

# THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER

100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

[www.sherwood-oaks.com](http://www.sherwood-oaks.com)

May 2024 “For the residents, by the residents” Vol. 43, No. 5

## *Sunrise at Sherwood Oaks* *March 26, 2024*



Photo by Bob Batykefer

Gentle Readers,

Welcome to May, the month of Mother's Day and the Pittsburgh Marathon, among other things. It is also a time for transplanting. No more killing frost! Our stunning house plants and new hanging baskets make their debuts, brightening the walkways and backyards.

Plants are not the only living things that thrive by being transplanted. After all, every one of the Sherwood Oaks residents has been transplanted, too.

Are we/you:

1. getting the appropriate amount of sunshine and fresh air?
2. appreciating the nutrients on our plates, not just vitamins and minerals, but the refinement of the food?
3. enjoying being with the other transplants who enhance our delight and satisfaction?

Since we have all been "transplanted" to Sherwood Oaks, let's be mindful of how our "garden" grows – How we all blossom and flourish. How together we form a stunning, nourishing, and fruitful landscape for our families, friends and neighbors.

Soon, June will be "busting out all over." Celebrate the moments. Tend the garden!

- Ruth Becker for the Acorn Staff

## MAY CALENDAR

May Day	1
Kentucky Derby	4
Pittsburgh Marathon	5
Ascension Day	9
Mother's Day	12
Malcolm X Day	17
Plant Something Day	19
National Solitaire Day	22
Memorial Day	27
Hug Your Cat Day	30

### **THE ACORN**

#### **Editor**

Rosemary Coffey  
rosemarycoffey@aol.com

#### **Assistant Editor**

Jan Wendt

#### **Staff**

Ruth Becker  
Deborah Darnbrough

#### **Production Editor**

Tabby Alford

#### **Ex Officio**

Annette McPeck

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

**May 15, 2024.**

## Memorial Donations and Remembrance Cards

Did you know? Donation envelopes and remembrance cards are on the memorial table in the lobby. The donation envelope lists many options to choose from when contributing in memory of a resident or loved one. Remembrance cards can be filled out and placed in Cubby #346; they will be collected and given to the spouse/family.

### ***IN MEMORIAM***

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

*Herman Stippelmans*                      *March 26, 2024*

*Robert Conte*                                      *April 3, 2024*

*Frank Conte*                                      *April 15, 2024*

## CAROL AND REED HARVEY - #235

By Jan Wendt - #158 [May '24]



Photo by Jan Wendt

Reed Harvey had a pleasant conversation with his new next-door neighbor, Wally Christy. The name and face seemed somewhat familiar. Next day, he asked Wally if he had gone to Westminster College. The answer, of course, was Yes. Both had graduated in the Class of 1962.

But Reed and wife Carol had other connections with Sherwood Oaks, including fellow church members Rick and Bobbie Berg, Marilyn and Denton Bond, and Al-ick Kennedy (their former pastor). Ann Ferguson and Janet Desko had both taught in the Northgate School District with them. They also knew Bruce Cooper through the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale, where Carol was a singer and Reed was on the Board of Directors.

The couple moved here from Freedom Crossing, where they had lived for 9 years after selling a large log home they had designed and built in Economy. That home was a labor of love, including a 1200-square-foot dance floor in the basement that they installed themselves.

Dance and music have been the ties that bound this duo together from the

start. They met as teachers at Northgate School District – Carol taught Business, and Reed taught Social Studies. When the faculty gathered during downtime, Carol and Reed brought their guitars and led the crew in singing (remember hootenannies?). Reed's first wife had died and Carol was single – music seemed to be the glue that sealed the pair. They will celebrate their 46<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June. Following their teaching careers, both had second acts, she as a court reporter, he as a financial advisor.

From his first marriage, Reed has one living son, who is the golf pro at Hershey's Mill in West Chester, PA. Their granddaughter is a magna cum laude graduate of Pitt, now working at Magee Women's Hospital in the infertility clinic. A grandson is a sophomore at Pitt-Johnstown.

For years, the pair were very active in country dancing, "The Butler Two-Steppers," sharing as well a mutual love of southern Gospel music. The latter led them to vacation for many years at the Gaither Family Festival in Tennessee.

Reed rehearses weekly in a men's gospel group consisting of eight voices and a pianist. The singers, together for sixteen years, perform at long-term care facilities and other venues throughout the North Hills.

Within days of their move, the couple joined our chorus. Carol has also jumped into the drama club, the welcome committee, and volunteering in the gift shop. In addition, she is interested in the Sherwood Neighbors' vigil group. She loves to walk for exercise.

This couple is active, so you'll see them often. Take a minute and maybe find that you, also, have something in common with these new friends.



## AND NOW ... FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER!

By Jan Wendt - #158



Photo by Jan Wendt

The fact that Annette McPeck is a 40-year Pirates fan gives one a glimpse into her level of patience and optimism. Those qualities have served her well in a nine-year tenure as Sherwood Oaks' CEO. This is remarkable, too, when you discover that her name badge when she first came on campus read "Temporary Clerical."

It was autumn of 2005. While painting a statue of the Blessed Mother in her backyard (perhaps a sign?), Annette took a call from a former colleague about the need for a fill-in finance person here, as the CFO had resigned. Although not sure about working in a "senior" community, she saw the close proximity to her home as a draw, at a time when husband Bill travelled a lot for work and she was shuttling two kids to school and various activities. She told administrators that she'd sign on for 90 days.

