

THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER
100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066
www.sherwood-oaks.com

December 2016 “For the residents, by the residents” Vol. XVII No. 10

Ready when you are, Santa!



John Becker

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Christmas Trees

Our Caps for Kids tree went up on November 22, followed by our two Christmas trees on November 29. New this year will be a set of 34 White House Ornaments, courtesy of Ruth Stirling. These finely crafted ornaments are reproductions of those actually used in our Presidents' house, through the years. Look for them on the larger "gold" tree.

Gussie Dimmick, 160



Eggnog Party Friday, December 2, 4:30-6 PM Card Room and Auditorium

Friday, December 2, is almost here and the annual Eggnog Party will start the holiday season. The Committee has been busy with preparations and decorations and your hosts are looking forward to seeing all of you at 4:30 PM. Our thanks to Ed Alo for printing the invitations. The Eggnog Committee encourages more residents to join them next year as hosts; if you are interested, speak to any of the current hosts.

Pat Stephen, 605

Note: The café will be closed for dinner; however, takeout meals will be available at the café counter from 5:10-7:10 PM. The main dining room will remain open for dinner after the party.

Employee Christmas Party Thursday, December 8, 11- 3:30 PM Main Dining Room

The Dining Room will be closed for lunch. The Café will remain open and takeout meals will be available at the counter during normal lunch hours. The Dining Room will be open for dinner.

Tabby Alford

Sherwood Oaks Christmas Concert "One Little Child" Monday, December 12, 7:15 PM Auditorium

'One little child' is only one of the many lovely carols that the Chorus and Bell Choir have been preparing for our annual Christmas concert. The music groups, directed by Lyn Marsh, are hoping for a big audience to help us start the Christmas Season.

LaVonne McCandlish, 133

SORA Quarterly Meeting Tuesday, December 13, 7:15 PM Auditorium

Resident Christmas Party Thursday, December 15, 4:30 - 6 PM Card Room /Auditorium/Lobby

Join us for a whimsical Christmas, good food and great company. Residents only, please. The Dining Room and Café will be closed for dinner. Takeout meals will be available at the Café counter from 5:10 – 6 PM.

Bobbie Cleland

**Skilled Nursing and Personal Care
Resident Holiday Party
Friday, December 16, 11:30 - 1 PM
Auditorium**

Families and friends are welcome. If your family and friends know in advance they will be attending, please call me so that we have an accurate count of guests.

Laura Childress, 8471

**Oak Grove Resident Holiday Party
Wednesday, December 21, 11:30-1 PM
Cranberry Lake Grill**

Families and friends are welcome to attend. If your family and friends know in advance they will be attending, please call me so that we have an accurate count of guests.

Lori Greer, 4651

Note: Due to regulatory restrictions, live pine trees and wreaths are prohibited in Personal Care, Skilled Nursing and the Oak Grove Center. However, poinsettias are welcome!

**SPECIAL HOLIDAY EVENTS FOR ALL
TO ATTEND AND ENJOY!**

**Seneca Valley High School Tri M
Music Honor Society Holiday Program
Monday, December 19, 6:30 PM
Auditorium**

Come enjoy this festive holiday program with these talented musicians.

**Rowan Elementary School returns for
their Winter Wonderland Concert!
Wednesday, December 21, 10:00 AM
Auditorium**

Come listen to these adorable kindergarteners sing holiday classics!!!

Laura Childress



**New Year's Eve Party
Thursday, December 31
9 PM-12:30 AM
Auditorium**

New Year's Eve tickets are \$10 per person. Purchase them at the front desk. The Dave Supinski Group will provide entertainment. They play many of your old favorites and take requests. There is room to dance! Enjoy party snacks, soda and champagne for the Midnight Toast. (You can also BYOB.) Games for all: Bingo, Blackjack, etc. — and ever so popular door prizes. Guests are welcome.

Diane Neely, 337

BELLS...BELLS...BELLS

The Christmas Program on Monday, December 12, 2016, marks the 25th year the Hand Bells have been a part of Sherwood Oaks. After great effort to obtain the Bells, the first time they were seen and rung was the Christmas Program of 1991. Ralph Peabody (Sherwood Oaks resident, July, 1991-May, 2016) was a member of the group who worked on the project to get the bells. He rang and eventually directed. He was very proud of the Hand Bell Choir. Ralph wrote the following story of the beginning and growth of the group for our archives.

After ten years directing the Bell Choir, he passed the directorship to Lyn Marsh who will be leading not only the Hand Bells but also the Chorus for the 2016 Christmas Program. The program will end, as always, with "Silent Night."

Rosemary Frelke, 348

1991 - SORA SAID NO

"Costs too much"

"They wouldn't be used"

"We are too old"

"We are not physically strong enough"

"They are too noisy"

"There was no one to be director"

In 1991 a resident offered SORA seed money to purchase a set of Hand Bells. Sally Stewart, a retired music teacher and director of the Sherwood Oaks Chorus, requested SORA to provide the balance of the money needed for a basic two-octave set. She was turned down with many weak excuses. Sally did not understand the word "NO."

She campaigned; petitions for and against were circulated. It was the "hot issue" of the day.

