Mom, I’m really not a cuddler: I always end up hunkering down at the bottom of the bed, after insisting that she stroke me for some time before I let her try to go to sleep. All in all, however, I’d guess, as long as she continues to do what I say, we’ll be together for a long time yet!”



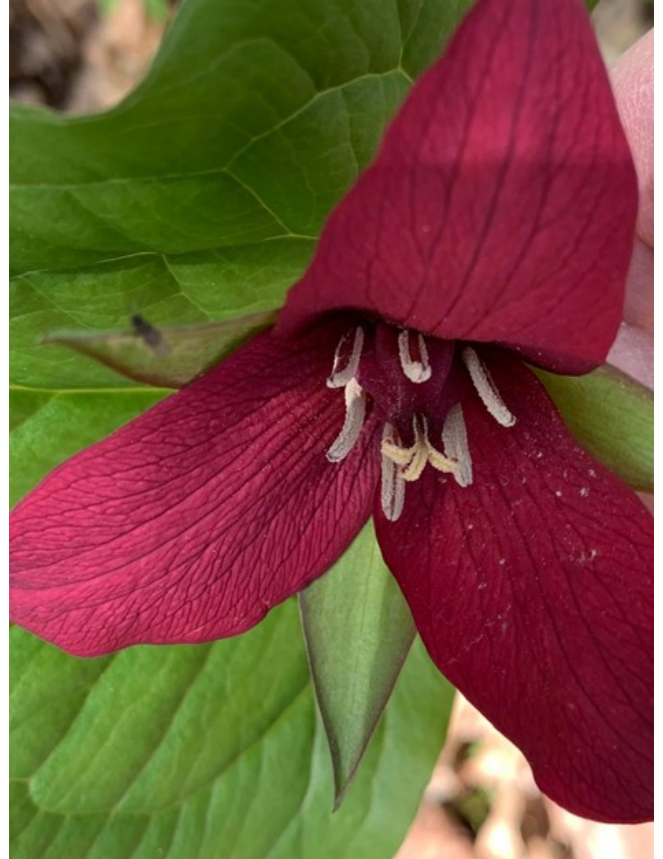
## *More Signs of Spring at Sherwood Oaks ...*



Photos by Rabe Marsh



*... and even more, for our delight!*



Photos by Kathie McCormick

## WORTH A LOOK

### BOOKS NEW TO OUR LIBRARY

By Barbara Christy - #237

*The Investigator* by John Sandford. Fiction. Out of boredom, Letty Davenport quit her job as an investigator for an Alabama senator. But when oil companies in Texas started reporting thefts of oil, and the Homeland Security Agency got involved, Letty was rehired, nominally as a liaison with the senator's office, but actually to investigate how and why an ugly militia group was involved and what subversive plot was at stake. F SAN

*City of Tears* by Kate Mosse. Fiction. France, 1572. Catholic Catherine de Medici is negotiating a marriage/diplomatic alliance with the Huguenot King of Navarre. But Catherine's hopes to bring an end to the religious civil wars that began with the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre at Vassy are being undermined by Cardinal Valentin. With a backdrop of all of Europe, this sweeping saga makes the drama of the religious wars of France come to life. F MOS

*The Tobacco Wives* by Adele Myers. Fiction. Bright Leaf, NC, is the tobacco capital of the South. When seamstress Maddie Sykes arrives to join her aunt's business, just after the end of WWII, it seems like an exciting, up-and-coming place. But, as Maddie becomes the favorite dressmaker for the leading ladies of the town, she overhears tidbits that make her wonder otherwise. As her skill and ingenuity earn her a place in the local community, she is also exposed to the emerging information about the dangers of smoking tobacco. When she learns that the tobacco tycoons are not only ignoring but misrepresenting these dangers, she begins to agitate among the women of the town to resist. Suddenly, Bright Leaf becomes a dangerous place. F MYE

*The Silent Sisters* by Robert Dugoni. Fiction. Charles Jenkins is back – in Russia – after

being recalled to investigate why two longtime undercover operatives have gone suddenly silent. But his low-profile arrival is blown when he is unavoidably involved in a barroom brawl. Avoiding Moscow police becomes a challenge, as he simultaneously tries to find out what happened to the highly placed US assets in a deadly game of hide-and-seek. F DUG

