

MY SUN DAY NEWS

PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF SUN CITY IN HUNTLEY

VOLUME 15 - NUMBER 20



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OCTOBER 3 - OCTOBER 16, 2024

quⁱckshot



Books the primary ingredient in this resident's collection

8

quⁱckquote

I enjoyed my time on the board, but all good things must come to an end

7



Worth the wait!

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Sun City has been celebrating its 25th anniversary, but the grand finale will be held on Thursday, October 10. Prairie Lodge will host many activities for the celebration, offering two time slots to enjoy the festivities. The lodge will be closed for this event, and residents will require a ticket.

Bill Niemasz, Sun City Board President, said, "The Lifestyle Committee seems to have put together an action-packed event that is worth the twenty-five-year wait."

Prepare to be entertained with a diverse range of performances at the celebration. Vito Zatto will bring his unique blend of stand-up comedy, celebrity impersonations, and soulful singing to Sun City. Frank Cassano, known for his captivating 'Frank Sinatra' act, will serenade the audience with his voice and trumpet. A pianist will set

the mood, and you can enjoy various musical genres while sipping your drink or participating in activities.

Bob Olesen, Sun City Board Member liaison to the Lifestyle committee, said, "The Lifestyles group has worked very hard to make a spectacular event. It is a Vegas-style event with a casino room and two live entertainment stages. Elvis will help renew your vows. My favorite will be the free ice cream room. Jameson has outdone themselves with a great selection of appetizers. All this is included in your price of admission."

The price of admission is \$20 for three hours of fun. Free gambling chips are provided to try your luck at the blackjack and roulette tables. Winners will cash in for a chance to win raffle prizes.

Enjoy the 'museum' showcasing Sun City from 1999 to 2024. Don't forget your camera to snap a photo with Elvis or at the Vegas photo backdrop. A caricature artist will capture your spirit in a sketch.

No celebration is without chances to win a raffle prize. Register at Prairie Lodge at the members' or fitness desk to participate. Two tickets limit per household. Two sessions: Session I from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m., Session II from 4:00 to 7:00. ■





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lifeinfocus

The Year of the Gazelle comes galloping to a close



Carol Pavlik
Columnist

The Back-to-School season as the official beginning of our year. We're not big on resolutions in January, but back-to-school time inspires us to shake off the summer slump and get ourselves in gear.

Last year at this time, my husband and I were feeling overwhelmed. We were overscheduled, tired, and worried about money. From our conversations surrounding these problems, a theme emerged: we were getting lax. Undisciplined. We knew what we needed to do, but we weren't bringing our A game.

This brought on the inception of "Year of the Gazelle: 2023-24." I made a poster with a majestic gazelle and seven goals on it, printed in bold type. I stuck it on our fridge, and with that, we had established the focus for the upcoming year.

Each day, as I reached into the fridge for milk for my coffee, I looked at our impressive gazelle and was reminded that, like that beautiful animal, we had made a commitment to run like the wind, away from danger, be it a lion (the gazelle) or car loans (us). We would face forward and not look back. We would be laser focused, as if our lives depended on it.

Here's the list: 1.) Aggressively knock out car payments, 2.) Funnel \$\$ into savings, 3.) Menu planning, 4.) "Use it up," 5.) Weekly time in the writing shed, 6.) Schedule fun, and 7.) Respect rest.

The Year of the Gazelle has officially ended, and I'm reflecting on what worked and what didn't:

1.) Aggressively knock out car payments. We successfully paid extra on our monthly car payments and paid them both off early. We had to scrimp a little bit, but it ultimately frees up our monthly cash flow by quite a bit. Paying off a debt gives me a rush I couldn't have anticipated earlier in my adult life. Paying off a debt makes me feel powerful and invincible. I give us a rating of 10/10 stars.

2.) Funnel \$\$ into savings. I directly deposited my main job and my side gig earnings into a separate savings account. Even if we had to dip into

savings for something, it was nice watching the number in that account slowly grow over time. I sleep better knowing there's an extra cushion in the bank for rainy days. 8/10 stars.

