

THE ACORN

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

October 2020 "For the residents, by the residents" Vol. 21, No. 9

"Fall ...



Photo by Ron Ouellette

when nature turns to gold."

Gentle Readers:

When we were kids, and probably when you were kids, too, Elementary School meant K-8 and High School was 9-12. Or, perhaps, Elementary School meant K-6, and then Grades 7-8 were considered Junior High, preceding High School, 9-12. Today many school districts conclude Elementary School in 5th grade, with Grades 6-8 considered Middle School.

So it might take some arithmetic to figure out just what photos from your albums are appropriate for the November ACORN request: Middle School and/or Junior High. But we know you can do the math. (Hint: The December issue plans to feature your HIGH SCHOOL photos.) Please email copies to Rosemary Coffey at rosemarycoffey@aol.com or put a photo in her cubbyhole in the mailroom (#113) by Oct. 15. She will scan them and return them to you intact.

Residents featured on page 7 in the current ACORN are identified on page 13. Give it a try before you peek, but then, after you do, you may well be able to say, "Oh, yeah, now I see the resemblance." In the meantime, no sneak peeking allowed!

Ruth Becker and Rosemary Coffey

OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

Columbus Day	Oct. 12
Indigenous People Day	Oct. 12
National New Friends Day	Oct. 19
United Nations Day	Oct. 24
Hallowe'en	Oct. 31
End of Daylight Savings Time	Nov. 1

THE ACORN

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Submissions for the November issue must be sent to the Editors no later than October 15, 2020.



RANDY AND BETTY PLANT - #344

By Jan Wendt - #158



Photos by Mike Mills

When Randy and Betty Plant set foot in their new residence in June, they joined a small legion of pioneers who had moved to Sherwood Oaks after the pandemic shut-down had commenced. Not for these brave souls the Big Sherwood Welcome, friendly meals in the dining room, lectures and musical programs, Trips and Tours! But even against that unusual background, the Plants say they are content here, respect the safety measures management has taken, and look forward to a time when they can really connect with their new community.

In fact, Randy feels the slower pace here gave them time to close down their 1928 farmhouse in Richland Township. It took time and thought to pare down their collection of antique family furniture and other treasures acquired over their 46-year marriage. The two had met on a blind date, as Randy finished a stint in the Army and Betty was working as a restaurant inspector. They quickly discovered that Betty had known Randy's ex-girlfriend in college!

And so began their adventure together. Randy, a graduate of Washington and Jefferson College, is a native of Memphis,

TN, and Betty, who studied at the University of Virginia and James Madison University, graduated from Point Park University. She is a Pittsburgher by birth. Their early married life was in Wilkinsburg, but, after the birth of two daughters, they moved to the northern suburbs to take advantage of the Pine-Richland schools.

Randy was employed as an infectious disease inspector by the Allegheny County Health Department, while Betty volunteered with the Northern Tier Library, North Suburban Art League, and her local Board of Elections. In addition, both daughters were involved in Junior Tamburitians, which meant a large time commitment for the parents as well. One daughter, who now lives in Squirrel Hill with her husband, is a research coordinator at the University of Pittsburgh. The other has lived and worked in Alaska for a number of years; the Plants have visited her many times in some very remote areas, as well as Fairbanks, Barrow, and the Aleutian Islands.

Randy recalls with a smile his time in the Army, where, after infantry training, he attended the Defense Language Institute, learned Arabic, and served as a language translator of technical manuals. It was the perfect union of his love of languages and his skills as a mechanic. Betty reports that her husband can fix just about anything, from cars to household appliances. He has installed his tool collection in the shed that comes with their unit.

Randy and Betty share a love of genealogy and ancestry; Betty enjoys baking and antiques. They chose Sherwood Oaks for its one-level living and walkability. In the future, Betty would like to help plan evening concerts and events, while Randy looks forward to meeting more of his neighbors. Be sure to welcome these new additions to our community, as opportunities arise!