*The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey* by Walter Mosley. Fiction. This thoughtful novel departs from Mosley's better-known crime stories. Instead, it features a 91-year-old black man living out his last days in deliberate isolation, with only dementia and memories for company. Into his life – at a funeral, no less – comes a 17-year-old orphan with beautiful eyes whose biggest virtue is that she doesn't remind him of anyone. A bond develops between them that changes both their lives. F MOS

*These Precious Days: Essays* by Ann Patchett. Non-fiction. "Death has no interest in essays," writes Ann Patchett, as a means to explain her most recent volume. Like other authors, when she is writing a novel, she is haunted by the idea she might die before finishing, thus obliterating the lives of her characters. When Covid struck, she found she was unable to start a new novel, but essays have a substance, a verifiability, which enable a survivor to finish an essay even if interrupted by death. For this happy reason, Sherwood Oaks now has this delightful offering, wherein the author muses on a special friendship, a super-abundance of fathers, the benefits of giving up shopping for twelve months, the joys of tattoos that almost were. 800 PAT

*The Black Book* by Middleton A. Harris. Non-fiction. This is a five-century collection of 500+ pictures, images, news articles, auction notices, sheet music, and personal recollections revealing the black experience in America. First curated, along with other noted collectors, by Toni Morrison as editor



at Random House, this newly restored edition is a breathtaking and disturbing tour of a portion of our national past. 973.049 HAR

*El Chapo* by Noah Hurowitz. Biography. The life and legends of history's most famous drug lord are described in this dynamic narrative covering three decades of Mexico's losing battle with the drug cartels. Based on trial testimony and interviews with dozens of cartel gunmen, family members, journalists, and DEA agents, Hurowitz's book covers the prison escapes, the private life, the government corruption, and the evolving disturbed mental state that finally led to his capture. BIO EL CH

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### DID YOU EVER WONDER ...

By John Bridges - #122

... if you could be a Woodworker?

Perhaps it would surprise you to learn that you already are. Yes! Since kindergarten, when you used machine tools and sharp implements to sharpen wooden pencils, you learned that rule known to all woodworkers: always *Cut with the grain*; that means cutting down to the point and never back up in the other direction.

Now as a Sherwood Oaks resident you can always escape the summer heat by descending to the cool, tranquil Wood Shop and learning new skills under expert instruction.

We can help you plan a Christmas ornament for that special friend, or a wooden toy for a deserving child. We are full of ideas and help.

It is already halfway to next Christmas. Stay cool and plan to work with wood!

***"Old people shouldn't eat health foods. They need all the preservatives they can get." – Robert Orben***

***"At my age, flowers scare me." – George Burns***

### TO READ OR TO SWIM ... THAT IS THE QUESTION

By Betty Polley - #251

Our founders had many decisions to make, one of which concerned the choice between a swimming pool and a library. Ellie Castle was told by Margaret McCoy that the conversation between two of the founders involved the statement: "If you get your swimming pool, then I get my library!" And so it was.

The first volunteer librarian was Coletta McKenry, retired from a similar position at the US Steel Co. in Pittsburgh. She undertook the task, beginning by urging those who were already resident here to donate books, magazines, and tapes. The first library committee members were Helen Bower, Peg Brennan, Jim Drain, Betty Hess, Hilda Hood, Jan McClintock, and Jean McIlroy.

Committee members visited other libraries for ideas related to shelving and spacing. Input was requested by Board members who were ultimately responsible for determining the size and layout of the room. At that time, SO had 62 signed resident agreements for 102 persons.

Permanent shelving was installed in October 1982 by twenty helpers. We don't know how many books had been donated by then, but there were nine magazine subscriptions. Coletta McKenry was followed by Mary Lief, Barbara Batcheler, and me, while Barbara Christy and Anne Hunt currently share the job.

The present library, the largest such in this area's retirement communities, is a testament to the foresight and determination of the founders. Its holdings have been computerized, and it is currently well used by our residents.