The Richland Township native found that the finance staff was down yet another

position by the time she came aboard, so she did her best to reorganize the tasks at hand and get the job done. "Mark [then-CEO Mark Bondi] was a tremendous mentor." From her description, it sounds as though he kept a watchful eye, but trusted her to innovate and create. Two months later, she was offered a fulltime slot as Sherwood Oaks CFO.

From 2005 through 2015, Annette crunched our numbers and became a fan of the beautiful campus and the interesting residents. When Mark Bondi moved on to lead UPMC Senior Communities, she stepped into his shoes and the corner office.

She muses that her favorite part of the position has always been the ability to "help somebody," even as she learned that she worked best with staff and residents when they found her to be "approachable." She adds, "I learn something every day from the residents."

When asked to name some of her favorite accomplishments, Annette glances out the window of her corner office. "I look at the apartments and am proud of that, along with the Oak Grove and the '600' houses," all completed during her tenure. She is also happy to see the campus walkway improvements coming to fruition.

Interestingly, she also names the addition of the left-turn lane onto Rochester Road. "I had worked for several years with Jerry Andre (Cranberry Township Manager at the time). I knew how fast the traffic whizzed by on Rochester Road and had nearly been hit myself several times just trying to turn **right**. I was really worried that our residents could easily be hit trying to turn left." Jerry heard her, and it was done.

“Now the swans, that was a leap of faith.” Having observed a single, visiting swan around the lake, Annette had noticed that the goose traffic was greatly reduced. When she heard of a couple who had two swans available, she ran the idea up the UPMC flagpole. With liability and other issues settled, Sherman and Oakley moved in, and the rest is history.

The Covid-19 pandemic proved to be the “best of times and the worst of times.” She was sailing in uncharted territory, but had the infectious disease specialists at UPMC to lean on and is especially grateful to Dr. David Nace and Theresa Murillo. She found herself overwhelmed by the resiliency of her staff. “They really came together,” she says proudly, “and we kept everyone safe.”

One of those she looked out for was her own mother, Betty Jackson, who made Sherwood Oaks her home, and who died recently. During Betty’s last weeks, Annette felt most heartened by the prayers of residents and staff. “I truly felt the love and care,” she recalls.

Looking ahead to the days after her departure on May 17, this CPA will continue to follow her beloved Pirates – “Baseball is a numbers game, you know.” She became hooked in 1982 when, tuning in to watch an episode of “Dallas,” she instead found herself watching the Buccos with her Dad. It became something they shared for the rest of his life. She opines that this year’s team looks promising, though “I always think they can improve their base-running skills.”

If she and her Dad shared baseball, she and her Mom relished reading and discussing their favorite books by authors such as Maeve Binchy and Rosamunde Pilcher. Annette likes a good mystery and

has a list of books to catch up with, now that time permits.

Annette will spend time in her tomato patch and brushing up on the piano, which she studied as a girl and hasn’t had time for in ages. There will also be the annual family trip to the beach, an anticipated wedding in August, and some weekends at Bedford Springs Resort with Bill. Oh, and a new grandbaby is due near year’s end!

Annette also plans to volunteer at Sherwood Oaks, likely as a Eucharistic Minister. She is heartened to be handing the reins, at least for a while, back to Mark Bondi. She knows of his fondness for this community and his appreciation for the things that make it unique.

I had one last question: Why pink? Annette is known to all for her affinity for the rosy tones, which are a trademark of her attire. No secret at all – she just loves the color. Even her bathroom is pink.

All in all, the Lady in Pink has left a significant mark on Sherwood Oaks after nearly 19 years of service. Grateful for her contributions, we celebrate with her as she explores the world of retirement, something we all know a little about.

We do plan to say, “Goodbye, Annette, and welcome to your new life,” but before that happens we are all invited to attend a Farewell Reception for her on **May 14, in the Card Room, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.** Don’t miss it!

---

*I never thought orthopedic shoes would really work for me. But I stand corrected.*

*Once upon a time there was a king who was only 12 inches tall. He was a terrible king, but he made a great ruler.*

## NEW PLAY

By Barbara Dixon - #335

Ellen Brierly and members of the Drama Club's Sherwood Oaks Players have collaborated to write and perform a new radio play. This work is a modification of Ellen's class on "How to Write Your Life Story," but is made up of real-life stories of Drama Club members.

Two performances will be offered, a Dinner Theatre on **Thursday, May 9, at 5:00 p.m.** and a free Matinee on **Saturday, May 11, at 1:00 p.m.** Dinner Theatre information was to have been available to residents in mid-April.

## POKER CLUB

(AKA The Hollister Game)

By Larry Brown - #617

A few years back, Jim Hollister approached me to suggest that we start a poker group. He had a wonderful poker table (subsequently donated to Sherwood Oaks) that was begging to be used. We never got off the ground, as Jim became ill before we could start. Recently, however, I was again approached about creating a poker group and thought it would be a good move.

Many details remain to be worked out, but here are a few ideas to begin with:

- Play would be once a month.
- Game would be located on lower level of Oak Grove building.
- It would be a unisex game – all players welcome.
- Stakes would be determined.
- The game would be regular poker: 3-card draw, 5- and 7-card stud, hi/low, no wild card games, and no Texas hold-'em.

Since the table and the idea to create the club started with Jim, I suggest we call it The Hollister Game. Hopefully, we can start in June. I will place a sign-up sheet in the Mail Room for residents to indicate interest – or feel free to email me directly at <lrberman@gmail.com>.

## BOOK CLUB

By Ruth Lasure - #306

The book discussion group meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the Chapel on the lower level. All are welcome.