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE MILLS, DIRECTOR OF SECURITY AND TRANSPORTATION

By Denton Bond - #736 and
Sandy Rubel - #258



Photo by Denton Bond

Mike Mills was born and raised near Beaver Falls in Koppel, PA. He graduated from Beaver Falls High School and attended Clarion University, before earning his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from the on-line Southern Columbia University. Mike is currently working toward his Master's Degree in Business Administration.

Mike has two children, Ava, who graduated from high school this past spring, and Alex, who is beginning his junior year. In 1995 Mike attended the Beaver Community College Municipal Police Training Academy, where he earned his ACT 120 police officer training certification. Mike then worked as a local municipal police officer for the borough of Koppel, earning the rank of sergeant. Next, in 2002, Mike took a job with the Department of Homeland Security as a security supervisor. In the wake of the Sept. 11 hits on the Twin Towers in NYC in 2001, Mike helped arrange the rollout of Federal security measures at major airports across the United States.

In 2003, Mike was promoted to Security Manager, from which position he oversaw the daily operations of five airports in Northwestern Pennsylvania and Southwestern New York. Then in 2006, Mike went to work for the Pentagon as a police officer and attended the Federal Police Academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, GA. While with the Pentagon police, Mike became a law enforcement instructor for the agency. He stated that this was a rewarding and interesting position, because he was able to meet some high-ranking military and government officials during his tenure.

When Mike was asked what qualities Sherwood Oaks looks for in its security personnel, he replied that they must be honest, dedicated, respectful, caring, compassionate, quick-witted, flexible, and eager to learn. He added that Sherwood Oaks favors individuals who have higher education and/or prior military, police, or security training. Once hired, Sherwood Oaks security officers undergo a two-week training period, allowing them to work with another senior officer to learn the job responsibilities and expectations.

All officers attend and are certified in Pennsylvania's Lethal Weapons Training ACT 235. Officers also receive certification in First Aid, CPR, and AED. Officers are trained on all our vehicle operations before going to a driving school to obtain their commercial driver's license.

Mike said, "I love working here!" He finds working at Sherwood Oaks rewarding because of the residents, who display warmth, caring, and respect toward each other and to all the employees. This leads him to feel a deeper responsibility to have his staff and himself trained for excellence and safety at Sherwood Oaks. Mike indicated that his biggest wish currently would be to upgrade the inside and outside of the gatehouse to make it more efficient and impressive.

WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA? (SO Residents Association)

By Jean Henderson, Secretary - #611

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

Summary of reports and actions for the Sept. 8, 2020, board meeting:

TREASURERS: the Memorial/Special Projects Fund balance is \$66,531.82, and the Employee Appreciation Fund balance is \$19,254.73. The SORA balance is \$64,456.25.

LIAISON REPORTS:

Program. All programs are canceled for 2020. Some may be rescheduled next year.

Recycling. A class on 'Planning' – using plastic bags as yarn to make products – will be offered on campus.

Library. A chairperson is needed ASAP for the Book Selection Committee.

Quilting. Quilt #3 has been completed for the Mars Home for Youth.

Technology. Use of live video streaming, installation of a second Armstrong channel, and other helpful IT solutions are being investigated.

ADMINISTRATION: Annette McPeck reported that 215 Independent Living units out of 272 are inhabited; ten more are under contract. The Skilled Nursing Unit ratio is 36/43, Personal Care is 36/42, and Oak Grove is 28/30. The Personal Care dining renovation is complete. SO employees in a recent satisfaction survey showed 83% engagement, with 77% of employees participating. Resident satisfaction surveys will be distributed in mid-October for all levels

of care. A schedule for safe committee meetings is being completed

OLD BUSINESS: Several new outdoor benches have been placed around campus, including at lakeside.

The next SORA Board meeting is planned for October 6, 2020, beginning at 1:30 p.m. Please watch the 900 channel, the SO APP, and FYIs for updates.

