

# THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER

100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

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

April 2024 “For the residents, by the residents” Vol. 43, No. 4

## *First Day of Spring 2024*



Photo by Jim Mauch

Gentle Readers,

*Hasn't March been an interesting month!? Certainly in terms of the weather, it has been extremely unpredictable: sunny and high in the 70s one day, and then snow flurries covering the hillsides on the next. It has meant that deciding what to wear for any particular occasion has required scanning weather reports ahead of time and then sticking one's nose out the door to confirm or challenge the predictions.*

*The campus at Sherwood Oaks, at least, has been developing beautifully (see photos on back page for examples). Seeing the daffodils blooming everywhere, and bushes and trees sprouting blossoms of assorted colors, has reminded us that nothing lasts forever ... while replacements may be even more beautiful than the originals. The next couple of months should be similarly delightful, so don't forget to look around when you're walking to and from the Community Center!*

*As we close, we want to thank our staff member and frequent photographer, Rabe Marsh, for his long and welcome service on The ACORN. May he enjoy his future activities as much as we enjoyed having him work with us for several years.*

- The Acorn Staff

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### Memorial Donations and Remembrance Cards

Did you know? Donation envelopes and remembrance cards are located 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.

## APRIL CALENDAR

April Fools' Day	1
National Dandelion Day	5
World Health Day	7
Tax Day	15
Patriots Day	18
Passover begins at Sunset	22
Earth Day	22
Morse Code Day	27
National Arbor Day	29

### **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 May issue must be sent to the Editor no later than

**April 15, 2024.**

### ***IN MEMORIAM***

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

*Sarah Tokash February 28, 2024*

*Juanita Manley March 5, 2024*

*Elizabeth Jackson March 9, 2024*

*Jean Anne Pelusi March 10, 2024*

*Martha Miller March 10, 2024*

*Emma Peters March 10, 2024*

*John Burress March 23, 2024*



## CALLIGRAPHY CLASS

By Connie Brandenberger - #602

SORA is offering a Calligraphy Class on **Apr. 23, Apr. 30, and May 7, 1:30-3:30 p.m.** in the Art Room. Jim Lavrinc, a well-known Pittsburgh-area instructor who has been teaching calligraphy for 30 years in churches and schools, will be teaching the class.

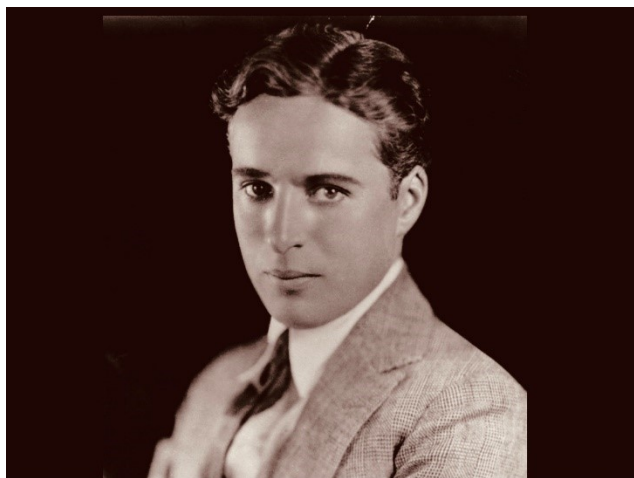
This short course is the perfect way to explore the art of calligraphy. Just come and enjoy! Even if you have never picked up a calligraphy pen, or if you are ready to enhance your skills and create unique hand-lettered art, this course is for you!

There is a \$25 fee to help cover the costs of materials and instructor's fee. If paying by check, make it out to SORA Art, with Calligraphy on the memo line. Just place the check in cubbyhole 602 or bring it to the first class.

Please call Connie Brandenberger in #602 (724-591-5385) if you would like to attend, so that we have a count for purchasing supplies. Join us if you can!

## DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS PERSON?

From Maggie Bennardo - #211



You will on **May 23!**

## COMFORTING CONVERSATION WITH DOCTOR



## ANNEX/GRANNY'S ATTIC

By Jane Paul - #341

The 'Annex' [currently housed in Unit #156] is a very important activity in our community. It provides a place where residents can donate furniture, lamps, and so on, that they can no longer use. These items, if they are in good condition, are then sold to other residents, their families, or Sherwood Oaks employees, always at very reasonable prices.

The proceeds from these sales, along with the Sherwood Gifts profits, go to The SORA Memorial/Special Projects Fund to be used for campus improvements.

Starting **April 1**, Sandy Smailer (#151) will manage this activity. '**Annex**' store hours will now be on **Tuesdays**. The April dates are currently **April 9 and 23, noon to 2:30 p.m.**, but dates and times may change, so do check Channel 950 before you head over there.