3.) Menu planning and 4.) "Use it up." These two go hand in hand, serving as a reminder to shop for groceries with a plan in mind, and actually eat leftovers instead of leaving them to die a moldy green death somewhere in the back of the refrigerator. When we stuck to menu plans, there was considerably less waste. Still, we couldn't quite break ourselves of the bad habit of "shopping while hungry." There is definitely room for improvement in this department. 2/10 stars.

5.) Weekly time in the writing shed. I love the little shed my husband built me in the backyard. It is quiet and cozy and a great place to think and get work done. While the intention was there, neither of us achieved making it a regular part of our routine, although we did use it more often overall. 6/10 stars.

6.) Schedule fun. Our weekends have been much better since we've instituted the "schedule fun" rule. The key is paying attention to open days on our calendar and protecting them, earmarking that time for something enjoyable: i.e. not "catching up on errands" and definitely not laundry or other mundane household chores. For instance, instead of lazing away a random Saturday morning, we got up, took a walk to check out the Farmers Market, then walked a little further for breakfast at a favorite local hangout. We explored more hiking trails and forest preserves in our area. Even if we were just watching a show on a weeknight, we scheduled it ahead of time and parsed out the episodes. I like spontaneity sometimes, but having something to look forward to is much better than slogging through a tough week with no dangling carrot up ahead. 9/10 stars.

7.) Respect rest. This was my favorite of all of them, I think. The Year of the Gazelle will go down in history as the time when I finally, finally realized how much better everything is after a solid night's sleep. I work better. I make fewer mistakes. I'm more patient, a better listener, less distractible, and the list goes on and on. I could get used to this. 10/10 stars.



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If you stay quiet, you'll never be heard

Why on earth do you own a paper? concluded an email thread from a rather agitated My Sun Day News reader, who was upset with us over the nature of the content of the letters we've published recently. In an earlier email by the same reader, I was told *You are part of the problem in this country* along with an accusation of biased reporting.

In a few moments, I'm going to tell you why I own a newspaper. But before I do, I need to briefly discuss the anatomy of one. This one in particular.

My Sun Day News publishes three major forms of written content. They are:

News Stories (which include features, previews, profiles, and general coverage)

Columns
Submissions

News Stories are stories that are assigned by our editors or gathered by our reporters. They are ALWAYS setoff by a byline, such as this

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

and either include a dateline before the first word of the first sentence or have a larger first letter of the first word (often in MSDN blue). News stories typically also have a photo accompaniment.

Columns are pieces hyper-focused on the topics of which the writers are experts or know a great deal about or have a very keen interest in, like The Dining Duo. They are usually setoff with a byline box that features the columnists smiling mug along with his/her name, which is clearly labeled columnist. Here's TR Kerth's for example:



Submissions are anything that comes into the paper FROM READERS that we publish. Submissions include letters, blurbs, and sometimes local coverage in the form of a story and/or photo or both. I need to stress that submissions are

SUBMITTED material and not generated by MSDN staff, columnists, or official contributors. Submission text sometimes looks different, is often much shorter, and is labeled as a Resident Reporter or Political Place or Hang Your Hat (both of these are usually opinionated letters), News Quicks, Quick Shots, or You're Invited. Here's the Hang Your Hat label:



The views in these letters are the writers' own.

Submissions also cause most of the confusion among readers that ultimately leads to messages being sent to us that read something like: *Why on earth do you own a paper?*

Every few years (not coincidentally aligned with election years), we get a flurry of emails (and sometimes calls) from readers who sling numerous insults on our "slanted" or "bias"

"reporting," claiming that we're one side of the aisle or the other. Or that we support one side of an issue or another.

We DON'T.

Slide your finger up a few inches to the submissions section above, specifically where it says "highly opinionated letters" in the parenthetical.

Letters.

Again, these are opinions submitted by readers that we publish and are not, and are not to be confused with, news stories helmed by our reporters.

For nearly fifteen years, My Sun Day News has dedicated and prided itself on publishing completely unbiased news. Whenever we hire a reporter (not to be confused with a columnist), we specifically tell them that their opinions are not allowed. We approach every angle to a story equally and allow all we speak to their voice to be heard.

