

THE ACORN

SHERWOOD OAKS NEWSLETTER

100 Norman Drive, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

www.sherwood-oaks.com

October 2026 "For the residents, by the residents" Vol. 45, No. 9

SUMMER ECLIPSE OR HALLOWEEN MOON?



See Page 7

Photo by Mary Gail Korsmeyer

Dear Reader –

These days, evening darkness falls earlier with the autumnal equinox just past. We're trading our cotton for flannel, iced tea for cider, and checking out the woolly caterpillars, those faithful prognosticators. The fading light is but one reminder that we are in a seasonal shift. Here at Sherwood Oaks, we also live through the challenges and personal transitions that come with aging.

New neighbors continue to transition in, bringing with them their unique experiences and ideas. We watch as friends undergo health challenges and, perhaps eventually, a move to a higher level of care. We know something about transitions here in the winter of our lives.

And then it's *our* turn, and we feel the strong support of those around us. The point is, we share these transitions together and are thankful for our community circle.

As the light outside fades, the inside lights burn bright as winter comes on. Raise your glass of cider, and enjoy!

~ Jan Wendt

OCTOBER CALENDAR

World Teacher's Day	Oct. 5
World Mental Health Day	Oct. 10
Columbus Day	Oct. 12
Indigenous Peoples' Day	Oct. 12
Canadian Thanksgiving	Oct. 12
Nat'l Pasta Day	Oct. 17
Halloween	Oct. 31

THE ACORN

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Submissions for the November issue must be sent to the Editor no later than
October 15, 2026.



Memorial Donations and 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.

IN MEMORIAM

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

Elise Cutler

August 25, 2026

MEET CECILIA DICKSON - #104

By Jean Henderson - #346



Photo from Marketing

One of my favorite old hymns is "There's a Sweet Sweet Spirit in This Place." And Cilia Dickson is that spirit! Raised in Smock PA, the 12th of 15 children, born to a miner and busy homemaker, she is one of four still living.

During high school in Uniontown, she felt the call to religious life, entered Vincentian Convent and soon graduated from high school. As Sister Marie Joseph for 14 years, she graduated from Mt. Mercy College (now Carlow) in elementary education and taught in Pittsburgh and Greensburg Dioceses.

After an illness, Cilia felt the call to leave the convent. Her vows were set aside by the Pope and she moved in with a family in Derry as she began seeking her new role in life. A young contractor named Vaughn Dickson came to work on the home and when he saw her, said, "Someday I'm going to marry that girl!" Two years later in 1978, they married - her new calling in life.

That calling included moving to Latrobe, more schooling at IUP as a reading specialist, teaching in Latrobe and Derry, and the birth of two daughters. Cecilia is an attorney in Pittsburgh and Gretchen is an M.D. in Kansas. Both are St. Vincent grads. Two grandsons bless the family. Cilia often dog-sat her "grand-dogs."

Vaughn died in 2024 after a fall and broken hip. He was a Marine, which led Cilia to her major volunteer effort - Toys for Tots, run by the Marines. She organized the collection for many years and has fondest memories of doing so.

Their travels included FL and trips to support their girls in debating.

Cilia's hobbies include all the hand arts - knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, embroidery, and quilting. She also enjoys all types of puzzles.

How did she get to Sherwood? Her daughter Cecilia's significant other, Chad, is the son of our current resident Jan Pociernicki, so they spent many hours here with Jan.

Cilia is now in our Skilled Nursing Unit. Last April, after knee surgery while still living in Latrobe, a ligament in her knee shattered. More surgery followed with another new knee and she came to SO for rehab. After four complete leg casts, she's now in a brace, waiting for clearance to move into her new patio home, #104. She is more than ready to cross that threshold!

Once, two SN staff were helping her and one of them swore. The other said, "You better be careful! Someday a nun might be around and hear you!" Cilia calmly said, "Guess what I was!"

Do welcome this sweet spirit!

BILL INMAN - #332

By Rosemary Coffey - #113



Photo from Marketing

Part of what brought Bill Inman to Sherwood Oaks was that one of his sons knew Dave Capan of our Marketing Dept. Another part was the fact that two of his sons lived nearby and the third was just north of here. He did check out a few other retirement communities, but Sherwood Oaks came out the winner. Now he is concentrating on the management of some health problems, especially connected to balance. He should find a lot of folks here who can relate to that particular challenge!

In his former house, where he had lived for 44 years, he had a recreation room, a living room, a laundry, a tool room, a two-car garage, three bedrooms, and a garden, so adapting to life in a one-bedroom-and-den apartment has been somewhat daunting. However, he is grateful that he can still live independently, without having to deal personally with storm damage and the local groundhogs and deer! He has already visited our Fitness Center and is looking forward to playing pickleball when he is feeling more stable. For

the time being, he continues to follow closely his favorite teams, including the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Steelers.

Bill started out in banking, following graduation from business school (New Castle Business College). He married after graduation and worked at a bank in Mercer for three years, where he was involved in bookkeeping and mortgages. Then, after his first two children were born, he went to work for the railroad in Greenville, PA, as clerk of the engineering department.

In the course of his career, he took several classes from local colleges to qualify as a draftsman. The railroad then promoted him to a draftsman position, which he held for several years until it promoted him again, this time to building maintenance engineer. He held that position till he took a buyout in 1992 after 28 years, two years short of a full pension.

After he left the railroad, Bill sold real estate for 10 years, then cared for a decade for his wife, who had Alzheimer's disease.

Bill has three children, many grandchildren, and four great-great grandchildren. He sees them often, since they all live in the Cranberry area.

So now, here he is at Sherwood Oaks. Let us, therefore, welcome him to his new home and encourage him to indulge his old interests and find new ones, as he becomes integrated into our bustling community.

