

THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER

100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

www.sherwood-oaks.com

January 2026 "For the residents, by the residents" Vol. 45, No. 1

*The night was fun, but now we're done.
The house is a sight and the sun much too bright!*



Painting, poem by Bob Typanski

Dear Reader –

Perhaps there is no time like a new year to make changes here and there. In the case of The Acorn, it's something old, but new again. . . a sketched/painted cover rather than our usual photo.

About a year ago, I took a dive through The Acorn archives and found that publication began even before ground was broken here on campus! Distribution was among those who planned to move here and other interested persons in the community. And behold, many of the old covers were sketches, even cartoons.

Recently, I had in my mind the image of 2026 approaching from behind an opening door or the turning page in a book. I approached resident Bob Typanski, known to us as a talented artist, with my vision.

You see the bright and whimsical result on our front cover.... We're always grateful to receive your lovely photos for use in The Acorn and on our covers.

If you can sketch, get creative and send us your offerings. It's nice to have a change now and then.

And thanks to Bob for accepting the challenge!

~ Jan Wendt

Remembrance Cards

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

JANUARY CALENDAR

New Year's Day	January 1
Nat'l Spaghetti Day	January 4
Epiphany/Three Kings Day	January 6
Nat'l Bagel Day	January 15
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 20
Holocaust Remembrance Day	January 27
Nat'l Hot Chocolate Day	January 31

THE ACORN

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

January 15, 2026.

IN MEMORIAM

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

Rudolph Guilloud November 29, 2025

Pearl Habashi December 7, 2025

Bertram Meyers December 13, 2025

SYLVIA AFFLECK - #311

By Jean Henderson - # 346



Photo by Dave Capan

“IT’S A SMALL WORLD!” How many times have we heard that phrase here at SO as we meet new residents? Sylvia Affleck takes the cake for ‘small world’ coincidences! Here are a few:

1) She was born in England near Nottingham, 20 miles from Robin Hood’s Sherwood Forest...and now she lives at Sherwood Oaks! Sylvia now holds dual citizenship in the UK and USA.

2) She graduated from University of Sheffield, majoring in French and Latin. She taught Latin at North Hills and later was on the faculty at St. Edmunds Academy. She and resident Kathie McCormick traveled to Italy together with their Latin students.

3) She met Bob, a mining engineer with a British firm. They married in 1968 and lived in Scotland a while. He was sent to the States in '81 for two years and they lived in Cranberry Twp., PA near Rowan Road. They stayed! Their son, an RPI grad living now in Concord MA and daughter, an educational administrator

living back in England in the Cotswolds, complete the family.

4) For 30 years they lived in Bradford Woods until Bob died in January 2019 after a fall. Sylvia then moved to Liberty Hills in 2019. An active member of St. Brendan’s Episcopal Church, she came to SO each month for many years to help serve late resident Bev Sanker organize the serving of the Eucharist to Episcopalians. Now Sylvia will be joining the group, including Ruth Becker. Jno and Anne Hunt are church friends as well.

5) The Hendersons and Afflecks met about 10 years ago at the Pittsburgh MG Club; David Henderson had a 1952 MGTD 1952 (with original plates!) and the Afflecks had a '71 MGBGT (coupe). Both husbands and both cars are gone, but great memories remain of those MG days. (But Sylvia and I don’t miss how they sucked up money!)

6) Many of her interests will be touch points for us: piano playing, reading, knitting, traveling on various Viking cruises, visiting Moscow, Alaska, Italy, and the Danube/Rhine region; and enjoying classical music with seasonal tickets to the Symphony.

So many ‘SMALL WORLD’ touch points with Sylvia. I hope you’ll meet her soon and perhaps find even more! It IS a small world, after all...



BOB EASTWOOD - #289

By Connie Brandenberger - #602



Photo by Dave Capan

Bob Eastwood feels fortunate to have two sons, one (with the help of his wife) who did all the “leg work” to find the right home for him. He trusted them and is happy with their choice. He has been here for three months and appreciates the friendliness, the campus grounds, the pool, the convenience to outside facilities and the Skilled Nursing Unit that his wife Myra required.

Being born in Philadelphia, he was not familiar with Pittsburgh, but one son lives in Cranberry Twp. and wanted to be sure Dad was nearby. This son stops by to watch sports with Bob every Saturday. A second son lives in Asheville, NC.

Bob earned his engineering degree at Penn State and his master's in systems engineering at Ohio University. He began his career with DuPont in Delaware, followed by working for Shell in chemical engineering. He was in the military for two years in Texas, using his engineering

skills. His career always involved the operating and building of pipelines for carrying gasoline, fuel oil, and kerosene. Bob has been retired since 1992.

The Eastwoods, who were married for 61 years, met at Penn State. Myra had been ill and died shortly after moving into the Sherwood Oaks Skilled Nursing Unit. Although his career required moving several times, Bob says she never complained. A math teacher who loved traveling, Myra would globetrot with friends if Bob was not available because of work. She has been to England, Russia, Costa Rica, Greece, and Italy (12 times).

