

THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER

100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

www.sherwood-oaks.com

September 2025 "For the residents, by the residents" Vol. 44, No. 7

EMPLOYEE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2025



Photo by Jesse Komara
(See story on page 5)

Dear Reader –

As a kid, to me September always felt like the “new year”; the end of summer, the beginning of school in a new grade. It somehow felt as though a page had been turned.

As we roll into what is really the fourth quarter of the year, it is a time of beginnings – a fresh crop of residents settling in here, the start of a new program year of group activities, opportunities, and experiences. One of the beauties of a community like ours is that our “face” is ever-changing, as old friends leave us and those moving in bring their own personalities and talents along with them to share.

The Acorn is glad to return after the summer hiatus to chronicle the rhythm of life on our campus. If you have a photograph, poem, or story to contribute, please do; your entries are the bread and butter of this publication.

So, with our batteries re-charged, let's look around for new connections and have fun doing it!

~ Jan Wendt

THE ACORN

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

September 15, 2025.

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Labor Day	Sept. 1
Grandparents Day	Sept. 7
Citizenship Day	Sept. 17
First Day of Fall	Sept. 22
Rosh Hashana begins	Sept. 22
National Coffee Day	Sept. 29

IN MEMORIAM

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

<i>Susan Jacobs</i>	<i>June 6, 2025</i>
<i>Nancy Baker</i>	<i>June 8, 2025</i>
<i>Robert Brown</i>	<i>June 19, 2025</i>
<i>Joan Howenstein</i>	<i>July 3, 2025</i>
<i>Richard Pospistle</i>	<i>July 8, 2025</i>
<i>Mary Tucker</i>	<i>July 8, 2025</i>
<i>Jacqueline Riley</i>	<i>July 9, 2025</i>
<i>Howard Charlebois</i>	<i>July 16, 2025</i>
<i>Janet Gorman</i>	<i>July 27, 2025</i>
<i>Kathleen Scharfner</i>	<i>July 31, 2025</i>
<i>Ruth Risch</i>	<i>July 31, 2025</i>
<i>John Ferry</i>	<i>August 5, 2025</i>
<i>Vivian Thompson</i>	<i>August 6, 2025</i>
<i>Joanne Clay</i>	<i>August 14, 2025</i>
<i>James Mentzer</i>	<i>August 14, 2025</i>
<i>Dolores Ference</i>	<i>August 19, 2025</i>
<i>Rabe Marsh</i>	<i>August 24, 2025</i>

RITA BEAN - #729

By Connie Brandenberger - #602



Rita Bean can be described as enthusiastic, energetic and, most of all, passionate when it comes to literacy. Her life has led her on a long and exciting journey to influence other teachers and literacy peers.

After graduating from Edinboro University, she began her teaching career in Doylestown, PA, working there for one year, before returning to teach in the Upper St. Clair School District near Pittsburgh. She also served as the district reading specialist (K-12), before being recruited by the University of Pittsburgh. She earned her Ph.D. while working in-depth with graduate students. She retired from Pitt after a career of over forty years.

Rita has wasted no time getting involved in activities at Sherwood Oaks. Later this Fall, under the guidance of Ellen Brierly, she hopes to lead an eight-week course helping residents write their “life stories.” She is already playing golf, bridge, and has expressed an interest in working in the library.

Rita loves to travel and in August went on an extended Viking ocean cruise of the British Isles that included multiple stops: Norway, the Shetland Islands, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and concluded with a stop in London.

Rita was born in Munhall and had been a South Hills resident until her move to Sewickley Ridge. She met her husband, Tony, when they taught together at the University of Pittsburgh. They were avid golfers and interested in all sports. Before becoming a professor at the Pitt, Tony was a professional baseball player. They were married for 41 years before his death in January 2024. When Tony became ill and needed specialized care, he came to the Sherwood Oaks Skilled Nursing Unit. Rita praised the staff and was grateful for the loving care he received. That influenced her decision to consider Sherwood Oaks for her future home.

Rita, who has written four books focusing on school leadership and literacy coaching, will receive the Distinguished Alumni Fellow award from the University of Pittsburgh in October. She feels honored and humbled with this recognition.

After living in the Whitehall area for many years, Tony and Rita downsized to Sewickley Ridge where they lived for eight years. Rita is happy to be near her stepson and his family who reside in Wexford. She also has a stepdaughter living in Arizona.

Because Rita wrote texts for teaching elementary reading, she and her husband had the opportunity to travel to England, Korea, Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines where Rita lead workshops for teachers in the Department of Defense Schools. She has been a lifelong member of the International Literary Association, a large group of educators, devoted to improving instruction for students across the world.

Rita is glad she chose Sherwood Oaks. She enjoys the company of many friendly residents and making new friends, the fitness center and activities, and the large campus with covered walkways (including Sherwood Oaks Park), and, of course, the beautiful swans! Welcome Rita!

MARY AND HANK KRETCHMAR - #287

By Harriett Burress - #112



What if you owned a bakery that had a yellow and brown color theme, and your daughter was in Nepal carrying a yellow tote bag with “Kretchmar’s Bakery” on it. Someone approached her and said, “I know that bakery in Beaver. I’ve been to it.”

OR what if you baked clown cookies for the movie “A Man Called Otto” starring Tom Hanks?

OR what if your bakery’s truck goes to Deener’s Market every Friday morning loaded with all sorts of delicious, sweet items for sale?

Well, a hearty welcome to Mary and Henry (Hank) Kretchmar, whose bakery is located on the main street in Beaver, PA. It is a three generational establishment first purchased by Hank’s Dad in 1960. From 1975 – 2003 Mary and Hank owned the bakery, but when he semi-retired, one of their sons then became owner and manager. Mary was kept busy with administrative activities: payroll for 30 employees, advertising, bookkeeping, etc.

When their children left home, she moved her office into the upstairs of the 19’x125’ store which has an interesting bit of history. When Beaver was established as a planned community, businesses were taxed by the front foot, thus the long, narrow buildings. However, it did have a basement and upstairs, and Mary transferred her desk to the 2nd floor.

Hank grew up in West View and Brighton Township, and went to high school at Greenbrier Military Academy, Lewisburg, West Virginia. He graduated from Washington and Jefferson College, when it was still an all-male school, and received his MBA from Michigan State. He served in the U.S. Army in artillery at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma before coming home to bake. When he semi-retired in 2003, he continued to evaluate the vendors, ordered supplies, and stayed busy with general overseeing for another 20 years.

