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MAY 16 - MAY 29, 2024

qu^{ick}shot



Persistence pays off for this original SC couple **9**

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We immediately bonded again, both having in common the love of animals **6**



Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

Named Desert Rat, this B-17E bomber was built in 1942 for bombing runs but was soon converted to a cargo carrier. After the war, it was sold for scrap. Since 1984, Desert Rat's owner Mike Kellner has been working to restore this piece of aviation history.

Local group embarks on mission to restore legendary B-17 bomber

By **Michelle Moreno**
michelle@myhuntleynews.com

Inside a pole barn, a dedicated group of aviation enthusiasts has undertaken a monumental endeavor to resur-

rect a piece of history. The rare B-17E, fondly known as Desert Rat after the name found painted on the side of the plane's fuselage, was initially built as a bomber aircraft delivered to the Army Air Forces on April 14,

1942, before being converted into a cargo plane.

The restoration project is led by Desert Rat's owner, Mike Kellner, who first found the plane chopped up into pieces back in 1984 in an overgrown

field near Bangor, Maine, according to Desert Rat restoration volunteer, Bill Stanczak.

"After the war ended in December 1945 it was declared surplus and sold for scrap," explained Stanczak. "So, when Mike got it, his intention was to bring it up to flying standard so he could fly it around. The intention was always to bring it back to a bomber configuration even though all that stuff had been stripped out of it."

Kellner bought the B-17 for \$7,250 and spent seven years hauling the separate plane pieces back to Illinois, where the journey to restore the aircraft has not been without its obstacles.

"We have the B-17 blueprints as Boeing built it. We don't have the blueprints for when they converted it to the XC108 [cargo plane]. There are some things missing out of the blueprints. We have back-engineered parts to sort of 'create' new blueprints for them," said Stanczak. "The biggest obstacle is cost. Every day the costs go up."

Stanczak, a long-time admirer of B-17 planes, first took an interest in the restoration project in the early 90s after reading an article about it in the Chicago Tribune when the plane was still being stored at Galt Airport in Wonder Lake.

However, Stanczak admitted that he had forgotten about the

B-17 | Pg. 4



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lifeinfocus

Prom: The tale of two dresses



Carol Pavlik
Columnist

My daughter's high school prom fell on a gorgeous spring day. The air was fresh and damp with the scent of lilacs and new life springing from the ground. While posing for photos, the breeze made the skirts of the girls' gowns sway, a hint at the dancing that would happen later.

My daughter, tall and slender, stands at the apex of most of the group pictures. She is taller than the other girls, so she tips her head slightly, not out of shyness, but in deference to the height difference. She is as elegant as I've ever seen her. The dress she is wearing, she told me, makes her feel beautiful. I can see it, too; the way her shoulders are back, the way her eyes sparkle, the way she delicately lifts her skirt to navigate stairs, revealing her strappy black shoes.

Her dress is a stunning brocade gown, aquamarine, the color of a shimmering ocean. All the other girls, giggling and happy, are wearing dresses of similar rich jewel tones, a sea of blues and greens.

Watching my daughter as she is about to go through this high school rite of passage, I see flashbacks of her as a toddler. She loved to dress up. She skipped and twirled through the house saying, "Look Mommy — I'm a princess!" Even as her brothers wrestled each other on the ground, emitting guttural sounds, she flitted above them, existing in her very own princess realm where she no doubt heard a fanfare whenever she walked into a room — all evil was vanquished and goodness prevailed.

My mental time machine jolts back further to my own senior prom, 1992. My date, Trevor, was a kind boy, and we had just finished performing together in the high school production of "Oklahoma." Trevor was handsome and tall, something I was acutely appreciative of, being a tall girl myself. As an immature teen lacking self-confidence, I always suspected he asked me to the dance out of pity. More than three decades later, I stand by that assessment. Nevertheless, he took pity on me in the kindest way possible and we had a fun, memorable night.

What I remember most about that night was the dress. My mother, an accomplished seamstress, had designed and made my dress by hand. It was black lace with a handkerchief hemline. Mom cut out individual pieces of the lace and painstakingly sewed each piece to the edge of the elegant off-the-shoulder neckline, giving it a

lovely silhouette. It fit me perfectly due to Mom's careful measuring. All in all, I felt like a princess. We danced the night away to the Cranberries and the Cure.

Our high school cafeteria was transformed into a dance hall for the night. Paper streamers were strewn across every surface. Hand-painted murals created by the Art Club lined the walls, plywood panels swimming with fish, anemone, and coral, draped with fishnet. The theme: Under the Sea. We danced to the popular song, "Everything I Do, I Do it For You." The way Bryan Adams sang the lyrics with full-throated pleading in his hoarse, emphatic voice, there was no doubt that he meant every word. I wasn't sure what he was doing, but I was darn sure he was doing it for me.

When we visited my parents' house a few months ago, my beautiful black prom dress was in the closet, carefully washed and hung on a hanger, protected with a plastic cover. I knew my Mom was hoping my daughter would fall in love with the dress as much as I had, and I guess I hoped that a little bit, too.

Just touching the fabric, I remembered the swish it made as I walked in it. Looking at the tiny waistline, I realized I would never again have the chance to squeeze once more into this dress. That window of opportunity had closed.

But my daughter! She looks so much like I did at that age, and we urged her to try it on. Her slender frame slid easily into the dress. My Mom and I both gasped at the sight of her. We stood there, three generations of women: my daughter, wearing her mother's dress, made by her grandmother.

You're beautiful, I whispered under my breath.