On **May 14** we'll talk about Victoria Woodhull, the 1st woman to run for President of the United States. Read any biography or research her life to spark a discussion on the evolution of women's rights since 1872.

Then on **June 11** we will discuss "West with Giraffes" by Lynda Rutledge, a novel based on the true story of the San Diego Zoo's first giraffes' journey from Africa to San Diego in 1938. Please join us!

## Spring at Sherwood Oaks



Photo by Kathie McCormick



## HELP WANTED: ACORN STAFFERS

By Current Acorn Staff

After the June/Summer issue of **The Acorn** goes to press in late May, the staff will take a brief hiatus, as is our custom, until we gather to create the September issue. As with every activity at Sherwood Oaks, we are eager for fresh insights and the participation of some new residents interested in the writing and production of our community's monthly newsletter.

You don't have to be a veteran reporter or photographer to help out! If you're curious about what goes on around our campus, we can find a spot for you and tailor it to the time you can commit.

Moreover, even if you're not sure about an ongoing commitment, we welcome your thoughts about format and content.

Please contact Rosemary Coffey (#113) or Jan Wendt (#158) to let us know of your interest.

## MAINTENANCE TRIVIA

By Jean Henderson - #346

Did you know that our Maintenance Department cares for

- 85 acres of land
- 106 structures
- 1+ miles of roadway
- 15 parking areas
- 3+ miles of sidewalk
- an 18-acre lake, and
- a 16'-high dam?

In addition, the Department last year responded to over 7000 work orders. These dealt with 352 toilets, 91 sinks, 261 HVAC units, 109 electrical issues, 4317 general problems, and 1082 grounds concerns. We are so grateful for this hardworking group of men and women!

## SHERWOOD OAKS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

By Donald McBurney - #206

Like many of us, I worked my way through college: washing dishes, cutting hair, painting houses, even cleaning wallpaper in smoky western PA. It helped me to appreciate my education, and even learn some skills that have benefited my life since then. The same is true of the young people who serve us here in the dining hall, and in the maintenance and nursing departments. Some of them are inspired to go on to careers in elder care.

Here at Sherwood Oaks we have a way to encourage college students in their careers. The Sherwood Oaks Scholarship Fund is a rare feature of retirement communities. Last year we received \$88,065 from residents, with an average gift of \$648. Together with our endowment, these gifts enabled us to fund 48 grants of \$2,400 each. Those who read the applications are always impressed with the hopes and plans they reveal. Moreover, the letters we get back from the recipients demonstrate their appreciation of our generosity.

Please make your checks payable to Sherwood Oaks Fund, with Scholarship Fund in the memo line. You may leave the checks at the front desk to the attention of Tabby Alford. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

Let's pay it forward!



*My friend claims that he "accidentally" glued himself to his autobiography, though I don't believe him. But that's his story, and he's sticking to it.*

## ARTISTS' GALLERY

By Joni Pun - #304

I hope you are enjoying the new black and white theme of some of the charcoal sketches that were done in the recent class given by Jim Prokep. They are very striking.

But now it is May again, which means that we run our annual exhibit of works that were done by our mothers, fathers, children – in short, by any relative. Please let me know what you would like to display, the title (if any), the name of the person who created it and his/her relation to you, and the medium used. As always, the works must be ready to be hung, with a wire in the back. Enjoy the exhibit!

## CURIO CABINETS FOR MAY/JUNE

By Janet Desko - #210

I'm sure all the "Special Women In Our Lives" would love to have seen the wonderful items residents brought to fill the curio cabinets for our April/May theme.

On **May 21**, please pick up your "Special Women in our Lives" items from **10:30 - noon** and from **4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

In May/June, we will be celebrating "**Dads.**" So on **May 23**, from **10:30 - noon** and from **4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**, bring us your "Dad" items: photographs, mementos, clothing, hats, ties, jewelry – things that remind you of a special dad.

*"My father didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it."* – Clarence Budington Kelland

## ACTIVITIES FAIR 2024 – WHAT FUN!

By Jean Henderson - #346

Congratulations to Sherwood Oaks for a successful Activities Fair! We welcomed over 85 residents and more than 70 workers during the 3 hours on March 19. Now it's time for the follow up – do volunteer for committees and activities! It makes living at SO attractive and keeps us all young. Thanks again for your hard work.

## SHERWOOD OAKS ARCHIVES

By Joe and Peg Rychcik - #297

As your community's Archivists, we (gently but firmly!) have a request relating to items placed on the bulletin boards in the mailroom announcing future events: Once the events have happened, please place the items in the box marked ARCHIVES, located on the lowest and rightmost shelf of the cubbyholes. Also, printed programs from events occurring in the community should be placed in the ARCHIVES cubbyhole as well. Thank you for helping keep the Sherwood Oaks archives historically accurate!

## BELLS AND CHORUS SPRING CONCERT

### "SPRING MESSAGE & MUSIC"

By Jean Henderson - #346

**May 5, 2024**, will be a SPECIAL MAY DAY for music at Sherwood Oaks! At 2:00 p.m. in the Auditorium, join Rev. Ben Robbins for Chapel Worship, along with the Hand Bells and Chorus, as we celebrate Spring together. Former bell ringers will be recognized with a special gift. Do come support our ringers and singers, directed by Lyn Marsh, and enjoy worship together.



## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

Those of us who live in southwestern Pennsylvania have been fairly safe from severe effects of climate change. But the weather we've experienced during the winter and early spring of 2024 has certainly been unusual, if not really strange. On April 4, the Ohio River crested at 28.3 feet, which is more than 12 feet above the normal pool. So, instead of launching rowing shells from my rowing club's boathouse on Washington's Landing, it will be all-hands-on-deck to clean all of the gunk out of the flooded boat bays.

I row for recreation and for lifting my spirits; but I could be a farmer in western Pennsylvania who must now figure out a new time to plant crops and hope that another huge rainstorm doesn't wipe out my planting. Moreover, other parts of the country will probably not be so lucky. For instance, between already warm Atlantic Ocean temperatures and a larger-than-normal El Niño in the Pacific Ocean, the forecast is for a great number of major hurricanes this year.

Meanwhile, the climate crisis is already here. If you watched the Earth Day Marathon on Channel 951, you know that we have solutions; what is lacking is the political will to implement them. Please keep that in mind when you enter the voting booth this November.

**Watch *Climate Change – What Will Our Lives Look Like in 2050?* on Channel 951 on Monday, May 13, at 10:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m., or 7:00 p.m. The Encore presentation is on Wednesday, May 15, at 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.**

## PAPERBACK PONDERINGS

By Jean Henderson - #346

After years of wishin' and hopin' – it has finally happened! The paperback room in the Library has been reorganized so that all novels are in order by author from A to Z, and biographies, non-fiction books, and authors with several titles are all shelved so they can be easily found.

We are grateful to Annette McPeck for the donation of her mother's bookcase, which now houses the non-fiction books.

This summer, some unique music books will be added to the room, on the initiative of Jno Hunt. They include many interesting items!

Remember, there's no need to check out your book. Just put a checkmark on the inside back cover when you return it.

We operate with donations only! No budget! So we invite you to share.

### FROM A PUB WALL IN DEVON

Shared by Jane Lavender - #253

SEE DERE DAYGO,  
FORTE LORIZ INARO.  
DAYENT LORIZ,  
DAY IS TRUX –  
FULLA COUS ANENZ ANDUX.

Having trouble? Need help reading the message? Below is the transliteration:

SEE THERE THEY GO,  
FORTY LORRIES IN A ROW.  
THEY AREN'T LORRIES  
THEY ARE TRUCKS –  
FULL OF COWS AND HENS AND  
DUCKS.

## WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

### (SO Residents Association)

By Jane Lohman, Secretary - 717

NOTE: Complete minutes are always available for review on the SORA bulletin board in the mailroom and in the SORA binder in the library.

Data from minutes for the April 9, 2024, monthly board meeting:

SORA Treasurers: Memorial/Special Projects Fund balance is \$37,131.64, with \$14,733.01 in the Employee Appreciation Fund, plus a short-term CD of \$20,000. The SORA operating treasury balance and CD investment comes to \$87,103.17. The Finance Committee is expecting committee budget requests for next year.

#### Liaison Reports:

Dining Committee: The Malibu burger has been added to the Always Available Menu, and olive oil packets are now on the salad bar. The spring/summer menu will begin in early May.

Sherwood Gifts: Sales increased in March. The Annex has slides of available furniture on Channel 950 in hopes of building interest.

Art Studio: A calligraphy class was to begin in late April. Results of the sketching class are on the Art Wall in the scooter room.

Handbells and Chorus: Concert is planned for **Sunday, May 5**, as part of the chapel service.

Archives: Please remember to place notices taken from the bulletin boards in the mail room in the box marked Archives on the lowest shelf of the cubbyholes.

Woodshop: Project undertaken to allow residents to select and put together various nesting bird houses; examples and sign-up sheet are on the table outside the dining room.

Health Affairs: Masking by staff or residents is no longer required. A podiatrist is making regular visits on the first Tuesday of each month. Three Health Letters approved for subscriptions will be placed in the Medical Office.

Drama Club: A play titled "Let Us Entertain You" will be performed as a dinner/theater on **May 9**, with a matinee on **May 11**.

Library Committee: Barbara Christy and Anne Hunt will be rotating management responsibilities on a semi-annual basis. The paperback room has been reorganized and will now include books on the arts that had previously been stored in the Music Room.

Farm Gardens: 44 of 46 raised beds are currently being used by 26 gardeners. Water will be turned on in early May.

Technology: Bruce Cooper has put together 72 hours of programming centering around Earth Day.

Executive Director: Census: IL 189 (occupied) / 245 (available) — 8 homes under contract. SN 31/43 (5-star CMS rating); PC: 27/42; OGC: 28/30. Marketing events planned for April and May.

Housekeeping: Cranberry Lake Grill and Oak Lodge Rooms/Patio Home Suites will be available for resident gatherings and rentals in May. Reservations can be made through Tabby Alford.

Photographer: Will be on site **June 4**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., in the Chapel for residents to update their photos in the book in the lobby.

Retirement Date: Annette McPeek has submitted May 17 as her official date of retirement.

Old Business: Awaiting bids on final parts of Summerhouse project and approval of funding. Hope to schedule some work this spring.

New Business: Nominating Committee is seeking individuals for the June election of three unfilled positions on the SORA Board. Two new social events—bingo and poker—are under consideration as on-going activities. Jason Lyle reported on possible changes to the SOAPP, resulting from a change in proprietary ownership from Touchtown to Uniguest.

Next Monthly Board Meeting: **Tues., May 7, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Card Room.