As I watch this generation try to rewrite history, one thing I am sure of is that it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.

At an optometrist's office: "If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."

CARL AND BETTY NANNI - #143

By Dick and Eileen Mobley - #164



The Nannis Today....

Photo by Jan Wendt

"We may be slow, but we're not afraid to stick our necks out!" Carl Nanni's motto originated during his tenure in the head office at ARMCO Steel Corporation. A stuffed turtle was showcased with the motto in his office. It prompted an enjoyable collection of miniature turtles.

Even though Carl and Betty (as Elizabeth prefers to be called) both attended the same high school in Butler, PA, they didn't get to know each other then. Carl emphasizes that Betty graduated from high school first in her class. He had noticed "that beautiful girl" at a distance in the high school auditorium, but then he lost sight of her. However, they both went to Indiana University of PA, and by chance, he saw the lovely Betty again when she was working in a department store's cafe.

Now, Carl and Betty have been married for 61 years and have five children: Mike, a VA pharmacist in Butler, who recommended Sherwood Oaks to his parents; Gina, in New York City; Ron, an engineer, educated at Grove City College; Teresa with her husband, building a home on Route 228; and Diane, CFO for Armstrong. The Nannis have twelve grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Carl says, "I am 100% Italian!" He studies Italian every day on Duo Lingo, and he and Betty have made several trips to Italy. They also traveled to France.

After attending Indiana University (IUP), Carl

graduated from Duquesne with dual degrees in math and physics. He worked in a steel mill during the summer of his college days and then became a bricklayer; at ARMCO. He spent 20 years as a steel worker and 20 more years as a union officer.

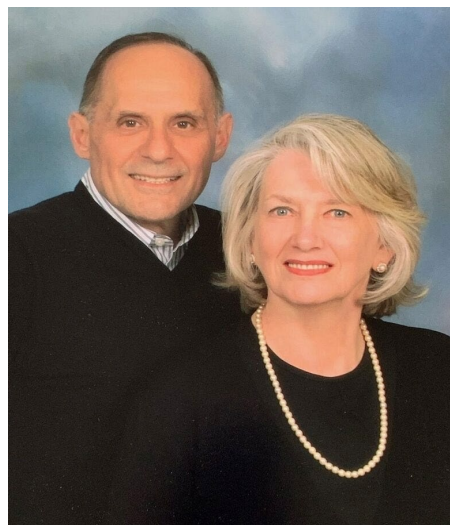
Carl loves to exercise (mainly running and lifting weights) and is an avid Pittsburgh sports fan! He enjoys doing Sudoku puzzles.

Betty has an interesting background. She was adopted when she was about two years old. Her adoptive mother had a sister who was a nun and recommended a Catholic orphanage in Buffalo. The couple also adopted two other girls, but none were biological siblings. Betty says that she and her adopted sisters have had a good relationship.

After IUP, Betty went to Butler County Community College's Nursing School and became a Registered Nurse and Diabetes Educator. On the home front, she was an expert seamstress, having made a wedding dress, prom dress, and many other advanced projects. For fun, she enjoys reading, sewing, and working crossword puzzles.

Both Carl and Betty have been active volunteers for their church. Betty has served as Eucharistic minister, and for many years they have delivered Meals on Wheels on a route in Butler.

Welcome to the Nannis!



And then.....

Photo submitted by the Nannis

SHELBY NEELY - #139

By Connie Brandenberger - #602



Photo from Marketing

Have you heard the story about the farmer's daughter meeting the farm equipment salesman? This is a true story for Shelby Neely, a new resident of Sherwood Oaks, who lived with her family on a farm in Clarion County, Pennsylvania. She did marry a farm equipment salesman named Barney (Byron H. Neely). He owned a farm equipment company, and Shelby was a homemaker who also worked with him in the business until his passing in 2012. They were married for 58 years. Together they raised horses, peacocks, and Charolais cattle. After his retirement, they would spend six months on their farm in Clarion and six months in Fort Myers, Florida.

Shelby later moved to Cranberry Township to be near her daughter, who teaches at Haine Elementary School. Another daughter, living in Hershey, PA, is a doctor specializing in eye surgery. Shelby lived here in Cranberry Twp. for 15 years before coming to Sherwood Oaks in August. She was pleased to discover that one of her neighbors is Louise Ewing, also a retired schoolteacher from

Haine School and is a friend of her daughter. Louise has been a great help to Shelby as she settles into her new home.

Shelby was excited to share a favorite photo of her husband shaking hands with astronaut Neil Armstrong. They were attending a farm equipment convention in Arizona. Neil impressed Barney with his friendliness and his knowledge of farming. Her husband was so proud.

Their many travels include visits to Australia, New Zealand, England, France, Alaska, and Hawaii. But they were always most happy to return to the bucolic setting of their home in Clarion.

Shelby is expecting the arrival of a scooter very soon as she plans to explore the campus and travel around more easily. She enjoyed volunteering for the American Heart Association and cancer clinics and still found time for knitting and quilting. She said she knitted "the German way" taught to her by her mother-in-law. (Is anyone familiar with that method?).

Shelby looks forward to forming new friendships. She especially likes to talk about the many acres of land and two lakes on their beautiful property in Clarion and life on the farm. It would be YOUR pleasure to take the opportunity to listen.

And that is the happy ending of the story of the farmer's daughter and the farm equipment salesman.



SPOOKY, BEAUTIFUL MOON

On the evening of August 28, Mary Gail Korsmeyer was sitting in her patio room. As the moon rose up between the trees behind her home, she noticed its golden glow and sensed a difference in its appearance. She grabbed her phone and went out to record its progress.