## FOCUS ON THE WORLD

By Bruce Cooper - #735

On April 22, Earth Day will celebrate its 55th anniversary. It was initiated on April 22, 1970, with 20 million Americans, some 10% of the population that year, taking to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development that had left a growing legacy of serious human health impacts.

On behalf of Focus on the World, I will be presenting "A Brief History of Earth Day" on **Thurs. evening, April 18, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Auditorium.

And beginning at **12:01 a.m. on Sat., April 20, through midnight, Mon., April 22**, Channel 951 will feature 72 hours of programming in an Earth Day Marathon, focusing with David Attenborough on the beauty of our planet, the evolution of agriculture as we struggle to feed a rapidly growing world population, and the causes and effects of climate change as we run out of time to keep the Earth livable for future generations.

In addition, the Spring Food Bank drive for the Lighthouse Foundation will take place from **April 18 through April 25**. Watch for boxes on the bench in the Scooter Room, ready to accept your donations.

## THE LIBRARY LOWDOWN

By Anne Hunt - #308

This month's featured author is Louise Penny. She is a Canadian author of mystery novels set in the province of Quebec. Penny started her career as a radio broadcaster for the Canadian Broadcasting Company, but soon turned to writing,

winning numerous awards for her work. She has written 19 books, most of them featuring the fictional head of the homicide department in Quebec, Chief Inspector Armand Gamache. Our library has 18 of her books! Check her out the next time you want a stimulating read.

National Library Week this year is April 7-13. Since we will have celebrated a little early at the Sherwood Oaks Activities Fair on March 19, we hope you had time to stop by to visit our table there, but – if not – there's always next year!

## CHAPEL NOTES

By Gary Brandenberger - #602

For the Chapel Committee

Services begin at 2:00 p.m.  
in the Card Room

Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend.

### Sunday, April 7

Rev. Ed Glover  
Urban Impact - Pittsburgh

### Sunday, April 14

Rev. James Benson  
Cranberry Community Presbyterian

### Sunday, April 21

Rev. George Steffey  
Sherwood Oaks - Retired

### Sunday, April 28

Rev. Karen Slusser  
St. Paul's UMC - Allison Park

*"Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you."*

- 2 Corinthians 13:11

## CONTINUED LEARNING

Submitted by Jno L. Hunt - #308

We are excited to have more presentations for April. They will be in the auditorium, but the times will vary due to its availability.

**Mon., April 1 @ 10:30 a.m.:** Merle Comeley, Carnegie Art Museum: "How the Carnegie, Planted in Pittsburgh in 1895, Grew and Bore Fruit"

**Mon., April 8 @ 1:30 p.m.:** Buzz Swank: "Raising and Farming Bees"

In addition, 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. Here they are:

**Tues., April 2:** How to Look at and Understand Great Art (Lessons 3 & 4); Encore on Thurs., April 4

**Tues., April 9:** Connections - Distant Voices; Encore on Thurs., Apr 11

**Tues., April 16:** A Voyage through Germany's Majestic River Moselle; Encore on Thurs., April 18

**Tues., April 23:** Lost Christianities (7 & 8); Encore on Thurs., April 25

**Tues., April 30:** Intelligent Trees; Encore on Thurs., May 2

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*Growing old should have taken longer.*

*Aging may have slowed you down, but it hasn't shut you up.*

*Your people skills are just fine. It's your tolerance for idiots that needs work.*

*The biggest lie you tell yourself is, "I don't need to write that down. I'll remember it."*

## THE NEW NORMAL

By Dennis Lynch - #335

Even though we may not pronounce them correctly, most of us know the names of more drugs than would stuff a medicine cabinet. We are conversant with words like "little pinch," "procedure," and "multiple co-morbidities." We can talk knowledgeably about the virtues of injections guided by X-rays vs. those guided by ultrasounds.

We have watched friends make the journey from walking sticks to canes to quadcanes to walkers to rollators to scooters to electric wheelchairs to ....

And some of us are no longer "good candidates" for surgeries. And while this may deny us many potentially helpful "procedures," it has the upside of keeping us from the side effects of the anesthetic and those long recoveries.

But this means that, more and more, your doctor may tell you that there is no "relief" for your current illness. For you it is "the new normal" ... so ... "Deal with it."

In fact, in the last month, two different specialists have nodded at me, smiling, when I wondered aloud if they were going to prescribe "the new normal" as the answer to my complaints. "Yep, Sonny" – big smile – "it is your new normal!"