---

## SORA OFFICERS AND BOARD NOMINATIONS

To be voted on at the **June 11, 2024**, Annual Meeting

Submitted by Jno Hunt, Nominating Committee Chair - #308

**President:** Jean Henderson, eligible for 1<sup>st</sup> 1-year term

**Vice President:** Bruce Cooper, eligible for 1<sup>st</sup> 1-year term

**Secretary:** Rosemary Coffey, eligible for 1<sup>st</sup> 1-year term

**Treasurer:** Peter Broeren is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year term; no action needed

**Assistant Treasurer:** Patsy Grant, eligible for 1<sup>st</sup> year of a 3-year term

**Operating Treasurer:** Beth Brown is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year term; no action needed.

**Directors:** The Nominating Committee has recommended the following residents to serve on the Board for their 1<sup>st</sup> term of two years:

Mary Gail Korsmeyer, Joe Schulties, George Steffey

The Committee recommends the following for re-election to a 2<sup>nd</sup> two-year term:

Dan Cindric, Kathy McCormick, Peggy Rubel

The following Board member will be completing the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of her 2<sup>nd</sup> two-year term; no action needed: Barbara Scruggs

The following Board members will be completing the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of their 1<sup>st</sup> two-year terms; no action needed: Lois Greer, Jno Hunt, Jim Hvidding.

## RECYCLING NOTES

By Ruth Inkpen - #225

Up-to-date Recycling Guidelines were in mailboxes last week (...“it’s a lot of words,” said she). Yes, it is, but that’s recycling.

Note that almost all of our takeout plastic containers are recyclable (if CLEAN, please!); they are #5 plastic. The *exceptions* are the *square clear* plastic containers for desserts, sandwiches, and salads from the café sideboard; **they are #6 plastic and not acceptable**; toss them out.

Paper: NO paper cups, please – they are not recyclable even if washed.

Thanks to maintenance staff for transporting the glass to the Pine Township facility.

The TREX bench project: Thanks to all who continue to put plastic bags and film of all kinds in the blue bags hanging in each trash room. We’ve collected over 700 of the 1000 pounds TREX requires. I think it’s safe to say that we’ll have another bench by sometime this summer.



## FURRY FELINES OF SHERWOOD OAKS: PART #8

By Kathie McCormick - #188

Here is JAKE, an eleven-year-old Maine Coon Cat, who lives with Kathy and Gary Bleakley in #265.



Jake had a birthday coming up on April 11, when he would turn 11. He has a fancy name: *Kennebec Jake F. Fuzzy Fitzgerald*.

In his youth, he climbed tall ladders and traversed lofty beams to look over everything from above. He also had a larger dwelling to patrol and lots of hiding places. In addition, he has always loved to play with toys and is open to new games, like leaping out and attacking from behind the shower curtain.

The move to Sherwood Oaks was stressful, but he found lots of activities to supervise: the laying of new floors, painting, and visits from many new friends and old ones.

Jake enjoys his “tree” as a base from which to watch the outside critters. He

gets treats when he jumps on the laundry room counter and also chases treats on a real spinning wheel!

Needless to say, he is a well-loved pet who involves himself in any activity. After all, he has to keep track of his people and get lots of attention and cuddles!

\*\*\*\*\*

Now let's meet LEW, who lives with Joanne Schollaert in #216.



After Joanne suddenly lost her cat “Big Bill” (to natural causes), she knew she had to get another feline companion. Lew was the first cat she saw at Animal Friends, and she decided to bring him home: he looked so much like her Bill.

Lew is a lovely 3½-year-old, who is very outgoing and affectionate. He loves his food and enjoys meeting people. He does “zoomies” around his home and loves to play with his toys – he has lots!

Lew's favorite place is his perch in the sunroom, from which he checks out everything that goes by – birds at the feeder, people walking by, critters playing in the yard. He knows the bedtime routine and also knows when to get up! His “meows” are an ideal alarm clock!

\*\*\*\*\*

Here come Finn and Farley, two 7-month-old kittens who entertain Katherine Montgomery in #214.



These siblings came home from the Butler Humane Society around Christmas – a delightful Christmas present! Katherine’s young male cat, Orpheus, had been quite unhappy after his long-time companion, Samantha, died at the tender age of 20. He is great with the kittens and clearly appreciates the company.

The kittens liven up the household with their endless energy and antics! There is a big cat tree adorning the living room that provides opportunities for leaping and climbing. The whole patio home is a racetrack on occasion. They love boxes and strings – fancy toys evidently aren’t as much fun as a box!! Amazingly enough, the looms, spinning wheels, and balls of yarn are left intact. But bobbins, corks, hair ties, and twist ties are often found under the sofa! The patio is clearly their favorite room.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I got into a fight today with 1,3,5,7, and 9. The odds were really against me.*

*97% of people are stupid. I’m so glad I’m in the other 5%.*

## CONTINUED LEARNING

Submitted by Jno L. Hunt - #308

We enjoyed an exciting and educational series of presentations in March and April. Unfortunately, the presentation “Raising and Farming Bees” by Buzz Swank had to be cancelled due to a conflict with the eclipse on April 8. We will try to reschedule Buzz for our fall series. We are, in fact, actively working on our programs for October and November, with a varied list of topics from opera to foreign affairs.