Our swimming pool is a great attraction to Bob, and he would like to use it often. He is looking for a “pool partner” with whom to swim. Another avenue of exercise for him is walking – really walking! Weather permitting, he walks to Walmart as often as possible. He says it only takes 45 minutes each way. Bob also likes walking our campus at his leisure.

Gardening is another interest, and Bob enjoys the Indoor Garden near the Reception Desk. Reading mystery novels and books containing little known information about past presidents is yet another pastime.

We welcome Bob to Sherwood Oaks where he can continue to pursue his many interests.

“One thing I am convinced more and more is true and that is this: the only way to be truly happy is to make others happy.”

– WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAM

FRAN AND DEE WELK - #713

By Eileen and Dick Mobley - # 164



Photos by Dave Capan

A hearty welcome to Francis (Fran) and Dorette (Dee) Welk! And yes, Fran really is the great-nephew of that famous TV host of a weekly show (1950s-1970s), with its “champagne music.” (At family gatherings over the years, Fran was with his great-uncle many times.)

Fran and Dee each grew up in the Buffalo, NY area, but they did not meet until after their fathers’ casual conversation at a meeting. They discovered that both of their children were going to have summer internships in Cleveland at Mt. Sinai Hospital. As a result, Fran agreed to give Dee a ride (along with her hairdryer, guitar, and suitcases). Later, Dee’s father would say, “I paid for your dental visits, got your contact lenses, and introduced you to your husband. What more can a dad do?”

Both Fran’s and Dee’s interests were in the medical field, his in medicine related to sports and rehabilitation, hers in nursing. Fran reflects appreciatively about a mentor who advised him wisely to pursue a career in physical therapy, which became “core to me,” he said.

While Dee was finishing her BSN degree at D’Youville College in Buffalo, Fran earned his BS in Physical Therapy at the University of Buffalo. He became a physical therapist and athletic trainer at the University of Pennsylvania for five years. Both Welks later

obtained advanced degrees in their respective fields; Fran a Master’s in Health Education and Doctorate in Physical Therapy, from Temple, and Dee an MSN from the University of Penn and a PhD from Penn State.

Dee and Fran were married in March 1972. When they became parents, they decided to raise their family in a small town rather than a big city. They chose Bloomsburg, PA, (where both nursing faculty and physical therapists were needed), had three sons, and stayed there for 35 years before moving to Squirrel Hill in Pittsburgh for thirteen years.

In Bloomsburg, Fran opened a one-person private physical therapy practice with the goal of finding well-qualified clinicians to join him. Eventually, his practice grew to have 25 employees and three locations. Dee’s nursing career included med-surg and ICU experience, and long tenure as a professor at Bloomsburg University. She has also been an online instructor at The University of Phoenix and St. Augustine (FL) University.

Both Fran and Dee have “fallen in and out of retirement.” They continue to be involved in their respective professional organizations, staying in touch with colleagues in those fields.

The Welks love to travel! Their many trips and cruises have taken them to some 60 countries. Dee makes photo books after trips to keep track of these good times. And they’ve also visited all 50 U.S. states. They enjoy hiking. And they spend several months each winter in St. Croix. But with 3 married sons (one in Virginia, two in nearby townships) and seven grandchildren, they both consider “traditional grand-parenting” a major interest, which influenced their coming to Sherwood Oaks.

Fran and Dee Welk, we are so blessed that you have come to share your richly full life with us. Welcome to our Sherwood Oaks family.

MORE SHERWOOD CONNECTIONS

By Janie Naylor - #139

Ed. Note – *At Sherwood Oaks, the six-degrees-of-separation theory is fully refined. Residents often discover someone here with whom a two - or three - degree connection is revealed. It's a small world. Keep these entertaining revelations coming!*

Mary Anne Riley was my “welcoming person” when I came to Sherwood Oaks in February 2020, so when I learned she had moved to Skilled Nursing, I visited her a few times to get better acquainted.

One time, I mentioned growing up in York, PA. The patient in the next bed said, “William Penn Senior High School.”

I replied, “How do you know? It was the late Debby Jacoby who replied, “I went there.” I asked, “What was your mother’s maiden name?” “Diebert. Ruth Diebert,” came the reply.

Well. My mother’s best friend and classmate at Germantown Hospital School of Nursing in Philadelphia was Ruth Diebert. Ruth was from Chalfont, PA, as was a mutual friend, Ellen Greenly. “Yes,” said Debby, “and Mr. Greenly was a butcher.”

Since I was visiting Mary Ann, I didn’t pursue the connection further.

Soon after, Debby moved to the Oak Grove. I decided to visit her there, and we spent a pleasant afternoon discussing our nursing careers. After graduation, Debby had worked for a brain surgeon. I was a grad of the Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham University) and Allegheny General Hospital and had worked at AGH as a clinical instructor for CCAC’s Practical Nursing program. Debby said she had worn a white uniform with white stocking and shoes. I wore a blue dress with starched white apron and black shoes and stockings. We both

recalled having had strict rules and protocol as students.