OFFICERS:

President – Frank Finley
Vice-President – Stan Foster
Secretary – Jean Henderson
Treasurer – Peter Broeren
Op. Treasurer – Jim Bouwkamp
Asst. Op. Treas. – Beth Brown

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

By Jean Henderson - #611

The Living with Loss Team will offer a grief support group for 10 persons in the Great Room at Oak Lodge, led by resident Jan Wendt, a former hospice nurse. The group will meet on Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. for six weeks: October 15, 22, and 29, and November 5, 12, and 19. Please call Ann Ferguson (8269) to register.

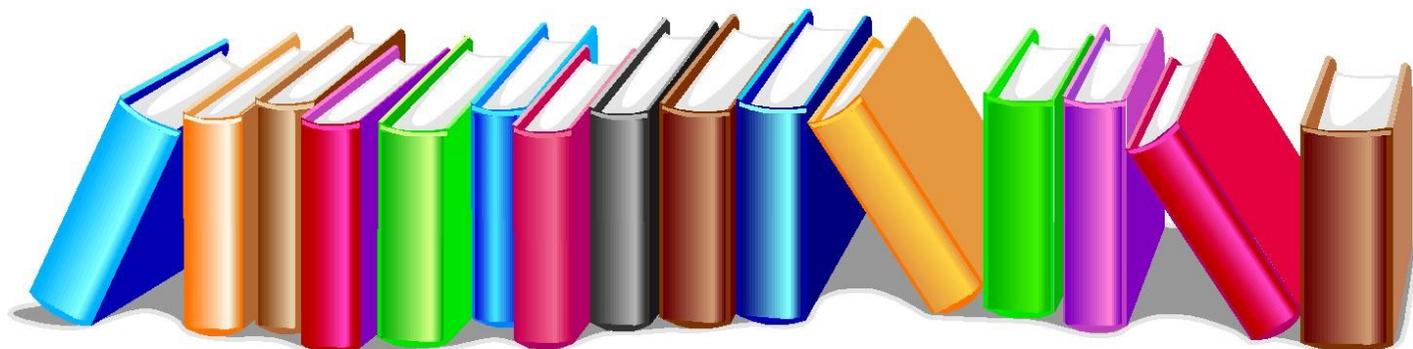


THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE AND DVDs

4 Movie Marathon: Waterworld, Children of Men, Skyline, and Doomsday		c. 1996	F FOU DVD
28 Summers	Hilderbrand, Elin	c. 2020	F HIL c. 2
All the Ugly and Wonderful Things	Greenwood, Bryn	c. 2017	F GRE p.b.
Breaking Bad		c. 2014	F BRE DVD
Deadlock	Coulter, Catherine	c. 2020	F COU
Flotsam & Jetsam	Dodson, DeAnna Julie	c. 2020	F DOD
The Geometry of Holding Hands	McCall Smith, Alexander	c. 2020	F SMI
The Invited	McMahon, Jennifer	c. 2020	F MCM L.T.
Key of Valor	Roberts, Nora	c. 2004	F ROB L.T.
The Lions of Fifth Avenue	Davis, Fiona	c. 2020	F DAV
Near Dark	Thor, Brad	c. 2020	F THO
The Order	Silva, Daniel	c. 2020	F SIL
The Orphan Collector	Wiseman, Ellen Marie	c. 2020	F WIS p.b.
Panning for Murder: A Murder She Wrote Mystery	Fletcher, Jessica	c. 2007	F FLE L.T.
A Place to Belong	Adams, Beth	c. 2018	F ADA
Sixty-Six	Levinson, Barry	c. 2003	F LEV L.T.
The Summer House	Patterson, James	c. 2020	F PAT c. 2
Wider Than an Ocean	Adams, Beth	c. 2018	F ADA

NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES

The Answer Is Reflections on My Life	Trebek, Alex	c. 2020	BIO TRE
Tough Love	Rice, Susan	c. 2019	BIO RIC
American Carnage: On the Front Lines of the Republican Civil War and the Rise of President Trump	Alberta, Tim	c. 2019	324.273 ALB
A Brotherhood of Valor	Wert, Jeffry	c. 1999	355.009 WER
For God and Country	Reed, Ralph	c. 2020	277.3 REE
Lake of the Ozarks	Geist, William	c. 2019	977.8 GEI
The Room Where It Happened	Bolton, John R.	c. 2020	973.93 BO

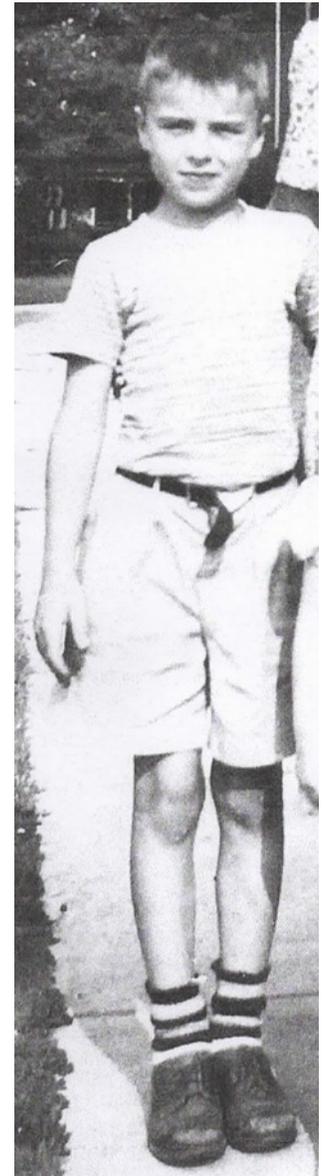




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School Days... School Daze...

See p. 13
for Answers



6



2



4



3



5



7

WALLS AND FENCES

By Bill Paul - #167

History is replete with accounts of walls and fences built either to divide or protect. For example, the ancient Great Wall across northern China and Hadrian's Wall across northern England were built for protection from the Asiatic hordes and the barbarians invading England from what is now Scotland.

In our own time we have seen the Iron Curtain and Berlin Wall built to divide East and West and prevent Eastern Europeans from escaping the Soviet tyranny. And now we have the politically controversial wall being constructed along our country's southern border for the purpose of preventing Central Americans from taking advantage of the freedoms, safety, and opportunities that American society has to offer.

Historically, walls have often been much more significant than fences. Without them, some civilized societies might not have survived. Walls inside buildings also provide protection from inclement weather. What's more, walls within homes conveniently divide our living spaces to allow for modesty, quiet, and personal privacy.

Today we live in a society that, sadly, is often deeply divided by walls reflecting differences related to economics, politics, race, and even religious loyalties. That need not be the case for us who are blessed to live here at Sherwood Oaks.

Our campus is surrounded only by a fence. Inside that fence is a community of people whose few social, economic, political, and religious differences need not, as do walls, divide and separate us from each other. We who are blessed to reside here are profoundly privileged. For that we can also be most grateful.

THE LIBRARY LOWDOWN

By Anne Hunt - #308

We extend our sincere thanks to Sally Hollister, who has managed our Paperback Room since April of 2004. While Sally has done an excellent job, she has decided that it is time to hand the reins over to someone else. Jean Henderson has volunteered to assume that responsibility, and we are most grateful to her.

A few gentle reminders when signing out library books: If you are checking your book out on the computer, please leave the sign-out card *in* the book. It is not necessary to sign your book out on both the computer and the card. Also, we have several residents with the same last name. If you are one of those residents, please write your first initial in addition to your last name on the sign-out card.

We are still in need of someone to chair the Book Selection Group. Please consider offering your services. We may be unable to provide our residents with new books if this position remains unfilled! Interested? Contact Anne Williams at 8329.