The result is this *Acorn's* cover. Mary Gail says she didn't realize it was an eclipse until after the fact. Her image is a perfect cover for our Halloween issue.



TRIPS & TOURS TRAFFIC

By Maggie Bennardo - #211

Question - how do you put a bracelet on a hummingbird?

Sign up for the tour to Powdermill Nature Reserve, and you'll discover the answer during a demonstration at the Powdermill Avian Research Center (PARC). The Powdermill Nature Reserve, an arm of Carnegie Mellon's Museum of Natural History, has been banding birds for over 60 years.

Our tour will leave here on the morning of October 7th. After the demonstration, we'll enjoy lunch at the Pike Run Country Club. With luck, we will also witness some fall colors during the ride.

Other events planned include:

- Lunch at the popular Juniper Grill nearby on Route 228

- Dinner at Shakespeare's in Ellwood City. Shakespeare's is known for its 'ye olde medieval style' dining and the building's architecture
- A trip to Johnstown to the Flood Museums is being finalized for mid-November. Suggested reading about the flood: David McCullough's book, "*The Johnstown Flood*" is in our library
- Lunch at Walnut Grill and
- Dinner at the Harmony Inn

With the holidays approaching faster than fast, we are beginning to plan for those events as well.

Stay tuned. Posters in the mailroom and on 950 will have all the details as they develop.

As a reminder, and for all our new arrivals:

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 accommodations, reasonable costs, availability, distance/time, and participation. Transportation costs are divided among participants. When participation is small, the transportation cost per person can become prohibitive.

We post signup sheets with wait lists in the mailroom. You can cancel up to two days before the trip without penalty. If you do NOT show up for the bus on time, and have not cancelled, you will be charged for your portion of the transportation. Also, please do not attempt to "jump the line" on the signup sheet.

PIECE BY PIECE, PUZZLES FOR ALL

By Mary Kretchmar - #287

Looking for something to do during a quiet moment at Sherwood Oaks? The Center has jigsaw puzzles available for all residents to borrow and enjoy!



Photo by Mary Kretchmar

Whether you are an experienced puzzler or simply looking for a relaxing way to spend some time, there is a wide variety of puzzles to choose from. They are displayed in the corner near the Auditorium. No sign-out is necessary. Simply select a puzzle, take it with you, and return it when finished.

You don't even have to borrow a puzzle to join in the fun. Near the front of the Lobby you'll find a table set up, usually with two puzzles in progress. Anyone can take a few minutes (or longer) to add to the progress.

This is a perfect activity while waiting for the bus, meeting a friend in the lobby, or filling a few spare minutes while relaxing between activities.

One important request: only members of the Puzzle Committee may disassemble puzzles on the puzzle table. This helps us

keep the puzzles organized and ready for the next puzzler.

Missing pieces? Check the drawer under the display of puzzles near the Auditorium. As puzzles are completed, the committee is coding pieces to make it easier to reunite strays with the proper puzzle.

Have puzzles to donate? We are always happy to accept new and used puzzles that have all their pieces. Please bring donations to the front desk and let the receptionist know they are for the Puzzle Committee, which includes: Joni Pun, Chair; Sandy Smaller, Marsha DeBoer and Mary Kretchmar.

CURIO CABINETS FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

By Janet Desko - #210

A big thank you to all the residents who brought their "School Day" items to the curio cabinets for September. This was a nostalgic look back.

For our next theme, Janie Cindric and I are **"CALLING ALL CRAFTERS."** Please bring your handmade items. This could include knitting, sewing, paintings, pottery, needlepoint, and any items crafted by you. If you made it, bring it!

Pick up your "School Day" items on **Tuesday, October 20** from **10:30 - noon** and from **4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

Then on **Thursday, October 22** bring your **"Crafted "** items from **10:30 - noon** and from **4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

We have a lot of talented residents here at Sherwood Oaks, so let's show off our stuff with this display.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

From the Entertainment Committee
Rita Bean, Chair

Mark your calendars! We are pleased to announce our performance schedule (as of now) for 2026-2027. All performances will be held in the Auditorium/Card Room, at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. More to come – read *The Acorn* for upcoming events.

Thursday, October 22, 2026 – Nikolai Song, Principal Flute for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform. Just age 24, Nikolai was born in Singapore. At age 13, he was one of the youngest students admitted to the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et Danse in Paris. Come and welcome Nikolai!

Monday, November 2, 2026 – Jenene Caramiello, daughter of resident Jean Wheeler. Jenene is a nationally famous performer and will treat us to a collection of her favorite songs from Broadway and the Great American Songbook, with Roberta Breninghouse accompanying her.



Photo submitted by Jenene Caramiello

Tuesday, November 17, 2026 – Roberta Breninghouse - Candlelight Piano Concert, featuring selections from Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* fused with carols from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Join us for an evening of warmth and seasonal reflection

Thursday, December 10, 2026 - Cranberry Men's Chorus will join us again, presenting their Holiday Program. It's a not-to-be missed evening.

January 23, 2027, Life Begins at 90. Several of our residents will share stories of their lives.

January 28, 2027 – Golden Strolling Strings, North Allegheny School District

March 23, 2027 – Resident artists who are starting their professional careers with the Pittsburgh Opera will entertain us with a variety of songs and arias from famous operas.

April 22, 2027 – TBD

May 6, 2027 Joan Liotta, a Louisa May Alcott Interpreter. She is an author and story performer who has received several awards for her work. Joan is the cousin of resident Diane Horn.

May 27, 2027 — The Swingin' BopCats Big Band returns to Sherwood Oaks! They play music of the Swing Era for all occasions. The band from Beaver also contributes to scholarships for local high school students pursuing musical careers.