He has been a member of the Beaver Rotary Club and for the past eleven years oversaw their “Bed Program.” Last year they delivered 77 youth beds to youngsters who did not have one on which to sleep. “It’s hard to believe in this day and age and this close by, that there is this need.” Hank hopes to join one of the three Rotary Clubs in Cranberry as soon as he and Mary are settled.

Mary was born in Indiana, grew up in Michigan but has spent most of her life in Beaver. She was known in school as Mary, but when she worked in a small office with a Margaret, Martha, and another Mary, she started using her middle name, Lea. Although she is Grandma Lea to her grandchildren and is known by many as Lea, she has now returned to Mary. She and Hank met in the Bahamas on spring break from Michigan State and “When we started dating, I was Mary, so this seems right,” she commented.

She is a member of the Beaver Valley AAUW, volunteers for Blue Neighbors - a service of Blue Cross which helps those who need assistance shopping, appreciate calls and visits, etc. Mary also is active in Gun Violence Prevention which is an online organization. “I wear orange on their day, but I am not against having a gun - just the violent semi-automatics.” She and Hank are members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills. They have two sons, one daughter and six grandchildren, and have been married for 53 years.

Please welcome Mary and Hank to Sherwood Oaks where they will surely be involved and become assets to our community.

EMPLOYEE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

By Warren Howe - #337

On behalf of the Employee Scholarship Committee, it's a pleasure to report that the Employee Scholarship Program has successfully continued its tradition of educational support for our employees in 2025. The program was established in 2001 and over the years has provided tuition assistance for literally hundreds of Sherwood Oaks employees. Any employee who has been on staff for at least a year and who is pursuing further accredited education is eligible. Many of the recipients are the young high school and college students we encounter in the dining room every day, but other employees, in maintenance, security, health services and less visible roles, can also apply for and receive this benefit.

The "Scholarship Fund" exists within the Sherwood Oaks Fund. It is supported by episodic gifts from families and friends seeking to support a worthy cause and by memorial gifts in the name of residents who have died. This fund provides a principal base from which a small percentage, representing the fund's income, can be drawn on to support awards. The bulk of funds distributed annually comes from individual contributions by residents in response to the annual spring campaign for donations. The Employee Scholarship Committee reviews all applications for eligibility and then determines the maximum award amount by considering the number of applicants and the total of available funds. In recent years, the maximum amount awarded has gradually risen, and in 2024 and 2025 it has been set at a maximum \$3,500 per

recipient. Funds are sent directly to the recipient's educational institution, earmarked for their tuition.

In 2025, there were 50 applicants to the program (34 prior year recipients, 16 first-time applicants). Two applications were for less than the full award amount. The total amount awarded was \$171,750. Residents can read the thank-you notes from many of the recipients which have been posted outside the dining room.

In the spring campaign, 126 resident gifts were received, for a total of \$89,304. The balance of the amount awarded was drawn from the Scholarship Fund. In reviewing the Scholarship Program data for the past several years (see table below), note that the long-term healthy trend of increasing number and total amount of resident gifts in the spring campaign was suddenly reversed in 2025. Hopefully this is merely a "one-time" setback. Should this negative trend persist, it will become difficult to maintain the number and amount of our scholarship awards, and the stability of the Scholarship Fund will be seriously undermined by the need for increasing withdrawals from it. The Committee will evaluate further to design strategy aimed at improvement.

As I take up the chair on your Employee Scholarship Committee, I am awed by the impact that the retiring chair, Charles Cullen, has made in improving the Scholarship Program since he assumed the chair in 2017. I am sure all Committee members, Sherwood Oaks residents, and the employees who have been scholarship recipients, join me in thanking Charles for his dedicated service and wish him Godspeed.

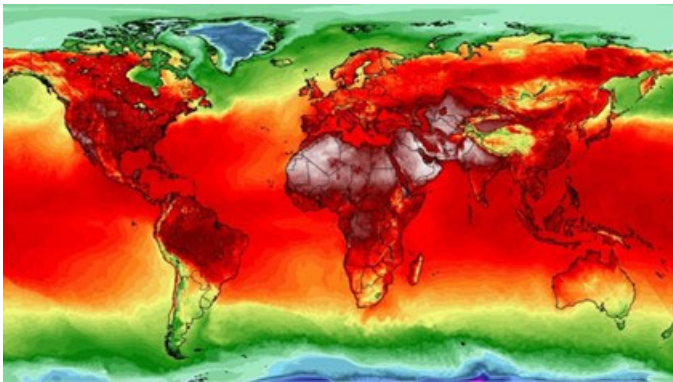
	2025	2024	2023	2022
Number of donations received	126	217	162	180
Total amount of donations received	\$89,304	\$114,275	\$100,790	\$96,433
Amount drawn from S.O. Scholarship Fund	\$71,400	\$40,000	\$0	\$0

COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

Heatwaves pose a significant and growing threat to public health, particularly among vulnerable populations. As climate change continues to escalate, the risk of heat-related deaths is expected to rise unless effective mitigation strategies are implemented. Heatwaves can lead to severe health issues, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke. They also exacerbate existing health conditions, particularly cardiovascular diseases.

The National Weather Service identifies heat as a leading weather-related killer in the U.S., with many deaths being preventable through proper outreach and intervention.



2025 Worldwide Predicted Temperatures

Now the federal government is undoing the progress we've made in moving to a green energy economy in the last few years, actions that will not only affect all of our citizens but will most likely send the planet, and all of humanity, beyond some climate tipping points difficult if not impossible to recover from.

And keep this in mind . . . 2025 will be the coolest year you will experience for the foreseeable future.

Watch *How Heatwaves Impact Our Lives* on Channel 950 on Monday, September 8, at 10:00 AM. Encore presentation on Wednesday, September 10, at 3:30 PM.

Bible Studies Resume...

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

By George Steffey - #275

Beginning Wednesday, September 10th, the Men's Bible Study will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. The group gathers in the Chapel on the Lower Level, at 10:00 a.m.

Regardless of your Biblical knowledge, you are more than welcome. In fact, a wide variety of perspectives adds to the enrichment of our time together.

This year we will start with a study of Philippians, using a study guide by N.T. Wright. Wright was an English scholar, a Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, and a senior research fellow at the University of Oxford.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

By Janet Desko - #210

The Women's Bible Study will begin on September 15, 2025. The group meets at 10:45 a.m. in the Crad Room every 1st and 3rd Monday. This year we are using a study guide on Ephesians by N.T. Wright, which must be ordered before the first session. Cost is \$8.00

Please consider joining us for lively discussion and spiritual fellowship as we continue our journey through the bible.