In the meantime, we have scheduled a regular series of programs on Channel 951. Initial airings on Tuesdays are at 10:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. Encore presentations are usually on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

**Tues., May 7:** Leonard Bernstein—Opera. Encore on Thurs., May 9

**Tues., May 14:** Connections—Faith in Numbers. Encore on Thurs., May 16

**Tues., May 21:** Travel/Local Interest—Portugal Travel Documentary. Encore on Thurs., May 23

**Tues., May 28:** Lost Christianities (9 & 10). Encore on Thurs., May 30

### One of Many Eclipse Watchers



Photo by Kathie McCormick

## **A THANK-YOU FROM THE FAMILY OF JOHN BURRESS**

By Harriet Burress - #112

With John's being a resident of Skilled Nursing here at Sherwood Oaks for 16 months, and my spending hours with him there each day, I and my family would like to express our heartfelt thanks to his doctors, his CRNPs, his nurses, his aides (who were his "angels in disguise"), and all other personnel of Skilled Nursing and Physical Therapy. Their expertise, kindness, and "tender loving care" were very much appreciated.

ALSO: Thanks go to the Security, House-keeping, and Dining staffs, along with anyone else who made possible John's Celebration of Life. Words cannot express our sincere appreciation.

### **WATER WOES!**

By John Bridges - #122

Looking back, I realize that living in fairly primitive conditions during the Second World War prepared me for experiences and conditions I would meet in later life. There was, for instance, no electricity, so oil lamps had to have their wicks trimmed each day and the glass chimneys cleaned of soot. How much simpler is life today when all one has to do for light is to flick a switch! Similarly, since there was no supply from any mains, water had to be carried each day in a couple of buckets from the Village Pump, half a mile down the road.

In Kenya, I enjoyed an occasional soak in a bathtub after a week of rigorous patrols for the Kenya Police at an altitude of 8,000 feet. Unfortunately, the mason had gotten the internal and external dimensions mixed up when building the tub with 6" stone blocks, so that what I

got was almost a swimming pool. There was almost a groan of horror, when the Bwana Mkubwa (Big Boss) said that he wanted a bath. The water, slung in a couple of empty kerosene cans, had to be carried up by a couple of donkeys from a stream 1000 ft. below. It then had to be boiled in saucepans on wood fires in the kitchen, before being carried to my "bathroom" (if that is an adequate word for that space in my mud hut).

When I married Sheila in Trinidad, our first house was up a hillside. We often had to wait until 11 p.m. for enough water pressure to rinse the dishes. Electricity also seemed to have trouble traveling uphill, since the radio would lapse into silence when the breakfast toaster was pushed down – only to blare forth again when the toast popped up.

In Ghana, we considered ourselves lucky if we had all three – water, telephone, and electricity – on the same day. If water failed but there was electricity, we could then collect drips from the air conditioner units, providing a wonderful opportunity to obey the ancient family motto, "Nil Desperandum," or "Never Despair."

To conclude this tale of water woes, I would like to introduce our dog, Mwenzi (*companion* in Swahili). He enjoyed swimming at Lake Arthur and drinking the cool clear water on hot summer days. We took him with us when we returned to Africa. There he enjoyed meeting other dogs being taken for walks on the beach, living up to his name as a companion for Sheila, as she adapted once again to living in a strange land. He could enjoy swimming in the sea to avoid the hot tropical sun. But – horror of horrors! – the water tasted terrible: it was salty and truly could not be drunk.



## SHERWOOD OAKS' SECRET GARDEN

(that shouldn't be so secret)

By Ruth Lasure - #306

We here at Sherwood Oaks have a beautiful, but underused, woodland that will soon be filled with trilliums and other wildflowers. Come and visit, finding beauty, solitude, and peace, and replenish your soul in the wonder of this woodland. It's at the end of Norman Drive, between parking lots H and I, where a banner announces the blooms.



---

## THOUGHTS ABOUT TEA

By Sarah Jane Naylor - #139

I got these poems at a High Tea, benefit of the Women's Conference in Titusville, PA, last July. [For the record, Titusville is the site of the discovery of oil in Pennsylvania.] My daughter took me for my 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The whole town chipped in for the Tea: local stores donated decorations and door prizes; groceries provided the fixings for tea sandwiches and sweets; and the local high school football team set up the tables and chairs in a church's Great Room. We all wore fancy hats and brought our China teacups along with us. The youth group served us, providing China teapots for the hot water and a variety of teabags. It was my best birthday party ever, as over 70 ladies sang "Happy Birthday" to me!

## TEA FOR TWO

Tea for two and two for tea,  
Me for you and you for me.

Here we are with TLC  
and friends.

Fancy Ladies Summer Tea,  
Fill your cup with memories.

Tea for two and me for you,  
My friend.

## MY CUP HAS OVERFLOWED

I've never made a fortune  
And it's probably too late now.  
But I don't worry about that much,  
I'm happy anyhow.

And as I go along life's way,  
I'm reaping better than I sowed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer,  
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I haven't got a lot of riches,  
And sometimes the going's tough.  
But I've got loved ones around me,  
And that makes me rich enough.

I thank God for His blessings,  
And the mercies He's bestowed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer,  
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I remember times when things went wrong.

My faith wore somewhat thin.  
But all at once the dark clouds broke,  
And the sun peeped through again.

So God help me not to gripe about  
The tough rows that I've hoed.  
I'm drinking from my saucer,  
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

If God gives me strength and courage,  
When the way grows steep and rough,  
I'll not ask for other blessings,  
I'm already blessed enough.

And may I never be too busy  
To help others bear their loads.  
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer,  
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

## **TOMMY ROBERTS**

By Maggie Bennardo - #211

The Program Committee is proud to present the widely acclaimed jazz pianist, composer, arranger, performer, and historian, Tom Roberts, on **Thurs., May 23, at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium**. Mr. Roberts was last at Sherwood Oaks in 2014. Please plan to welcome his return.