## I PUBLISHED A BOOK!

By Jack Dills - #207

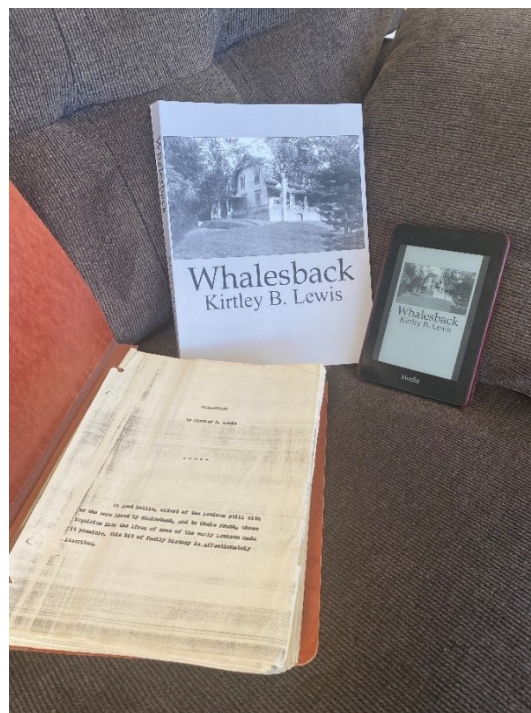
In January, I published a book titled *Whalesback*. It's about an apple farm in Dutchess County, New York (not far from Bard College). It is also about a line of my ancestors starting with Thomas Lewis (1628-1684, my 7th great-grandfather). It ends with Kirtley Bowen Lewis (1887-1954, my granduncle). I would say it is written in a small-town newspaper style. Major American history events (from New Amsterdam, the Revolution, and the Civil War, into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century) provide a backdrop to the day-to-day life of the Lewis family and their apple farm, which was located on a hill that, from the Hudson River, looked like a whale's back – hence the title of the farm and the book.

The Original Whalesback Document (First Edition) was produced by Kirtley B. Lewis, using typewriter and carbon paper during the last years of World War II and immediately afterwards. The Second Edition was produced by the Dills brothers (grandnephews of Kirtley B. Lewis) over several years, concluding in 2021.

The effort started with one of my brothers having the first four chapters (out of 15 total) transcribed about twenty years ago. With that start, I would transcribe a chapter every couple of years – yes, slow going. Then I retired and moved to Sherwood Oaks, and the Covid lockdown hit. This set me up to make some real progress. I did try to use various pieces of software, but none was very helpful. My version of the original looked like a xerox copy of a carbon copy. Eventually we got it all in and were able to add pictures, genealogical information, a few additional family stories, and, finally, a cookie recipe (from my three greats

grandaunt, Sarah Nelson). We also found a second cousin who did a wonderful proofreading job for us.

The final step was the actual publishing. Most of the information about self-publishing discussed marketing and the like. Since our intention was to get about thirty copies printed that we would give to family members (we have identified 25 first through third cousins) and a few libraries in Dutchess County (including the one at Bard College, which owns the original Whalesback house), we were concerned about the per-item cost on small orders as well as minimum orders. Then we discovered Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (“KDP”). KDP allowed us to create a paperback version for less than \$23 apiece (we could order only one if we wanted). It also permitted Kindle eBook versions for around \$2. Just for the record, to have a paperback created, you will need to produce a .pdf file (which Word can do). An eBook requires a Word document (with minimal formatting).



For a first-hand look, see the book on display in the Sherwood Oaks library.



## GARDEN MEMORIES

Poem and Painting by Robert Typanski -  
#190

### *Her home:*

She feels peace while standing there  
with springtime color everywhere.  
Blooming trees and colors bright  
share with her the morning light.

### *Now and then:*

Birds and fragrances of flowers  
she enjoys for many hours.  
Beauty surrounds for her to see  
sights there now and from memory.

### *The birdbath:*

From above a robin gently glides  
onto the water, it then slides.  
From years ago when she saw it alight  
her reflection remains to see new flights.

### *The girl:*

Memories of youth now freely come.  
Into the garden a child's image runs.  
Stopping to pick fresh flowers there  
while happily laughing without a care.

### *Tranquility:*

She savors each day as it passes by  
while enjoying the flowers and blue sky.  
Returning birds she still loves to see  
while recalling persons she used to be.



## A MEMORABLE TOUR AT THE CARNEGIE

By Harriet Burress - #112

When reading Dennis Lynch's article in the *May Acorn*, I was reminded of one particular tour in the Carnegie Museum of Natural History many years ago. Our granddaughter (now 38) was 2½ and recovering at Children's Hospital from Kawasaki disease. Docents from the Museum would come to the playroom with many creative ways of teaching about and demonstrating life as a dinosaur.