However, I am glad to tell you that there is a silver lining to this waste of a co-pay. The new normal soon becomes the normal. Our bodies and our minds are supremely adaptable, and the unacceptable quickly gets folded into our Activities of Daily Living. We form new habits and routines, and the old days of wine and roses slip into the fog of the past. So don't despair!

At least, that's what I keep telling myself.

## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

One of the favorite arguments of climate deniers has to do with China, along the lines of, "If China isn't doing anything about the climate crisis, why should the US hobble its economy converting to green energy?" Here are some facts:

China spent \$546 billion in 2022 on investments that included solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, and batteries. That is nearly four times the amount of U.S. investments, which totaled \$141 billion. China also dominated in low-carbon manufacturing, accounting for more than 90 percent of the \$79 billion invested in that sector.

On the other hand, China permitted more coal power plants last year than at any time in the last seven years. It's the equivalent of about two new coal power plants per week. The growth of new coal plant permitting appears to be a response to ongoing drought and last summer's historic heat wave, which scientists say was made more likely because of climate change. The heat wave increased demand for air conditioning and led to problems with the grid. Moreover, the heat and drought led rivers to dry up, including parts of the Yangtze, and meant less hydro-power. Soaring prices for liquified natural gas due to the war in Ukraine also led at least one province to turn to coal.

China is the world's biggest emitter of fossil fuels and has pledged for its emissions to peak by 2030. But there are questions over how high that peak will get and how soon that peak will come.

Let's hope that they keep their pledge and use coal only as a backup to solar, wind, and battery sources.

**Watch *China's Contradiction – World's Biggest Clean Energy Producer/Polluter* on Channel 951 on Mon., April 8, at 10:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m., or 7:00 p.m. Encore presentation on Wed., April 10, at 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.**

## PAPERBACK PONDERINGS

By Jean Henderson - #346

Our paperback room is funded totally by your donations, and I'm so grateful! Often, after the passing of a resident, family members will donate large numbers of books; recently, such a donation was made by the family of Dr. Bobbie Harley, whose love of reading spanned multiple interests. Here are a few of the donations, available on the "Recent New Donations" shelf, to the right as you enter:

**Georgia O'Keefe** – illustrated biography

**The Truths We Hold** – by Kamala Harris

**The Orientalist** – a true tale of a Jewish man posing as a Muslim prince in Nazi Germany

**The Final Solution** by Michael Chabon

**Interpreter of Maladies** – Pulitzer Prize winner by Jhumpa Lahiri

**It Can't Happen Here** by Sinclair Lewis, about the fragility of democracy

**Spunk** – short stories by Zora Neale Hurston

**The Bible according to Mark Twain!!!**

**The Origin and Development of the Pueblo Katsina Cult** – a fascinating history about ancestor worship and the concept of an afterlife

Do stop in and enjoy ALL types of books in the Paperback Room! There is no need to sign out the book; just check on the inside back cover that you've read it ... and return it.

*Old age is coming at a really bad time.*

*Of course I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice.*

## CURIO CABINETS FOR APRIL/MAY

By Janet Desko - #210

A big "thank you" to everyone who contributed to the "Treasures from the Past" theme for our curio cabinets.

Peggy Meister and I are looking forward to the April/May cabinets with thoughts of Mother's Day and the theme of "**Special Women in our Lives.**" Let's take the time to honor our daughters, mothers, grandmothers, granddaughters, sisters, teachers, female mentors, etc. Please bring your pictures, sentimental items, jewelry, dishes, vases, and keepsakes that evoke memories of a special woman in your life.

Please pick up your "Treasures from the Past" items on **Tues., April 23** from **10:30 – noon** and from **4:30 – 6:00 p.m.**

On **Thurs., April 25**, please bring in your new items from **10:30 – 12:00** and from **4:30 – 6:00 p.m.** for "**Special Women in our Lives.**"

Keep up the good work! We couldn't do it without you!

## THEY ARE UNIQUE

By Jane Lavender - #253

In response to many requests, the Program Committee has invited The North Allegheny Strolling Strings (NASS) to return to Sherwood Oaks on **Tues., Apr. 30, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Auditorium. It will be an evening of stirring music, as the musicians wander among the audience. It is truly a unique experience.

The NASS are now in their 36th season. Having started in 1988, they are students in grades 9-12 who play a variety of music.

Under the direction of Ms. Sarah Lavelle and Ms. Lauren Donato, this group has played for national conventions with 1000

people, weddings, church dinners, and other school and community events. The act of strolling while performing has brought these students to a new level of self-confidence, independence, musical leadership, and the experience of communicating directly with an audience through music.