She thanked me, and said the dress was pretty. But I saw it in her eyes. They didn't sparkle when she wore my prom dress. I realized I had been holding my breath, hoping she would insist on wearing it to her own prom, but I knew immediately that wasn't to be. My prom dress, sewn by hand under lamplight in the wee hours of the night, was made for me. It held magic for that girl in 1992, a girl I hardly recognized anymore, who had big dreams for her future and only a faint idea of how to get there.

The two dresses hang in the closet side by side now: my prom dress and hers, washed and protected, suspended in air waiting patiently to be asked to go to a second dance. My daughter returned from her prom exhausted and smiling. I hope it is a night that years from now, she will look back on fondly. I hope the night held a special magic that was reserved only for her. I hope she felt like a princess.



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Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

Cost, says restoration volunteer Bill Stanczak, is always an issue. As well as missing portions of the blueprints in bringing Desert Rat back to its fighting form.



•B-17

project until the early 2000s after having run across the article again. He gave Kellner a call and found out that the B-17 had been moved into a barn in Marengo, which is when Stanczak says he got “hooked” on the project.

“As far as metalworking, Mike has taught me a little bit. Well actually, he’s taught me everything that I know about it

which is a little bit. I’m more on the computer side with the blueprints. Getting the blueprint, deciphering them, [and] helping in that way,” Stanczak told My Huntley News. “I work a lot with getting material and working with other vendors to get parts made that we are not capable of doing.”

Stanczak and the rest of the restoration team have managed to garner some community support throughout the years in-

cluding obtaining a sponsorship from ItsYourAirplane.com.

“[It’s] our only official sponsor right now and they contribute money monthly to us and it isn’t a lot but you know, it’s something and we also make some of the products that [are sold on the website]. So, that helps a little bit too in order to get us some funds,” said Stanczak.

As the restoration progresses, each milestone achieved brings

the group one step closer to their goal: to see Desert Rat take to the skies once again. While the road ahead may be long and arduous, the group remains undaunted, fueled by their passion and unwavering determination.

“There have been museums that have expressed interest in helping us out once we’re flying. I mean to me, it’s nice to think about it but all of the issues and everything else that’s involved with that just seems so far down the road right now,” said Stanczak. “I find it interesting that I’ve loved aircraft all my life and here I am. I’m actually contracting through the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration)...I think a project like this has not only given me a lot of friends that are related to this

but it’s also made me realize that love for something, whether it be an aircraft or a ship or you know, a car or something like that, there’s a lot of like-minded people out there and it can really bring people together.”

For the restoration team, the B-17 is more than just a plane; it’s a symbol of resilience, a testament to the indomitable spirit of those who served and sacrificed. As they painstakingly work to restore this piece of history, the group ensures that the legacy of Desert Rat continues to soar for generations to come.

• *Those interested in learning more about the project can visit its Facebook page, B-17E Desert Rat Restoration Project, or visit the website aerovintage.com/rat-4.htm.*

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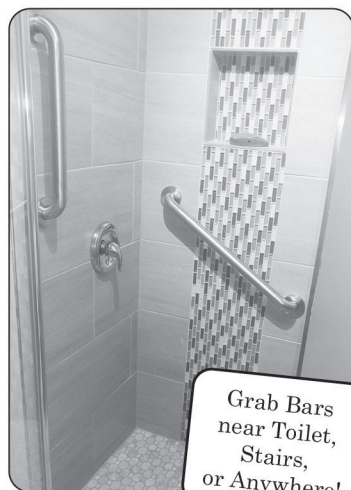
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theviewfromplanetkerth

Eulogy for a good, old tree



TR Kerth
Columnist

It's hard to say if a hummingbird is mourning just by the look on its face, but I think the hummers in my yard this spring are sad about the changes in their neighborhood.

That's because their favorite resting spot, the old purple cherry plum tree in my yard, is gone. It blew down on one of those blustery days in late April, just before the hummers got back in town.

That tree was my favorite of all the trees in my yard. It was the earliest to sport fragrant blossoms in the spring. Its purple leaves provided an eye-catching diversion from the surrounding greenery all summer long.

And best of all, framed perfectly in the window where I drink my morning coffee, it had one bare branch that was a favorite resting spot for hummingbirds all through the summer.

I suppose that bare branch should have been a warning to me that the tree wouldn't be standing much longer. After all, I planted it twenty years ago, and two decades is about the longest you can expect a cherry plum tree to live, according to sources like the University of Redlands. Other sources, such as St. Lawrence Nurseries, sell them with the caution that they may only live ten to fifteen years.

So when my favorite tree toppled at twenty years old, I guess you could say it had been living on borrowed time. It was originally part of a pair, but its partner tree shuffled off to the cordwood pile about ten years ago.

I have been trimming off dead branches from it for the past several years, trying to keep it healthy, but it had long ago taken on the pathetic look of a Charlie Brown Christmas tree.

Still, it was my favorite tree in the yard, not least of which because of that one dead branch, the favorite resting spot of all the hustling, bustling hummingbirds in the 'hood. It was because of that one branch that I lingered long over my morning coffee, watching a perching hummer scope out the landscape, defending her territory against rival hummers before dashing off for another sip of nectar from every feeder or flower on the block.

But now, alas, after gracing my yard for the past twenty years, that beautiful old purple cherry tree is gone. I hand-trimmed the fallen trunk down to a manageable length, then my son came over with his chain saw to turn it into lovingly useful logs for his backyard firepit.

And then I toasted it a fond farewell and drizzled a bit of my Jameson's on its

gnarled roots. Ah, my old friend, may ye find your way to heaven a half hour before the devil knows ye're gone.