Notify Janet Desko (#810) as soon as possible if you wish to order a study guide so we all can be prepared for the first session. Hope to see you there.

THE JUNE FELINE CAPER

By Kathie McCormick - #188

Mew, mew, mew.... little mews... could it be a bird? Then Marta Peterson saw a little black face. It was a tiny kitten!

Her cat, Zane, loves to view the world from the sliding glass door of the patio. A female feral black cat enjoyed meeting him at the door on a regular basis. Needless to say, he was inside, and she was outside. But it seemed to be a safe area outside on the patio for kittens!

There is a plank alongside the patio and the momma cat felt that underneath the plank was perfect for her kittens---yup...kittens, plural. Marta counted four.

Next chapter. Momma moved the kittens around and were now near the 600s. They arrived at the Stovers and then headed off to the Zuberbuhlers. Rae Zuberbuhler found a dead bird on her porch and suspected a cat. And then she spotted a kitten playing on the table right outside her bedroom window. When she went out, she spotted a couple more kittens playing. She and Dick put out water because of the heat, and a day or so later, Momma cat was seen nursing kittens on the porch. When Rae put out cottage cheese, the kittens were glad to eat while Momma watched. Since the nights were cold, she provided a box with rags for comfort.

Chapter Three. Rae contacted Joanie Reese from the Medical Office, and it was decided the cat family needed to be caught and homes found. Now what? Enter Amy from Landscaping. Who else to call when it came to animals—especially wild ones! Rae continued to leave water & food out so that the kitties

would stay in the area where Amy put the traps. SUCCESS! She captured the mother and all five kittens. There were four black ones, like the mother, and one tortoise shell one - three girls and two boys.

Final Chapter. What would become of Momma and her five kittens? Joanie Reese, of course, had a hand in this caper. Homes were found for every one of the lovely kittens and their mom.

The mother and one kitten have a home together with Joanie's sister.



Photo by Joanie Reese

Momma and Mia are pictured above.

All the other kittens were adopted by members of our staff. Koda belongs to Misty, who works on the Personal Care unit. Jim from Grounds has Sherwood, Frank from Grounds adopted Ratatouille Stella has gone to live with Ashley from Housekeeping.

What a happy ending and beginning!

CONGRATS TO RECENT EMPLOYEE GRADS

By Jean Henderson - #346

"Hats off to these recent high school grads, and see where they are headed and plan to study":

Hailey Heeter (Robert Morris, Nursing);
Anthony Marcotte (Pitt, Data Science);
Chase Crawford (Purdue, Computer Engineering Technology); **Paul Weis** (Penn State, Electrical Engineering);
Hanna Ambrose (Pitt, Biology); **Avery Rape** (Waynesburg, Marketing); **Maya Anglero** (Kent State, Nursing); **Matthew Frankovic** (Penn State, Finance);
Mason Klingensmith (WVU, Computer Science); **Hannah Hwang** (Kent State, Nursing); **Ben Beresnyak** (Minnesota, Chemical Engineering); **Cortlan Harrell** (Pitt, Environmental Sciences); **Matthew Dudash** (South Carolina, Accounting).



TIME TO RING AND SING!!

By Jean Henderson - #346

Ringers and Singers! Heads up! We'll begin our rehearsals for the fall on Wednesday, September 17. Handbells ring from 1-2:00 p.m. and Chorus sings from 2:30-3:30, both in the Auditorium. We meet most Wednesdays until the Holiday Concert on December 10.

We need both ringers and singers – the more the merrier! We have a lot of fun with old tunes and new. Do join us.

AUTUMN TANKA AND HAIKU

By Julie Eden - #290

warm autumn sun glows
a chill dances on the wind
before the first frost
in harvested fields and hay
scarecrows romp among the pumpkins



Photo submitted by Julie Eden

in stubble fields
face to face with the harvest moon
scarecrows open arms
harvest pumpkins glow
scarecrows smiling about pies
autumn's delight

CONTINUED LEARNING

By Jno Hunt - #308

We are delighted to announce a schedule of seven speakers for this fall, three in September and four in October. The series will normally be on Mondays at **1:30 p.m.** in the Auditorium.

September 15: Jno Hunt will kick off the series with a delve into Puccini's masterful depiction of passion and drama in his masterwork, *La Boheme*.

September 22: Moni McIntyre will return to share with us the teaching she performs monthly at Bethesda Naval Hospital on "Medical Ethics."

September 29: Monika Dalrymple will share her experiences of a 12-day journey through Scandinavia and the Arctic Circle.

October 6: Raymond Asche will regale us with stories of his "Life of a Towboat Captain" on the Mississippi River.

October 13: Edd Hale, a retired middle school history teacher will return to present the amazing story of the USS Niagara. **Note that his presentation will be at 10:30 a.m. in the auditorium.**

October 20: Miguel Sague from the Native Americans Speakers Bureau will return to introduce us to the original indigenous people of western Pennsylvania.

October 27: Lauren Dietz (daughter of Winnie!) and avid bird watcher will present "The Beautiful Birds of Florida."

For several reasons, our presentations on Channel 951 were suspended earlier this year. Some of those issues have been resolved so we are resuming our videos on **Channel 950**. Initial airings on Tuesdays are at 10:00 a.m. Encore presentations are usually on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m.

September:

- Tues., Sept. 2 and Thurs., Sept. 4: *BBC Great Composers—Beethoven*.
- Tues., Sept. 9 and Thurs., Sept. 11: *Solar System—Volcano Worlds*.
- Tues., Sept. 16 and Thurs., Sept. 18: *Traveling the Mighty Hudson River*.
- Tues., Sept. 23 and Thurs., Sept. 25: *The Holy Land Revealed—Lectures 9 & 10*.
- Tues., Sept. 30 and Thurs., Oct. 2: *Flood in the Desert*.



Entertainment Committee ...

TUESDAY GOSPEL SINGERS

By Thea Stover - #606

On Thursday, September 25, at 7:00 p.m. The Tuesday Gospel Singers will perform in the Auditorium. They came together in the spring of 2008 when several friends and brothers in Christ joined to sing the good "old-fashioned gospel hymns" that were seldom sung in church. The men felt that these times of singing together were much like "prayers set to music."

Sherwood Oaks' Reed Harvey is a member of the group. The ensemble, which represents six church congregations in the North Hills, includes seven vocalists and a pianist.