## SHERWOOD OAKS GOLF GROUP

By Gary Brandenberger - #602

We expect to resume our golf group as soon as the weather permits. The Cranberry Highlands Golf Course is once again providing us with Thursday morning tee times every week, except when the course is closed for events. When this happens, they will try for another day, which is usually Wednesday. Our tee times start about 9:30, and we usually reserve 4 times.

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

I will notify you by email over the preceding weekend of the tee times "Cranberry" is assigning us. Please respond as soon as you decide whether you are playing **or not**. I will arrange the groups by Tuesday afternoon and let you know your tee time by email. Unused tee times will be released back to the course. When we have Wednesday times, we back everything up one day.

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

## 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 March 5, 2024, monthly board meeting follow:

**SORA Treasurers:** Memorial-Special Projects Fund balance is \$37,131.34, with \$13,382.89 in the Employee Appreciation Fund, plus a short-term CD of \$20,000. The SORA Operating Treasury balance and CD investment are \$90,688.62.

### **Liaison Reports:**

**Dining Committee:** A taste test of vegetarian burgers was held, with the Malibu Burger as the winner.

**Crazy Crafters:** Pottery classes are planned for two groups: beginners and those who took the class last fall. A fee of \$25 will help cover costs of materials and instructor.

**Sherwood Neighbors:** More volunteers are needed to visit patients in PC, SN, and OG.

**Trips & Tours:** Maggie Bennardo and Thea Stover will now direct this committee.

**Focus on the World:** On **June 20**, a program on antisemitism will be presented by the Jewish Community Center.

**Recycling:** We are ahead of the Sept. deadline for collecting plastic for the next TREX bench. Volunteers are needed to sort plastic on Mon. afternoons. Call Ruth Inken, 8225.

**Gift Shop:** Sales in Gift Shop and Annex were low in January. The mission statement of Sherwood Gifts was reworded to reflect volunteer participation of two non-residents.

**Handbells & Chorus:** A concert is planned for **Sun., May 5**, as part of the chapel service.

**Archives:** Archivists Peg and Joe Rychick have asked that notices removed from the

bulletin boards in the mailroom after an event be placed in the box marked Archives on the lowest shelf of the pigeonholes.

**Executive Director:** Census: IL at 190/247 – 9 signed contracts. Marketing events planned for **Apr. 30** and **May 23**. SN 35/43 (5-star CMS rating); PC 31/42; OGC 29/30.

**Re-opening Cranberry Lake Grill:** Available in May for residents to reserve space; Dining Dept. will resume catering. Room reservations accepted through Tabby Alford beginning **April 15**.

**Photographer** will be on-site **Tuesday, June 4, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.**, in the Chapel for resident photos, an opportunity to update the resident photo book in the lobby.

**Social Media:** Help get the word out about SO by sharing posts with family and friends. Highest performing post in February was the Wizard of Oz-themed dinner.

**Summerhouse:** Cranberry Township requiring a drinking fountain at site; location is under review. Vendor bids being sought.

**Resident Satisfaction Survey:** Results under review. IL overall score was 4.58, an increase from 2022. Highest scoring factor was friendliness, at 4.85; lowest was housekeeping, at 3.69.

**Armstrong Cable Upgrade:** Campus-wide upgrade is in progress. Armstrong has been on-site to remedy service issues.

**Grab-n-Go Market:** Dining Dept. is upgrading appearance of Café market and will be providing samples of new items after the Gordon Food Service show in March.

**Notification Slides:** In-house TV channels, a valuable resource for residents, are updated as information becomes available.

**New Business:** Three additional residents agreed to complete the Nominating Committee: Joan Reynolds, Rosemary Coffey, and Frank Weiss. The Board approved these appointments.



A budget increase request for the Art Studio and the Crazy Crafters was approved.

A Super Bowl party and a bingo night were well attended in February. Bingo evenings will be offered once a month as a “pilot” project, with funding from the Special Events Budget item.

**Next Monthly Board Meeting: Tues., April 9, 2024, beginning at 1:30 p.m.** in the Card Room. A Quarterly SORA Meeting was held on Tues., Mar. 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. All residents were welcome to attend.

## **I'M ONE OF THE FELLOWS WHO IS MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY!**

By an Unknown Reader Who Left This  
Essay in an S.O. Library Book

I fought and I fought and I fought – but I had to go anyway. I was called in Class “A.” [The next time, I want to be in Class “B” (B here when they go, and B here when they come back).] I remember when I registered: I went up to a desk, and the man in charge was my milkman. He said, “What’s your name?” I said, “Oh, you know my name.” “WHAT’S YOUR NAME?” he barked. So I told him, August Childs. He said, “Are you an alien?” I said, “No, I feel fine.” He asked me where I was born, and I said “Pittsburgh.” Then he asked, “When did you first see the light of day?” I said, “When we moved to Philadelphia.” He asked me how old I was, so I told him, “Twenty-three the first day of September.” He said, “The first of September you’ll be in China, and that will be the last of August.”