The hummers returned to town a week or so later, about the same time as usual, but I think they miss their old friend as much as I do. Maybe more. As I say, it's hard to say if a hummingbird is mourning just by the look on its face, but they seem a bit befuddled.

When they leave the feeder hanging outside my window, they head west, straight for the spot where that old bare branch stood fifteen feet off the ground, and then they swing south, to the tippy top of the tall oaks at the back of my yard. It may be that they sit up there scanning the landscape, searching for wherever their old cherry plum perch pal might have wandered off to.

It's a sad thing to watch.

Still, all hope is not lost, because at the gnarled base right at ground level where that old tree broke, there is a "sucker" stem arching skyward from the root. About as thick as a pencil, it already rises almost up to my chin. Halfway up, three or four thin branches reach out from the main stem, all of them covered by those beautiful purple leaves, interspersed by a dozen or so fragrant blossoms.

Is it possible? Could a new, healthy tree grow where my old tree fell?

I fired up Mama Google to see if there was any chance, and the Birds & Blooms site tells me, yes, there's an excellent chance of that happening. In fact, because the little stem already has a large, well-established root system, it will likely grow much faster than any new tree I might plant. The mature root will spend all its energy feeding that tiny shoot, rather than laboring to keep an old tree alive, the article says.

Alongside that article is a photo showing a lady tending to a tiny tree with a stem about as thick as a pencil, rising up almost to her chin. The article explains that the tiny stem is a sucker growing from the roots of a fallen tree.

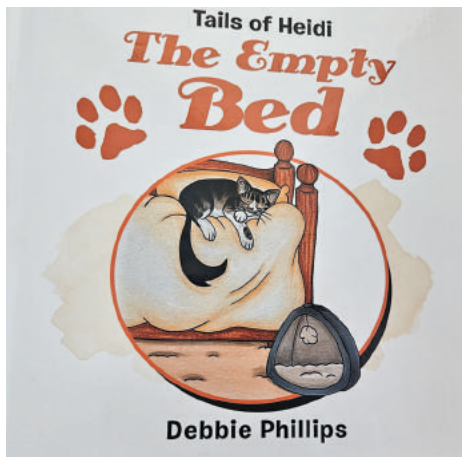
Next to that photo is another taken 14 months later, where she stands in the same spot beside a tree whose trunk is as thick as her wrist. It towers more than ten feet over her head.

So maybe that's not mourning I see on the faces of the hummingbirds in my yard as they dash west and then swoop south right at the spot where their old resting place once stood.

Maybe it's hope that I see in their eyes.

The same look they see on my face when they watch me drink my morning coffee through the window.

• TR Kerth is the author of the book "Revenge of the Sardines." Contact him at trkerth@yahoo.com



Provided | MHN Photo

Upcoming book signing at Barnes & Noble will benefit animal shelter Young at Heart.

BOOK SIGNING FUNDRAISER AIMS TO HELP NONPROFIT SHELTER

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Debbie Bailey, a Sun City resident, volunteers at Young at Heart, an animal shelter, and is working hard to raise funds for the organization. It is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to saving the lives of senior pets.

At a high school reunion, Bailey reconnected with Debbie Phillips. Bailey said, "We immediately bonded again, both having in common the love of animals, especially cats. I found out that Debbie wrote a book about her cat, Heidi. It was a children's book, 'The Empty Bed: Tails of Heidi'. It was so cute, and I loved the story and the illustrations."

Phillips said, "Heidi, a cat I inherited from my mother, is my inspiration. Heidi only wanted to be with my mother. She

would hide under the bed when I came by. But when my mother died, Heidi came right to me. She knew that she belonged to me now. I have volunteered at shelters, and I love cats. I love to write poems. I always had a passion for writing poetry. I would think of a story and write it down. Sometimes, in the middle of the night, I would write my thoughts. A friend suggested I write a book, so I put my two passions together and created this adorable children's book."

Bailey said, "I was at Barnes and Noble in Algonquin and got an idea. I met Bob Ward, a store associate. I found out he has a passion and love for animals and was interested in my idea of a book signing and sponsoring a fundraiser for Young at Heart."

Now, Barnes and Noble will host the event on June 8, from 1-5 p.m. Storytime featuring 'Empty Bed' will be at 3 p.m. Portions of sales from Phillip's book will go to Young at Heart.

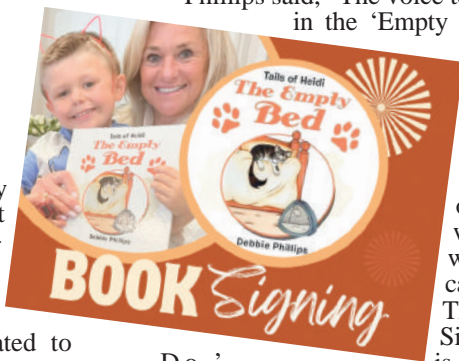
Bailey said, "There will be foster dogs at the event. The dogs are available for adoption. Debbie will have cat ears for the children to wear. It will be a fun event."

Phillips dedicated the book to all the grandchildren and children she had read the book to. Phillips has already drafted two sequels.

Phillips said, "The voice telling the story in the 'Empty Nest' is mine.

The second, 'I Have a Mean Little Sister' is in the voice of Katrina, my older cat who was not thrilled when Heidi came home. The third, 'The Silly Things I Do,' Layna Malave will illustrate both. She is a very talented college student."