LOCKED DOORS

By Mike Rose - #503

There's much out there,
yet I bar the door
to keep it out
and feel safe
without realizing
that I am locked in
and that fear and living
cannot walk hand-in-hand
through life.

From Michael Rose, *Parallel Worlds: One Man's Journey through the Corporate World to the Real World*

“I’M NOT SAYING WE WOULDN’T GET OUR HAIR MUSSED ...

By Dennis Lynch - #335

... but no more than ten to twenty million killed, tops,” says General “Buck” Turgidson to President Merkin Muffley in the film *Dr. Strangelove*. He’s talking about an American peremptory nuclear strike on Russia.

I am writing this on Labor Day weekend, which has led me to recall that, in 1946, on the Thursday before Labor Day, the August 31 issue of *The New Yorker* hit the streets. That issue was probably the greatest event in journalistic reporting in the 20th century, namely: the publication of John Hersey’s story, *Hiroshima*, as the only editorial content in the entire magazine.

That “bolt from the blue” was the result of secretive work by Hersey, Founding Editor Harold Ross, and Deputy Editor William Shawn. The importance of the single 30,000-word story as the only content of the magazine other than ads (e.g., Maidenform! Chesterfields!) was the way the story treated the dropping of the first atomic bomb. Instead of providing dry statistics about a city that had been wiped out, Hersey wrote personally, from the victims’ point of view. His story details the effects of the bomb on six citizens of Hiroshima: the physical effects on them at the time and, importantly, *after* the blast (radiation); the emotional effects; and, if you will, the moral effects.

The New Yorker began life in 1924 as a “gay, humorous, and satirical” weekly, not written for “the little old lady in Dubuque.” Serious long-form stories began during World War II, among the cartoons and humor, and have continued ever since.

After the war, the government and the Army went to great lengths to block news about the after-effects of the bomb. If there were any radiation deaths, they were “very few,” General Leslie R. Groves said, and it was “a pleasant way to die.” Hersey’s story toppled that spin. That was one of its most important contributions to literature and politics.

By showing the effects of radiation on six individuals, he made all of us wonder what life would be like if other countries were to bomb *our* town – us – or if we all started flinging our increasingly violent weapons around the globe.

When we bombed Hiroshima, the U.S. possessed only two bombs. Today we have very many more, and they are very, very much more powerful. “Little Boy,” the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, had a yield of 12-18 kilotons (thousand tons) of TNT. Our most common bomb now, the B53, has a yield of 9,000 kilotons (600 times more powerful than Little Boy!). Russia has tested the largest bomb so far, the Tsar Bomba: 50,000 kilotons (over 3,000 times more powerful) (*Wikipedia*).

The US and Russia combined have stockpiled a total of 8,518 nuclear bombs and deployed 3,163 more. Of course, other hats are in the ring as well.

A 4,000-kiloton bomb that exploded over the Pittsburgh Point would set fires and cause 3rd-degree burns at the junction of I-79 and I-76 here in Cranberry; detonated over New York City, that one bomb would kill over 3,800,000 people. With 1,796 bombs deployed by Russia (*State Dept.*, 2017), they must be hard-pressed to find enough worthwhile targets.

The new book, *Fallout* (2020), by Lesley M. M. Blume, tells the story of the idea,

the reporting and editing, the publication, and the world-wide responses to *Hiroshima*.

Ms. Blume has written a short (183 pp. with 74 pp. of notes), fascinating narrative, which shows her ability to carry the torch for Ross, Shawn, White, Liebling ... all those great *New Yorker* writers: clean, clear, simple prose that carries you along faster than the latest Jack Reacher thriller.

Ms. Blume sums up the present situation: "The greatest tragedy of the twenty-first century may be that we have learned so little from the greatest tragedies of the twentieth century. ... So here are some refreshers: Nuclear conflict may mean the end of life on this planet. Mass dehumanization can lead to genocide. The death of an independent press can lead to tyranny and render a population helpless to protect itself against a government that disdains law and conscience."