We give voice to EVERYONE, no matter their position or opinion on a certain matter and we publish only what we receive, so if you're upset that some of our letters lean more one way or the other, it's only

because we haven't received opinions or feature a perspective that agrees yours. We don't withhold letters due to content unless they're too graphic, vulgar, or profane to print. Other than that our pages are pretty much fair game. Of course, we are bound by space constraints, so a letter may never run, but for the ones that do, we still only have whatever we've received to choose from. So if you're upset because you see letters that carry opinions that don't match yours, send in your opinions. We'll publish them because everyone's voice is equal and deserves equal attention. We don't, never have, and never will silence anyone. This is why I own a newspaper. Because I value everyone's perspective and believe everyone's voice should be heard.

In fact, in my years as a journalist, the only people whom I've ever seen silenced are those who silence themselves:

Is this intended for publication? I asked the agitated reader from above.

To which the reader replied: *No, not this one!*

Chris La Pelusa

MSDN Publisher/Owner

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theviewfromplanetkerth

Casting my vote for season of the year



TR Kerth
Columnist

Every season of the year has its own special charm, but if you cornered me and said, "OK, undecided voter, it's time to make your choice," I would cast my vote for autumn without a moment's hesitation.

I'll admit that much of my love for fall is tied up in nostalgia, in memories that I will never relive again. Gone are the piles of elm leaves raked into the street and set ablaze, into which we kids would toss apples and potatoes, and then rake them from the ashes to eat, charred husks and all. I think that fragrant, savory memory is why I still like to toast bagels and English muffins almost black, until the smoke alarm threatens to squawk.

Gone, too, are the weeks spent planning what costume to wear on Halloween. Those plans almost always ended up with "hobo," because tattered flannel shirts and torn jeans were easy to find around the house, and Mom could always find a wine cork to char and paint an ashy beard on my chin.

So yes, a lot of my love of autumn is linked to forever-gone memories of long-ago. But beyond the nostalgia, autumn always brings me pleasures that still eclipse any other season of the year.

Take the rows of ripe corn, for example, monotonously green from day to day through the summer, but now sporting a burnt honey glow, even after they're shorn down to stubble. If the Crayola company is looking for a can't-lose new color, may I suggest "October Corn."

Or take the autumn insect neighbors I meet every evening on my walk through the meadow and around the lake, like the praying mantises longer than my finger. They were no bigger than a mosquito when they hatched in early June from their toasted-marshmallow egg case. Through the summer they have feasted on aphids, and then crickets, and now on plump green grasshoppers. Those green and brown adult mantises today are searching for each other to mate and start the egg-laying once again, because none of them will survive winter.

Also out now are the orange-and-black wooly bear caterpillars, which my friend Jimmy Mulvihill tells me are called "Hairy Mollys" in Ireland. Unlike the mantises, they will survive winter, because their blood contains a kind of antifreeze that lets them burrow into leaf piles and linger until spring, when they will sprout their wings to become Isabella tiger moths. Besides the bugs, nothing can beat the birds of autumn: The hummingbirds flitting around my feeder, sucking so greedily from it that I have to refill it almost every day. Or the geese and sandhill cranes flying noisily over-

head. Or the flocks of blackbirds gathering by the hundreds in the oaks behind my house, singing a song in unison that rises louder and louder — until I clap my hands and they fall silent, only to begin again a few seconds later. They will all be gone soon.

And then there are the shortening days, of course, each one a wonder unto itself, reminding you to stop and look long and hard now, because it will all change soon enough. Brisk mornings at daybreak, with the meadow draped with fog. Evenings with golden sunlight setting the yellowing oak leaves ablaze. Nights cool enough to spark up the firepit on the patio, with no worry of mosquitos now. But even if a few stragglers linger, they are no match against the cozy thick hoodie and sweat pants that have waited all summer to get back in the game.

And then, of course, there is my garden, brown and bedraggled of late, but only just now coming into its true purpose. It was originally planted by my wife, and if she were here she would disagree with me about the best season of all. To her, the purpose of those flowers was to provide beauty to the eye and the nose, and once they browned and wilted, it was time to "dead-head" them.

But with her passing six years ago, her garden came to me, and I see those dried flower heads as the final triumph and true purpose of the flower all along—the imperative of creating seeds for the next generation of flowers.