Save the date: June 8. Bring your grandchildren to the Algonquin Barnes and Noble (1802 S. Randall Rd.) for a fun-filled reading adventure. Meet some of the foster dogs from Young at Heart and join Barnes and Noble in supporting the shelter. Your attendance and donations will make a significant difference in the lives of these animals. You can also donate at <https://www.adoptaseniorpet.com/>



CHICAGO WHITE SOX FAN CLUB

The May meeting of the Chicago White Sox Fan Club will be held on Wednesday May 29 at 6 p.m. at the Village Inn restaurant in the Huntley Square. Our speaker for the evening is Mike Huff who played outfield for the White Sox from 1991-1993. Mike also substituted for Steve Stone when he was with Ken Harrelson. Mike also played for Cleveland, Toronto & the Dodgers. He will be available to sign autographs and memorabilia.

We will also have our trivia, 50/50, door prizes, great food from the Village Inn and a final update on the Sun City bus trip to the White Sox/Brewers in Milwaukee on Sunday June 2. The welcome mat is always out there for new members and guests of current members.

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askanangel



Arlene Petersen
Columnist

Just a few weeks ago, my dad experienced a minor stroke, and while we are grateful that it wasn't severe, it has left us all quite shaken. As their adult daughter, I want to do everything in my power to support my Mom and Dad through this challenging time.

Specifically, I would like to know what steps we can take as a family to minimize the risk of my dad experiencing another stroke. Whether it's adjustments to their lifestyle, dietary changes, or other preventative measures, my family and I are eager to learn and implement change to safeguard our parents' health.

In addition, I would appreciate any guidance on how I can

support my dad's emotional recovery. My dad prides himself in being the leader of our family. Although I know he would never admit it, his recent stroke has left him feeling vulnerable and unsure about his and my mom's future.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my letter and considering my request for guidance.

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your concerns regarding your dad's recent health scare. I understand how unsettling it can be for both you and your family to navigate through such a challenging time.

First and foremost, I commend you for taking proactive steps to seek guidance on how to prevent future strokes. I strongly recommend that you schedule an

appointment with your dad's primary care physician to learn what preventative steps you can help your dad take. You can also ask for the names of a few healthcare professionals who specialize in stroke prevention and management. They can provide tailored recommendations based on your dad's current health status and can work with your dad to develop a comprehensive health plan that promotes overall well-being.

It's also important that you and your family learn about stroke warning signs and know what to do in case your dad has another stroke. Prompt recognition and treatment of stroke symptoms can significantly improve the outcomes and reduce the risk of long-term disability.

With the approval of your dad's physician, specific preventative measures you and your family can implement include

a heart-healthy diet, daily exercise, managing stress levels, and getting consistent quality sleep. Most importantly, encourage your dad to participate in rehabilitation exercises consistently and to take his medications as prescribed.

Regarding supporting your dad's emotional recovery, communication and encouragement are key. Maintain open lines of communication with both of your parents. Call often or stop by to check in. Listen and validate your dad's feelings, reminding him that it's perfectly normal to feel vulnerable after a major medical event. If your dad continues to feel discouraged, he might benefit from talking with a licensed therapist or joining a stroke recovery support group, where he can safely express his feelings and receive support and encouragement from others in a

similar situation.

Another conversation I encourage you to have with your parents relates to long-term care planning. Perhaps your dad is feeling vulnerable because he and your mom don't have any plans outlined yet, or his affairs aren't in order. It's never too early to start making plans, and those plans can change down the road.

Remember that navigating through a stroke recovery process can be a gradual journey, and patience is key. Celebrate the small victories along the way, and never hesitate to reach out for support when needed.

• Have a question for our angel correspondent? Send our angel an email at jcbarrett@visitingangels.com, or write in at Ask An Angel, 65 Woodbury St., South Elgin, IL 60177.

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Candi Thuringer wears the crochet maternity coat her mother made and other handmade keepsakes.

Mother's Day memories stitched into keepsakes

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Daughters and sons hold close, cherished memories of their mothers, whether it be a trip, a celebration, or a note in a lunch bag. Some are lucky to have special sentimental items. Candi Thuringer has kept some beautiful crocheted items that her mother, Melly, made for her two daughters. Each outfit is a piece of the past.

Thuringer said, "My mother crocheted and was a seamstress. Everyone she loved got a beautiful crocheted blanket. We have a special round crochet blanket that is a treasure. She crocheted so many different things for my daughters. My daughters both came home from the hospital in the most beautiful, crocheted blanket woven with hues of soft colors and an outfit that mom had made."

Melly was a dispatcher, and many men in uniform received a crocheted blanket for their children to cherish. Thuringer

said, "One of the state troopers came to my mom one day and shared a piece of his past that he still had. He sought her out and told her, 'I still have my blanket.' My mom had worked with his father and had made the blanket for the son who now was a state trooper."

Melly also made ornaments for everyone every year. "My mom just kept buying fiberfill anytime she found some on sale," Thuringer said. "Fiberfill was a key material in mom's crafting ornaments, and its abundance in the garage was a testament to her dedication and passion. Everyone she knew and worked with got a different ornament from her every year, a small token of her love and appreciation. When cleaning up her garage, we found boxes and boxes of fiberfill. We would joke about it - kidding each other, asking, 'What could be in this box.' The fiberfill became a source of laughter and fond memories. At one point, we were laughing so hard we asked my mom if she would choose to be stuffed with fiberfill instead of getting embalmed."

The Thuringers had two daughters, Erica and Robin, each received many dresses their grandmother made. Melly's sewing and crocheting were not just hobbies, but a way for her to express her love and creativity.

Thuringer said, "My mother had four grandchildren, three of whom were girls, and they all had beautiful dresses, not only crocheted but sewn by my mother. Her creativity was her passion, and it left a lasting impact on our family. She was meticulous and very creative, and her creations continue to be cherished by us."