Let's think hard before we restart an arms race with people who have "nuclear buttons." Please read, or re-read, *Hiroshima*. The Cranberry library has several copies; our library, alas, has none. Cranberry also has *Fallout*.

* * * *

**THE ORPHAN COLLECTOR, by
ELLEN MARIE WISEMAN**

A review by Julie Eden - #290

The 1918 influenza pandemic is raging in Philadelphia. Thirteen-year-old German immigrant Pia Lange is suddenly left in charge of her baby brothers in the slums of the city. Eventually, she makes the decision that she must venture out in search of food.

Neighbor Bernice Groves is lost in grief and bitterness after the deaths of her husband and young son. Seeing Pia leave her home, Bernice makes a life-altering decision that leads her on a mission: to transform the city's orphans and immigrant children into what she feels are "true Americans."

This latest novel by Ellen Marie Wiseman was published in August — at the height of our current pandemic; the Sherwood Oaks library now has the copy that I donated after reading the book.

I was captivated by the two main characters, noted above. They are well defined by the author, as the story navigates deftly between them and the situations to which they are exposed. Their lives are woven together and apart for months throughout the city and the influenza pandemic.

The book has been described as being "a page-turning novel as suspenseful as it is poignant," and I agree.

* * * *

EARLY SUNDAY

By Rabe Marsh - #187

The birds start singing long before it's
light:
How loud at first, but soft, as sun comes
through
The trees and casts its golden glow
about,
And cooing doves repeat their song in
threes.
Here comes my faithful dog, whose furry
feet
Fly through the grassy dew, who stops to
stare
At Joe, our feral friend, who runs for
home – the porch –
As groundhogs do, to start my day again.

RIGHT PLACE — RIGHT TIME

By Joe and Peg Rychcik - #297

A usual walk along the pathways of Sherwood Oaks turned into a remarkable experience in late August. The wind-breakers along the walkways are marked to deter birds from flying into them, but birds sometimes do collide with the glass.

As we approached the Center, we saw something hit the windbreaker and fall to the sidewalk. When we got to it, we discovered a tiny bird lying there, motionless. Joe checked to see if its fragile bones had been affected. Finding no apparent damage other than the bird still not moving, Joe gently scooped it into his hands to remove it from the sidewalk.



Photo by Peg Rychcik

People who walked by were amazed to hear the story and to see a hummingbird up close. It kept opening its mouth, moving its tongue out, and blinking. Obviously greatly stunned by the impact, it remained in Joe's hands for almost ten minutes. As we carried it while looking for a garden spot suitable to allow it to rest and recuperate safely, it fluttered its wings and then flew off to the roof of the Community Center.

We were so glad that it had regained its strength. It was an extraordinary experience to see the hummingbird look down

at us from the roof for at least two minutes before flying away.

The National Aviary in Pittsburgh identified it from the photo as a female juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbird.



NOVEMBER 3 AND YOUR BALLOT

By Agnes Peebles - #324, for the
Ad Hoc Civic Affairs Task Force

By the time you read this article, the ballot will have been finalized and mailed to those who requested one. Those of you who have already returned your ballot may skip the rest of this article!

If you choose to go to the polls, remember that we vote in the Senior Center at the Municipal Building. There will be bus transportation several times during the day. We vote in Cranberry 2.

If you use your mail-in ballot, check to be sure that everything on it is correct and that your signature is *exactly* as you wrote it on your ballot request.

If you are concerned about the postal service, you may deliver your ballot in person any time after you receive it. The director of the Bureau of Elections has this advice: "Mail-in ballots can be dropped off at the Elections Bureau (124 Diamond Street, Butler) up until 8 p.m. Nov. 3. Voters must bring with them a valid driver's license or identification card issued by the state Department of Transportation when dropping off their ballot." There will be no ballot drop boxes anywhere else in Butler County.

Please watch the Civic Affairs bulletin board and your in-house mailbox for any vital information as it becomes available.