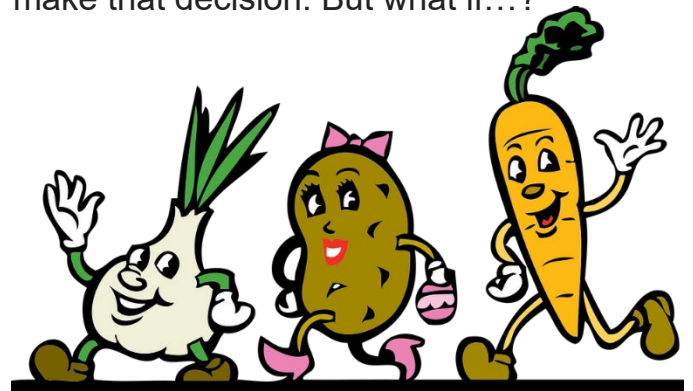
A few weeks after that visit, Debby died in the Oak Grove on June 9, 2023. I wondered if I had been her last visitor; maybe this was a wonderful coincidence or “God thing.” I still enjoy visiting my friend Mary Anne, with whom this unexpected connection began.

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## THE VEGGIES CONVENE?

By Art Sommer - #115

Do you ever wonder how the Vegetable of the Week is selected? No? Probably not. Most likely the chef and maybe a nutritionist make that decision. But what if...?



Picture all the vegetables getting together in the kitchen on Friday night after dinner and after everyone has gone home. Maybe nominations are made. Maybe candidates must give a little speech as to why they should be selected. Maybe they have to say what their favorite recipes are. And then a vote is taken. Was it a close vote? Who will be next week’s Vegetable of the Week? Is there a Runner Up in case the kitchen runs out mid-week?

So, next week when your server asks you if you’d like that week’s choice, give it some thought before you decide.

## SORA OFFERS APPRECIATION

By Bruce Cooper, Vice President

We want to recognize all those who decorate our lobby area for the holiday season. In particular, we give special recognition to the many residents who during 2025 have knitted a total, as of last week, of 604 caps which, first, decorate one of the Christmas trees in the lobby, and then are distributed to children who need them to keep warm this winter. In addition, three scarves and four blankets were produced by this group.

The knitters are:

| Name                      | Caps | Scarves | Blankets |
|---------------------------|------|---------|----------|
| Anonymous                 | 19   |         | 2        |
| Nancy Baker               | 104  |         |          |
| Mary Bouwkamp             | 141  | 2       |          |
| Barbara Christy & Friends | 10   | 1       | 1        |
| Charles Cullen            |      |         | 1        |
| Verna Korade              | 100  |         |          |
| Jane Laverder             | 15   |         |          |
| Janie Naylor              | 26   |         |          |
| Dolores Roscoe            | 193  |         |          |
| Anne Williams             | 2    |         |          |

Those who have helped to decorate the Lobby over the last several years are Beth Brown, Harriett Buress, Connie Brandenberger, Joan Reynolds, Dolly O'Toole, Rich Greer, and Patrick from the Maintenance department.

We also want to recognize Monika Dalrymple, who has brightened the

Christmas season with a collection of almost 400 nutcrackers, a Christmas village with many moving parts, and a table of figures that should make you happy when you see them.

Thanks to all these folks for their efforts.

## WISHES BECOME REALITY

Submitted by Bruce Cooper for SORA

As the fiscal fourth quarter ends, SORA wants to share items from the Wish List which have been completed or are nearing completion:

- Address blue barriers/metal framing in handicap parking lot
- Finish covering on posts
- Investigate solar/wind power options (on-going)
- Repair/paint siding on Lakeside Apartment and Oak Grove buildings
- Completed repair/painting of garage doors
- Update waiting area between sliding doors into Center lobby
- Replace sidewalk lights (in-process, 80% complete)
- Provide staffed Respite Care Unit (Daybreak) on campus (pilot, in process)
- Address sound and lighting system in auditorium (in-process)
- Power-wash patio homes and walkways (in process)
- Update campus-wide phone system with a modern and consistent network (continuing discussions with Armstrong Cable)
- Increase selection of sundries available in Sherwood Gifts

## **MAINTAIN YOUR HYDRATION FOR HEALTH**

By Dolly O'Toole - #195

The Health Affairs Committee focuses on issues that should be important to all our residents as they pursue good health. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) recently published an article titled, "How to Stay Hydrated for Better Health" which is worth attention.

A study from UCLA reported that up to 40% of elderly people may be chronically underhydrated for several reasons such as: diminished appetite and thirst, bodily changes with aging that decrease water storage, and using medications that increase dehydration risk. Older adults do not regulate body temperature as efficiently as younger folks, so during exercise or activity seniors are more prone to become dehydrated through sweating. Dehydration affects the health of the body's cells and can lower one's ability to ward off infections or heal from injury or illness.