Over time, the ensemble has added some secular numbers to their repertoire and has sung at church socials, nursing homes and the home churches of its members. They practice weekly at Heritage Presbyterian Church. Be sure to put their September 25th performance on your calendar.

WHERE WERE THE SWANS?

By Kathie McCormick - #188

Where are the swans?? That is the question everyone was asking early in the summer. For many days they hadn't been seen swimming on our lake. They were M.I.A.

After some searching, the duo was found in the retention pond over at the Meeder development. Someone must have been feeding them since they were not in a hurry to return. Now the question became, how do we get them back? They are strong and can be fierce and so it wouldn't be easy.

Well, Gary Whoric, Maintenance Director, has a formidable team capable of handling such a project: Amy, Bob and Patrick. The group headed over to the Meeder neighborhood with a rope and a crook (like a shepherd's crook). Using the rope, they were able to herd the swans to the edge (even if it took them two tries!) where the crook could gently hold them while being caught. Amy picked up one and hoisted him over the fence. Bob and Patrick had to join forces to capture the second one and put him under the fence. The fence has been repaired and reinforced to prevent another escapade. Too bad this rescue was not captured on video!

Thank you to Gary and his workers who successfully brought the swans back home. We do enjoy seeing Sherman and Oakley and are grateful they work to keep the Canada geese at bay.

IN THE FIFTIES

By Diane Horn - #203

In the fifties when I went out to play my Mom would say, "Come home when you're hungry and need a rest. Then, off I went to meet Donna on her big front porch. Skate key in hand, we strapped on our skates and flew down the city sidewalks.



Photo submitted by Diane Horn

We skated to the playground to swing up to the sky, then lay in the grass to find animals in the clouds.

Next, we skated to my shady porch for a game of jacks. We were both experts at catching the ball.

In the kitchen we ate lunch while reading a chapter of *Nancy Drew*. Then, after a rest with our paper dolls, we were off for adventures till dinner time.

News from Living with Loss

BOOK DONATIONS

By Jean Henderson - #346

During Dennis Lynch's life, he collected a myriad of books about living the good life, end-of-life issues, and grief around dying. His wife, Barbara Dixon, has donated this amazing collection to our Library. We are so very grateful! Here are just a few of the titles. You can find them in the Paperback Room to the right, under the LIVING WITH LOSS section.

Handbook for Mortals: Guidance for People Facing Serious Illness - Lynn and Harrold

The Inevitable: Dispatches on the Right to Die - Englehart

How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter - Nuland

Nothing to Be Frightened Of - Barnes

Preparing For a Better End: Expert Lessons on Death and Dying for You and Your Loved Ones - Morharm

In Love – A Memoir of Love and Loss - Bloom

The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning - Magnusson

Invasion of the Prostate Snatchers - Blum

When Your Life is Touched by Cancer - Riter

Let Me Die Before I Wake - Humphrey

ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

By Alick Kennedy - #725

The Living with Loss team will offer its annual Memorial Service on September 27th at 1:30 p.m. in the Auditorium. This non-denominational service honors those residents who have died since September 23, 2024.

The service includes appropriate music and readings, and the acknowledgement of each resident with a flower added to a larger bouquet.

Family members of those being remembered will be invited to attend.

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## **GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**

By Alick Kennedy - #725

Living with Loss will also sponsor a grief support group, to meet Tuesdays October 14, 21, 28 and November 4, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Chapel on the Lower Level.

The group is facilitated by Rev. Sam Blair, a chaplain with Bridges Hospice. It is open to any resident working through a recent loss. More details will follow in the coming weeks.



Photo by Kathie McCormick

## FUN TV QUIZ

By Joni Pun - #223

How many of these ten questions about the early days of television can you answer? If you get them all right, it doesn't mean that you are a genius - it's just that we must have watched the same shows!

1. Who was John Beredford Tipton?
2. Who was Snooky Lansen?
3. Who sang "See the USA in a Chevrolet" at the end of each of her shows?
4. What British series starred Richard Greene?
5. What show's theme song was The William Tell Overture?
6. What was the long word that a little girl correctly spelled on The 64 Thousand Dollar Question?
7. What was the science fiction series that sometimes featured weird or scary scenarios that you probably still remember?
8. Who was Ricky Ricardo?
9. Who presented the show "You Bet Your Life"?
10. How long was the Howdy Doody Show?

(Answers on page 14)



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## WISHES CAN COME TRUE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

*This column will appear in the Acorn periodically as items requested in the recent Resident Wish List are completed or see major progress.*

Here is the status as of early August:

### COMPLETED:

- Reflectors along Norman Drive
- Emergency egress from Lakeside Apartment building
- Updated staff list available at front desk
- Fire pit added to Sherwood Oaks Park

**IN-PROCESS:** (Already funded or in process of being funded):

- Tele-coils installed in Auditorium/Card Room for hearing impaired.
- Armstrong addressing fiber optics, landscape issues
- Respite care/adult day care on campus
- Replace/repair garage doors
- Painting/siding issues on Lakeside Apartment building and Oak Grove
- Establish Campus Taskforce to address campus appearance
- Voluntary addition of emails/cell phone numbers to distributed Resident Lists

Look for Wish List progress in future editions of The Acorn.

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*"The old summer's-end melancholy nips at my heels. There's no school to go back to; no detail of my life will change come the onset of September; yet still, I feel the old trepidation." - Sara Baume*

## OUR WALKWAYS....

By Kathie McCormick - #188

How many of you take our walkways for granted? We see and use them daily! Have you ever thought how special they really are? I was musing over that very issue as I was meandering up and down and over with my dog.

If you live in one of the patio homes, you can reach anywhere in the pouring down rain, in the falling snow, in the heat of the sun, and in the best of weather without being directly exposed to the elements!



They allow everyone to reach the Center by walking, using a walker or riding a scooter. No one need be isolated if unable to drive a car. They allow us all to live in our independent units and not be isolated.

I have a new appreciation for these walkways and do see them as a unique treasure for our community. I don't think I'll take them for granted any longer.