I promised Tricia we would go to see the display of dinosaurs after her last medical visit. That day arrived, and we went into the lobby of the museum, where we found only one guard behind the reception desk and the lights out. The Carnegie was closed on Mondays! I explained the situation – that she had been sick, lived out of town, and had been promised a visit. Our daughter was ready to leave, but I said, "Wait a minute." "Come on, Mom," she insisted several times, but I was just as determined. To the guard I said, "One can't promise a child something and then not do it." He replied, "Wait a minute," and disappeared, returning with another guard to take his place. He directed the three of us, "Come with me." We followed him to the dinosaur exhibit as he turned on the lights. When Tricia had seen the large and small skeletons and was satisfied, we followed the guard out – as he turned the lights out.

Many times my husband John told that story to the amazement of the Museum's representative who called for donations. It's just another example of the graciousness and kindness of those who live in Pittsburgh!

## CLOTHESLINES FROM THE PAST

Submitted by Beverly Puglia  
Director, Dining Services

We are possibly the last generation that will remember what a clothesline was. Indeed, in lots of places they are now illegal.

Remembering Mom's Clothesline

### THE BASIC RULES FOR CLOTHESLINES

1. You had to hang the socks by the toes, NOT the top.
2. You hung pants by the BOTTOM (cuffs), NOT the waistbands.
3. You had to hang the clothes in a certain order, always hanging "whites" with "whites," and hanging them first.
4. You NEVER hung a shirt by the shoulders – always by the tail! What would the neighbors think?
5. Washday was on a Monday! NEVER hang clothes on the weekend, or on Sunday, for Heaven's sake!
6. Hang the sheets and towels on the OUTSIDE lines so you can hide your "unmentionables" in the middle.
7. It didn't matter if it was sub-zero weather ... clothes would "freeze-dry."
8. ALWAYS gather up the clothespins when taking down dry clothes. Pins left on the lines were "tacky"!
9. If you were efficient, you would line up the clothes so that each item did not need two clothespins, but shared one of the clothespins with the next washed item.
10. Clothes off of the line before dinner time, neatly folded in the clothes basket, and ready to be ironed. IRONED?! Well, that's a whole OTHER subject!
11. You had a long wooden pole that was used to push the clotheslines up so that longer items (sheets/pants/etc.) didn't brush the ground and get dirty.

12. And now here's a poem on the subject:

## CLOTHESLINES

By Marilyn K. Walker

A clothesline was a news forecast  
to neighbors passing by.

There were no secrets you could keep,  
when clothes were hung to dry.

It also was a friendly link,  
for neighbors always knew  
if company had stopped on by,  
to spend a night or two.

For then you'd see the fancy sheets  
and towels on the line;  
you'd see the "company tablecloths"  
with intricate design.

The line announced a baby's birth  
to folks who lived inside,  
as brand-new infant clothes were hung,  
so carefully with pride!

The ages of the children could  
so readily be known;  
by watching how the sizes changed,  
you'd know how much they'd grown.

It also told when illness struck,  
as extra sheets were hung;  
then nightclothes, and a bathrobe too,  
haphazardly were strung.

It also said, "Vacationing now,"  
when lines hung limp and bare.  
It told, "We're back!" when full lines sagged  
with not an inch to spare.

New folks in town were scorned upon,  
if wash was dingy grey,  
as neighbors carefully raised their brows  
and looked the other way.

But clotheslines now are of the past,  
for dryers make work much less.  
Now what goes on inside a home  
is anybody's guess.

I really miss that way of life;  
it was a friendly sign,  
when neighbors knew each other best  
by what hung upon the line.



## **“YOU’LL FEEL A LITTLE PINCH”**

By Dennis Lynch – #335

I’m stick and tired of seeing injections. For over a year after we had Covid vaccines, the evening news showed people getting shots in their arms. Skin is bared, wham-bam the needle plunges in, the vax is injected, a Band-Aid is applied (some have bullseyes on them, which seems rather cart-before-horse), and it’s “next!” Night after night.