If residents have suggestions for performers, please get in touch with Rita Bean, Chair. You can put a note in my cubby #729 or email me at (ritabean35@gmail.com).

CONTINUED LEARNING

By Jno L. Hunt - #308

We are pleased to offer four more outstanding presentations this Fall. The series continues on **Mondays, starting on October 5 and runs through October 26 at 1:30 p.m. in the Auditorium.**

October 5: Lauren Dietz Shaffer (Winnie's daughter) will return to present Beautiful Birds of western Pennsylvania. (Note ~ this presentation is at 7:00 p.m.)

October 12: Miguel Sague will return on Indigenous Peoples Day to share with us his insights into Ancient Caribbean Indigenous Culture.

October 19: Rachel Bezanson, Prof. of Astronomy at Pitt, will provide us with the latest information we are receiving back from our telescopes.

October 26: Shannon Reed, a local author, will present My Life as a Reader and Writer. She will also discuss writing life stories in general which should be of interest to our many residents who have been writing their own memoirs.

In the meantime, enjoy our presentations on Channel 950. Initial airings on Tuesdays are at 10:00 AM, and encore presentations are on Thursdays at and 3:00 p.m.

October (on Channel 950):

Tues., Oct. 6: "How to Look at and Understand Great Art." Encore on Thurs., Oct. 8.

Tues., Oct. 13: "The Brain—Who Will We Be?" Encore on Thurs., Oct. 15.

Tues., Oct. 20: "The Real Australia Most People Never Discover." Encore on Thurs., Oct. 22.

Tues., Oct. 27: "The Holy Land Revealed—Lectures 35 & 36." Encore on Thurs., Oct. 29.



EGGNOG PARTY PLANNING MEETING

By Jan Desko - #210

All residents are invited to an Eggnog Party Planning meeting on **October 9**, at **1:30 p.m.** in the Card Room.

The Eggnog Party is a holiday cocktail party for all residents of Sherwood Oaks, sponsored, hosted, and paid for by the residents.

Come to this informational meeting and find out how you can be a part of this annual Sherwood Oaks tradition.

For additional information, contact Ann Ferguson at 724-776-8269 or Janet Desko at 724-776-8210.

WHAT DOES BECKY DO?

By Jan Wendt - #158

Make your way to the Personal Care unit on the second floor of the Community Center, and you'll find a quiet, recessed office midway down the hall on the left side. The soft lighting and homey atmosphere belie the variety, volume and intensity of work done by the smiling woman inside.

Becky McGinnis has been the sole social worker on staff at Sherwood Oaks since 2002, and she calls the job "the best move I ever made." We are indeed fortunate to have someone of her experience and perspective to help us, but just what does she do?



Becky and Grands

She holds BSW and MSW degrees from Pitt and can best be described as a medical social worker. She is a valuable resource for residents in **all** levels of care here, but may be most familiar to residents and families in the nursing units.

In Skilled Nursing, state Department of Health regulations are rigorous and require a lot of documentation. Becky helps residents know if their stay is being covered by Medicare, and for how long.

She participates in each resident's admission and monthly Care Conference, meetings which involve the resident, family, and staff. Care Conferences are also required quarterly and whenever there is a change in a patient's condition. When Medicare coverage expires, Becky helps people explore their options and supports them through transitions to home or a different level of care. She is also responsible for administering a mood/memory test monthly to Skilled Nursing residents.

Personal Care is not as highly regulated, but Becky is available as a support to those residents and their families. She happily reports that folks often stop in her office to chat and share concerns.

It is Becky who serves as the admissions coordinator for the units, and this involves dealing with area hospitals and other facilities and involves loads of phone time. She is the liaison between Sherwood Oaks and hospitals when our residents are admitted.

Becky lived in Arizona until age five, when the family moved to Ross Township. She has sweet memories of childhood times there. Her grandparents were close by as well. Now, Becky is the mother of a daughter and has three grandchildren who live locally.

As social workers receive significant training in counseling, Becky enjoys helping folks with transitions in levels of care and in adjustment issues when those moves happen. She serves as a resource person for those in all levels of care who need to make connections for different kinds of assistance.

If Becky could answer a question you have or provide you with resources, you can reach her at 724-776-8485. Or just go introduce yourself to this easy-going and warm person. She's just another reason Sherwood Oaks is special!

MAP OF THE MONTH - TAKE A LOOK!

By Frank and Joanne Weiss - #154

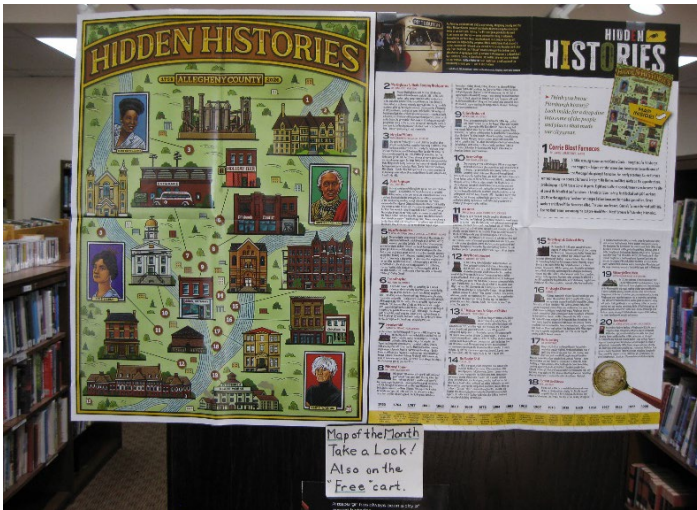


Photo by Frank Weiss

The map this month is from the July issue of Pittsburgh Magazine, titled "Hidden Histories". It features 20 pictures of historical places and people on the front. On the back there is a short explanation of each one.