Now Thuringers' granddaughter, M.J., wears the beautiful outfits made by her great-grandmother. "I hoped my daughter would have a girl so these outfits could be worn again."

Thuringer has a scrapbook of photos of Erica and Robin outfitted in beautiful dresses handmade by her mother. She also saved many handmade sweaters, caps, jackets, and dresses.

"My mom always made dresses for the girls for special occasions and picture day outfits. She even crocheted a jacket sweater for me when I got pregnant so I didn't have to buy a coat. My daughter wore it when she was pregnant."

Thuringer has framed photos of her daughters in beautiful pinafore dresses that her mother handmade for Thuringer's in-laws' 50th anniversary.

She said, "My mother made dresses for homecoming and proms for the girls. They never had to worry that someone else had the same dress. My mother tried to teach me to crochet, but I never had the passion or creativity she had. She would see an item at a craft show and look at it carefully, analyzing it, and sure enough, she could replicate it for one of her grandchildren. My daughter Robin inherited some of her creativity. She is her company's Associate Director of Marketing. Seeing Robin's creative side, I am reminded of my mother and her passion for crafting, a memory that brings me comfort and joy."

Thuringer said, "When my mom retired, she continued to sew. We had her sewing machine set up in the kitchen so she could enjoy the television as she sewed."

Thuringer remembers a treadle sewing machine that her mother had at one time. She recalls her mother moving her foot to run the machine smoothly. "I don't have that machine, but I had seen one. My daughter Erica bought it for me as a Mother's Day gift, which brought me so much joy. She knew how much that reminder of my mom meant to me."



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Provided | MHN Photo

Joanie and Carter Berg's interest in Del Webb communities started in the mid-80s. After touring other Del Webb communities across the country, it was the atmosphere for them. In June of 1999, they became one of the first couples in Sun City, Huntley.

MEET ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SUN CITY HUNTLEY COUPLES

My husband Carter and I saw an article in a magazine in 1985/86 that Del Webb offered three-day getaways in their communities that we could visit. We stayed in a home with a golf cart and gave us an idea to help us decide if we wanted to retire in their community. We drove and stayed in many Del Webb communities - Arizona, California, South Carolina, and Florida, and we enjoyed all our stays but when we returned home to Schaumburg, Illinois we knew we wanted to stay here in Illinois for our golden years with our family.

After we got home, I called Arizona's Del Webb office and asked to speak to someone in charge. I talked to an executive and I asked if Del Webb would be building here in Illinois. He said to me, "Lady, do you realize you have snow there? And we never built in the north." My reply was, "Yes, but do you know we have our children and grandchildren here?"

I called them in Arizona so often they finally got someone to answer my many calls. When they told me that maybe Del Webb was finally deciding to build up north, maybe in Harvard, I called the mayor's office in Harvard, and I was told no, not at the time. I called Arizona again and was told maybe Woodstock, so then I called the mayor's office in Woodstock often and was told Del Webb was not coming there but there was talk that Del Webb might be coming to talk to Huntley. With that, I called

often to see if Huntley was interested in having Del Webb here.

I'm sure all the people who were taking my calls were getting tired of hearing from me, but I don't give up easy. So, Carter and I made a call to Mayor Dhamer of Huntley and asked if we could come by and talk with him. He said sure, come on over. What a nice gentleman and how kind he was to spend time with too. We liked him from the start. He was a good representative for the town of Huntley.

Huntley's Del Webb sales personnel gave our name to the Chicago Tribune Newspaper to do stories about us and had a photographer come and take many pictures of us and our four grandchildren and a story about us buying our new home in Sun City.

We also had our picture taken one cold, snowy windy, stormy, winter day here on Del Webb's property in a big gazebo they built but sad to say the storm was so strong it was blown to pieces.

We were one of the first couples to buy our house and moved in June 1999, Neighborhood 3. Everyone was so happy to move in at the same time. After all I'm sure we were all wondering if we did the right thing by leaving our homes, neighbors, and churches behind, but we all realized we like meeting new people and felt like joining a bigger family. In fact, some of our friends (about eleven couples of our friends) bought here.

I guess you can say, we are living happily ever after. How could we go wrong with Del Webb's reputation and lifestyle?

Happy 25th anniversary to all!

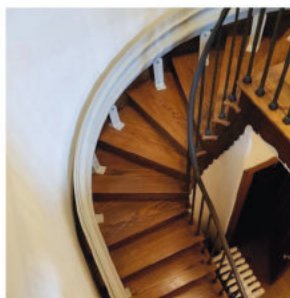
Joanie & Carter Berg

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Developing and maintaining relationships with annual flowers



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

Maintaining relationships can be difficult. We all have a variety of individuals with whom we have some sort of relationship. It may be a friend from elementary school that we have lunch with every few years, an adult child that we talk on the phone with each day or a cousin with whom we exchange Christmas cards annually. The level of the relationship, the type of contact and the frequency of contact varies. Some relationships 'wither on the vine,' as the saying goes, because we don't invest enough time and energy in maintaining them others remain strong no matter the amount of effort.

A correlation can be drawn between our relationship with plants and people. Some plants grow and grow without us doing anything or perhaps even despite what we do. Other plants require regular care through our time and commitment to them. Annual flowers fall into the latter category. Annual flowers can

be a bit needy. In an effort to help you get the most from your annual flowers this summer, this column includes information on annual flower selection, planting, watering, fertilizing and pruning.

The key to a plant's success, whether they be annual or perennial often starts with the questions that are asked prior to purchasing them. A few questions to ask yourself before you invest in annual flowers include "What type of light will these flowers receive?" and "What type of care will I be able to give these flowers?" and "Where do I want to place or plant these flowers?"