To stay hydrated, as a general rule, you should drink a number of ounces of fluid, such as water, equal to one-third of your body's weight (e.g., a person weighing 150 pounds should aim to drink about 50 ounces, 6 cups of water daily). Thirst alone may be an inadequate guide to adequate fluid intake, so perhaps setting specific goals for fluid intake with each meal may help.

The amount of water each person needs can vary. A quick way to tell if you are drinking enough water is to check the color of your urine. If it is pale in color and clear, you are likely to be well-

hydrated, but if it is dark colored you may be dehydrated.

Dehydration is a potentially serious condition which can lead to health complications such as urinary tract infections, heat stroke, heart problems, kidney failure and abnormal blood clotting. Just a little care in being sure you take in adequate fluids regularly can head these off and promote better health.

For further information on hydration, and other topics related to healthy aging, check out the NCOA website ([www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org)).



## **ARE YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER?**

From Living with Loss Team

January is a great time to clean out and organize the year's paperwork, bills, tax documents, etc. And every January, the Living with Loss team provides an opportunity to create/review your end-of-life documents, including Living Will and Healthcare POA.

This year's review will be offered on **Thursday, January 22, at 10:30 a.m. in the Auditorium.**

When you moved to Sherwood Oaks, you received a packet of end-of-life documents. If you never completed them, misplaced them, or want to update, plan to attend this meeting. We will have additional packets available if you have mislaid yours.

Checking this chore off your "to do" list early in 2026 will give you and your family peace of mind.



## THE TALE OF OLIVER AND AMY

By Carole Fox - # 733

On a very cold Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, I called the front desk to ask if someone from Maintenance could help me with a problem. The problem was that my cat, Oliver, had climbed into an opening that was cut into the back wall of my lower kitchen cabinet. The opening didn't seem to have any purpose but exposed a narrow space between the cabinet wall and the dry wall behind the cabinet.



Oliver, who likes small, dark places thought this opening looked like a great place to explore! Unfortunately, Oliver (who weights 15 pounds) couldn't find his way out of that deep and narrow space. He went into this opening early on Friday morning and I assumed he would eventually be able to get himself out. I was wrong, and by Saturday morning I was in panic mode!

Tabby was at the front desk early that Saturday and called Amy, who was on week-end duty in Maintenance. Amy came very quickly, looked at the situation, and left to get a saw.

She returned and then proceeded to get herself into this cabinet (see picture) and

with the saw managed to enlarge the opening. She was then able to reach into the opening, grab Oliver at the bottom and pull him to safety!

Amy never hesitated to tackle this problem and find a solution within 30 minutes! She then proceeded to get a piece of scrap wood to cover over this opening which insured there would not be a repeat of Oliver's stunt.

I was amazed at Amy's ability to make this rescue happen and very grateful. Sherwood Oaks is very lucky to have this amazing woman as part of our Maintenance staff. Please congratulate Amy when you see her on campus for this wonderful cat rescue work.



Photos by Carole Fox

## EASTER PLANT SALE

By Diana Shulties - #312

The Landscape Committee is planning an Easter plant sale, something lovely to think about during these cold winter days.

Watch for coming details about ordering the beautiful lilies, hyacinths, tulips, and daffodils that will be offered.



Photo by Jan Wendt

## CURIO CABINETS FOR JANUARY

By Janet Desko - #210

Due to repairs needed on the curio cabinets, they will remain empty for most of the month of January.

In February, we will continue with the theme of "Sports Memorabilia".

Look for dates in the next *Acorn*.

Thank you for your patience.

## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

The energy transition refers to the global shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. This change is crucial to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The transition involves transforming energy systems worldwide, which is considered one of the most significant challenges since industrialization.

The energy transition is not just a technical challenge; it also requires a shift in mindset and action from all sectors of society.

To effectively support the energy transition, several strategies must be implemented:

- **Accelerate Renewable Energy Deployment** - Increase the pace of installing renewable energy sources like solar and wind. This includes streamlining permitting processes and enhancing financial incentives for renewable projects.
- **Strengthen Electrical Grids** - Upgrade and expand electrical grid infrastructure to handle increased renewable energy inputs. This involves building new power lines and improving grid efficiency to connect remote energy sources to urban areas.
- **Promote Energy Efficiency** - Implement measures to enhance energy efficiency across all sectors. This includes adopting advanced technologies and practices that reduce energy consumption.

**Watch *Global Renewables – Pioneering the Energy Transition* on Channel 950 on Monday, January 12, at 10:00 AM. Encore presentation on Wednesday, January 14, at 3:30 PM.**

*Three tons of hair were stolen from a wig factory. Police are combing the area.*

## SCRAB B L T I M E

*(Ed. Note-This is the fourth article in a series about popular Sherwood Oaks table games)*

By Kelly Noble - #189

In a far corner of the Lobby, in the shadow of the tall-case clock, two card tables wait for 1:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoons, Scrabble Time! Each of the tables can support two to five players ("formal" Scrabble games are played with four players).