You can see this displayed on the end of one of the stacks in the Sherwood Oaks Library.

Whether you are a forever-Pittsburgher or have moved to our community from some other part of the world, we think you will find it interesting and possibly an eye-opener.

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*I never considered it a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend.* ~ Thomas Jefferson

## CHRISTMAS FLOWERS? IT'S NOT TOO SOON, REALLY

From the Landscape Committee

By resident request, the Landscape Committee plans to offer a sale of Christmas plants a little earlier than in past years.

On October 15, order forms will appear in cubbies. Those forms, with payment, will be due on October 29, to be returned to Diana Schulties in cubby #312.

Gumto Nurseries in Renfrew, PA is the supplier. Poinsettias in 7" (2-stem) and 8" (3-stem) pots will be sold, along with other winter favorites like Christmas cactus, amaryllis, and cyclamen.

Costs had not been finalized as The Acorn went to press, but will be noted on the order forms.

Orders will be available for pickup on Thursday, November 19, time and place to be announced. Stay tuned.



## CUSTOM CREATIONS

By Jan Wendt - #158

When creative passion meets opportunity, look out! In this narrative, Zoe Lacabe relocates to Sherwood Oaks in November of 2024. She brings with her a talent with needle and thread and a desire to get busy.

The Franklin, PA native had lived and worked for a number of years in South Carolina as a nurse anesthetist, but was bored and out of sorts in retirement. Looking to move closer to her son in Franklin, she scoped out our community, liked what she saw, and packed up her sewing machines and small canine pal, and headed north.

She had taken sewing in Home Ec, but didn't do much until the birth of her granddaughter motivated her to fashion cute and frilly garments. That spurred Zoe to taking classes and making items for her own wardrobe. We're talking suits, coats, and other advanced projects.

After her move here, she noticed some handmade items in Sherwood Gifts, decided to try her hand at creating some, "and it kind of snowballed from there," she says.

You could say so! Her second bedroom is now without a bed, but houses three sewing machines, two heat transfer devices, an embroidery machine, and a serger. When inspired, she can work long into the night.

You'll find many of her creations in Sherwood Gifts in "The Zoe Zone," items ranging from baby bibs and onesies, to



Zoe in her Sherwood Gifts "zone"

Photo by Jan Wendt

colorful tote bags and gift baskets. She is forever scanning the internet for decals and other decorative additions to her handiwork.

Shop Manager Barb DiDinato recognized Zoe's talent when shown a pretty bag to hook onto a walker. "It was the beginning of a great working relationship and friendship," comments Barb.

Barb says, "when Zoe is at home, we say she is in her 'factory'. She can whip up four or five items in an evening."

Zoe is now the shop's Co-Manager and continues to dream up and stitch up new items almost daily, many with a seasonal flair. "The possibilities are endless," notes Barb.

Stop in the Shop, head to the Zoe Zone to see what she's been up to recently.

## COOPER'S CLIMATE CAPSULE

By Bruce Cooper - #735

How has this country, which is seemingly a land of plenty, dealt with the threat of global warming? Why is there such forceful denial of reality?

To understand what provokes this complicated relationship, we must look back at the United States' history - from the arrival of the first settlers. Look at the roots of the concepts of the "wilderness" of the promised land; consider the notion of "American exceptionalism," which claims to exploit and protect nature simultaneously.

We now live in an age of "fake news" and social media blurbs that let anyone publish and seem like an expert. But it's been seventy years since the interstate highway system construction started and signaled the death knell of passenger rail service and the capture of our economy by the fossil fuel industry. The industry has been very good at turning the science of climate change into "fake news."

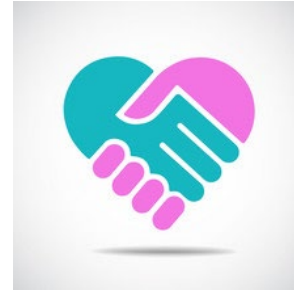
As we have celebrated the nation's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are living through the hottest year on record. And it will also be the coolest year we experience as we move to 2027 and beyond. The forest fires in the U.S. have burned a record number of hectares; and the water level of Lake Mead is approaching a low point that will end electrical generation at the Hoover Dam. I wish that was "fake."

We must put aside political differences and declare war on climate change.

**Watch America & Climate Change: Denial, Progress, & Political Divides on Channel 950 on Monday, October 12, at 10:00 a.m. Encore presentation on Wednesday, October 14, at 3:30 p.m.**

## GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

By Jan Wendt - #158



The Living with Loss team will sponsor a four-week grief support group for Sherwood Oaks residents.

It begins on Tuesday, October 20 and continues on succeeding Tuesdays through November 10 at 1:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Bridges Hospice Chaplain, Sam Blair, the group will meet in the Sherwood Oaks Conference Room on the Lower Level.

For more information, contact Jean Henderson (724-776-8346) or Jan Wendt (724-776-8158).



*I asked the surgeon if I could administer my own anesthetic. He said, "Sure. Knock yourself out!"*

*I got into a fight today with 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9. The odds were really against me.*

*In Britain it's called a lift but Americans call it an elevator. I guess we were just raised differently.*

*97% of people are stupid. Glad I'm in the other 5%.*

## TARA – A COUNTRY INN

By John Hennon - #165



Photo by John Hennon

A pre-Civil War plantation-style mansion called Tara can be found in Mercer County about 55 miles north of Sherwood Oaks. Those who are familiar with the book “Gone with the Wind” and the subsequent movie version starring Clark Gable as Rhett Butler and Vivian Leigh as Scarlett O’Hara will know that “Tara” is the name of the O’Hara plantation.