Then I went to Camp, and I guess they didn’t think I’d live long – the first fellow I saw wrote on my card, “Flying Corps.” I went a little farther, and some fellow said, “Look what the wind’s blowing in.” I said, “Wind nothing – the draft’s doing it.” On the second morning, they put these clothes on me. They have two sizes – too small and too

the pants were so tight I couldn’t sit down. The shoes were so big I turned around three times and they didn’t move. I passed an officer all dressed up with a funny belt; he said, calling after me, “Didn’t you notice my uniform when you passed?” I said, “Yes. What are you kicking about – look what they gave *me!*”

One morning, when it was five degrees below zero, they called us out for an underwear inspection. The union suit I had on would fit Tony Galento.\* The lieutenant lined us up and told me to stand up. I said, “I am up, sir, but this underwear makes you think I am sitting down.” He got so mad that he put me out digging a ditch. When he passed by me later, he said, “Don’t throw that dirt up here.” I said, “Where am I going to put it?” He said, “Dig another hole and put it there.”

Then we sailed for Australia. When we landed, we were immediately sent to the trenches. After three nights there, the cannons started to roar and the shells started to pop. I was shaking with patriotism. I tried to hide behind a tree, but there weren’t enough trees for the officers. The captain came around and said, “We go over the top at five o’clock.” I said, “Captain I’d like to have a word with you.” He said, “Well, what is it?” I said, “I’d like to have a furlough.” He said, “Haven’t you any red blood in you?” I said, “Yes, but I don’t want to see it.”

At five o’clock, we went over the top and 10,000 Japanese came at us. The way they looked at me, you’d think I had started the war. Our captain yelled, “Fire at Will,” but I didn’t know anybody by the name of Will. I guess the fellow behind me thought I was “Will,” because he fired his gun and shot me in the excitement. So it goes.

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\*Tony Galento was an American heavy-weight boxer. He is best remembered for scoring a third-round knockdown against Joe Louis in a world title stoppage loss in June 1939.

## MY SUMMER OF 1964

By Julie Eden -#290

Imagine glancing at a glossy tourist brochure of Cornwall, England. There is a photo of a seaside hamlet with steep steps of scattered terraced homes above a small sand-patch sheltered beach. Then imagine the color photo coming alive as you step out of a taxi at Sennen Primary School, your home for several weeks. Now, imagine turning the page of the brochure and seeing a photo of an amphitheater built into a natural gully and perched on a granite outcrop. The steps lead precariously through seating onto an open-air stage that juts to the ocean's edge. That stage is the one level surface around.



The Minack Theatre was the second picturesque surprise I had during the summer of 1964. I was there to work with the Cambridge University Players. A school friend from the 1960-61 year had arranged for our jobs working with costumes and props for the cast of about twenty. We would present *The Winter's Tale*, one of the last of Shakespeare's plays. It is categorized as a comedy, or one of his late romances. It also contains elements of a psychological drama.



The first week was busy with part-time and full days of rehearsals. Jenny and I learned enough of the play to know when we would be needed for props. But my most important job during that time was driving all over Cornwall with several others, pasting up posters advertising the production. We drove past crop fields and grazing cattle, and went down meandering village lanes. Evenings were spent at the school cooking dinner or playing cards, or at the local pub.

During the second week, our company was still rehearsing. Finally, it was show-time. I alternated between spending the performance time in the dressing room and working at the box office (a WWII pill-box). On a couple of afternoons off, we swam and sunbathed at the cove.

Our last day and night at the theater came all too soon. Once the show was over, we had to clear out the theater and the school. We then relaxed at the pub. The next morning, after too little sleep, we headed home.

The Minack Theatre still thrives today, still backing against the ocean, with terraced seats, pillars, and walkways. The summer season usually includes 20 plays. There are also many programs and performances during the year. The granite outcrop overlooking the sea is alive and well, and so are my wonderful memories of part of the summer of 1964.

## MORE CLIMATE RANTING

By Dennis Lynch – #335

Many years ago, *Billboard*—the program magazine you get in theaters in New York—contained a rant about New York City pigeons. The author (I picture her as a Helen Hokinson matron) was ranting about the many pigeons in NY, how very many there were, what a nuisance they were, and “Where on earth did they all go at night?”

E. B. White, my favorite *New Yorker* essayist, wrote a lengthy story in reply. He observed pigeons rather than just ranting about them, and he found out where they spent their nights. And he told her, and his readers, the answer to her question.