If you suspect that these games are somewhat informal, you would be wrong. They are **very** informal! We use the dictionary! We have lists of two-letter words to be used in a pinch! We even let players take back their tiles if they have made a mistake!



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

The Saturday Scrabble fun in its present form dates back at least seven or eight years. The Saturday game was initiated by the late Mary McCrea, Sonja Degray and others.

Current players find success and failure at the board, but we all enjoy the camaraderie and the challenge.

Join us on Saturdays at 1:00 p.m.

## PAPERBACK PONDERINGS

by Jean Henderson - #346  
(corrected data)

Six categories of books are housed in our Paperback Room in the Library:

1. 5 shelves of MUSIC (biographies, opera, histories).
2. 2 shelves of SPIRITUALITY items
3. 36 shelves of FICTION (marked N for novel)
4. 4 shelves of NON-FICTION
5. 2 shelves of LIVING WITH LOSS books
6. 1 shelf of RECENT DONATIONS

No need to sign out the books. Just take one and check off the small sticky note in the back that it's been read before you return it. Enjoy!



## WINTER FOOD BANK DRIVE

By Bruce Cooper - #735



The Winter drive for the Lighthouse Foundation Food Bank will occur from January 15-22. Look for collection boxes on the bench in the Scooter Room on those dates.

Thanks for your support.



## AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

By John Bridges - #122

When I arrived in Kenya in 1952, life in the villages had remained almost static for many years. Admittedly, some schools had been established where reading and writing could be taught by rote. When the teachers retired, they would be replaced by their pupils who continued to teach in the same manner. Another slight improvement over the years was the spread of Swahili as a common language enabling any one of the twenty tribes to communicate with another. Swahili was originally the language of Zanzibar, carried inland by the Arab traders.

An important market for my wood preservation industry was telephone poles for the spreading and expensive system of communication. But, in reality, very few villages had access to a telephone. Some few villagers left for the towns to seek work in factories or the homes of expatriates. There they learnt new trades or customs. Words had to be invented for all the new, strange sights. These were often based on the sounds they made such as “tonka-tonka” for a farm tractor or “tinka-tinka” for a motor bike.

When I was conscripted for service in the police to protect villages from Mau Mau terrorists, I lived in one of the mud huts as did all my “Askaris.” They were a mixed bunch from many different tribes. One was a Kipsigi from the area around Lake Victoria. His uniform was always the most immaculate and his leather belts and boots shone brighter than those of anyone else. On leave, he picked up a wife and brought her back to the Mioro camp. She had obviously worked some

time in a European house and picked up several ideas. When we knew there was to be an Inspection of the site by the Chief Constable, there was a big effort to make our site look at its best. Floors were swept, beds and uniforms carefully placed, and walls white-washed. The Kipsigi hut was uniquely adorned with pictures, cut out of magazines, on the walls, the little wooden table gleaming and covered with a handwoven cloth and a pot with flowers.

Lately the overall picture has more rapidly changed with wireless telegraphy and the availability of small generators so that each village could have at least one place where they could communicate with the outside world.

Today the changes are even faster and greater with cheap cellphones becoming widely available. News of the outside world is available to almost all. Local famine, shortage or glut can be widely discussed, and remedies sought.

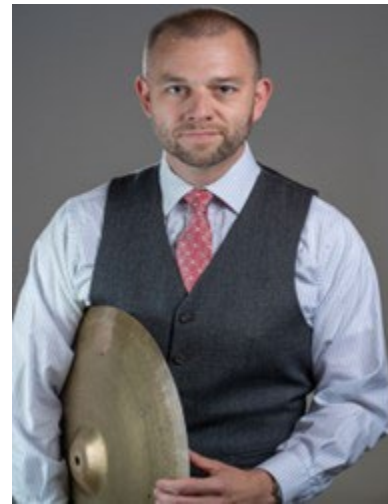
The game of checkers has always been popular (I associate it with night watchmen.) In Kenya, it was played on any marked board with Pepsi Cola bottle tops right way up or upside down. Inventiveness has never been lacking midst dull tradition.

My hope is that Africa is now at an exciting stage of rapid progress and will not fall into the chaos and wars, so common today in the rest of the world. I like to think that, over the years I played my small part of introducing new useful ideas and technologies to Africa.

Sometimes much patience and forgiveness was needed. When my intelligent cook/houseboy broke his leg in an accident on his bike, a brother from his

village came as a replacement whilst he was in hospital. When Gatune was released from hospital, I retained Waithaka to establish a garden in my recently built bungalow. Unfortunately, Waithaka was not a born gardener. For instance, he mixed brussel sprout seeds with the grass seed, so that when they sprouted, I had a peculiar looking green lawn that was, to say the least, difficult to mow.