The building started out in 1854 as a rather typical Pennsylvania farmhouse. The grandson of the builder later toured the Southern states and was fascinated by antebellum architecture. Upon returning home, he re-created the house in the style of the “Old South.” Fast forward to 1984 when the deteriorating property was purchased by a local couple who renovated the house, added two wings, and turned the eyesore into a hotel, restaurant, and event center.

Antique lovers will appreciate the décor – the structure with its guest rooms, sitting rooms, lobbies, hallways, and dining rooms resembles a museum crammed full of antique furniture, artworks, and decorative items. The 27 guest rooms and suites are all uniquely appointed with “Gone with the Wind” themes – Rhett’s Room, The Robert E. Lee Room, The Sweet Magnolia Room, etc. Photos of scenes from the movie and its stars are everywhere. For those who do not wish to stay overnight,

various bus tour companies regularly stop at the facility for guided tours.

There are three restaurants on the property – a fancy one where gentlemen are expected to wear jackets and ties, a rathskeller-type place that serves very generous portions, and a luncheon spot next to the outdoor swimming pool. Due to its romantic ambience, Tara is a very popular wedding venue; a large outdoor space under a tent is used for weddings and other events.

Also outdoors are several landscaped acres featuring a wide variety of statuary. The facility claims to have the second-largest collection of Frederic Remington statues in the country. Perhaps this is unverifiable, but they certainly have A LOT of them scattered around the site.

Not all is ideal at Tara, however. It is located on a four-lane highway where noise from large trucks and motorcycles is common. Of course, the highway was a dirt road when the house was built so they should not be faulted for their location. If a visitor desires a more rustic experience, the property abuts Shenango River Lake, a popular recreation area for fishing, boating, hiking, etc.

Of greater concern than the sound of traffic is the deficits throughout the property for individuals with mobility challenges. The building and grounds are only marginally ADA-compliant, at best. There are no elevators anywhere and steps galore; overnight guests who have difficulties with stairs should request a first-floor room. There is only one ramp available to enter the building (hidden away in the rear); all other entrances have anywhere from 3-6 steps to climb. Staircases with even more steps are necessary to access the restaurants.

The general impression is that the owners are more interested in historical imagery than modern convenience.

Overall, Tara is a unique offering in Western Pennsylvania that would be worth at least a day trip for lunch and a tour.

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

|                                  |                     |        |       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| The Country Road Murders         | Patterson, James    | c2026. | F PAT |
| Everyone in this Bank is a Thief | Stevenson, Benjamin | c2025. | F STE |
| Flashlight                       | Choi, Susan         | c2025. | F CHO |
| John of John                     | Stuart, Douglas     | c2026. | F STU |
| You'll Be Sorry                  | Gardner, Lisa       | c2026. | F GAR |

### **NONFICTION, INCLUDING BIOGRAPHIES**

|                                                                                                     |                      |        |               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------|---------------|
| The 30 Greatest Orchestral Works: Volumes 1-4                                                       | Greenberg, Robert    | C2011  | 781.1 GRE DVD |
| All the Wild that Remains: Edward Abbey, Wallace Stagner and the American West                      | Gessner, David       | c2015. | 363.700 GES   |
| American Elegy: Reflections on 250 Years of the Dis-United States of America                        | Simon, Ed            | c2026. | 973 SIM p.b.  |
| The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma                            | Van der Kolk, Bessel | c2014. | 616.85 VAN    |
| The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe                                                     | Poe, Edgar Allan     | c2006. | 818.30 POE    |
| Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement            | Bausum, Ann          | c2006. | 323.092 BAU   |
| The Gales of November: The Untold Story of the Edmund Fitzgerald                                    | Bacon, John U.       | c2025. | 917.749 BAC   |
| George Westinghouse: Gentle Genius                                                                  | Skrabec, Quentin     | c2007. | BIO WES       |
| The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate: Discoveries from a Secret World     | Wohlleben, Peter     | c2016. | 582.16 WOH    |
| Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times                                              | Curry, Michael B.    | c2020. | 241.4 CUR     |
| The Pursuit of Liberty: How Hamilton vs. Jefferson Ignited the Lasting Battle Over Power in America | Rosen, Jeffrey       | c2025. | 323.440 ROS   |
| The Song of the Horse: a Selection of Poems, 1958-2008                                              | Hazo, Samuel         | c2008. | 811.54 HAZ    |
| What Did Jesus Ask? Christian Leaders Reflect on His Questions of Faith                             | Dias, Elizabeth      | c2015. | 232.954 DIA   |



## TREE WORK

Photos by Warren Howe - #337



On an 84-acre campus with many mature trees, uprooting is inevitable, especially after heavy rain. Warren Howe captured these photos of a day's worth of tree work in the woods behind his patio home. He reports the arborist was competent and conversational. A new friend was made as he snapped a series of photos.



## WORTH A LOOK

### Books New to Our Library

By Barbara Christy - #237

***Don't Say a Word*** by Allison Brennan. Fiction. The policemen who found Elijah Martinez dead of an overdose in the park next to the high school were understandably skeptical when his mother and friends said that wasn't possible. Honor student Elijah emphatically did not take drugs. His mother engages Angelhart Investigations, a family business (with more family members engaged in law and justice than you can shake a stick at), to clear his name. What ensues is a troubling look at drugs in our schools and police corruption that allows it. But when the DEA gets involved, things start to get interesting. F BRE.

***Everyone in This Bank Is a Thief*** by Benjamin Stevenson. Fiction. This is a tongue-in-cheek murder mystery novel that people tired of James Patterson will find engaging. Ernest Cunningham is a novelist trying to open a detective agency. Called to a remote Australian bank to discuss a loan, he finds the bank owner has a different agenda. After ten thefts in one day at the bank, though, Ernest starts to get serious about investigating and then the murders start.