When a person asks, “What is the scientific basis” for global warming, for rapidly approaching tipping points, and for blaming (I would say “identifying”) fossil fuels as culprits, I must think that that person has not read any reputable newspaper or magazine for the last 20 years.

When a person asks, suspiciously, whether the “facts derive from computer models,” I would say, “No, facts were the input to the models; the models only provide various predictions.”

When a person asks, “What are the scientific facts?,” I would say that there are thousands of research papers describing *climate* (not *weather*) observations ... and thousands of scientists trying to understand the causes of the incontrovertible changes we all see and experience: heat waves, fires, floods; retreating glaciers, melting permafrost; shorter, mixed-up Springs and Falls.

When a person says climate change is not “settled science,” I would reply that very little science is “settled.” Science is

always open to change based on new observations and more complete understanding. I guess we would all agree that the Earth is a globe that orbits the sun ... but beyond that....

Yes, climate change has been a “constant phenomenon” for “many years” but none of us would have wanted to try to live for the bulk of those 4.5 billion years. In fact, I don’t think any of us would want our grandchildren to live on a planet where there were full years with 2023’s Dallas heat waves, or the Canadian forest fires, or destructive flooding.

Here’s an example of one effect of climate change: wine growers in France are buying land in northern England to have a more favorable temperature.

I believe that thousands of scientists are searching for any solutions that can mitigate the growing climate warming. Reducing the use of fossil fuels is one of them, and the most obvious. Perhaps they will find others of meaningful consequence as time goes by.

Perhaps, one day, we will “perfectly understand” our climate and be able to make “proven” recommendations. Then we will only have to contend with the politicians who have money tied up in preserving the status quo.

Perhaps, for the short term, here at Sherwood Oaks, we could help mitigate climate change if we turned off our air conditioning from April to November and just wore fewer clothes ... No! Perish the thought!

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*I didn’t make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row.*

*Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven’t met yet.*

**WORTH A LOOK:  
BOOKS FOR APRIL**

By Barbara Christy - #237

*Spider Woman's Daughter* by Anne Hillerman. Fiction. Lovers of the Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee books about the Navaho Nation will cheer, as Anne Hillerman has taken over her father's domain. Jim Chee and Bernie Manuelito are on the trail of a shooter who has tried to assassinate retired Navaho Nation Police Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn. Is the shooting an effort to cover up a long-past crime? F HIL

*Devil Makes Three* by Ben Fountain. Fiction. Since Ben Fountain is one of Malcolm Gladwell's "late-blooming geniuses," this novel continues to build his reputation. It is set in Haiti in 1991, during the crisis after Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted from office. Weaving the history of that time into a John LeCarré-type novel, Fountain creates suspense over the main characters' unlikely venture into deep sea diving, looking for lost shipwrecks full of gold doubloons that could be a career highlight for a fortune-hunting billionaire or the salvation of an embargo-starved nation. F FOU

*Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett. Fiction. Do you wonder about your parents' lives before you were born? This lovely, nuanced novel explores conversations among three daughters and their mother about her romance and community theater career with a famous actor at a Michigan theater company called Tom Lake. As they pick cherries on the family farm, the girls grill their mother for details of a chapter in her life they never knew. Meanwhile, the mother is reliving that time, when she experienced herself as a young girl. Bouncing between ordinary family life during the harvest and an exceptional period in their mother's life, this novel provides loving insight into a loving family. F PAT

*Let Us Descend* by Jesmyn Ward. Fiction. Annis, an adolescent house slave in Carolina, says of the mean woman who shares the slave cabin with her mother and herself, "She won't love what she can't keep." But Annis's mother loves *her* enough to take her into the woods on dark nights to teach her women's warrior craft, learned from her mother, a queen in Africa. Fighting with staff and spear, gathering mushrooms, herbs, and roots and learning her mother's combative ways, Annis doesn't comprehend the risks of resisting her owner's power until her mother is sold south to New Orleans. Still defiant, six months later, Annis herself is sold south. During the endless, painful walk south and the months of agony and humiliation in New Orleans, Annis calls on the spirits of her ancestors and learns to lean on them for strength and endurance. F WAR