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Submitted by Tom Wendt

SMOOTH JAZZ FOR A WINTER'S EVENING

By Jno Hunt - #308

Looking for a way to enjoy a comfortable, cozy winter's evening? Join us in the auditorium at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 27th for jazz with the Thomas Wendt Trio. He'll be joined by Mark Strickland on guitar and Chris McGraw on bass.

A graduate of the Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts, Thomas has been a professional musician since the age of 14. He is an active member of the current jazz scene playing with groups led by Joe Negri, Dwayne Dolphin, and many others. Additionally, he leads his own groups including a trio and the sextet, *Firm Roots*. He is also a member of the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra.

Thomas has performed with many visiting international jazz greats and has played with NEA Jazz Master Hubert Laws at several major jazz festivals and with pianist Alan Broadbent for the Nyack, NY library jazz series.

He has been on the faculty of The Afro-American Music Institute since 1998. He is also an adjunct professor at Duquesne University since 2015 where he teaches drums, chamber jazz ensemble and jazz history.

He was with us last April to present the life and times of jazz piano great, Teddy Wilson, as part of our Continuing Education series. He is the son of resident Jan Wendt.

Come and enjoy a relaxing evening with Thomas and his trio.



CONTINUED LEARNING

By Jno L. Hunt - #308

Due to several issues, our presentations on Channel 951 were suspended earlier this year. Some of the problems 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. Posters are hanging in the mail room.

January:

Tues., Jan. 6: "**BBC Great Composers—Tchaikovsky.**" Encore on Thurs., Jan. 8.

Tues., Jan. 13: "**Is There an Effective Alternative to Antibiotics?**" Encore on Thurs., Jan 15

Tues., Jan. 20: "**Travel Through Central Asia.**" Encore on Thurs., Jan. 22

Tues., Jan 27: "**Holy Land Revealed—Lectures 17 & 18.**" Encore on Thurs., Jan. 29

Tues., Dec. 30: "**Alaska's Winter.**" Encore on Thurs. Jan. 1



HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE NOTES

By John Houston - #618

The following issues were discussed at the Committee's recent meeting:

The *Cleveland Clinic Arthritis Advisor newsletter* is now available in the Medical Office literature rack. The newsletter provides the latest information and treatment

alternatives for those suffering from muscle and bone pain. Readers of the letter have provided very favorable reviews.

The workshop for the **Yellow Dot** program was held at the Cranberry Township Municipal Center on November 3rd. This program encourages drivers to have important medical information available in their glove compartments for the use of first responders. If you were unable to attend the November 3 meeting, information about this program is available by typing "yellow dot program" into your internet browser. Having your medical information immediately available to first responders could be lifesaving.

An **AED** (automatic external defibrillator) has been purchased for Sherwood Park. A waterproof storage locker has been ordered, and upon its receipt, the AED will be installed.

The Committee had asked the Maintenance Department if a program of regular **cleaning of heating ducts** should be put in place. Maintenance reported that it was unnecessary to have such a program, as it would not reduce dust collection in residences and the regular replacement of filters, which is now done, is the only maintenance necessary absent an unusual problem. This advice is consistent with EPA guidance that regular duct cleaning has not proved to have health benefits or to reduce dust in the home.

The November meeting of the Committee was Executive Director Mark Bondi's last before his retirement. The Committee recognized his outstanding leadership and support of Sherwood Oaks and wished him well in his retirement.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION WRAPUP

By Patsy Grant, SORA Treasurer

This has been an interesting year full of changes! The switch in management from UPMC to Presbyterian Senior Care presented a few headaches in determining actual hours worked by employees. Huge "Thank You's" go to Mark Nord and Tabby Alford for their many diligent hours spent compiling this information.

These changes were positive for our community in bringing staffing levels near 100%. Marketing improvements have resulted in many new residents. A big "Welcome" to all of you... we are so glad you are here.

However, this year of change has also impacted our Employee Appreciation Fund. Last year, collections exceeded \$160,000 and checks went to 325 SO employees. Appreciation checks were 44 cents per hour worked. This year, as of the end of November, we had collected only \$136,745. (With interest income of \$1.43 and a balance of \$17,951.61 in the account, this gave us only \$154,698.04 for approximately 375 employees.) The SORA Board decided to commit to a 41 cent per hour award and sent out a second appeal. Thank you for stepping up with an additional \$20,098. As of December 16th, contributions totaled \$155,843. Since December 11th, we have distributed 386 checks to employees totaling \$155,328.

A few of you have expressed remorse in not being able to give individual gifts to some of the workers you see often. This is not allowed by Sherwood Oaks to keep staff/resident interactions on a level playing field. Recognizing individuals, while commendable, does not give equal credit to the many hours of "behind the scenes" work we all benefit from. Likewise, having an anonymous source for recognition assures staff treats all residents equally.