About that time Del and Ralph Peabody had applied for residency. During their routine new/prospective resident talk with Bob Morrow, CEO, they asked if there was a Handbell Group as they were both ringers. Bob passed this inquiry on to Sally who immediately conferred upon Ralph the Directorship and reported to SORA (unbeknown to him) his willingness to direct. The bells were purchased.

Sally recruited eight residents who agreed to ring at the Christmas Program. After a quick rehearsal they were assembled in the closet to the left of the Auditorium stage and played Silent Night at the annual concert. This was the first performance of Hand Bells at Sherwood Oaks. There was no director; so Ruth Anderson counted out loud the beats for the players. It was later reported that the audience could hear Ruth counting better than the bells.

After that performance the bells came out of the closet. Ralph, with no directing experience, refused the position of director. A couple musicians that had never so much as rung a bell each tried their hand at directing. They soon quit; so Ralph reluctantly agreed. He served as the Director for the next 10 years. The Handbells were accepted by the residents with great enthusiasm. Many who had opposed the purchase publicly acknowledged their mistake.

The two octave beginners set did not allow for much variety in the music and was almost exclusively sacred music.

At one of the concerts Bill Shenk who was MC of the program spontaneously interviewed Ralph. It was a hard and fast rule that residents and committees could not raise or solicit funds. Bill asked how much it would take to purchase another octave; how much each bell might cost; the price of new music, etc. Then he gave a little pep talk telling the audience they should get behind us and see to it that the money was available for more bells and support. The next morning the checks started rolling in, and the additional bells and equipment were purchased without "raising" money or going to SORA for funds.

During those first ten years there were three groups with some members participating in all three. A beginners group was held whenever new ringers wanted to join. The main group of usually eleven members was for performing at the two annual programs with the chorus. The third group played once a month in the Sunday Chapel Service. Ralph has said this was particularly close to his heart, as he always thought of the performance as thanks to the residents for supporting the program. It was very popular with the Sunday Chapel audience.

The handbell program has always had a very inclusive attitude. We encouraged anyone with an interest at all to join in. We jokingly said they must be able to count to four. When the beginners group was active it gave the new player a nice taste of being a ringer. Now we no longer have that luxury; so it is a little like throwing the kid in the pool as a way of teaching them to swim. Of those people

we have thrown in the pool, many have proven to be good swimmers or rather bell ringers.

Sally Stewart, you were so right. Handbells belong at Sherwood Oaks. Thank you, Sally, and to the many who have supported this program over the years, and particularly the ringers.

Ralph Peabody



Archive photo

Current and former resident Bell Ringers:
 Front row: Ruth Tomb, Dorothy Warner, Trudy Thomas
 Middle Row: Olive Tiller, Mary Shoup, Doris Dowling
 Back Row: Ralph Peabody, Rusty Sweitzer, Mike Estabrook, Agnes Peebles, Bradley Watkins

BELLS STILL RINGING...

When the bells started to ring at Sherwood, some of our current residents were there ringing: Doris Dowling, Agnes Peebles, Rusty Sweitzer, and Olive Tiller. Mostly it was the fun. That was part of the purpose of playing, second only to learning to ring in a socially acceptable manner with the result of sounding musical.

New ringers would often practice at home with kitchen utensils in place of bells in order to learn rhythms and motions.

At one point when there were several empty patio homes available, the bells, tables, pads, stands remained in a patio home, performance ready — easier than setting up and taking down everything at each rehearsal.

Becoming a bit more competent, the bell choir sometimes took their show on the road to such places as the foyer of North Hills Passavant Hospital and Oldenski Hall at St. Ferdinand's Church. They also played in joint performances with the Dutilh Methodist Church Bell Choir.

Often accommodations were (and are) made for members who need to sit on stools or sit in chairs to play. Dorothy Warner, a resident with only one arm, played the bells for years. In the woodshop, Norman DeWeese created a rack to hold her assigned bells so that she was able to play by using a mallet.

Another non-player who was involved with the bells was Art Croll who made enameled jewelry. He made pendants for the women ringers to wear on ribbons. The men wore them on bolo ties during performances.

Listen to some of the original ringers:

Agnes – "Bell ringing is a community experience. Every ringer is essential."

Doris – "I'd never done this before but I guess we all became brave, played well, and had a good time."

Olive – "We didn't give up because it wasn't perfect or because we were told we were 'too old'. We just had fun!"

Jane Lavender
253



Lyn Marsh

Photo by Joe Asin

OUR HEARTS RING OUT WITH THANKS

A note of appreciation for our current director, Lyn Marsh. Lyn is a woman with humor, great musical talent and the patience of a saint. How many times, after a difficult section, has she said, "That's why we practice!" Her directing and listening skills gently push players toward better performance. She corrects wrong notes and encourages all; over a year's time she prepares two programs, Christmas and Spring, so that there is music for all the residents and their guests to share.

A special thank you for all your time, energy, and encouragement...and making sure that ringing remains fun.

JL

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT SNOWMAN

(Based on a True Story)

A week before Christmas there was a big snowstorm in the town where Abby, Genevieve and Zachary lived. They were all excited. It was the first snow of the year and they had been dreaming about making a snowman since last winter.

After breakfast they were ready. On went the coats, hats, gloves and finally the boots. But before they could even go out, their mom and dad had to clean off the front steps and get some snow off the sidewalk and driveway.