Annual flowers such as lobelia grow best in shade and lico-rice plant grows best in full sun. Providing the correct amount of light for flowers is crucial to their success. Many of us live very busy lives. If this is the case then choosing plants that are a bit tolerant may be in your best interest. Lantana, purple fountain grass and Livingston daisies are very forgiving plants. Figuring out ahead of time how many containers you have or where in the ground you want to plant the annual flowers prior to going to the local gar-

den center will help you be better prepared. Some plants look best when scene from a distance and others have to be viewed up close in order to be appreciated.

If planting in a container, there is a flower design guideline titled 'Spiller, Thriller and Filler.' This encourages gardeners to choose some plants that spill over the sides of the containers, others that fill in the middle of the containers and at least one plant that acts as a focal point or 'thriller.' Tall Zinnias may be used as a thriller. Bacopa can be successfully used as a spiller. With its colorful leaves, coleus makes a perfect filler.

Potting soil that is used in annual flower containers should be light and fluffy. Most high-quality potting soils include peat moss, perlite and vermiculite. When choosing a container in which to plant, make sure that container has drainage holes. Annual flowers aren't particularly picking as to the type of container they will grow in but do consider the color, shape, size and type of material that is used to construct your containers prior to purchasing them.

Watering flowers, while it seems simple, is actually quite complex. Annuals should never

be allowed to dry out completely, yet they do not like sitting in soggy soil either. How often you need to water your containers depends on many factors, including container size, sun and wind exposure and weather conditions. A small pot in full sun may need water two or three times a day when the weather is really hot, while a medium or large pot on a shady porch may only require water every two to three days during the same weather. It is critical that you look and feel the soil each day to see if the plants need to be watered. Generally speaking, most pots will need water at least once a day. Deep thorough soakings encourage healthy plant growth.

Annual flowers are considered heavy feeders. They do much better if they are fertilized on a regular basis. A granular fertilizer, such as Osmocote, can be incorporated when planting. Water soluble fertilizers such as Miracle-Gro can be used through the growing season. Liquid fertilizers can be applied every two weeks. Of course, as with any plant care product, please make sure to follow the label directions.

Deadheading a flower refers

to the act of removing spent or old flowers. This is an important task to keep up with in the garden throughout the growing season. As flowers shed their petals and begin to form seed heads, energy is focused into the development of the seeds, rather than the flowers. Regular deadheading channels the energy into the flowers, resulting in healthier plants and a continued bloom time. Snapping or cutting dead flower heads can enhance the flowering performance of many annuals. Although most plants benefit from deadheading, some plants, such as callibrachoa, do not require deadheading.

The beautiful blooms of annual flowers bring much joy. I hope that this summer, you are able to nurture your annual flowers and perhaps also some of those relationships with people that are important to you.

• Kathleen Carr is the owner of The Growing Scene, Inc., a landscaping company. She can be reached by calling 815-923-7322 or emailing her at Kathleen@thegrowingscene.com. Have a gardening question? Please contact her. She may address it in an upcoming column.



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Scott Slagle on "Part D Updates"

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iheardthisquote...

A compilation of quotes worth thinking about

By TR Kerth
Columnist

Life's too short to worry. Life's too long to wait. It's too short not to love everybody, and life's too long to hate.

- Todd Snider

Whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right.

- Henry Ford

On those rare occasions when you go into the woods and the woods speak to you, it is not because the woods owe you an explanation of what it is to be human. It's a gift nature gives to you when your soul is ready to receive it.

- Dave Ambrose

AMERICAN TREASURES

In its Spring Concerts on May 23rd at 7PM and May 25th at 1PM in Drendal Ballroom in Sun City Huntley the band will perform American Treasures. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased outside of the Birch Room in the Fountain View Atrium on Wednesday, May 15th from 2 to 3Pm or call Rob at 847-904-3088.

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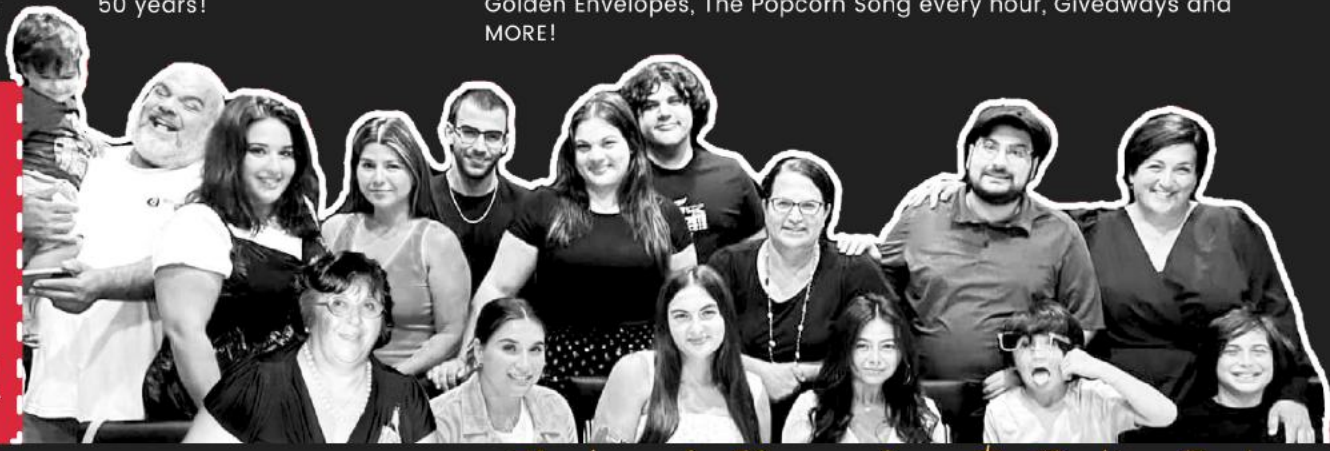
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thediningduo

Flying Broccoli



Jim & Nancy Eggers
Columnists

Jim and Nancy do not disclose the fact that they will review a restaurant before they attend, ensuring their reviews are unbiased and uninfluenced by their position with the Sun Day.