We all want our staff to know we appreciate their time and talent in taking care of us. Contributing to the Employee Appreciation Fund is the best way to give a meaningful appreciation check to everyone at the beginning of the holiday season.

CHAPEL NOTES

By Gary Brandenberger - #602
For the Chapel Committee

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

Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend.

Sunday, January 4

Rev. Dena Roy
Cranberry Community Presbyterian
Church

Sunday, January 11

Rev. Leonard Finn
All Saints Anglican Church
Cranberry Township, PA

Sunday, January 18

Rev. Greg Cox
Ingomar United Methodist Church
McCandless Township

Sunday, January 25

Rev. Richard Mobley
Sherwood Oaks - Retired

*"Riches will do you no good on the day you
face death, but honesty can save your life."*

~ Proverbs 11:5

WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

(SO Residents Association)

By Thea Stover, Secretary

Note: Complete minutes are available for review on the SORA Bulletin Board in the mailroom and in the SORA binder in the library.

The Board met on December 2, with the following information shared:

Finances: Memorial/Special Fund Balance is \$17,883.25 and the Employee Appreciation Fund Balance is \$153,698.04. The SORA Balance is \$96,970.67.

Technology/Soapp: There are 3 estimates for replacing the current Creston A/V system in the auditorium. The committee will be meeting soon to determine the best option.

Security and Transportation: Security is fully staffed with 10 full time and two part time officers. If a person is away for more than seven days, security will conduct weekly checks at the residence leaving a list with date/time of those checks on the kitchen counter.

Pool, Spa and Locker Room: The pool party is set for Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. There will be pool volleyball, a five-minute Aquacise demonstration, five-minute "high octane" pool class demonstration, and drinks and snacks.

Bingo: Bingo will be on Monday, January 26 at 6:30 in the Auditorium.

Health Affairs: Subscriptions for two Health Newsletters (Mayo and Cleveland Clinic) are available in the medical offices downstairs for residents to read and borrow.

Maintenance: Gary Whoric, Director of Maintenance will retire in January. Underground water leaks continue to be a problem and are being addressed.

Sherwood Gifts: The shop had another amazing month with total sales being \$5,045.00. Every department has shown an increase, with candy up 145% and cards were up 98%.

Trips and Tours: The committee is grappling with an issue of residents signing up, but then either cancelling at the last minute or worse, not showing up for the bus time.

Library: Library in the Lobby event on November 6 and 7 was very successful and will be repeated during National Library Week in April.

Administrative Report: A new Maintenance Director, David Rausch, has been hired. Armstrong is proposing a bulk deal where Sherwood Oaks would pay for all TV, Telephone, and Internet Services and then Sherwood Oaks would bill residents for these services. A committee will discuss this proposal.

Sherwood Oaks Park Oversight Committee: The following people have agreed to serve on this committee: Jan Wendt, Kate Donovan, Jason Lyle, Frank Finley, Donna Artz, Katherine Montgomery, Denton Bond, Gary Brandenberger, Ann Ferguson, Shirley Poduslo and Jean Henderson. There will also be members of staff.

Next Board Meeting: January 6, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.



WORTH A LOOK

Books New to Our Library

By Barbara Christy - #237

The Lost Story of Eva Fuentes by Chanel Cleeton. Fiction. Historical fiction, set in Cuba, about three different women, living in three different time periods and locations. Margo, a well-known locator of rare antiques living in London in 2024, is asked to find a mysterious book with only one copy left in existence. In 1966, Pilar is a librarian whose devotion to books leads to a mission as a keeper of books necessarily abandoned by Cubans fleeing Castro's regime. Eva Fuentes is a Cuban schoolteacher given the opportunity of a lifetime to travel to Harvard for an intercultural exchange with 100 other schoolteachers. During the summer, she meets a mysterious stranger and uncovers lies and secrets that result in her writing a life-altering book – the missing book Margo is trying to find despite dangerous events around her. This is a great read for those interested in Cuban history and lovers of books of all kinds. F CLE

Saltcrop by Yume Kitasei. Fiction. Three sisters struggle to survive in a world of blighted crops, hunger and genetic mutation caused by a chemical fertilizer. Nora, the eldest, has left home to work in the big city, searching for a cure for the damage caused by a profit-greedy corporation. Carmen, the middle sister, is pragmatic and focused on the surviving. The youngest, Skipper, is really only herself when she is out on her boat scavenging plastic from the ocean's surface. When Nora disappears after sending a cryptic cry for help, the two younger sisters set aside their differences to sail to the city to rescue her. This book is both an absorbing adventure tale of fighting pirates,

storms at sea and a corporate villain, and a saga of personal self-discovery and re-kindling family ties. Told in three parts, each voiced by a different sister, this is a climate change disaster story that utilizes its setting and well-written characters to explore lost futures and regained relationships. F KIT