First the kids took turns on an old wooden sled. It was fun but they wanted to make a snowman. They decided where in the yard to make it and tried to help their dad roll up the first large ball. The snow was deep and they fell down every time they took a step. Their mom and dad ended up doing most of the work.

Finally the first big bottom section was done and then the mid-section. The top was easier and their dad lifted that up into place. Then decorating began. They helped their mom put the buttons and scarf and hat on. And the carrot nose, of course. They made arms out of twigs. Somehow a Dunkin Donut cup got in one hand, too.

As the family got ready for Christmas the kids kept an eye on the great snowman. On the day before Christmas, Abby, Genevieve and Zachary saw that two sections of the snowman were on the ground! The arms were on the snow and

the scarf had been tossed aside. "Whoever did that did not have the Christmas Spirit," they said. Their dad promised to try to fix it.

With a lot to do on Christmas Eve it was after midnight before their dad remembered he had to work on the snowman. It was dark and cold when he went out. Then he saw what he considered to be the true Christmas Spirit. Someone had been nice enough to put the snowman back together.

On Christmas morning the kids were awake early. They went to check on the snowman first thing. Right there in the front yard they saw their wonderful Christmas snowman. He looked great although he did lean a bit to one side. They jumped up and down around their dad and thanked him. He just smiled and said, "You are welcome, but I had a bit of help from some elves who had the Christmas Spirit."

Julie Eden



Julie Eden

“T’WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS”

'Twas the night before Christmas. At home in our apt,
I heard on the window a finger that tapped.
I waited a second, but not many more,
Then rose in my jumpsuit and went to the door.

The face of old Santa that greeted me there
was flustered and weary and riddled with care.

In a moment of pity I pulled the door wide.
“Ho! Ho! I said brightly, “Please do come inside.
We don't have a chimney; so just use the portal.
The cocoa is instant; we'll soon hear you chortle.”

He was grateful but glum, an unjolly old elf
(And plainly, the cocoa'd been long on the shelf.)
“If you'll tell me,” I said, “what you're troubled about,
I'll waken, my husband, and he'll help you out.”

“Oh, no,” sighed old Santa, “The problem's insoluble.
I'm seeking for answers, and you're all of you voluble!”

“The question is easy: what gift do you crave?
The responses dismay me, for nobody's brave.

‘I'd love to have candy, but the doctor forbids me.’

‘I want an Amigo, but every one kids me.’

‘I'm wild about dresses, but the walk-in's too jammed.’

‘I'd like a new painting, but the walls look too crammed.’

When wishes have drawbacks, the yuletide's no fun.

I think I'll retire and go sit in the sun.”

“Oh Santa, dear Santa,” I said, “don't despair –
Though we talk of restrictions, it's mostly hot air.
Just be present sometime where dessert-choosers stand:

‘I know that I shouldn't, but the chocolate's so grand.’

Just bring us the gifts that we say we'll refuse;
We can sell at the Flea Mart the ones we don't use.”

Now Santa looked heartened. He strode to the door,
And waving, he cried, “I'll try one Christmas more.”

Then I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,
Merry Christmas to all Sherwood Oakers tonight.”



CHANUKAH

Even though Chanukah starts the evening of December 24, in 2016, it is NOT Jewish Christmas.

So, what does the holiday of Chanukah celebrate? It celebrates two miracles:

The 2nd Century BCE victory of a small, outnumbered army of Jews over the mighty Greeks who had occupied the Holy Land.

When the Maccabees (the Jewish army) liberated the Temple from the hands of the invaders, only a small amount of olive oil was found for fueling the Menorah (their seven-branched candelabra, an important part of the daily service in the Holy Temple.) That small amount of oil would last only one day and it would take eight days to make new oil. Miraculously the oil burned for eight days and nights.

So, how is Chanukah celebrated?

On each of the eight days of Chanukah, we light the menorah, after nightfall. On the first night we kindle one candle plus another attendant candle. For each successive night, another candle is added until a total of nine are lit on the last night. It is also traditional to eat foods fried in oil to remember the miracle of Chanukah. Latkes (potato pancakes) and special donuts are favorites. Another tradition is to give to charity and to give money to children so that they can play the Dreidel game.

The classic Dreidel is a four sided spinning top made of wood, plastic, or clay. On the four sides of the dreidel appear letters from the Hebrew alphabet: nun, gimmel, hey, and shin. These letters are an acronym for a Hebrew saying: a great miracle happened there (In Israel the last letter is "pey" to mean the miracle happened "here.") Each player puts one unit of the ante (nuts, pennies, nickels, chocolate coins, etc.) into the pot.

The dreidel is then spun by one player after another and, according to which letter lands on top, the following actions are taken:

Nun: no action is taken

Gimmel: take the whole pot

Hey: take half the pot

Shin: you have to put another unit into the pot (and take nothing.)

The game continues until the platter of latkes or donuts is finished, one of the children gets too tired to play, the crack of dawn has come, or the players decide to call it a game.....try it and enjoy! (some information from chabad.org)

Julie Eden



WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

Reports and actions at the November 2016 SORA Board meeting included:

Treasurer's Report

Gary Brandenberger reported a current balance in the Memorial/Special Projects Fund of \$60,666. The Employee Appreciation Fund balance is \$105,842. Madelin Clements reported a balance of \$28,678.81 in the operating budget.