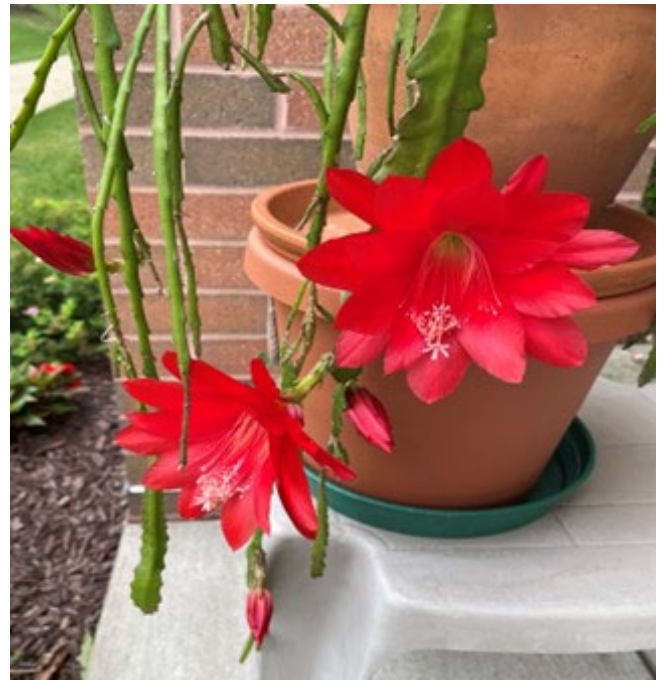


Photo by Retta Aghbar

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NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

The Civic Affairs Committee want you to know that Voter Registration Day is September 16th. If you need a registration form, call Ruth Lasure at #8306.



I never thought orthopedic shoes would really work for me, but I stand corrected.

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

I wrote a book on how to fall down the stairs. It's a step-by-step guide.

An armed man ran into a real estate agency and shouted, "Nobody move!"

GETTING TOGETHER?

By Kate Donovan - #293

It's been a season of summer fun, holidays, entertaining, club gatherings and parties! We have also had a very successful first summer of activities at Sherwood Oaks Park.

The residents of Sherwood Oaks are indeed fortunate to have a number of comfortable venues on campus to hold an event.

As a reminder to all who use the Park, the Card Room and the Great Room in the Oak Lodge:

- If you need to deliver food items in advance for an event, please be sure they are secured in a lock-tight container.
- NO food should be left at the venue after your event is over.
- Housekeeping and resident volunteers are working cooperatively to keep these areas clean and free of critters.

Please leave our entertaining and gathering areas as clean as you found them. These spaces are shared by all residents.

Happy gatherings!

PICKLEBALL INVITATION

By Denton Bond - #736

We are fortunate to have a beautiful pickleball court here at Sherwood Oaks.

We'll be offering a clinic to learn the game on several dates in September at the court in Sherwood Oaks Park.

To be successful and have fun, you need to have good balance and coordination. The score isn't important; it's just fun and good exercise.

So, come learn the sport:

September 4 and 16 at 2:00 p.m.

September 22 and 27 at 10:00 a.m.

For more information, call Denton Bond at 412-400-2423.



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. the fictional millionaire who gave away \$1,000,000 each week
2. One of the singers on The Hit Parade
3. Dinah Shore
4. Robin Hood
5. The Lone Ranger
6. antidisestablishmentarianism
7. The Twilight Zone
8. fictional husband on I Love Lucy
9. Groucho Marx
10. 15 minutes

ANOTHER HERO OF HISTORY

By Jim Mauch - #263

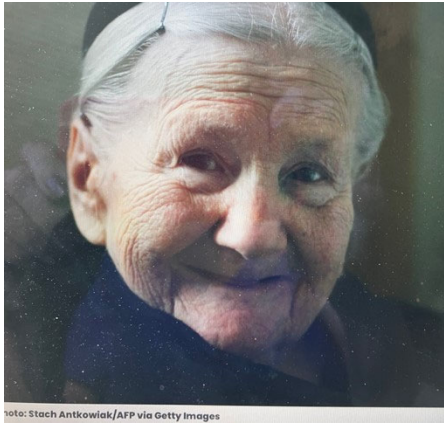


Photo: Stach Antkowiak/AFP via Getty Images

The reader may not have heard of Irena Sendler, but she was a true hero. During World War II, Irena got permission to work in the Warsaw Ghetto as a plumbing/sewer specialist. She had an ulterior motive: she smuggled out Jewish infants. She also had a burlap sack in the back of her truck for larger kids.

Irena kept a dog in the truck that she trained to bark whenever the vehicle passed through a Nazi checkpoint. The soldiers, of course, had no interest in the dog, whose barking masked any noises the children might make.

During her time doing this, Irena managed to smuggle and save 2,500 kids and infants. Ultimately, she was caught, and the Nazis broke both of her arms and her leg. She kept a record of the kids' names in a glass jar that she buried under a tree in her yard.

After the War, Irena tried to locate any surviving parents, but most had been gassed. She tried to place as many children as possible with foster families or in adoptive homes.

Irena lived to age 98.

Small Group Fun . . .

Ed. Note- If you stroll through our lobby and fireplace areas on any given day, you're likely to find groups of four or five huddled around a card table, and they are not always playing Bridge. In the past several years, small groups have sprung up for impromptu or weekly rounds of board games, from Scrabble to Rummikub, Mah Jongg and others. **The Acorn** takes a closer look at the popularity of these activities. We begin with Mah Jongg.

MAH JONGG

By Chris Eibling - #327

This is an ancient game, of Chinese origin, played with tiles or *pais*, that are similar in physical description to those used in dominoes but engraved with Chinese symbols and characters, and divided into suits and honours.

A fad in England, in the United States and Australia in the mid-1920's, the game was revived in the U.S. after 1935 but never quite regained its original popularity.

The Sherwood Oaks players gather every Thursday at 2 p.m. They play with the 2025 Mah Jongg card. They'd be delighted to welcome more players, though suggest that beginners come and watch initially. For more information, call or text Chris Eibling (567-201-8829) in patio home #327.

Below - Chris Eibling, Joan Reynolds and Marta Peterson study the tiles.



NOTES FROM THE HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Submitted by John Houston - #618

TICKS

A reminder that the tick season in Pennsylvania continues through the fall. The tick population in the State has increased substantially in recent years, due in part to warmer temperatures and the over population of deer. For a refresher on ways to protect against ticks, use your internet browser and type in "ticks in PA".

RADON TESTING

Sherwood Oaks has completed Radon testing for the Community Center. While there were a few readings over 2, the majority were lower, with an average of 1.9. While management will continue to monitor Radon levels, no further action will be taken at this time.

AEDs (Automatic External Defibrillator)

Gary Whoric is looking for more visible signage identifying AED sites. An additional AED will be installed at Sherwood Park.