HOW TO CALL THE POLICE ... WHEN YOU'RE OLD AND DON'T MOVE FAST ANY MORE

Posted 5/4/2010, by Maceman

George Phillips, an elderly man from Walled Lake, Michigan, was going up to bed, when his wife told him that he'd left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window.

George opened the back door to go turn off the light, but saw that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phoned the police, who asked, "Is someone actually in your house?"

He said, "No, but some people are breaking into my garden shed and stealing from me."

Then the police dispatcher said, "All patrols are busy; you should lock your doors, and an officer will be along when one is available."

George said, "Okay."

He hung up the phone and counted to 30. Then he phoned the police again.

"Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago, because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now, because I just shot them both," and he hung up.

Within five minutes, six police cars, a SWAT Team, a helicopter, two fire trucks, a paramedic, and an ambulance showed up at the Phillips' residence and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the policemen said to George, "I thought you said you'd shot them!"

George replied, "I thought *you* said there was nobody available to come over!"

This was meant to elicit a smile ... but: (a) it didn't happen, and (b) don't do it! It's illegal, and you'll be arrested!

FOCUS ON THE WORLD

Quarterly Collection
for Gleaners' Food Bank

Sunday Oct. 18 – Saturday, Oct. 24

By Nancy Paul - #167

People in southwestern Pennsylvania, who through no fault of their own have lost their jobs, struggle with deciding how to pay for food along with housing, utilities, medical expenses, and other essentials. Some buy cheaper, less nutritious foods or skip meals so that there will be enough to eat. One in five children faces food insecurity.

We can help. Every \$1 donated to area food banks will buy \$5 worth of food for those whose hunger we probably can't imagine. Note: This collection will be our opportunity to help buy food for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

During the continuing pandemic, food items will not be collected. **Checks can be made out to Gleaners' Food Bank and placed in cubby 348 in the Mailroom.**

* * * *

NEW SCAM ALERT

From the Editors

A lot of shops these days may ask if you need a receipt; if you say No, you won't get one. Do not say No! It is important to check your receipt to ensure that the cashier has not added a line indicating a "cash-out" of, say, \$20.00, which means a "cash advance" against your credit card, on which you would be paying interest. Electronic cheating becomes ever easier as time goes on and new programs are developed; please be sure that you don't become a victim of it just because you're not paying attention.

WISDOM FOR THE AGES AND AGING

Submitted by Bill Paul - #167

Perhaps we need to be reminded that ...

... the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

... just one person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes my day.

... being kind is more important than being right.

... life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

... money doesn't buy class.

... it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

...under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

... love, not time, heals all wounds.

... everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

... when you harbor bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

... people should keep their words both soft and tender, because tomorrow they may have to eat them.

... a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

... everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occur while you're climbing it.

... the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

FOR SHERWOOD OAKS DINERS: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (during and after Covid-19)

By Ellie Castle - #307

1. Thou shalt compliment more and complain less.
2. Thou shalt not complain about cold food – that's why thou hast a stove and a microwave oven.
3. Thou shalt show appreciation to our servers and chefs and to Beverly and Jesse and their crews.
4. Thou shalt not throw plastic bags into the garbage bin.
5. Thou shalt wash plastic containers before recycling them.
6. Thou shalt take (or order) only what thou canst eat.
7. Thou shalt be willing to try new foods.
8. Thou shalt wipe thy mouth, not thy nose, with thy napkin.
9. Thou shalt sanitize thy hands before eating.
10. Thou shalt say a prayer for all these blessings!

SCHOOL DAZE

Below are the names of the children pictured on p. 7. See how many of them you identified correctly!

4. Julie Eden	Naylor
3. Emerick Zovko	7. Sarah Jane
2. Diane Neely	6. Bill Paul
1. Barbara Scruggs	5. Betty Howard

UNRELIABLE FINGERS

By Ellen Brierly - #734

I have ten fingers, but they aren't too reliable. Arthritis has claimed dexterity and nimbleness.