Liaison Reports

Finance: External and internal financial reviews for fiscal year of 7/1/2015-6/30/2016 have been conducted for all funds and were approved upon review.

Maintenance: Roof flashing is still a problem for a few new patio homes.

Trips and Tours: Upcoming events include Oglebay and the Nutcracker Ballet.

Other Events: The New Year's Eve Party will be 9 PM -12:30AM. Fee is \$10 and guests are welcome. No movies will be shown Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve.

Health Affairs: New issues to be addressed include campus water quality, lawn care product toxicity, and environmental issues.

Dining Committee: New menu jackets and dining options are in place. Chef's demos will be offered Thursdays, not Tuesdays. Reserved tables will be held for only 15 minutes past reservation time.

Special Needs: Gratitude is expressed to outgoing chairperson, Leslie Crawford. New co-chairs are George and Mary Kay Wallace.

Welcoming Committee: The New residents' dinner will be December 13 in the Cranberry Lake Grill.

Carpeting in the Dining Room and Center lobby will be replaced in early December. Site work continues on the upper campus.

Bill Paul is visiting committee meetings. He expressed concern about low attendance at Continuing Education events.

WINTERFEST will be held January 31, 1-3 PM – an event to introduce all residents to SORA committees and activities.

Next SORA Board Meeting:

December 6, 2016.

Jean Henderson
611

SHERWOOD OAKS ARCHIVES

Please welcome Joe and Peg Rychik, who agreed to co-chair the Sherwood Oakes Archives Committee on Oct. 29, 2016. They joined the Archives Committee at the invitation of Bob and Carole Fletcher. Joe and Peg have been archiving with the Fletchers since earlier this year. Peg, whose parents, Ralph and Louise Allen were former residents of Sherwood Oaks, has already donated many interesting and historical records from her parents' file to the Archives.

Since becoming co-chairs, Joe and Peg have researched the history of the Bell Ringers who are celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year. Their enthusiasm and dedication are greatly appreciated.

Bob and Carole Fletcher, 358
Former Co-Chairs

NANCY MARSHALL

326

Interviewed by Connie Brandenberger



Even though Nancy Marshall has been a resident at Sherwood Oaks for only 2 months, she admits she has found her “home.” It has been an easy adjustment with the acquaintance of all of her friendly neighbors. She especially enjoys her Thursday evening dinners with the friends in her neighborhood.

Nancy was born on the North Side of Pittsburgh and attended two elementary schools in that part of the city. She was the only girl in a large family with six older brothers. Being the youngest in this group helped to prepare Nancy for many of life’s challenges. It was through her brothers that she met her husband when she was a young girl; but it was not until they became reacquainted many years later that they married. He died in 2000 after 29 years of marriage.

Nancy moved to California when she was young and graduated from Long Beach High School, but Pittsburgh has always been home for her. She definitely is a “Towel-waving” Pittsburgh Steeler fan and doesn’t miss a game. She worked as a cartographer for U.S. Steel in Pittsburgh before retiring in 1983. In 1994 Nancy and her husband moved to Cocoa Beach, Florida, where they lived until his death. It was then that she moved to the Crosswinds community in Beaver Falls, renewing former friendships and developing new friends through her many activities. She is very involved and active with these friends, being a part of three golf leagues, a bowling league, and a bridge group. Nancy must do a lot golfing – she came in third in our Putting Contest this year. Congratulations, Nancy! She even expressed an interest in a women’s golf league here at Sherwood Oaks. Any takers?

Our new resident is very anxious to explore all the options for activities at Sherwood Oaks. She expressed interest in Tai Chi, Yoga, water aerobics, and exercise class, but she is busy at the present time settling in, moving things around, and trying to remember where she put them. But the move was easy for her emotionally. She knew she was ready to give up maintaining a house, cleaning, and worrying about repairs, and she especially enjoys the feeling of complete security.

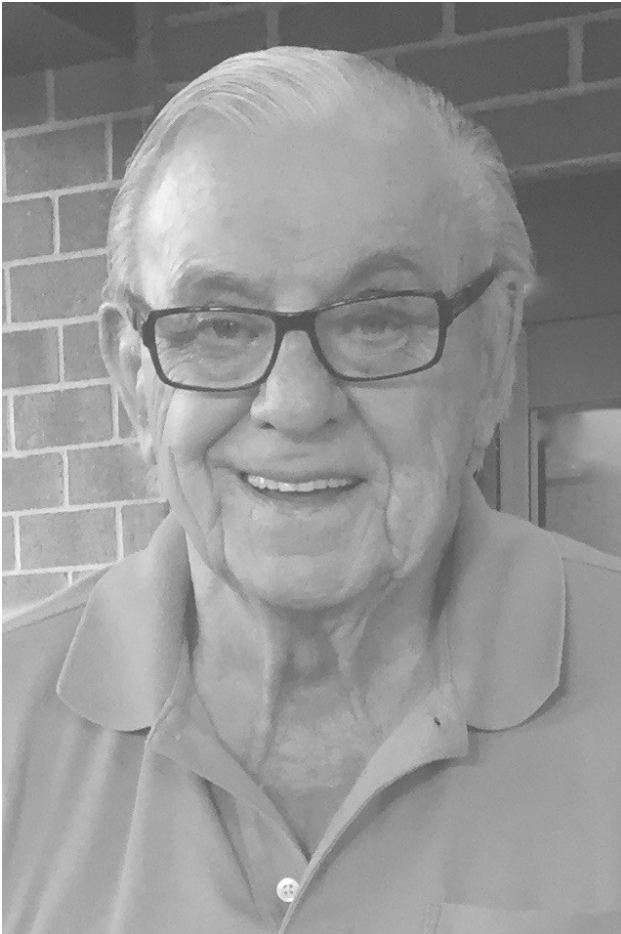
Nancy has a constant companion, Cassie, a lively little Yorkshire Terrier. Cassie helps keep Nancy in good shape by demanding to be walked at least three times a day.