WHEELCHAIR IN SCOOTER ROOM

A member of the committee brought up the need of having available a wheelchair for emergency use in the scooter room. Mark Bondi concurred and believed a wheelchair is available for that purpose. The committee emphasized that it should be prominently labeled **for emergency use only**.

SLIPPING AND SLIDING

By John Bridges - #122

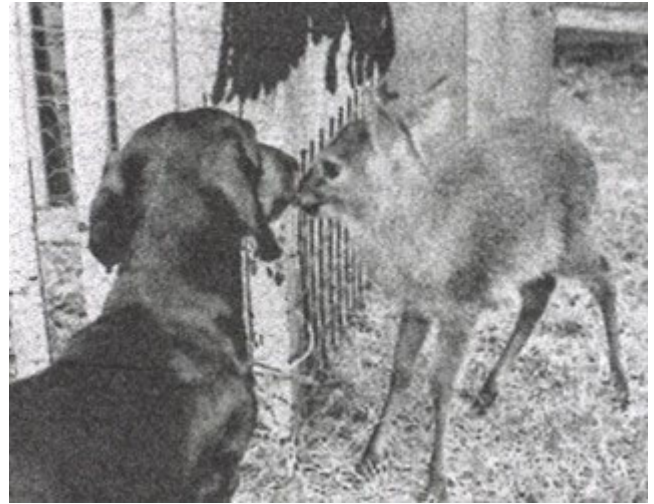


Photo by John Bridges

We were returning from a day of sailing on Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley of Kenya. As we climbed the steep escarpment, a small Kikuyu boy at the side of the road offered to sell a baby Duiker. This is a small Antelope which my girlfriend wanted to add to her collection of pets. The deal was made, and we took it to her home.

The rabbit and Dachshund quickly made friends. And all three played and ate together, although the dog could not understand the enjoyment of chewing Lettuce leaves as a way of passing the time.

The Duiker quickly learnt to stand at the edge of a rug before putting a foot on the polished wood floor. Great care and concentration would be needed to avoid doing the splits or falling down, before reaching the safety of the next rug. His hard hooves did not provide the sliding resistance of rabbit paws or dogs padded feet.

This lesson of the Duiker to "Think before you leap" could act as a useful reminder for all Sherwood Oak residents.

“A LITTLE GROWING UP”

By Monika Dalrymple - #200

Just a little growing up to do...

Here are a few of my earliest memories of my childhood in Bavaria.

We had several fish farming ponds in our area and very moist soil where a lot of the turf was cut out, dried, and used for fuel. My sister and I would gleefully play hide and seek between the racks of stacked up turf. There were so many small lanes to run through and hide. It was so much fun.

Another memory which plagued me through my life was my mother's pining for my father to come home from the war. It must have been so hard for her never knowing if and when he would come home. We always left the key under the mat of our front door when we went away, should he find his way home. For 10 long years she hoped and prayed for his return, but it never came. She never knew where he was stationed.

She received a letter from him in February of 1945, telling her that he found a bike for her and that he would send it to her in parts so she would have a better means of getting around. Nothing ever came. She waited for his return for ten long years and then she finally declared him dead.

We were greatly influenced by this long wait and many prayers. Those were sad moments for me to remember; a war which should not have been fought; so many mothers and children losing their fathers. One evil man causing the death of countless innocent people. I fear that

this evil is rearing its head again! I pray and hope that I am wrong!

I also remember events one would consider funny but at the time weren't really that funny...not. It mostly concerned my sister and me going out on adventures and of course I often caused great distress to her as she tried to keep me safe, but it turned out that I wound up saving her.

One which I remember clearly was a “rock hopping” outing where I was hopping over rocks passing a rather wild white-water area of a stream near our home. I hopped, she followed, I did well, alas, she fell in, and I had to pull her out by her hair to save her life. She was not happy with me. We had a few more of those “who – is – saving – who” experiences which mostly were initiated by me.

I was the wild child and she found it always necessary to either keep up with me or save me from possible danger. I did not appreciate her point of view till later in our lives. She passed on in 2015 due to diabetes and its side effects.

We were apart most of our lives since I was here, and she was way over there. Geography is not helpful to keep close relationships going.

There were many experiences that followed but for now this should suffice.



*“September... the golden threshold
between summer and winter”*

— Meeta Ahluwalia

WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

(SO Residents Association)

By Jean Henderson - #346

Note: Complete minutes are always available for review on the SORA bulletin board in the Mailroom and in the SORA binder in the Library.

The Board met August 5 with the following information shared:

FINANCES: Memorial/Special Projects Fund balance is \$25,499.58. Employees Appreciation Fund balance is \$18,236.38.

WELCOME: Four couples and four singles will be welcomed in September and October.

TRIPS & TOURS: Log Cabin trip is planned for September 10.

LANDSCAPE: 80 walkway lights will be replaced; many underground water leaks will be fixed. Two new hires: HVAC and electrical.

RECYCLING: 1000 pounds of plastic have been collected and a new bench has been ordered.

MAINTENANCE: There is a temporary fix for the sound in the auditorium. 14 patio homes are under reconstruction as well as three model homes.

ADMIN REPORT: As of August 4, 186 of 283 IL units are occupied; 36 of 42 PC units occupied; 32 of 43 beds in SNF occupied. IL sales have increased. Rooms in SNF and PC are being renovated.

NEW BUSINESS: Resignation of Board member Dan Cindric was accepted with appreciation for his service. A new activity is Singalong and Snax with a budget of \$500. The Swimming Pool budget was increased from \$50 to \$350.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: September 9 at 1:30 p.m. in the Card Room. Next residents quarterly meeting is Sept. 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

ANOTHER BENCH!

By Ruth Lasure - #306

A big THANK YOU to all residents who recycle their dry, clean, and paper - free bags. You have earned another Treks bench for Sherwood Oaks.

The latest bench has been installed in the playground at Sherwood Park for the comfort of the parents and grandparents and even some great grandparents.

Keep recycling – place your plastic in the blue bags that hang in your trash room.

“YOU ROCK” WINNERS

By Jean Henderson - #346

The “YOU ROCK” program recognizes team members who go above and beyond to provide outstanding person-centered care. Each quarter, the campus/service line recognition committee selects the winners.

Congratulations to the 1st quarter – 2025 winners! Security Officer, **Alex Caruso** is the Sherwood Oaks winner and **Karen Obringer**, PC RN Manager, is the Network winner. We're proud of both of you; you surely deserve the awards!