It is my duty to hand out Bob's and my meds each morning. As my husband, he trusts me to get it right and do what is necessary to ensure his good health. Some of the pills are monsters that need to be split in half, while others are very small but must be halved also. It is very confusing, and probably not something to be done prior to drinking one's coffee in the morning.

One recent day I was diligently lining up the collection. I unscrewed the cap to the bottle, but lost control. The opened bottle slipped from my hand, and one zillion (actually 150) miniscule pills shot to the floor. They didn't land in a nice, clear, accessible spot. They scattered hither and yon.

Hearing my plaintive plea, Bob assured me he was coming to the rescue. I ran to get my picker-upper, while he struggled to get out of the recliner. The picker-upper picks up only one pill at a time. Neither of us could stoop to pick them up, so Bob opted for a stool on which he could sit and lean over instead of bending from the waist or knees. Meanwhile, I continued my one-at-a-time endeavor. The little rascals were hiding in obscure spots that required flushing them out, so we could return them to the confines of the bottle.

After we were finished, Bob suggested that there could be some under the stove or refrigerator, but we'll never know. By the time they are found, we should be out of the apartment.

I confess that, while all of this was happening, the thought occurred to me that this would make a good story in the *Acorn*.

IMPROVE YOUR VOCABULARY!

The *Washington Post* asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are some of this year's winners. Read them carefully!

Intoxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.

Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

Giraffiti: Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

Sarchasm: The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Inoculatte: To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

Osteopornosis: A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)

Karmageddon: It's, like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes, and it's, like, a serious bummer.

Decafalon (n.): The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

Glibido: All talk and no action.

WHAT I LEARNED AT THE MOVIES

By Dennis Lynch - #335

When I was a kid, we went to the movies every Tuesday night, after supper (whatever time that might be), to the least objectionable double-feature showing. If we came in in the middle, maybe my parents would stay and see the end through a second time. After all, movies were educational. A friend recently wrote to remind me of some things we learned from them:

- If you are chased through town, you can always take cover in a passing St. Patrick's Day parade, at any time of the year.
- All grocery shopping bags contain at least one stick of French bread.
- If you wish to pass yourself off as a German officer, it will not be necessary to speak the language. A "German" accent will do.
- The Eiffel Tower can be seen from any window in Paris.
- If you are a woman staying in a haunted house, you must investigate any strange noise in your most revealing underwear.
- The Chief of Police will always suspend his star detective.
- Medieval peasants had perfect teeth.
- Television news bulletins usually contain a story that affects you personally at that precise moment.
- Any lock can be picked by a paper clip in seconds, unless it's the door to a burning building with a trapped child inside.
- It is always possible to park directly outside the building you are visiting. Ah, those were the days!

COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #715

This column highlights information from U.S. government agencies that authored the 4th National Climate Assessment in 2018.

This Month's Agency – Environmental Protection Agency

Website: <https://www.epa.gov>

The Earth's climate is changing. Temperatures are rising, snow and rainfall patterns are shifting, and more extreme climate events – like heavy rainstorms and record-high temperatures – are already happening. Many of these observed changes are linked to the rising levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, caused by human activities.

EPA partners with more than 40 data contributors from various government agencies, academic institutions, and other organizations to compile a key set of indicators related to the causes and effects of climate change. The indicators are published in EPA's report, *Climate Change Indicators in the United States*, which, unfortunately, has not been updated since 2016. The indicators are grouped into the following categories:

Greenhouse Gases	Weather & Climate	Oceans
Snow & Ice	Health & Society	Ecosystems

Current "Carbon Tax" Legislation

Learn more about the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend bill, with 82 co-sponsors, at www.energyinnovationact.org. For constantly updated information on the current climate crisis, follow [@CCLSlipperyRock](https://www.facebook.com/CCLSlipperyRock) on Facebook.

... and other colors, too!



Photos by Rabe Marsh and Jan Wendt