We are happy to welcome Nancy to our community and look forward to seeing her enjoying all the amenities of Sherwood Oaks.

CHESTER LUDWICKI

163

Interviewed by Peggy Meister



Chester Ludwicki moved to Sherwood Oaks in September of this year from Irwin, PA. He and his wife, Marge celebrated 55 years of marriage before her death 10 years ago. Together they raised three wonderful children. One daughter and her husband live in Cranberry Twp. Another daughter and her family live in Maryland, while his son and his family live in Delaware. He has six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Chester spent one year of active duty and nine years of active reserve duty in the US Army. He retired from Equitable Gas Company as Superintendent of Buildings after 35 years of service. In

His free time, he enjoys fixing things and fishing. He also loves to sing and has joined both the Oak Grove and Personal Care sing-a-longs here at Sherwood Oaks. We will be looking for him at the campfire sing-a-longs when they resume in the spring!

Before moving to Sherwood Oaks, Chester was active in a Rosary group. Since this was not offered here, Chester took the bull by the horns and has started a weekly Rosary service on Fridays at 9:30 AM, prior to the priest's visit in the Chapel. How nice to find a "newbie" who has made a spot for himself and others because of his own interests and needs. Welcome to Sherwood Oaks, Chester!



EARLY WINTER MORNING *Parts & Pieces* by Eleanor Bauer

The countryside is now behaving
Like some lovely wood engraving.
Black fences with their tangles tracings
Join fallow fields with frilly lacings,
Old apple trees in grotesque stances
Etch themselves between the fences,
Each twig in detail-perfect rending
On paper-white of flat unending
Frigid fields, reflecting light
From the snow that snowed last night,
Whose crystals fell with lovely mission,
To publish winter's first edition.

MARY SOMBO

178

Interviewed by Jean Henderson



“Hello! My name is Mary. How may I help you?” Imagine Mary – a young customer service rep at Equitable Gas smiling up at Gene Sombo, also with Equitable, and that was the beginning of 46 years of married life that just ended last April with Gene’s death. They loved living in Braddock Hills and traveled all over the world together: Europe, Hawaii, San Francisco, and Boca Raton. He golfed and loved sports – she baked and cooked and sewed, including all her own clothes and a wedding gown for her niece along with 5 bridesmaids dresses! Her family calls her Mimi, but she prefers Mary at Sherwood.

“Hello! My name is Mary. How may I help you?” Imagine Mary – now retired from Equitable downtown after 45

years. She can’t stand not working! So she goes to Burlington Coat Factory downtown for 16 more years in the sports department, retiring just this past October 1! And one month later, with her brother, a retired dentist, hounding her to move from Braddock Hills and be closer to family, Mary has joined us at SO, after selling both her house and her car in just one week!

“Hello! My name is Mary.” You’ll be hearing that cheery voice and seeing that bright smile often here at SO. But resident Janet Gorman already knew her name – she and Mary have known each other for 50 years and were in the same club together decades ago. And Chester Ludwicki knew her as well – turns out he worked for Equitable, too, right along with Mary and Gene. You may be seeing Mary at the fitness center, the swimming pool, the gift shop, wherever, when she finally gets settled. So do stop Mary when you see her and tell her your name! She will LOVE meeting you!

* * * * *

CURIO CABINETS

The current military exhibit, a tribute to Sherwood Oaks' many veterans, will end on November 29. We can thank George and Mary Kay Wallace for their efforts in bringing this display to Sherwood Oaks. It will be followed on December 1st by something special - Marilyn Altman's fantastic collection of Santas. To describe this collection would be a disservice - it has to be seen to be believed.

Gussie Dimmick, 160

BOB AND DORIS WILES

223

Interviewed by Peggy Meister



Bob and Doris Wiles moved to Sherwood Oaks in August of this year. They came from their home in Venice, Florida, where they began "snow birding" in 1986. But let's start earlier with their story.

Bob and Doris met in high school. Butler and Pompton Lakes were rival high schools in New Jersey. They met at a square dance. They married in 1949. On Saturday, the honeymoon began with a baseball game where they saw Jackie Robinson play. Then a week's cruise to Bermuda followed.

Bob worked full time for Bell Telephone while attending night school for eight years to earn an Electrical Engineering degree from Farleigh Dickenson University. He stayed with Bell Telephone until retirement age of 55. Meanwhile, Doris worked as a secretary for Tenco, an import company that bought tea from around the world and blended them for retail sales. They raised a family of one boy and one girl. When their daughter left home for college, Doris began her

college career too. She earned her business degree from Montclair State University in New Jersey.