We have been having a rough couple of months (health wise), and both of us needed a fun date night with dinner and a show. What better way to combine both of these than at a Japanese hibachi restaurant. We literally have to lock Rosie in her crate since she is an escape artist and opened the latches and got out twice!!! Feeling confident that she was secured, we jumped into the Mini-Mobile and headed out to Arlington Heights to dine at Rokbonki Japanese Steakhouse.

It is nestled in the middle of a shopping center and you would never guess it contains 14 hibachi tables, small and large, which seat 8 or 12 people respectively. They also have a large sushi bar in its own separate area and a smaller bar to sit and have a drink while waiting for your table.

Now for dinner. Nancy ordered the combo meal of shrimp and scallops (\$48). The shrimp could be cooked one of three ways: spicy garlic (cayenne pepper, garlic butter and bread crumb topping), hibachi, or Tokyo style (egg yolk mixture as a topping). What a surprise, she ordered it prepared spicy garlic style, go figure. She loves her scallops browned and crunchy, and that's exactly what she got. She loves this combination, especially the spicy garlic shrimp. They tasted even better with the "cheater chopsticks" that the chef gave to Nancy and the other kids at the table.

Jim ordered, the New York Steak and shrimp combo (\$44). He asked for the steak to be cooked teriyaki style with mushrooms and the shrimp, spicy garlic style to combat Nancy's garlic shrimp. Both the shrimp and the steak were cooked to perfection.

All entrees come with a hibachi shrimp appetizer, chicken noodle soup and a salad with ginger dressing. You also get a nice portion of noodles with a sweet teriyaki sauce and a pile of veggies which consisted of onions, zucchini, carrots and broccoli. All of this is grilled in front of you and seasoned to perfection.

White rice is included with all of the entrees. The combination entrees come with fried rice.

On to the show... The chef proved to be hilarious. Upon his arrival he set the

grill ablaze (Jim doesn't have to trim his eyebrows this week). His repertoire also consists of the mandatory onion volcano. Kudos to our chef, he finally found a good use for broccoli. He kept on tossing it at each one of us at the table until we caught it in our mouths. Of course, most of it wound up on the floor.

For dessert, they give you a small scoop (called a nerdle in the Eggers household) of either rainbow sherbet or chocolate ice cream. Jim had the rainbow sherbet, and I chose the chocolate ice cream.

When it comes to hibachi restaurants, this one is by far the tastiest of them all. You do get a lot of food for the money, and the chefs are really talented, and their cooking skills will entertain you with a non-stop show.

FYI: This restaurant is handicap accessible and reservations are a must on week-ends, otherwise be prepared for a long wait.


The price for our entertaining date night was \$110.69. Throwing broccoli on the floor, priceless....

He Said / She Said

JIM'S TAKE: The sweetness of the teriyaki steak and the spiciness of the garlic shrimp was an out of this world combination.

NANCY'S TAKE: Of all the hibachi restaurants we have frequented, this is the only one that gives you those delicious teriyaki noodles included with your meal. They were so good...

• Have comments or restaurant suggestions for the Dining Duo? Send them an email at thediningduo@gmail.com.



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let's get reel

Some friendly competition



Will Moore
Columnist

Sun's out and we are headed into outdoor season. With eighty-degree weather coming this early, that spring fever has been blasted into overdrive. The old joke persists that Chicagoland residents don't have more than two seasons. And upon the drive to work, men in hard hats and caution lights block the roadways. While sitting in traffic, I could see some local tennis courts filled with would-be athletes practicing. I remember getting my racket and friends to do just the same. But I never had the same fervor as others. Certainly not like the characters we find in *Challengers*.

Luca Guadagnino is a strange fit for such genres as the sports movie. Up until now, his focus has been on small independent dramas. *Call Me By Your Name* is the film you are mostly likely to remember. However, he has amassed a large body of work by now, ranging from character pieces like *I Am Love* to horror like his remarkable remake of *Suspiria* or 2022's *Bones and All*. However, nothing

before has really prepared me for what he accomplished here.

We are introduced slowly over the two hour and eleven-minute runtime to three key figures. Tashi Duncan (Zendaya) is married to a champion turned also-ran Art Donaldson (Mike Faist). They are living in hotels and she tries to manage his sagging career. They have a daughter, however, parenting doesn't seem to be their primary function in life; winning is. Another in this menage a trois is Patrick Zwick (Josh O'Connor), a rich kid and former tennis phenom who has now amounted to nothing more than a punchline. Both Art and Patrick find themselves at a match in New Rochelle, New York with hopes of saving what's left. This is where we find ourselves at the start.

Flashing back, Luca and writer Justin Kuritzkes present us what has brought our main characters to this point. Through a brilliant use of script coordination, the story keeps momentum like a ball being volleyed over a net. Sustained suspense is met with a mix of great editing and a propulsive EDM score by Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross, the best since their work with David Fincher. First-time screenwriter Kuritzkes needs kudos for crafting the most compelling protagonists I have seen in some time. They

are almost literary, rich with detail and personality beyond what we see on the screen. Our three leads add layers onto what is already on the page, from a given look or gesture. I became so engrossed in their lives that I didn't want the story to end. Funny that the writer is married to Celine Song, the writer-director of last summer's indie hit *Past Lives*; itself a tale about three people in complicated relationships.