Nomination forms are posted in the mailroom and can be turned into the reception desk. Who can nominate? Team members, residents, family members, visitors, vendors, clients, and caregivers – any of us. Do consider nominating.

TRY OUR SWIMMING POOL

By Art Sommer - #115



“Water walkers” Photo by Jan Wendt

Several times a week I walk by our swimming pool and often wonder why there is usually no one in it. Now, I should make it very clear that I never learned to swim, and I've always hated swimming pools: the noise, the cold water, the splashing, the annoying people bumping into me. It's been decades since I've been in a pool, and I had to search our home to even find a bathing suit.

But I have arthritis and am in pain most every day. I was told that mild exercise in a pool might help my aching joints. So, I very reluctantly located my bathing suit and found my way to our pool.

What a surprise! The water temperature is a comfortable 86 degrees F, and the deepest part of the pool is just five feet. There is a wonderful hot tub there as well. But best of all, since there are no children, there is no noise and no splashing. The result is a safe, warm, and comforting environment.

If you used to enjoy swimming, you will find that there are times set aside for you to again delight in the water. If you don't swim laps, there are low impact classes available or you can simply walk in the water, which offers numerous benefits.

So, I say to you, try it, you just might like it.

TRIPS AND TOURS . . .

By Maggie Bennardo - #211

Welcome to our little “corner” of *The Acorn*, where you will find news, updates, and information about future events.

Trips and Tours is a SORA activity committee whose members are tasked with proposing, planning, promoting, and hosting events for Sherwood Oaks residents' enjoyment. We look at potential events with an eye to compatible accommodation, reasonable cost, availability, distance/time, and participation. Cost of transportation to events is divided among those attending and charged to their monthly statement.

In the works, is an excursion to the **PA Trolley Museum** in Washington, PA. About 45 miles south on route I-79, you'll find the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, which offers visitors a direct connection to the Trolley Era. Once only a dream, the museum became a reality in 1954.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC

Today there are more than 50 trolleys in residence. Volunteers continue to restore and preserve all things “trolley.” Western Pennsylvania's history of transportation is closely woven around the trolley. The museum offers a direct connection to that history. Trips & Tours plans a visit to this unique venue in September; watch the bulletin board in the Mailroom for details.

EGGNOG - A BRIEF HISTORY

By Ruth Lasure - #306

Sherwood Oaks has celebrated the opening of the Christmas season with an Eggnog Party for over 30 years and the tradition will continue again this year. Even though it's only September, the Committee would like to entice you with some history of the legendary cup.

While culinary historians debate the exact lineage, most agree that eggnog originated from an early medieval British drink called "*posset*," which is made with hot milk curdled with wine or ale and flavored with spices. At that time, it was used as a cold remedy. Posset was popular from medieval times to the 19th century. According to *Time* magazine, by the 13th century, monks were known to drink a posset with eggs and figs.

Eggnog in America has an interesting story. A poem by Jonathan Boucher, a clergyman in Maryland, is the first mention of the term "eggnog:

*"Fog-drams i' th' morn or better still egg-nogg
At night hot-suppings, and at mdi-day,
grogg.
My palate can regale ..."*

George Washington served an eggnog - like drink loaded with alcohol to visitors at Mount Vernon. It was a special-occasion drink due to its ingredients of milk, eggs, and alcohol, which were quite expensive at the time.



Photo by John Hennon

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, September 1
Rev. Nathan Snode
Lifeway Baptist Church
Cranberry Township

Sunday, September 14
Rev. Ed Glover
Urban Impact
Pittsburgh

Sunday, September 21
Rev. Jeff Sterling
St. Paul's UMC (Retired)
Allison Park

Sunday, September 28
Rev. Donna Giver-Johnston
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Pittsburgh

*"Better is a poor man who walks in integrity
than a rich man who is perverse in his ways."
Proverbs 28:6*

WORTH A LOOK

Books New to Our Library

By Barbara Christy - #237

A Better Ending: A Brother's Twenty-Year Quest to Uncover the Truth about His Sister's Death by James Whitfield Thomson. Non-fiction. LARGE TYPE. It has all the overtones of a Raymond Chandler who-done-it novel, but it is real life. The author is the big brother of a twenty-seven-year-old suicide victim. The first half of the book relates their family life in Pittsburgh and early adult years, ending with her death and its aftermath. But after many years, doubts surface about the family's knowledge of the event. Thomson sets out to investigate and the second half of the book explores his painstaking search for the truth about his sister's marriage, his policeman brother-in-law, and the possibility of a police cover-up for oof their own. The book is not a novel but reads like one, absorbing and alarming. 920 THO L.T.

The Invisible Front: Love and Loss in an Era of Endless War by Yochi Dreazen. Non-fiction. The "war" in the title is the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Major General Mark Graham and his wife, Carol, had two sons who died in those wars – one in battle and one by suicide. Kevin, their middle son, hung himself just before the ROTC exercises that would cap his military training at the U. of Kentucky. He had been diagnosed and successfully treated for depression but stopped taking his medications from fear that the military would discover his illness and end his career before it began. Less than a year later, their older son, Jeff, was killed in Afghanistan. The Grahams were astounded and alarmed by the degree to which the military ignored the death due

to depression but celebrated the death in combat. Thus began their multi year struggle to change and upgrade military officers' understanding and response to factors contributing to soldiers' suicides. Blending individual's stories with the research about suicide, this book is written in a warm, humane style that expands our knowledge about a growing problem. 355 DRE

Who is Government: The Untold Story of Public Service by Michael Lewis, Ed. Non-fiction. This series of captivating essays were written in response to a request by Michael Lewis to find and profile a government worker doing exceptional work despite his/her bureaucratic environment. The results are fascinating, engaging, and inspiring stories of the man who made cemetery organization work; the sleuth in the IRS who finds children victimized by rape and abuse; the woman in the National Archives who struggles to make the Archives accessible to all. In a time when public service is being denigrated and decimated, it is refreshing to read good writers presenting good people doing good work. 351 LEWAARP

Medicare for Dummies by Patricia Barry. Non-fiction. With all the changes currently being made to the Medicaid program, perhaps now is the time to better understand our Medicare plan. This is not a novel or life story but a comprehensive explanation in which it's possible to skip the chapters you know to spend time with the sections you don't. From explaining the differences between original Medicare and Medicare Advantage to identifying the top ten mistakes made, this is not a book to read for pleasure but a good resource if you have questions about your benefits. 368.4 BAR