With both kids out of college, Doris and Bob continued their square dancing. They also learned round dancing. That is done worldwide and has five levels of participation. "Cue-ers" call the steps and the circling dancers must execute them while the circle turns. They were fortunate to be in round dancing clubs in New York and in Florida. The Wiles took a round dancing club cruise to Hawaii. When retirement came for Bob, Doris was ready to quit her job as a high school business teacher to "start living." The family had always camped and hiked but with an RV they began in earnest. They covered the United States several times and camped in many National Parks. They also traveled widely in Canada. Their retirement home was in the Adirondack Mountains of New York near Lake Placid. When they weren't roaming with the RV, they hiked the mountains. From 1985 — 1988 they hiked all of the forty-six highest peaks of the Adirondacks. Having accomplished this feat, they were eligible to work as volunteers on the trails. They are listed in the "46'ers official book" both for their climbs and for their volunteer hours on the trails.

The Wiles' home is full of memorabilia of their outdoor life and interests. They may find Sherwood Oaks much too tame. But they do admit that their legs no longer would take the backpacking and hiking they so enjoyed. They have come to Pennsylvania to be near their artist daughter, but their hearts have been left in the Adirondacks and Florida.

SHERWOOD GIFTS

Jingle Bells, Deck the Halls! It's that time of year again. A time of GIVING and GETTING. At Sherwood Gifts, Santa's elves work all year getting all the goodies for you.

It's time to give thanks to all these elves:

The "Busy Bee" Elves: co-managers Peggy Meister and Kelly Noble give hours making sure everything runs smoothly.

The "Sparkle" Elf: Juanita Manley gets all the jewelry and other accessories that brighten up our outfits.

The "Holiday" Elf: Marianne Davis makes sure that you have a card for every special occasion in your life.

The "Sugar" Elf: Jean Gibson gets us all those goodies that keep our sweet tooth happy.

The "Little Bit of Everything" Elf: Sonja DeGray gets us a variety of sundries we use all the time, run out of, or need once in a while.

The "Money" Elves: our treasurers Judy Batson, Andy Briskar, Ken Mundell, and Janet Gorman make "cents" out of a difficult job.

The "Donation" Elves: Carol Caum and Peggy Meister don't get anything but keep very busy collecting, pricing, and displaying the generous donations of our residents and their families. The goodies are available in Sherwood Gifts and The Annex #156.

The "Volunteer" Elves: too many to name. We couldn't function without the time they give.

Please stop by this season and GET something to GIVE, and don't forget to GET for yourself. Happy Holidays from all of us at Sherwood Gifts.

Carol Caum, 227
Manager: Granny's Attic

THE CHRISTMAS TREE STAND

My husband and I grew up in two different worlds. He was a city boy, riding busses and streetcars, swimming in chlorinated pools, attending a large city high school. I grew up in a rural area, walking or bicycling everywhere, swimming in a meandering stream, attending a one-room grade school and our relatively small high school.

We met at Waynesburg College and eventually started dating. During my senior year, we were engaged. Ray was already studying at Western Seminary in Pittsburgh. He drove me home at the beginning of my Christmas vacation that year. My three older brothers were all already married and living some distance away. My parents were empty nesters and had not set up a Christmas tree for several years.

Ray and I decided to get a tree for them, as well as a few boxes of ornaments and a string of lights. When we took these into my parents' house, Ray said to me, "Where's the Christmas tree stand." I said, "The what?" He repeated, "the Christmas tree stand." I looked a little blank: so he asked, "How do you stand up your Christmas tree?" "Oh," I said, "Come with me." We went outside to where we stored the coal for the heating stove. "Fill this bucket with coal," I said. "Then put the tree in it and heap coal up around it. Put some snow on top and as it melts, it will keep the tree watered."

This was a brand new concept for my future husband, but of course it worked, as it always had during my childhood and youth. I'd be interested to know if anyone else at Sherwood Oaks ever used a bucket of coal for a Christmas tree stand.

Betty Eichler, 355



SORA PROGRAM COMMITTEE

On Tuesday, December 6 at 7:15 PM the "Pittsburgh Boy Choir" will entertain us with their Winter Concert.

The Boy Choir is dedicated to training boys ages 6 to 13 in the art of choral singing. Group instruction in sight singing, music theory, and vocal production is carried out in an environment which promotes teamwork while affirming the worth of each individual. Boys develop leadership and self-discipline through a focused commitment to artistic excellence and group accountability.

Their first rehearsal was held in September 2014 under the direction of Mrs. Sarah Wannamaker. The first season ended with nine members. In 2015, Mrs. Wannamaker was joined by Artistic Director Craig G. Cannon. The 2016-17 season began with 20 boys.

In addition to two regular concerts (December and April), the boys have performed at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, the International Children's Festival, and in a concert performance of the musical "Oliver" with CAPA (Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts School.)

Jim Miller, 142

A MEMORY WITH YOUR GRANDCHILDREN

Memories are precious for the old and young. Those who have enjoyed family reunions at the Summer House this past year have reported that "Everyone wants to return." There is so much to do and enjoy there for all ages — even great-grandchildren. And now that the season is past for the outdoor fun, invite them for another very special time and memory.