I am interested in the ways patients respond to the experience. There are two classes of reactions: the Accepters, who watch the needle enter their arm with interest, and the Deniers (I’m one), who would not be caught dead watching and believe that, if they don’t see it, it’s not happening. How do *you* react?

To me it *is* a “little” pinch. I grew up when PCPs were GPs. There was one office, with a doctor, a nurse, and a receptionist who was probably the doctor’s wife. In the exam room there was an autoclave where needles were sterilized for re-use. I think the GPs got a packet of needles when they graduated and were expected to make them last. And the needles were not thin; a jumbo paper clip would be a better comparison. Now *those* needles really did “pinch”!

Finally, vax sequences bored even the newscasters, and needle sticks all but vanished – until variant viruses came along and cases started climbing. But it didn’t seem as bad, because you could watch the Ukraine war or forest fires ... until ... gas prices started to climb.

Today, needles are replaced by hose nozzles being thrust into the sides of cars. These insertions look PG, but some should be rated R, I think! And at dinnertime, too! Variety today comes not from patient responses, but from gasoline vs. electricity. Progress? Who knows?

## **SHERWOOD OAKS CONNECTIONS ARE EVERYWHERE!**

By Ruth Becker - #340

Where have we been? You might well ask. On Tuesday evening, May 10, 2022, four of us "Oaks Folks" attended a super concert at Heinz Hall. Well, it wasn't "a" concert, exactly – it was "the" 28th in a series: PSO players and PYSO students, SIDE-BY-SIDE. It was exactly as billed: students from 33 high schools across nine counties in SW PA and WVA from the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra sat next to and played with Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra instrumentalists. Students wore white shirts, PSO members, the customary black. Maddy Shipe, from the SO serving staff, played first chair bass!

The program could have been longer, from my point of view. Excerpts from works by Sibelius and Grieg filled most of the hour. The finale was "Danzon No. 2" by Arturo Marquez, with the audience providing some of the percussion by clapping on cue. We were pretty good, too, if I read the facial expressions on the face of Moon Doh, PSO Assistant Conductor, correctly.

Ice cream sandwiches and live jazz performed by students from Pgh CAPA 6-12 provided the encore in the lobby and courtyard.

Can't wait for next year's 29<sup>th</sup> offering!

***"The older I get, the more clearly I remember things that never happened. – Mark Twain***

***"I'm at that age where my back goes out more than I do." – Phyllis Diller***

***"First you forget names, then you forget faces, then you forget to pull your zipper up, then you forget to pull your zipper down." – Leo Rosenberg***



## **YOUR RESPONSES TO “WHY I/WE LIVE AT SHERWOOD OAKS”**

By the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee and the Sherwood Oaks Marketing Department want to thank all of you – over 80 so far – for submitting your reasons for coming to Sherwood Oaks. It is interesting to see what other residents list as their reasons. Moreover, the marketing department will be able to use this information in their literature. We will also include it in our feature articles in assorted media regarding our “40 Years of Excellence.” You, too, may be able to help with marketing among friends who may be researching senior communities.

The #1 reason given was the importance of continuing care provided here: from independent living to personal care, dementia care, and skilled nursing. We have become more aware that most senior communities do not necessarily provide this full spectrum of care. Many have two or three levels of care, but not all four.

The second most important reason is the unique control residents have in the community through the Sherwood Oaks Residents Association’s activity and the operating committees. There is no social director or recreation department to make these decisions. Residents control all activities through the twenty activity committees, and they provide input to the Administration through the ten operating committees. Most of our residents are involved in one or more of these, showing how important they consider this benefit.

The beauty of the campus, grounds, and homes is the third most reported reason for selecting Sherwood Oaks, along with the benefit of being situated in the middle of Cranberry Township, with every imaginable store, restaurant, medical facility, church, library, and post office within two miles of our gate. This “Hidden Gem,” in a very

convenient area, may be a pleasant surprise even to longtime Pittsburgh-area residents.

There were many other reasons given: the friendly atmosphere; being near a family member; children not having to worry about their parents; pets allowed; no worries about maintenance, cooking, grass cutting, snow removal; and convenient van transportation schedules.

Thank you again for your input. It is most valuable.