Through June and July, the garden lured bees, moths, and butterflies with color and fragrance, tricking them into laboring all day (and sometimes all night) as the flowers' pollination slaves. That work is finished now, but it is only now that the curtain opens on the garden's final magnificent closing act—dozens of goldfinches, sparrows, and cardinals flitting from seedhead to seedhead, their song twittering through the yard. They will eat enough of the seeds to power their bodies for the long migration they will soon take, but they will also drop enough seeds to create next year's bounty of rusty cone flowers and yellow heliopsis.

It's all happening right now, but it won't last much longer. Soon all that wonderful activity will end, and the land will sleep through the still, quiet, waiting season of winter.

In time spring will come, and I'll surely put on my Make Another Garden Again hat. I'll enjoy wearing it all through spring and summer, and I will relish every day of those seasons.

But the whole time I will be looking forward to once again casting my vote for my favorite season of all — autumn.

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

politicalplace

The views in these letters are the writers' own.

This is another good day. It is one in which everywhere you drive you see signs for Kamala and Walz. That is except in Sun City where signs are not allowed. They are the point of a "Notice of Violation." Ultimately, if the signs do not disappear, even from within your home in your window, the threat is heightened. The last notice tells you the Sun City HOA will send someone into your home to remove the sign(s) from your window(s). Of course, they must have a police officer with them, or they would be in violation of your private residency.

All that aside, I have to say that the rest of the country is waking up to the threat that is Trump and Vance and their Project 2025 program to disassemble the foundation of our democratic republic. November 5 is just around the corner. Everyone has to do what they are physically capable of doing to make this election count in huge numbers. People who listen exclusively to right-wing programs are unaware that our economy is great. Young people are engaged in fighting for freedom for women's body autonomy. Also, as Harris recently said to a Times reporter, "I'm in favor of the Second Amendment and

I'm in favor of assault weapons bans, universal background checks, red flag laws." Both she and Tim Walz, her running mate, are gun owners. "These are just common sense." It is time to use the power of your vote.

By the way, flags are allowed in Sun City.

Gail Talbot

Sun City resident

Stop! – PLEASE JUST STOP I'd like you to think back to when you were young. Did you ever hear your parents argue politics with friends, family, or neighbors? Sure, they discussed with each other, but they kept their opinions private. I grew up with the guidelines of "never discuss politics nor religion." I'm sure you did, too. I wonder why now do you think that it is okay to voice your opinions to people you have never met and what makes you think your opinions are the only ones that are correct? No matter how much you scream at me in opinions pages, or at friend's gatherings you are Not going to influence who I vote for – never. I have my own ideas and my own opinions. I have my own free thinking and I will vote for whomever I want. You will not

influence me by calling me uninformed, stupid, or uncaring. You get your information from the same places I do – media. The media gives opinions now, not the news like it did when we were growing up. The current events were read as said. Not torn apart sound bite by sound bite, and it is your job to listen and to decipher what is really truth and what is sensationalized and then make your own decisions. We are fortunate enough to live in a country of free speech and free thinking. I don't "Hate" one candidate or the other. I just prefer one over the other, but I will survive just like we have for centuries with whichever one wins the contest. I am privileged to make up my own mind as to whom I vote. Please stop stepping on that privilege. Your opinion is just that; an opinion and everyone has one. Keep yours to yourself.

Debbie Hughes

Sun City resident

Joan Davis...who is stupid? Have you read Kamala's tax plan? Increased taxes, taxes on unrealized capital gains. What if you pay on those gains and they do not happen? Do you think the government is going to re-

imburse you? She wants to get rid of medical debt, student loan debt, give \$25,000 for down payment on first time house buyers, raise child tax credit. All good thing but who is going to pay for this? This will increase inflation. How many times does Trump have to say he had nothing to do with Project 25. Because of tax laws this Think Tank cannot have who created Project 25 cannot use political people to help develop it. A Federal price setting will ruin the country. Cuba, Venezuela and Russia have tried it but look at their country. It ALWAYS fails. Billionaire John Paulson said he would pull his money out of the market if Harris wins the election and go into cash and gold. She has never answered the question on how she is going to fix the economy. Do you know? Her economic plans will have raging economic implications. All the things she plans on fixing she helped create!