The Oak Grove Fitness Center on the ground level is a beautiful facility. In addition to the exercise area, it provides indoor shuffle board, bocci, corn hole, and ping pong. If you have not visited this area, "check it out" and plan a date with your little ones. It will be warm, easily accessible (Ground Floor on the elevator), and another "memory made." Soon after arriving at Sherwood Oaks, our 3 and 4 year-old great-grandchildren ask to go play shuffleboard and the latest — to run Pap's remote control car on the bocci court. This is a wonderful alternative to "sitting around listening to grown-ups talk" and a guarantee they will want to return — thinking Sherwood Oaks is a "neat" place.

Harriet Burress, 152

These games are available for residents and their families to enjoy except during active fitness classes Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 11:00AM - 12:00 PM and Tuesday 10:00 - 11:00 AM.

Bill Burtner, 8543

HEALTH COMMITTEE

We apologize for the erroneous notice about the collection of unneeded medications in the November Acorn. The collection will be in January 2017.

Our current members are: Joe Asin, Jean Bell, Wallace Christy (chair), Monica Dalrymple, Ron Ouellette (SORA representative), Jean Pelusi, Kathleen Sarver, and Catherine Wagner. Ronna Stewart and Betty Wright attend the meetings on behalf of administration.

The committee regularly deals with concerns from the Oak Grove and Personal Care units, immunizations, Alzheimer's support groups, and other concerns from residents. In addition, we recently had a report on the safety of chemicals used on the lawn and grounds and expect to hear about the quality of our water.

Wallace Christy, 237

FROM THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Is Sherwood Oaks a civic-minded community? Absolutely! Here's a numbers report to prove it.

The committee sent invitations for our Candidates Night to twenty-six people whose names were on the ballot and to one write-in candidate. Responses received: nine, six of which were affirmative. Three sent representatives to speak for them. Two candidates spoke for themselves. Approximately seventy residents came to hear and question

them. On Election Day seventy-seven residents went to the polls on the bus. There is no way to count how many drove to cast their votes or who voted by absentee ballot. We are a significant group in Cranberry Township!

Agnes Peebles, 324

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

"What favorite holiday TV or radio show, or play, or musical do you plan to be sure to watch/hear during this holiday season?"

Dennis Lynch, 335

I don't think that far ahead.

Charlie Brown

"It's a Wonderful Life"

Ed and Frances Borrebach

Linda Blum

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

Ann Ferguson

Steeler's football

Ed Vidt

"A Christmas Story"

Kathleen Schartner

Barbara Dixon

Tabby Alford

Pavarotti and Domingo singing "O Holy Night," recorded in Vienna in 1999

Albert Schartner

Pittsburgh Concert Chorale concert, early December

Ron Ouellette

"A Christmas Carol"

Linda Blum

Lessons and Carols Service, King's College Choir, Cambridge, UK,

Jean Henderson

Ruth B. Becker

<https://youtu.be/XtDv8f78rFA>

Beni & Hugh Downing



Worth the Time
by Ed Vidt

Martha Washington

Patricia Brady (Bio) (Lr.Pr.) Bra

The subtitle of this biography is "An American Life." It introduces a very capable and companionable woman. Mrs. Custis, a recent widow of a wealthy landowner in Virginia, is 26. So is George. How they meet, marry, and enjoy life together over the next 40 or more years you will enjoy discovering when you read this very good story.

I Contain Multitudes

Ed Yong (579) Yon

Multitudes of Bacteria! Germs! Names such as Salmonella, E. Coli, Listeria, and Wolbachia (A very common microbe.) You, me, and everyone else contain this very common bacteria, in the billions. It is normally harmless, BUT in some cases it can also be very, very helpful. Dengue fever and yellow fever can be stopped by careful application of massive amounts of Wolbachia microbes. So can malaria. This book tells how we used DNA to identify "good microbes" and how that ability now provides us with a future full of hope for better health. This is an often bewildering but also very optimistic description of what our health professionals are doing now to help us all.

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**The next ACORN deadline is
Thursday, December 15.**

All submissions to Mike Rose,
preferably online, at the above
email address.



SPOTLIGHT ON NEW BOOKS

The Book Selection Committee
Tom Fararo, Chair

These recently purchased books are on the new bookshelf in our library. If a book you seek is not there, you can fill out a reserve slip.

The Wrong Side of Goodbye by Michael Connelly. Fiction. The LA-based hard-boiled detective Harry Bosch is back. His fans won't be disappointed, critics agree.

The Whistler by John Grisham. Fiction. Justice triumphs as a whistle-blower enables a legal investigator to bring down a corrupt judge in the Florida panhandle.

The Trespasser by Tana French. Fiction. *"The most interesting, most important crime novelist to emerge in the past 10 years"* (Washington Post). Her new novel is *"beautifully conceived and executed"* (NY Times)

The Shattered Tree by Charles Todd. Fiction. The English nurse Bess Crawford solves a mystery in a WWI setting. *A reviewer writes that the novel is "an enjoyable and quick read."*

Precious and Grace by Alexander McCall Smith. Fiction. This is the latest novel in the popular No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series. *"As ever, Smith adroitly mixes gentle humor with important life lessons"* (Publishers Weekly.)