## **THE LIBRARY LOWDOWN**

By Barbara Christy - #237

Where are they all going? Many books are being returned to the library without their sign-out card in the front pocket. If you use the computer to sign out your books, please don’t remove the card, as it will be needed for the next person who does not use the computer. Thank you.

Based on recommendations from residents, we have ordered a new magazine – *The Week*. We hope you will come by soon and check it out.

## **AQUA**

By Natalia Rose Wagner, age 10

Submitted by her grandmother,  
Catherine Wagner - #731

Aqua is an ocean, on a summer day,  
Aqua is a vacation, a break from reality,  
Aqua is a sky, on a paradise island,  
Aqua is a sunset walk near the beach,  
Aqua tastes like a nicely seasoned fish,  
Aqua smells like a summer beach morning,  
Aqua sounds like waves breaking on a  
beautiful summer day,  
Aqua feels like a soft, cuddly cat,  
Aqua looks like a small boutique on a  
paradise island,  
Aqua makes me want to live on the beach,  
Aqua is an ocean, on a summer day.



## THEY WALK BY NIGHT

By Don Gowan - #173

Darlene and I were lying in bed one night, in the first house that we rented in Texas, when we heard a soft tapping/rapping noise on the wooden floor out in the hall. *Click, click, click ... click, click, click, click, click, ... click, click;* moving slowly, pausing, then rapidly, pausing ... and coming down the hall toward the bedroom. We hadn't been in Texas very long, and we had never heard a sound like that before (we would encounter more Texas creatures later), so we lay there, listening and waiting, as it came nearer, down the long hallway. When it entered the bedroom, we were ready: we turned on the light, and it was – a mouse.

It scampered. Darlene shut the door, and I grabbed the nearest weapon and vigorously chased after the mouse until I got it. Then we saw what had made the noise. The mouse had evidently squeezed through a tiny hole somewhere in the plastered wall, and a fragment of plaster had got caught on one of its legs. The plaster had been hitting the floor with every step, as the mouse made its way down the hall to visit us.

Obviously, it is not good to try to sneak up on people while walking on a wooden floor with a plaster cast, as the mouse found out.

Now, as a testimonial to Sherwood Oaks, let me say that I have been acquainted with mice throughout my long life, but I have lost all connection with them since I moved here. Indeed, in the past 10½ years I have never seen mice in my home – or even heard one walking about. I don't miss them.

## INVASIVE JUMPING EARTHWORMS

Shared by Diane Neely - #351

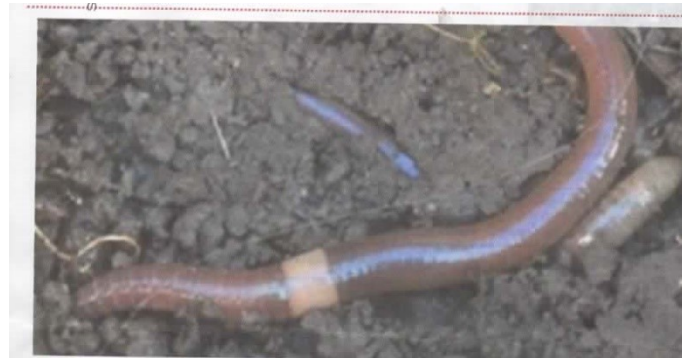


Photo from Cornell Cooperative Extension

We need to be aware that Asian jumping earthworms have been seen at Sherwood Oaks. An invasive species, they devour organic matter more rapidly than their European counterparts, stripping the forest of the layer critical for seedlings and wildflowers. They can severely damage the roots of plants in nurseries, gardens, forests, and turf.

These worms can be recognized by the prominent gray or milky-white band wrapped around their bodies; known as the clitellum, it is where cocoons are produced. One telltale sign of an infestation is a very uniform, granular soil, created from worm castings, with a texture similar to that of coffee grounds.

Be careful when sharing and moving plants; always check for worms and know where your plantings come from. Buy bare root stock when possible. If you find a small population of jumping worms, handpick and destroy them by bagging them and leaving them out in the sun for at least ten minutes before throwing the bag away.

If you find jumping worms in your garden, avoid moving plants or soil. Report the infestation to : <[www.nyimainvasives.org](http://www.nyimainvasives.org)>.