J.P. Morgan

Sun City resident

Nobody can give you freedom. You will never find people from the past who have a model for how to achieve freedom. No politician has the

answers on how to achieve freedom. Certainly not Trump who says, "only I can fix this for you."

"You can be rebels in your own time," as said by Timothy Snyder. We have to continue to look toward the future, with a positive attitude as we work toward our freedoms with moral strength and fortitude. We have to strive to keep a country that adheres to the rule of laws.

Since 1980 the Republican Party has forged an attempt to suppress the right to vote. Currently, in an atmosphere of the women's right to bodily autonomy, they have added another threat to women. In 2006 in Indiana the first voter ID laws were passed which suppressed the vote. Now women, about 34 percent, would have to find their original birth certificate and then apply to the proper agency to make their married name their legal name, in order to vote, under Trump's "Safe Vote" act. Trump told the house to shut down the government if they do not accept this act.

Women have become joyous warriors rebelling against these attempts to erase them.

Gail Talbot

Sun City resident

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Bring clarity to Medicare's 2025 changes

Sun City Residents are concerned and curious about recent Media reports about a combination of good news and bad news about their Part D Drug Plan. Sun City Resident in N25, Ellen Muradian, RN, President of Medicare Solutions of Huntley reports that the her follow Residents are delighted to



learn that in the calendar year of 2025, their maximum financial risk (total out-of-patient payouts) will drop to \$2,000, down from \$8,000 in 2024. Her Partner, Scott Slagle, points out this new 75% cost shift to the Part D companies is resulting in a \$590 deductible, which is part of the \$2,000 annual out-of-pocket maximum. In short, Slagle summarizes, the typical out-of-pocket after the \$590 deductible, equates to \$1,410.

Muradian emphasizes "Our government tends to have complex formulas and rules, so please come to my no-cost Educational Dinner Seminar on Wednesday, Oct 9th at 6M in our Solarium to discover your new rights and options".

One of the most important new government subsidizes for Baby Boomers is to address the ever-increasing demand for in-home health care, as that need turns into Assisted Living and finally to Institutional Nursing Care. This 45-minute informational (no specific products or plans will be discussed) workshop will review the specifics of this new program which will help pay for your Custodial extended health care, beyond what your Medicare Advantage or Medicare Supplement will pay for.

Ellen and Scott hope you will join them this coming Wednesday, Oct 9th at 6 PM for a complimentary delicious dinner at the Solarium, just outside of Jamesons, so please call 847-284-0232 to RSVP. Feel free to bring a Neighbor, Friend or family member.



Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Former Village Trustee Harry Leopold was asked to fill the vacant board seat left by Mary Holzkopf's departure.

Leopold asked to fill vacant trustee seat

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

HUNTLEY - Sun City resident Harry Leopold was asked to fill the vacancy on the Huntley Village Trustee vacated by Mary Holzkopf. At the August 8 Village Board meeting, Sun City resident Harry Leopold was officially sworn in as the trustee.

Leopold moved into Sun City in 1999. He said, "We were interested in Del Webb since [wife] Gini's parents bought a Del Webb home in Arizona where we planned to buy. Then we heard that Del Webb was building in Huntley. We selected our house from an artist's conception at the Outlet Mall. We were the third to close on our home on April 19, 1999."

Leopold's unwavering commitment to the community is truly inspiring. He has generously volunteered his time, skills, and knowledge, serving on three non-profit boards, including the church and the community. His eagerness to get involved was evident when he moved into Sun City.

"I started playing bocci ball and started a bridge club with five people. They gave us a table at the outlet center sales center to play. Now, the club has over 200 members. Bill Eisenmenger and I founded the Railroad Club, and I enjoyed playing golf in two different leagues," Leopold said.

Before Leopold moved to Huntley, he attended a Village Board meeting to see how the Village was run.

"I met the Village President at the time, Jim Dhamer. He approached me to consider running for the Village Board. In 2000, I got enough signatures on the petition to run for a trustee seat in April. In October, Jim died," he said.

When his supporters urged him to run for village president, he accepted the challenge. Despite facing tough competition from Charles Becker and Charles Sass and losing by 200 votes, Leopold's determination was unwavering. This setback motivated him further, leading him to run for the board in 2003.