The author makes fun of all standard detective novels even as Cunningham sits locked in a bank vault with the air running out. Just plain fun for the burned-out crime reader. F STE

***A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*** by Dave Eggers. Non-Fiction. In this memoir, Dave Eggers becomes the guardian of his 8-year-old brother, Toph,

after both parents die of cancer within five weeks. Trying with difficulty to be a carefree 21-year-old while growing into new responsibilities as a parent, Dave moves Toph into a little house in Berkley, CA, and together they have both hilarious and heartbreaking experiences as they each adapt to their new circumstances. The fact that the author flips between dreams and reality may make this book a challenge to read, but it's a fascinating look at how one person deals with tragedy. F EGG

***Flashlight*** by Susan Choi Fiction. Louisa is a precocious, contentious ten-year-old of a mixed-race, ex-patriot couple living in Japan. On an ocean-front vacation she and her father, Seok, decide to walk the break-water while her mother Anne, confined to a wheelchair with MS, remains behind. Louisa is later found on the beach, soaked, with her father's flashlight in hand but without any memory of what has happened to him. Louisa and her mother move back to the US where Louisa becomes a behavioral problem, a school truant and a shoplifter. For the next twenty years, Louisa and her mother struggle to maintain a relationship while Anne remarries a Korean War veteran named Walt. Tobias, her son from a brief liaison, reenters her life, and helps her unravel the mystery of Seok's disappearance. Flashbacks to Seok's childhood and the experiences of Korean immigrants living in Japan during WWII enrich the plot line to create a fascinating insight into Asia history in the middle of the twentieth century. Author Choi also draws on her own life experiences to create a complex and textured novel. F CHO

**Regime Change** by Maggie Habermann and Jonathan Swan. Non-fiction. This book is real-time history of Donald Trump's second term in office. Told in depth and based on hundreds of hours of interviews, including with Trump himself, the authors explain what is different in the second term – the guardrails are missing. They also show how the President is using what he learned in the first term to achieve his goals in the second. Little in this book will be new to the person who follows the news, but it likely to become one of the signature books about the Trump presidency. 973.935 HAB

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LIBRARY LOWDOWN

By Barbara Christy - #237

If you would like an orientation to our Library, including how to access the catalog from home, please contact Barbara Christy (724-776-8237) or Anne Hunt (724-776-8308) to schedule a time. You can also stop into the Library on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

The Library welcomes recommendations from residents for books to be purchased. Please use the forms on the checkout desk or pinned to the bulletin board in the Mailroom.

Missing in action: **Pandemic 1028** by Catharine Arnold, is missing from the Library and not signed out. It is the November selection for the SO Book Club. If you happen to have it, please return for the Book Club's use.

PAPERBACK PONDERINGS

By Jean Henderson - #346

Donations are what we thrive on! So thanks for the recent biographies and non-fiction books we've received. Look for them on the right as you enter.

Biographies:

The Hare with Amber Eyes - E. DeWaal
Scaramouche - Rafael Sabatini
Lafayette - H.G. Unger
The Audacity of Hope - Barack Obama
Scott's Last Expedition - Robert F. Scott

Non-Fiction:

Desert Solitude - Edward Abbey
The Flags of Our Fathers - J. Bradley
Saratoga - R.M. Ketchum
The People, Yes - Carl Sandburg



Photo by Ann Ferguson

"Fergie" Ferguson cruises the scene at the Sherwood Oaks Fair Day on August 22.

THE KALEIDOSCOPIC MAPLES

By John Bridges - #122



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

There is a row of maples behind the garages of Parking Lot “B” which give me much pleasure and interest throughout the year. Whilst the cherry trees in Washington are famous for their **pink** exuberance which just lasts just a couple of weeks, the maples give more color changes than a chameleon throughout the year.

In winter, in common with most trees, their twigs and branches show a delicate **black** tracery against the winter sky

Then, as Spring approaches, the trees become covered with **red** flowers. As these die off, they are replaced by delicate **yellow** winged seeds and the outline color of the trees changes from **red** to **yellow**.

As these seeds and their wings mature, the trees will change from **yellow** to **gold**, shining in the glorious Spring sunshine. In time, a few tightly-wrapped almost inconspicuous **green** leaf buds may appear and endeavor to dilute the **golden** glow.

But with the rapid changes of the Spring climate, along comes Jack Frost one night to frighten these baby leaf buds. So that on the next morning, in strong sunlight shining in a blue sky, the trees are back to their **golden** glory. In a few hours the leaves recover and the trees will again have a **greenish** or almost **pinkish** tinge. This results in the maples almost resembling an Apple Tree in its full Spring-time glory.

As the leaves grow, they will give us entirely **green** trees, although in June a few of the new leaves will develop **reddish** tips to give a slightly mottled appearance. During a prolonged dry

spell in September, individual leaves may turn to a glorious **copper** color which tints to give the tree a speckled appearance before dropping off.

October rains will allow a return to **green** until frosts cause the whole tree to become a mass of **red**. These shades of old **copper** contrast vividly against the fir, yew and other evergreens, before all the leaves fall off and the trees once again show their delicate **black** tracery.



CREATIVE KITCHEN IDEA

By Peg Rychcik - #297

All the patio homes at Sherwood Oaks have had their kitchen phones removed and a plastic plate cover is the only proof of its former location.

I found that a 6” embroidery hoop easily covers the plate. I’ve completed and hung a punch-needle design of a plant in a flower pot to brighten up my kitchen and hide the new plastic plate cover.