Mr. Roberts is a Pittsburgh native who honed his career in the jazz worlds of New Orleans and Harlem. After joining forces with Leon Redbone and others, in 1999 he produced his first solo album, *Night Cap*. He returned to Pittsburgh in 2006, albeit continuing to tour.

In 2012, the Andy Warhol Museum approached Mr. Roberts to update scores for some silent movies. This led to Mr. Roberts' fervent interest in silent movies and their accompanying music.

Sherwood Oaks residents now once again have the chance to experience Tommy Roberts performing live, while watching the silent movie, "The Tramp." This is an opportunity not to be missed!

## **WORTH A LOOK**

### **BOOKS NEW TO OUR LIBRARY**

By Barbara Christy - #237

*Absolution* by Alice McDermott. Fiction. Tricia was a newlywed who wanted desperately to be a helpmeet for her engineer husband, a consultant to the US Army in Saigon in the late 1950s. Rainey was the eight-year-old daughter of a military wife, also stationed in Viet Nam. When Rainey discovers old letters written by her mother to Tricia, it prompts her to write asking for more information about her mother during that time. What follows is an almost unbelievable description (for those of us who remember the last years of the war) of the

socially constrained world of military (read corporate) wives before the women's liberation movement of the '60s. Trying to build friendships and create meaningful experiences, Tricia is swept into the orbit of Rainey's mom, Charlene, as she conducts a stream of charity work to raise money to support local Catholic orphanages. With Rainey tagging along, Tricia visits homeless infants and children while suffering from a miscarriage of her own. As the current-day exchange of letters reveals, both Tricia and Rainey made choices that would change their lives forever. F MCD

*Preparing for a Better Death* by Dan Morhaim, M.D. Non-fiction. This practical and timely volume covers such topics as: what to expect from palliative and hospice care, what to do when someone you know has dementia, organ donation and body disposition, how to choose and take charge of the care you want, treating pain and anxiety, etc. While not a subject we approach cheerily, this book can answer questions and help us plan. 179.7 MOR

*The Rediscovery of America* by Ned Blackhawk. Non-fiction. Most American history has focused on Europeans and their descendants, creating a story of American diversity and exemplary democracy. What is missing in many of these accounts is the story of the indigenous peoples who were here first. Today, as we are struggling openly to live according to our national promise of equality for all, we must develop a new understanding of the incredible diversity and agency of the first peoples to live here. Focusing more on the interaction and interdependency of Native peoples and "new-comers," this volume seeks to look beyond the violence, relocations, and suppression we know about to open doors for seeing Native contributions and influence over the last five hundred years. 973.0497 BLA

*America Fantastica* by Tim O'Brien. Fiction. "Amusing chaos" – that's one reviewer's description of this book. Boyd Halverson is a lying, ne'er-do-well former investigative reporter who robs a California bank and kidnaps Angie, the talkaholic teller. As they head out for, first, Mexico, and then, Minnesota, Boyd explains that he only wants to settle the score with his father-in-law, who destroyed his journalism career and his marriage. Along the way, they are trailed by con men, an heiress, the bank owners (who are themselves thieves), a veteran of the Iraq War, and Angie's dirt-bag-wrapped-up-in-cowboy-clothes boyfriend. What emerges is a *sub rosa* reflection of American society's current struggle with the truth, wrapped up as a comic crime spree. F O'BR

*Black Cloud Rising* by David Wright Faladé. Fiction. Based on a true account of recently enslaved, newly freed Black men fighting in the African Brigade in the coastal South in 1863, this is a compelling novel about a significant moment in time. Singing "Go Down Moses" as they march, the Black soldiers strike fear into the hearts of Southerners, citizens, guerilla and Confederate irregulars alike. The men are aware of the impact they are having, as they devotedly follow their passionate White Abolitionist leader, General Wild. The book centers on Sgt. Richard Etheredge, son of an enslaved woman and her master, who was taught to read and write and treated well by the standards of the time. But when he comes face to face with his half-brother on the battlefield, he must confront his familial past as well as his patriotic present. F WRI

*Somehow: Thoughts on Love* by Anne Lamott. Non-fiction. This book will not disappoint Anne Lamott fans and may become an entry point for new ones. Powerfully written, uniquely observant,

alternately humorous and poignant, the message is that hope, faith, and laughter exist, and we must grab hold of them in order to endure, whether it is surviving California wildfires, deciding to get married while enrolling in Social Security, or enduring red-blue political turmoil. A beacon of light for a dark time. 815.54 LAM

*The Last Language* by Jennifer duBois. Fiction. Angie is a graduate student in linguistics at Harvard, pregnant and with a four-year-old daughter, when her husband suddenly dies. Next, she has a miscarriage and is forced by her department chair to take a leave of absence without pay to recover her equilibrium. Desperate for income, she takes a low-wage job with an experimental program designed to give language capability to non-verbal persons, thereby meeting Sam, a non-verbal, autistic 28-year-old. Trained to think of language as the fundamental infrastructure of thought, Angie is intrigued by the idea that thoughts can occur without words. As Sam succeeds with the therapy, Angie learns that speech is not required in order for a person to be seen or believed or known. Sam's humor and intelligence are revealed, as are his charm and sympathetic nature. As the months go on, their relationship progresses; Angie will later describe it as love, and it becomes intimate. When the family discover this, they describe it as abuse. Accused, tried, and sentenced to prison, Angie writes a confessional account of her journey with Sam through linguistic naiveté to a profound uncertainty about the nature of language. You, the reader, are left to judge. F DUB

---

*Now that I have lived through a plague, I totally understand why Italian Renaissance paintings are full of fat people lying on couches.*



## OLD TOOLS

By Dennis Lynch - #335

The wicked stage is responsible for this story. I flunked out of Stanford in 1956 because I spent all my time working in the theatre. Then I joined a tech theatre class at the Pasadena Playhouse. I never had a real career goal in mind, and would not have known how to reach it if I had had one.