Much has been buzzed about the potential love scene with a photo circulating around of Faist and O'Connor sitting on both sides of Zendaya, kissing her neck. Much ado about nothing, I can report. That doesn't mean this film is devoid of heat. Guadagnino has a way, as *Fraud* put it, of making something that is a cigar not just be a cigar. Or in this case, a churro. Callbacks like this one to a cigarette scene in *A Bigger Splash* or even just peaches in Art's locker room managed to illicit a chuckle.

All jokes aside; by the time you get to the end, you can't help but be enthralled by the way all the players and crew are firing on all cylinders. One character would be introduced only to reincorporate them later in a deeper context. From the way one serves a ball to a line from a former ball catcher express more than



any expository dialogue could. Guadagnino blends so many cinematic tricks in the final match point, from making the camera pass back and forth to a quick under-shot; all downright exhilarating. This has been one the most rewarding viewing experiences I have had in a long while. I also wanted to get up, yell, and cheer at this decided victory.



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ONGOING SEEKING GOLFERS

The Sun City Tuesday Men's (golf) League is accepting new members and substitutes for the 2024 season.

We play at Pinecrest Tuesday mornings starting at 7:20 a.m. off both #1 & #10 tees.

This is an 18-hole Match Play handicap league with two divisions. One for lower handicaps and one for higher handicaps.

We also encourage golfers who can't commit to every Tuesday for 20 weeks, to sign up as a sub. With 6 to 8 subs playing each week, they are an important part of the league.

Cash prizes are awarded each week for "Closest to the hole," "Longest putt," and "Skins." Subs are included!

Year-end cash prizes are awarded based on match play points earned each week, at our end of season luncheon.

The top half of each division receive the awards. We are entering our 25th season. Last year we had 60 regulars and 40 subs.

For more information e-mail

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WANTED
Immediately seeking knowledgeable collectors to describe antique and vintage items for a local auction house. Flexible hours. Contact Randy at 815-790-9435.

SEEKING
Wanted to buy. Golf cart. Doesn't have to be perfect. Please call 847-845-8697.

Ron Hawley (ronaldhawley@yahoo.com)

ONGOING CALLING ALL CHICAGO SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS!!!!

The Chi-Town Sports Trivia Group is up and running. Friendly competition - the FIRST FRI-DAY of each month, 3 to 4:30 p.m. at the Huntley Library. All questions covering the BEARS, BLACKHAWKS, BULLS, CUBS, WHITESOX, and the Chicago sports scene.

ONGOING WALKERS AND BICYCLISTS FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

Walkers and Bicyclists for a Safer Community is dedicated to promoting safe street conditions in Sun City Huntley for walkers and cyclists. Remember, It's Right to be Bright. Please be ALERT for Pedestrians in our crosswalks, and Cyclists and Golf Carts on our streets. As daylight hours shorten it will be more difficult to see walkers, bicycles, and golf carts. Safety tip: Some walkers prefer to use the streets over the sidewalks. Always walk facing the flow of traffic and wear bright reflective clothing as an outer layer. It's better to be seen.

If you are concerned about safe streets in Sun City for walkers, bicycles, and golf carts, or for more information email WBSC at: wbscsig@gmail.com.

JUNE 4 & 5 THE SUN CITY STRUTTERS

The Sun City Strutters will be presenting their 21st Spring Show, "Dancing with the Strutters," on Tuesday June 4 and Wednesday June 5 in Drendel Ballroom.

The show will feature tap, ballet, and jazz dance routines. Guest performers will be joining us to perform a variety of entertaining selections. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased at Prairie Lodge and Meadow View Lodge Fitness Desks only. Seating will be reserved at time of ticket purchase.

The Strutters group is made up of ladies with a love of dance... ranging in age from 50+ to 80+. We always welcome new dancers and invite interested dancers to join us next fall. We offer beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes in tap, ballet,



and jazz. If you like to dance but don't want to be in a show, we offer non-performance classes in Ballet and Jazz.

It's a good place to learn or improve your dance skills and it's a wonderful way to meet people and exercise both the body and mind. Please come and join us.

MAY 18 AND 25 FREE STINGRAY SWIM CLINIC/LEARN TO SWIM

The dates are Saturdays: May 4, 11, 18, 25, from 10-11 a.m. All residents are welcomed. Sessions are tailored to your skill level. Bring goggles, nose clip, and bathing cap to be worn. Sign up at pool desk. Questions? Call Irene Camp at 847-337-5477

MAY 22 WOMEN'S CIRCLE OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Women's Circle of First Congregational Church of Huntley, 11628 E. Main Street, Huntley, is hosting BUNCO in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, May 22, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.. Refreshments & Prizes. Call Jeannie at 847-624-4237 for tickets, \$10 each, deadline for tickets May 15.

ONGOING BLACKJACK CLASS

Informal, relaxed setting for beginners or someone who wants to improve their game. LEARN BEFORE YOU PLAY refreshments call 630-802-5473 or ahfortin@aol.com to register.

MAY 21 CULVER'S SCOOPIE SHARE NIGHT & VALOR QUILTS FUNDRAISER

Come and join the Huntley Gazebo Quilters Valor Quilt ladies on Tuesday, May 21, for a fundraiser night from 4-8 p.m. Meet your family and friends to enjoy a delicious meal or the famous frozen custard at the Huntley's Culver's.

HAVE AN EVENT?
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