The Instrumentalist by Harriet Constable. Fiction. Venice. The year is 1695. Prostitution is rampant and accepted but the results are not. Most babies born in this situation are tossed in the canal but not Anna Maria della Pieta. The mother was found by a retired prostitute who took her in and told her about an orphanage which not only houses these baby girls but educates them, gives them opportunities and even music lessons. With difficulty, mother places her child in the hole in the wall designated for this purpose, praying for a better life for her daughter. But a better life in these trying times means either marrying against her will or becoming a musician capable of supporting herself. Thus, with the help of her teacher Antonino Vivaldi, Anna Maria develops into one of the greatest violinists of the eighteenth century. This novel, featuring life in Venice and the music world of that time, is based on the true events of the life of Anna Maria della Pieta. F CON

The Other Mothers by Katherine Faulkner. Fiction. When Natasha Carpenter moves from London to Cornwall, she has high hopes for her free-lance journalism career and for the prospects of making friends with other new mothers in the area. Both hopes are fulfilled, but not in the way she would wish. She is soon headlong into reopening a case of accidental death into a murder investigation—her new friends may have made her the patsy in a second murder case. F FAU



THE LIBRARY LOWDOWN

By Anne Hunt - #308

We have acquired many new books over the summer, several of which are in large print. Please come down and peruse our new selections. For newer residents and those of us who need a reminder, the following are easy ways to access the library's online catalog from home:

Bring up the Uniguest app on your device, (formerly Touchtown) and click on the "Library" link. At the bottom of the page, click on the link in blue. This will take you to the red and white online catalog screen. From there, you can use the search box in the upper left-hand corner to find a book by title, author, or subject. Alternatively, you can access the online catalog from home by entering www.sherwoodoaksrc.booksys.net into your search engine and clicking on "Display." Having trouble using the online catalog? Call Anne Hunt (#8308) or Barb Christy (#8237).

*Try to remember the kind of September
When life was slow and oh, so mellow.*

*Try to remember the kind of September
when grass was green, and grain was
yellow.*

*Try to remember the kind of September
when you were a tender and callow fel-
low.*

*Try to remember and if you remember,
then follow*

From *The Fantasticks*

Lyrics by Tom Jones

THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS **FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE**

Little Wishes	Adams, Michelle	c. 2020	F ADA
Strangers in Time	Baldacci, David	c. 2025	F BAL L.T.
The Medici Return	Berry, Steve	c. 2025	F BER L.T.
Nobody's Fool	Coben, Harlan	c. 2025.	F COB c.2
FDR Drive	Comey, James	c. 2025	F COM
It's One of Us	Ellison, J. T.	c. 2023	F ELL p.b.
The Missing Half	Flowers, Ashley	c. 2025	F FLO
Before Dorothy	Gaynor, Hazel	c. 2025	F GAY L.T.
The Letter Carrier	Giannone, Francesca	c. 2025	F GIA
She Left	Grey, Stacie	c. 2024	F GRE p.b.
The River is Waiting	Lamb, Wally	c. 2025	F LAM
The Hamptons Lawyer	Patterson, James & Mike Lupica	c. 2025	F PAT
How to Age Disgracefully	Pooley, Clare	c. 2024	F POO
Badlands	Preston, Douglas J.	c. 2025	F PRE
Edge of Honor	Thor, Brad	c.2025	F THO

NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES

1932: FDR, Hoover and the Dawn of a New America	Martelle, Scott	c. 2023	973.91 MAR
Age of Revolutions: Progress and Backlash from 1600 to the Present	Zakaria, Fareed	c. 2024	303.48 ZAK
A Better Ending: A Brother's Twenty-Year Quest to Uncover the Truth About His Sister's Death	Thomson, James W.	c. 2025	920 THO L.T.
Character Matters	Becker, Jean	c. 2024	973.92 BEC
The Fight to Vote	Waldman, Michael	c. 2016	324.62 WAL p.b.
The Greatest Comeback Ever	Concha, Joe	c. 2025	324.97 CON
On the Rocks	Palmer, Maria	c. 2024	647.95 PAL
Original Sin: President Biden's Decline	Tapper, Jake	c. 2025	973.93 TAP
Outclassed: How the Left Lost the Working Class and How to Win Them Back	Williams, Joan	c 2025	305.56 WIL
Prisoners of the Castle	Macintyre, Ben	c.2022	940.54 MAC
Shot Down: The True Story of Pilot Howard Snyder and the Crew of the B-17 Susan Ruth	Snyder, Steve	c. 2015	940.53 SNY
The Sirens' Call	Hayes, Chris	c. 2025	306.342 HAY
V is For Victory	Nelson, Craig	c. 2023	973.917 NEL

RESIDENTS CAPTURE SUMMER'S BEAUTY

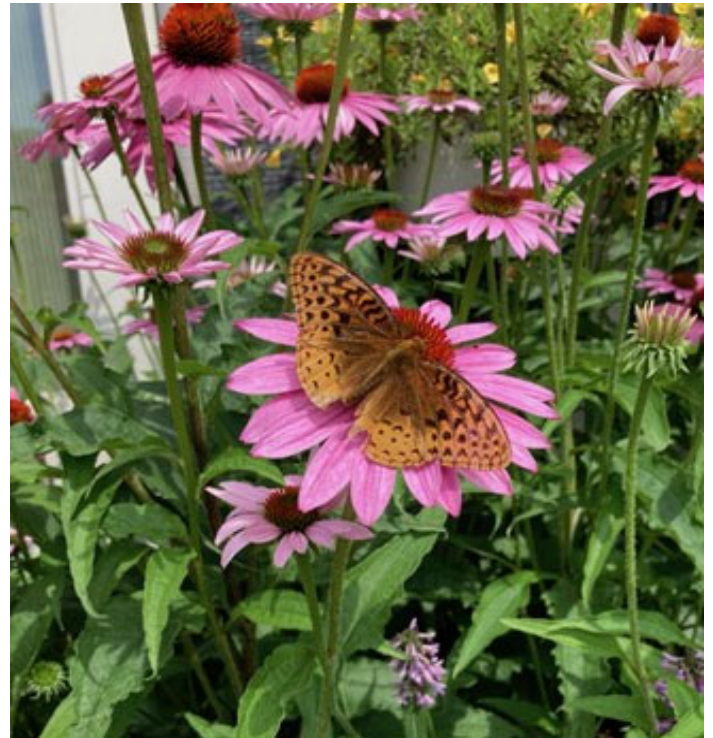


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