Well, the coursework at the Playhouse, and the lousy instructor, were not going to help me, and the Main Stage was Union. However, the Union had a dispensation to allow students to work with the pros. So I turned myself into an “intern” in the scene shop and finagled a companionship with Al, the Master Electrician.

Really, nobody worked too hard. The boss, the Master Carpenter Bill, was near or past retirement age. He had been in the Union for over 50 years—he had a *gold* Union card—and his Union number was only 2 digits long. He had started in the business when Los Angeles was all orange groves and hitching posts.

On the day I’m recalling, however, we were busy. The Playhouse, which was trying to refurbish its fortunes, was planning a Black Tie opening of *Romeo and Juliet*, starring John Barrymore, Jr., and Margaret O’Brien.

Meanwhile, we were behind. So Bill, the Master Carpenter, called the Union and asked them to send over two carpenters to help out. They sent two guys I’ll call Buddy 1 and Buddy 2. Alas, they were not the sharpest knives on the chandelier.

After an hour, Buddy 2 managed to hit himself in the head with his hammer. Really a good whack: blood was flowing, so an ambulance was called and took him away. Buddy 1, laughing and pran-

cing around the shop, thought this was the funniest thing he had ever seen.

Soon stitched and bandaged, Buddy 2 returned. Buddy 1 ran across the floor to the hammer Buddy 2 had dropped, rushed to the radial arm saw, slapped the hammer down and sawed off all of the handle except about 3 inches. He flipped the residue handle into the trash bin.

The shop had become very quiet after the sawing incident. But not Buddy 1. Posturing elaborately, he sashayed over to Buddy 2 and formally presented him with the now truncated hammer. Then he laughed wildly, bent almost double!

The silence was now ominous, and Buddy 1 turned to see Bill, the Master Carpenter, approaching slowly but steadily toward him, with such a sad and furious look on his face I had to turn away. Indeed, I must draw a curtain over the next few moments of action and tirade. You see, the hammer did not belong to Buddy 2. He had just picked it up. It belonged to the Master Carpenter.

Bill had had it since he was a kid. It had been his father’s, and, before that, his grandfather’s. Buddy 1 found that out the hard way.

Now, looking back, I should have noticed that the hammer was quite old. The head was small and made of plain black iron. The handle was reddish, very smooth, and well-worn.

The moral of this story: Respect your tools, especially if they don’t belong to you.

*When Bono and The Edge walked into a Dublin bar, the bartender said, “Oh, no, not U2 again!”*

## **THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS**

### **FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE AND DVDs**

Absolution	McDermott, Alice	c. 2023	F MCD
America Fantastica	O'Brien, Tim	c. 2023	F OBR
Black Cloud Rising	Wright Faladé, David	c. 2022	F WRI
The Frozen River	Lawhon, Ariel	c. 2023	F LAW
The Ghost Orchid	Kellerman, Jonathan	c. 2024	F KEL
The Housemaid's Secret	McFadden, Freida	c. 2023	F MCF p.b.
The Last Language	DuBois, Jennifer	c. 2023	F DUB
Lone Wolf	Hurwitz, Gregg	c. 2024	F HUR
The Love Scribe	Meyerson, Amy	c. 2023	F MEY
Queen of Exiles	Riley, Vanessa	c. 2023	F RIL
The River We Remember	Krueger, William Kent	c. 2023	F KRU
The Satanic Verses	Rushdie, Salman	c. 1988	F RUS p.b.
Stealing Mona Lisa	Morton, Carson	c. 2011	F MOR
To Die Beautiful	Jackson, Buzzy,	c. 2023	F JAC
Unnatural Death	Cornwell, Patricia	c. 2023	F COR
We Must Not Think of Ourselves	Grodstein, Lauren	c. 2023	F GRO
The Woman on the Ledge	Mancini, Ruth	c. 2024	F MAN p.b.

### **NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES**

Somebody's Daughter	Ford, Ashley C.	c. 2021	BIO FOR
At Every Depth: Growing Knowledge of the Changing Oceans	Hill, Tessa	c. 2024	551.46 HIL
The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory : American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism	Alberta, Tim	c. 2023	277.3 ALB
The Lede: Dispatches from a Life in the Press	Trillin, Calvin	c. 2024	071.3 TRI
Pittsburgh: A Place in Time	Mendelson, Abby	c. 2004	974.83 MEN p.b.
Portraits of Courage	Bush, George W.	c. 2017	759.13 BUS
Preparing for a Better End: Expert Lessons on Death and Dying for You and Your Loved Ones	Morhaim, Dan	c. 2020	179.7 MOR
Superpower in Peril: A Battle Plan to Renew America	McCormick, David & James Cunningham	c. 2023	973.93 MCC
This House of Grief	Garner, Helen	c. 2023	364.15 GAR

#### **River in Backyard**



Photo by Rosemary Coffey

#### **Duck finding Water Everywhere**



Photo by Kathie McCormick



# *Sherwood Oaks on the way to May*

**TRILLIUM**



Photo by Kathie McCormick

**RAINBOW**



Photo by Janet Desko

**ECLIPSE**



Photo by Jim Mauch

**SUNRISE**



Photo by Kathie McCormick