*Kantika* by Elizabeth Graver. Fiction. The Cohens are a lively, cultured, Sephardic Jewish family in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Constantinople. Cosmopolitan daughter Rebecca attends a French Catholic school, enjoys her friendships with Greek diplomats' children, and sings in five languages. But on November 14, 1914, her childhood ends: her school is closed without warning, mail between warring countries stops, and lifetime friends leave for America. As the multiethnic, multisectarian world of the Ottoman Empire collapses, paths to emigration to Europe and America close. Rebecca's family is forced to go to Spain, their ancient homeland, from which the family was expelled four centuries earlier. Rebecca marries, has two sons, and disguises her Jewishness in order to get work as a seamstress. After the death of her husband, she joins her sister in Cuba and remarries, then lands in Brooklyn, always finding a song to sing and beauty to enjoy. Her tale is an inspiring one, based in the history of her people. F GRA



*We Must Not Think of Ourselves* by Lauren Grodstein. Fiction. The Oneg Shabbat Archive is the background for this novel of life in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940. Adam Paskow is a schoolteacher teaching English to children in the basement of an abandoned building, when he is approached by a secret group of Jewish archivists. As he engages the children in his classroom with poetry by Rudyard Kipling, and gets them to write their own poems, he realizes he could add their efforts to the growing collection. After all, archives need poetry too. Agreeing to join, because he has nothing better to do, he interviews inmates to learn about their previous lives, their loves, passions, and fears, and their views of the future. One person he interviews is Sara, a married flat mate with three children. As their relationship develops into love, it brings both joy and complications and, finally, a crisis, when he learns of a way to escape and must decide whom to take with him. F GRO

*The Lede: Dispatches from a Life in the Press* by Calvin Trillin. Non-fiction. Trillin says this book is “disparate pieces from various places ... of what the press has been like” over the six decades he has been a practitioner. With sections titled The Trade, Reporters and Reporting, Big Shots, R.I.P, Controversies, and Niches, Trillin has organized past columns from a variety of sources into a fascinating look inside journalism. 071.3 TRI

*This House of Grief* by Helen Garner. Non-fiction. On Father’s Day, 2005, in Australia, a man separated from his wife is returning his three children to their mother when his car leaves the road and ends up in a farm pond. The man escapes, but the children are drowned. Thus begins a grief-filled, five-year journey through the criminal justice system, told by a journalist with precision and compassion. From crash to final verdict,

Garner details the events, and the parade of witnesses and experts offering insight into the innocence or guilt of a small, sad man with puffy eyes. The author, and through her the reader, becomes completely absorbed in this drama. 364.15 GAR

## IT’S TRILLIUM TIME!

By Ruth Lasure - #306

*What are Trilliums?* All trillium species, which are members of the Liliaceae (lily) family, are rhizomatous herbs with unbranched stems.

*Where are Trilliums?* At Sherwood Oaks, they are located in the North Woods.

Although they look very simple (three petals and three sepals), they are really very complex and confuse even the best of botanists. The many different species of trilliums exhibit only a few obscure structural differences, which is something to look for on your trip to the North Woods.

With a legacy gift from Sara Nutter in 2009, residents planned and planted our woodland with about 20 varieties of trillium. Thanks to volunteers, and with help from Gardens LLC, this gift survives and thrives, giving joy to all who visit the North Woods just off Parking Area I.

Watch for the sign that announces the season, then wander in and be amazed and grateful for the wondrous gifts that we have been given.



## OUTHOUSES

By John Bridges - #122

There are certain things we do every day but that are not talked about in polite society. However, if humor is involved, perhaps an exception can be made.

During World War II, when I moved to Anglesey in North Wales, our house did not have any running water, and all drinking water had to be collected from the village pump half a mile down the road. Rain water was collected from the roof, and there was a water closet for use when there was sufficient rain. In drier spells, we had to utilize the "One Holer" down the garden. My father and I had the unpleasant task of removing manure for the garden each month. This soon palled, and an "ELSAN" chemical closet was installed in the same small shed.

At the height of the Battle of Britain in 1942, we were invaded by 10 family members sheltering from bomb-damaged homes whilst they were being repaired. This strained the water resources obtained from the roof. One day, my grandfather was quietly sitting on the Elsan, when to his surprise the lid over the dis-used one-holer started to rise. My 5-year-old-cousin's head appeared, and my grandfather hollered, "Noel! What do you think you're doing?" "Looking after my Winkles [shells], Brampa," came the response. He had collected them at the beach, brought them home, stored them in a jam jar, and kept them in what he thought was a safe and secure hiding place in the dis-used and now clean one-holer.

Other friends were living in a similar house a mile away, but one without any indoor plumbing. Their one-holer

down a covered passage outside the kitchen door. To prevent visiting city dwellers from embarrassment, they kept a stack of firewood there that could be collected as an excuse for their absence. Our friends also had a sense of humor: they fastened a chain with a handle hanging from the ceiling. If a visitor pulled the chain (as he was in the habit of doing before leaving a toilet with one of the common high-level cisterns), there would be a loud clang, as a bell had been mischievously placed there to alert all and sundry that another victim had been had.