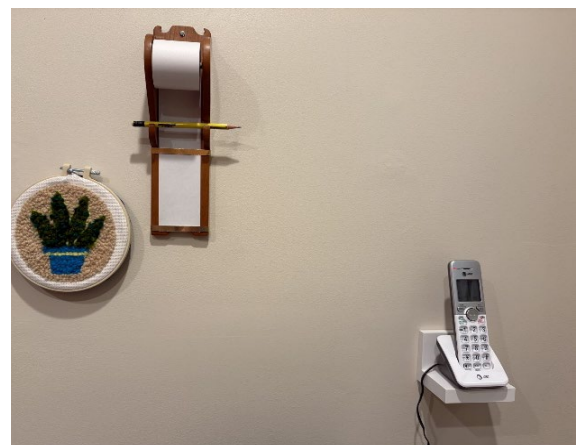


Photo by Peg Rychcik

A 6” embroidery hoop can be used for several different needlework types or sewing designs. If you’re not interested in handiwork, a colorful piece of fabric or material with seasonal designs could be put in the hoop and hung.

I wanted a phone in my kitchen, so I bought a Command brand shelf, which installs using Command strips, to set my extension phone on. It’s off the counters, but easily accessible.

Enjoy creating!

WHAT'S NEW WITH SORA?

(SO Residents Association)

By Thea Stover, Secretary - # 606

Note: Complete Minutes are always available on the SORA Bulletin Board in the Mailroom and in the SORA binder in the library, as well as on the SOapp.

The Board met on September 1, 2026, with the following information shared:

Finance: Memorial Special Projects Fund balance is \$33,510.17 and the Employee Appreciation balance is \$25,621.65.

The budget total for the Operating Fund is \$25,465.00, however, the amount collected to date is \$18,000.00. Donations are always welcome.

Technology: They are working with Uniquest to add a Technology module to the SOapp to offer resources and links to technical guides and operating instructions for household and community equipment.

Dining: Due to the high demand for Dark Chocolate Raspberry Truffle ice cream, dining services will try to offer it more often. With the increase in dining attendance, especially at dinner, reopening of the Private Dining Room for extra seating is under consideration.

Trips and Tours: A trip to Powder Mill Nature Preserve to see bird banding is scheduled for October 7, 2026

Entertainment: Nikolai Song, PSO Principal Flute, will entertain us on October 22, 2026.

Sherwood Neighbors: Looking for volunteers to play games and do activities with the Personal Care Residents.

Living With Loss: October 15, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. in the auditorium there will be a Dementia 360 Program by Amy Kowinsky entitled "Memory Loss: Helping our Neighbors, our Friends and Ourselves."

A Grief Group is planned for October 20, 27 and November 3, 10 at 1:30 p.m. led by Chaplain Sam Blair of Bridges Hospice.

Landscaping: An outside contractor is working on the very wet areas of the campus.

New Operating Treasurer: If you are interested or know someone who would be interested in this position, please contact Beth Brown.

Administration: Mark Nord stated that Independent Occupancy as of September 1, 2026 is at 72%.

Both the phone conversion and the Sherwood Center roof replacement projects are complete.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. in the Card Room.

Arts Festival: is scheduled for Friday, March 12, 2027. (Set-up scheduled for March 11).





RECYCLING

Do's & Don'ts

THANK YOU FOR HELPING
KEEP SHERWOOD OAKS BEAUTIFUL!



DO RECYCLE



**Black take out
containers from
the Buffet**

Rinse & Empty



**Black take out
salad & soup
bowls**

Rinse & Empty



**Clean
cardboard &
paper**

Flatten boxes



**Newspapers &
magazines**

Keep loose,
no plastic bags



**Empty glass
bottles & jars**

Rinse & empty



DON'T RECYCLE



**Plastic clamshell
dessert
containers**

Not recyclable



**Food-
contaminated
containers**

Too dirty
to recycle



Styrofoam

Not recyclable



**Paper towels
& napkins**

Not recyclable



**Containers from
the grab & go**



**Plastic
utensils**
Not recyclable



**Takeout containers
with food residue**
Not recyclable



WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

Let's work together to keep our community clean and green.
Thank you!



SHERWOOD OAKS
— DINING —

Together, we make a difference.

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, October 4

Rev. Jean Henderson
Sherwood Oaks
World Communion Sunday

Sunday, October 11

Rev. Ron Brown
Hope Lutheran Church
Cranberry Township

Sunday, October 18

Rev. Bob Cummings
Christ Church at
Grove Farm
Sewickley, PA

Sunday, October 25

Rev. Liddy Barlow
Christians Associates
Pittsburgh, PA

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain
conceit."*

Philippians 2:3



HERE, IN THE RIGHT PLACE

By Ruth Becker - #338

It was the library and the pool that really hooked me on moving to Sherwood Oaks. After we had been here, maybe two weeks, I tried one of the exercise classes. During the second session, I felt at ease enough to raise my hand and ask Bill Burtner, 'How come my right shoulder clicks when I raise my arm?' Looking me straight in the eye, he said 'Age.' I knew from that moment I was truly in the right place, doing what is helpful with staff that tells it like it is. Thanks, Bill. Thanks, Sherwood Oaks.

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## REFLECTIONS ON A RAINY DAY

By Diane Horn - #203



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The rain falls and  
splashes as it hits the ground.  
My dog and I sit inside  
cozy and warm by the fireside.  
Memories slide through my mind  
Of happy times in years gone by.  
What lies ahead I cannot know,  
But forward I go with the past  
tucked safely in my heart.



A violent thunderstorm on August 29 brought down a large tree limb in Sherwood Oaks Park, demolishing a covered sitting area near the garden shed.



Top photo by Jan Wendt, bottom photo by Asghar Aghbar