Leopold served five consecutive four-year terms.

"I enjoyed my time on the board, but all good things must come to an end," he said.

The Village's recognition of Leopold and Village Clerk Rita McMahon's service to the community was a testament

to their significant contributions. The party thrown in their honor, the street signs bearing their names, and the plaque featuring Leopold's accomplishments all underscore the community's deep appreciation for their service.

Leopold said, "It was amazing. Leopold Lane is located off Reed Road in Talamore. The plaque highlighted my favorite accomplishments on the board: the four-way interchange, widening Route 47, and the hospital. New Village Hall, Walmart, Weber International, and the fifth largest Amazon warehouse with 1,800,000 square feet."

Then, the Village looked for Harry Leopold to fill the Trustee position once again.

Leopold said, "Tim Hoeft came to me and said, 'We have a resignation. Would you serve out the term?' I talked to my wife, Gini, who supported me and encouraged me to take the position."

Leopold was also elected and served three terms on the Sun City Board. His tenure on this board also had significant accomplishments.

"We authored the storage building, which filled up quickly like all storage. The Birch and Cedar rooms were created from the Sales Center at the Lodge. We added the dividers and the kitchen. The train club moved into the basement of the Woodchuck Building, and the Billiards moved from the Pub location in Jameson to the Woodchucks Building. We also increased the size of the Sew n' Sew's room. We saved the community a significant amount of funds by treating fifty percent of the ash trees for the emerald ash borer."

Leopold's personal life is just as rich and fulfilling as his professional one. He has been happily married to his wife, Gini, for 66 years. After the wedding, the couple moved to Germany, where Leopold was stationed while serving in the Army.

"We loved it there," Leopold fondly recalls.

Their love for Germany is evident in their frequent visits, with the couple returning in 1994 and making twenty more trips since then.

The Leopolds have two children, Melissa and Michael, both married, and have given them thirteen grandkids, ages 21 to 32, and one great-granddaughter, Olivia, who is five years old.



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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

At one point, SC resident Linda Lakomek had over 2,000 cookbooks in her collection.

LAKOMEK AND HER COOKBOOK ROOM

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

Residents have shared their collections in the past, and Linda Lakomek's collection is no exception. Lakomek, a Sun City resident, is not just a cookbook collector, but a dedicated one.

"I have been cooking from my cookbooks since the 1980s, although the collection part didn't start until 2003," she said. "But once it did, there was no turning back."

Many brides receive their first cookbook (or a well-used family cookbook) at a bridal shower. The Better Homes & Gardens New Cookbook is one of the world's most recognized books with its distinctive red-and-white plaid cover.

Lakomek said, "I remember carefully reading my mother's copy of 'Better Homes and Gardens.' The book that started the collection process was, 'A Treasury of Great Recipes' by Vincent and Mary Price. Vincent Price is the actor so familiar to us from his classic horror films."

The cookbook is the first one written by a celebrity. The cookbook follows Price's travels through Europe, Mexico, and the United States, and features the menus of restaurants they visited and loved, along with recipes from those menus.

"Over the years, my collection had swelled to over 2,000 books, but when we moved to our home in Del Webb in 2022, I had to cull the collection, donating over twelve full and heavy boxes of cookbooks to our Huntley Library," Lakomek said. "My current collection is about 1,200 cookbooks, limited to my space in my cookbook room."

The cookbook room has shelves from top to bottom. Each shelf is packed with cookbooks. The books are organized by type. There are baking books: cookies, pies, cakes. There are vegetarian and cultural books, too, all organized by shelf. The cookbooks are from 1990 to the present.

Lakomek said, "My new acquisitions need to replace an existing cookbook. The room is full."

Lakomek has all the baking equipment needed in one cabinet, including cookie cutters, mats, and pans. She also has a display of cake stands. She loves baking Christmas cookies and hosts a cookie exchange for the neighborhood.

The Lakomeks love to entertain and enjoy planning, shopping, and putting food on the table.

"My favorite recipes have many steps with unique and unusual ingredients," she said. "We have twenty-one sets of dinnerware. I have a tablecloth closet that has one for every occasion. I love setting the table with folded napkins."