***"The important thing to remember is that I'm probably going to forget." – Anon.***

## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #715

Unit 5 of the Climate Solutions 101 program produced by Project Drawdown is titled "Putting It All Together"; its description of the unit is as follows: 'Clear paths to safe, equitable drawdown exist today: reducing sources, supporting sinks, and building a more equal human society all play pivotal roles. Take a closer look – from critical features to dollars and cents – at Project Drawdown's Framework for Climate Solutions, and explore dozens of known paths to a more hopeful inflection point. Learn why comprehensive, equitable climate action is the largest business and job creation opportunity in human history.' Watch Channel 901 on **June 13**.

On April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day was celebrated, with 20 million Americans demonstrating their support for saving the planet from humanity.

And here we are, 52 years later, with particulate levels in the air at dangerous points and water in the western parts of the U.S. at record-low levels, due to what *Scientific American* calls the worst megadrought in 1,200 years.

The primary reason for all of this is the burning of fossil fuels. While economics has greatly diminished the use of coal as a power source, "Big Oil" has employed, among other things, the playbook of "Big Tobacco" to push back any attempts to reduce the use of petroleum and natural gas. Congress must pass legislation to "stop the burn."

### Current "Carbon Tax" Legislation

Learn more about the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend bill, with 96 co-sponsors, at [www.energyinnovationact.org](http://www.energyinnovationact.org).

For constantly updated information on the climate crisis, follow @CCLSlipperyRock on Facebook.



### OUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE ORIGINAL

By Harriet Burress - #112

Some years ago, John and I, along with his cousin and his wife, visited the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. We were standing in front of van Gogh's "Irises," which in 1987 had been sold to an Australian at an art auction for \$54 million. The museum had purchased it in 1990 "for an undisclosed price."

Jeanne, who had been President of the American Iris Society, and Bob perused the painting. With arms folded, Jeanne finally said, "They really aren't good irises."

What do you think? There is a copy of van Gogh's "Irises" in the downstairs hallway of the Center. Take a look!



## WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

(SO Residents Association)

By Jean Henderson, Secretary - #346

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

Summary of reports and actions for the  
**May 17, 2022**, board meeting:

TREASURERS: Memorial/Special Projects Fund balance is \$117,297.52. Employee Appreciation Fund balance is \$16,752.44. The SORA bank balance is \$83,663.46.

ADMINISTRATION: Annette McPeck reported. Census: IL 198 units with 248 residents; SNU 37/43; PC 38/42, and OGC 29/30. Three homes are under contract. Butler County current positivity rate is 14.01%. The most popular post on SO social media was the SpringFest: 4,400 people and 88 reactions. Lineage Logistics, our neighbor to the north, is addressing the loud fan noise. Residents will be invited to review a solar power study. The Auditorium Task Force met with the UPMC project manager and LGA Architects April 25.

OLD BUSINESS: The 40<sup>th</sup>-anniversary dinner will be on September 15.

NEW BUSINESS: The Board approved two expenditures from the Memorial/Special Projects Fund: \$50,000 for the Auditorium Project, and \$20,859 for the WiFi project.

VISITORS: Fifteen residents attended.

*The next SORA Board meeting is Tuesday, **June 7, 2022**. The annual residents' meeting is **June 14, 2022**.*

## TULIPS BY THE GATEHOUSE



Photo by Kathie McCormick

### FAMILY SAYINGS

In our family, we don't hide crazy ... we put it on the porch and give it a cocktail. (Anon.)

Blood is thicker than water. (German proverb)

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family. (Thomas Jefferson)

The most extraordinary thing in the world is two ordinary people and their ordinary children. (Gilbert K. Chesterton)

A person travels the world over in search of what is needed and returns home to find it. (George Moore)

The family is one of nature's masterpieces. (George Santayana)

I have learned that to be with those I like is enough. (Walt Whitman)

Make yourself necessary to someone. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

# Summer Scenes



a silent surprise  
among the garden's chaos  
found serenity



youthful memories  
the boardwalk allows  
never forgotten



dad's gentle coaching  
the giving and receiving  
candid direction



an astounding find  
geraniums thriving  
on wild Plum Island



tumbling from a basket  
red ripe farm-fresh tomatoes  
a true summer's delight



bent storm-blown dune grass  
Mother Nature's reminder  
beauty has history

Photos and haiku by Julie Eden