Rogue Heroes: The History of the SAS, Britain's Secret Special Forces Unit that Sabotaged the Nazis and Changed the Nature of War by Ben Macintyre. Nonfiction. *"A cinematic narrative that races along"* (Kirkus starred review.)

The Fix: How Nations Survive and Thrive in a World in Decline by Jonathan Tepperman. Nonfiction. Tired of bad news and of problems not being solved? Try this antidote to pessimism, filled with examples of successful efforts. *"A stirring account of the achievements of risk-taking political leaders"* (Kirkus starred review.)



SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES 7:00 PM, Auditorium

December 3 - AIRPLANE
(PG) 1hr 27min

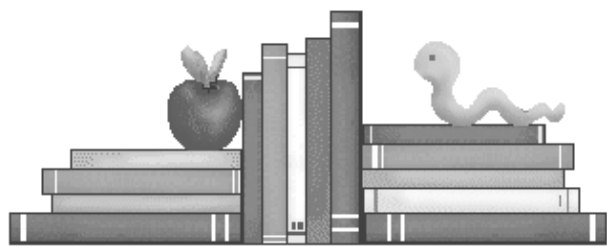
December 10 - AMERICAN PRESIDENT
(PG13) 1hr 53min

December 17 - MR. HOLMES
(PG) 1hr 44min

December 24 - NO MOVIE

December 31 - NO MOVIE

Dave Moon, 127



COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE

"H" is for Homicide

Sue Grafton © 1991.F/GRA

All the Dead Voices

Declan Hughes © 2009.F/HUG/L.T.

Aloha Betrayed

Jessica Fletcher © 2014.F/FLE/L.T.

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Commonwealth

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Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero

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Rich and Pretty

Rumaan Alam © 2016.F/ALA

The Secret Hour

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***The Shattered Tree**

Charles Todd © 2016.F/TOD

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Stoner

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**501 Things YOU Should Have Learned
About Philosophy**
Alison Rattle © 2014.100/RAT
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Volkswagen, "Just the Facts".
Bob Cropley © 1995.388.3/CRO
What Did Jesus Ask?
Elizabeth Dias © 2015.234/DIA



CHAPEL NOTES

It's early November. Christmas decorations have been put up in many communities; the stores are geared up for sales; light-up nights are scheduled for Cranberry and Pittsburgh and many other places. On the last Sunday of November churches will welcome the Advent season, a time of contemplation and preparation for the holy season of Christmas.

Leading our Advent worship in December are the following ministers:

December 4 -- The Rev. Charlie Hamill, Christ Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh.

December 11 – The Rev. Mark Boyd, Park Presbyterian Church, Beaver.

December 18 -- The Rev. William Dambach, North Hills United Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh.

Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Sunday, and we will have special services on those days.

December 25 – Christmas Day – We will be led in worship by the Rev. Dr. John Rodgers as minister and Peggy Meister at the piano.

January 1 – New Year's Day – The service will be the traditional service of lessons and carols, arranged by Connie and Gary Brandenberger and a group of residents of Sherwood Oaks, with Nancy Baker as the musician.

We welcome all of you to share in these Sunday services at 2:00 PM in the Auditorium, and we wish you a blessed Advent and Christmas.

Agnes Peebles, 324

IN MEMORIAM

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

Dorothy Breyne

October 27, 2016



ACTIVITIES IN THE CHAPEL

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

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

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

Quaker Meeting for Worship
Fourth Sunday
10:30-11:30 AM

ARE WE FINISHED YET? – THE EARTHMOVING, THAT IS!

The long wait for action at the site of the six new houses along the northern part of Norman Drive has been replaced by a long period of rumbling and banging as excavators, dump trucks, and compaction rollers have removed and replaced many cubic feet of unanticipated unsuitable earth — soil that will not allow building construction with conventional foundation systems or ratings.



Removing unsuitable soil with a backhoe

A cavalcade of other trucks brought new topsoil that has been placed in the pits left from soil removal.

To be sure this will provide good support and minimal settlement later on; the new soil has been placed in layers and compacted with heavy rollers. This has delayed the construction project significantly.



Bulldozer and sheeps-foot roller which is used for compacting fine grained soils.



Dumping new soil for spreading by the bulldozer

Meanwhile, A colorful display of little flags has materialized on portions of the site where soil removal has been completed. Contrary to appearances, these will not mark croquet wickets or golf holes. They are surveyor's flags used to mark key locations for foundations and underground utilities – either already there or planned to be built. The American Public Works Association color coding – which may or may not be in use here – is as follows:

Red: Electric power lines, cables, Conduit, and lighting cables

Orange: Telecommunication, alarm or signal lines, cables, or conduit

Yellow: Natural gas, oil, steam, petroleum or other gaseous or flammable material

Green: Sewers and drain lines

Blue: Drinking water

Violet: Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines

Pink: Temporary survey markings, unknown/unidentified facilities

White: Proposed excavation limits or route

At this writing, there is finally some sign that new construction (as opposed to soil stabilization) is beginning. Storm drainage pipe is being laid and gravel for slabs-on-grade has been delivered! Next month, we may have pictures of something other than earthmoving machines.

Stuart Knoop, 261

Bells Bells Bells



Photos by Joe Asin & Tabby Alford