The Lover - Wartime Notebooks and Practicalities by Marguerite Duras is a semi-autobiographical work centering on the experiences of a fifteen-year-old white girl growing up in poverty in Indochina during the French colonial era. The narrator, speaking from the perspective of her older self, recounts her adolescent years as she navigates issues of identity, family, and societal expectations. The central narrative follows the protagonist as she is sent to boarding school. There she experiments with her appearance and behavior—such as wearing a man's hat and adopting new clothing styles—discovering how these choices influence how others perceive her. Against the backdrop of a dysfunctional family, she embarks on a controversial relationship with a much older Chinese man. Through this affair, she is introduced to the world of wealth and privilege, sharply contrasting with her own circumstances, and further complicating her understanding of self and belonging. Duras' narrative delves deeply into themes of colonialism, racism, sexism, and the search for identity. She explores the complexities of power dynamics in colonial society, the intersections of race and gender, and the societal constraints that shape individual choices. Her candid reflections challenge conventional views on relationships, social norms, and the legacy of colonialism, urging readers to reconsider their assumptions about Vietnam and its history. Duras's own

experiences infuse the story with authenticity, lending her commentary a personal and thought-provoking perspective.

The latter sections of the book shift focus to Duras's notes on post-war France, including observations on the treatment of collaborators, the anticipation surrounding the return of German prisoners, and recollections of life in Indochina—all of which would later inform her literary works. 848.91 DUR

The Wreck by Catherine Newman. Fiction. Sequel to the best-selling novel *Sandwich*. Rocky and her family, two years after their vacation on Cape Cod, are living in western Massachusetts. Daughter Willa is home from college, son Jamie has a new job in New York and Rocky's father has moved in with them. When a train wreck kills a classmate of her son and a weird rash appears on her arm, Rocky is thrown off-kilter and her all-American life becomes disjointed. With quirky humor, reverence for family life and grateful acceptance of the unconventionality of her fellow human beings, Newman has written a heart-warming, sit-with-a-cup-of-tea novel that may send you to our library to find her first book about this family. F NEW

Science Under Siege: How to Fight the Five Most Powerful Forces that Threaten Our World by Michael Mann. Non-fiction. Best known for writing the controversial book *The Hockey Stick*, this time Mann has teamed up with global health expert Peter Hotez to reveal the ways in which our scientific policies are influenced by political, professional, and corporate actors. They are two respected and well-known scientists who have spent the last twenty years struggling to convey accurate, reliable, and trustworthy information about science in the face of determined opposition. They present a clear-eyed moral argument that, in the opinion of some reviewers, will age as the

science it defends. Truth and integrity never go out of style. 303.483. MAN



Photo by Monika Dalrymple

NOW IS THE TIME TO BE SLOW

*This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.
Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.
If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.*

~John O'Donohue

THE COLETTA MCKENRY LIBRARY ACCESSIONS **FICTION, INCLUDING LARGE TYPE AND DVD's**

***Reviewed in Worth a Look**

<i>*The Lost Story of Eva Fuentes</i>	Cleeton, Chanel	c2025.	F CLE p.b.
<i>The Proving Ground</i>	Connelly, Michael	c2025.	F CON
<i>The Wilderness</i>	Flournoy, Angela	c2025.	F FLO
<i>The Keepers of the House</i>	Grau, Shirley Ann	c1965.	F GRA
<i>The Widow</i>	Grisham, John	c2025.	F GRI
<i>The Other Black Girl</i>	Harris, Zakiya D.	c2021.	F HAR
<i>Holiday Inn</i>		c2006.	DVD
<i>Waves End</i>	Jennings, Kay	c2025.	F JEN
<i>*Saltcrop</i>	Kitasei, Yume	c2025.	F KIT
<i>Sandwich</i>	Newman, Catherine	c2024.	F NEW
<i>*Wreck</i>	Newman, Catherine	c2025.	F NEW
<i>The Black Wolf</i>	Penny, Louise	c2025.	F PEN
<i>Bear</i>	Phillips, Julia	c2024.	F PHI
<i>Atmosphere: A Love Story</i>	Reid, Taylor J.	c2025.	F REI
<i>Buckeye</i>	Ryan, Patrick	c2025.	F RYA

NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES

<i>Memorial Days</i>	Brooks, Geraldine	c2025.	BIO BRO
<i>The Good Neighbor: The Life and Work of Fred Rogers</i>	King, Maxwell	c2018.	BIO ROG
<i>The CIA Book Club</i>	English, Charlie	c2025.	028.70 ENG
<i>*Science Under Siege: How to Fight the Five Most Powerful Forces that Threaten Our World</i>	Mann, Michael E.	c2025.	303.48 MAN
<i>Done With the Crying: Help and Healing for Mothers of Estranged Adult Children</i>	McGregor, Sheri	c2016.	306.87 MCG
<i>We the People: A History of the U.S. Constitution</i>	Lepore, Jill	c2025.	342.02 LEP
<i>The Lover: Wartime Notebooks</i>	Duras, Marguerite	c2018.	848.91 DUR





Photo By Peg Rychcik