During the height of the Mau Mau terrorist movement, when I lived in Kenya, a series of police posts had been established about 3 miles apart along the edges of the Aberdare Forest. They were alerted that there was to be an inspection by a senior police officer. The post south of ours was under an inspector who was not popular with his men. He tried hard to prepare his post for the coming inspection. He decided to pour gasoline down the latrine pit to avoid any unpleasant smells. Then he threw down a lighted match, but nothing happened. He tried again, and, to the delight of all his constables, there was an explosion; everything blew up to cover him with excrement. At Mioro, we had been very active against the terrorists for some time, and I did not want my men to have to spend extra time on cleaning and polishing equipment and homes. I therefore posted a sign at the road junction leading to Mioro reading, "Road Closed due to Recent Rains." We did not get our inspection.

Further reading:

"The Specialist"

"Back Houses of the North"

## **THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS**

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

Anna Karenina		c. 2012	F ANN DVD
Blind Fear	Webb, Brandon	c. 2023	F WEB
Coleman Hill	Foote, Kimberly	c. 2023	F FOO
The Covenant of Water	Verghese, A.	c. 2023	F VER L.T.
Crosshairs: A Michael Bennett Thriller	Patterson, James	c. 2024	F PAT
The Fury	Michaelides, Alex	c. 2024	F MIC
Grant Comes East	Gingrich, Newt	c. 2004	F GIN
Holmes, Marple & Poe	Patterson, James	c. 2024	F PAT
The House in the Pines	Reyes, Ana	c. 2023	F REY
Identity	Roberts, Nora	c. 2023	F ROB
The Jim Chee Mysteries	Hillerman, Tony	c. 1990	F HIL
The Joe Leaphorn Mysteries: Three Classic Hillerman Mysteries	Hillerman, Tony	c. 1989	F HIL
Leaphorn & Chee: Three Classic Mysteries	Hillerman, Tony	c. 1992	F HIL
Let Us Descend	Ward, Jesmyn	c. 2023	F WAR
The Little Liar	Albom, Mitch	c. 2023	F ALB
The Pillars of the Earth	Follett, Ken	c. 2010	F FOL DVD
Random in Death	Robb, J. D.	c. 2024	F ROB
State of Terror	Clinton, Hillary R.	c. 2021	F CLI
Valley Forge: George Washington and the Crucible of Victory	Gingrich, Newt	c. 2010	F GIN
The Women	Hannah, Kristin	c. 2024	F HAN

### **NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES**

Rachel Carson		c. 2017	BIO CAR DVD
My Name is Barbra	Streisand, B.	c. 2023	BIO STR
America Afire: Jefferson, Adams, and the Revolutionary Election of 1800	Weisberger, Bernard A.	c. 2000	324.973044 WEI
Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America	Webb, James	c. 2004	973.049162 WEB
Botanica's Annuals & Perennials		c. 1999	635.9 BOT p.b.
Clematis: For Colour and Versatility	Fair, Keith & Carol	c. 1990	635.933 FAI p.b.
Color by Color Plant Directory	Huntington & David Squire	c. 2004	635.9 HUN
Devil Makes Three	Fountain, Ben	c. 2023	813.6 FOU
Eve: How the Female Body Drove 200 Million Years of Human Evolution	Bohannon, Cat	c. 2023	613.0424 BOH
FDR's Folly: How Roosevelt and His New Deal Prolonged the Great Depression	Powell, Jim,	c. 2003	9730917 POW
First in Peace: How George Washington Set the Course for America	O'Brien, Conor Cruise	c. 2009	973.41092 O'B
Herbaceous: Harvesting Tips and Recipes for Healthy Living	Baker, Sarah ED.	c. 2003	635.7 BAK
Liberty and Tyranny: A Conservative Manifesto	Levin, Mark R.	c. 2009	320.520973 LEV
Oppenheimer		c. 2023	973 OPP DVD
The Path to Love	Chopra, Deepak	c. 1997	204 CHO L.T.
Prequel: An American Fight Against Fascism	Maddow, Rachel	c. 2023	320.53 MAD
The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History	Blackhawk, Ned	c. 2023	973.0497 BLA 320
A Republic under Assault: The Left's Ongoing Attack on American Freedom	Fitton, Thomas	c. 2020	FIT
Unbroken: A WWII Story of Survival...	Laura Hillenbrand	c. 2010	940.54 HIL L.T.



# Other Signs of Spring at Sherwood Oaks



Photo by Kathie McCormick



Photo by Jim Mauch



Photo by Jan Wendt



Photo by Kathie McCormick