As expected, Lakomek hosts holiday dinners. She loves cooking every dish for the occasion.

"It's part of fun. I love making it all," she said.

The Lakomeks have two daughters. Lakomek said, "Lauren is my sous chef, and Carrie is my firefighter, and she cooks for the station."

Jerry Lakomek said, "I enjoy being the taste taster for Linda, especially for the pastries and cakes."

What's next for Lakomek?

"I would love to start an active cookbook club here in Del Webb. I believe that cooking is not just about the food but the joy of sharing it with others. I would gather like-minded people to pick a cookbook, select recipes for each member, and then enjoy the meal together. It's a wonderful way to bond over our love for cooking," she said.

Han; Your Hat

The views in these letters are the writers' own.

I attended the public meeting on September 19 to get a better understanding of what the \$18 million bond sale entailed. Scott Crowe, Huntley Park District executive director, gave an informative and well-prepared presentation. I realize there are substantial

costs in maintaining our parks and recreation centers to be safe, aesthetically appealing, and accessible. However, there are several items on this proposal that would fall under the "wish list" and not under the "necessity list." Examples of the wish list would be golf entertainment, a dog park, and the purchase of open space. With the current economic climate, I do not feel it would be prudent to tackle a project of this proportion. My vote will be "no." I would prefer this proposal would be considered in the future with a more practical and needs based approach.

Sharon Lynch
Sun City resident

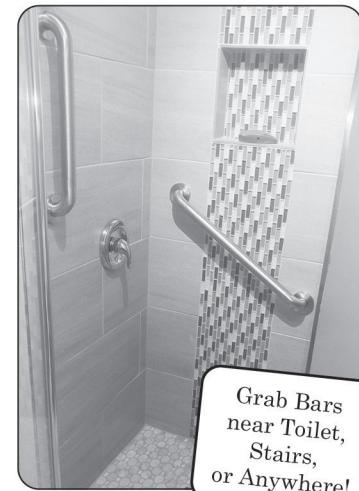
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Arlene Petersen
Columnist

Hi there, I'm writing to seek your advice regarding a health condition I've recently been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (AFib). As a senior, this diagnosis has understandably caused me some concern, and I want to make sure I'm doing everything I can to manage it effectively.

The doctor has explained that AFib can increase the risk of stroke and may also lead to other complications if not managed properly. While I'm following the prescribed treatments, including medication and regular check-ups, I'm eager to learn more about what I can do on my own to manage my condition and maintain a good quality of life.

Could you offer any practical

tips or strategies that might help in managing AFib? Specifically, I'm interested in learning about any lifestyle changes I should adopt, stress management techniques, and any other tips to help me manage my condition at home.

Thank you for reaching out with your questions about managing atrial fibrillation (AFib). It's great that you're taking a proactive approach to your health. AFib can indeed be challenging, but there are several strategies you can use to manage your condition effectively and maintain a good quality of life. Below are some tips and suggestions that might help.

Regarding lifestyle changes, diet, exercise, and weight management should be your top priorities. Eating a heart-healthy diet can be beneficial. Focus on

incorporating plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Reducing sodium intake and limiting caffeine and alcohol can also be helpful.

Regular physical activity can improve your overall heart health and may help reduce AFib symptoms. Aim for activities that you enjoy and can do regularly, such as walking, swimming, or cycling. Always consult with your doctor before starting any new exercise regimen to ensure it's safe for you.

Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the burden on your heart. If needed, work with a healthcare provider to develop a plan that suits your needs.

You also mentioned stress management techniques. There are several ways to manage stress, including relaxation techniques. Practice stress-relief techniques such as deep

breathing exercises, meditation, or yoga. These methods can help manage stress levels, which might positively impact your AFib.

Pursuing hobbies or other recreational activities regularly is another effective way to help manage stress. Engage in activities that you find relaxing and enjoyable. Pursuing hobbies or spending time with loved ones can help reduce overall stress.

I'm glad to read that you are following your doctor's instructions. This is the best way you can manage your condition at home. I encourage you to continue to schedule regular follow-up appointments with your cardiologist to monitor your condition and adjust your treatment plan as needed. Some people find it useful to have a blood pressure monitor or a heart rate monitor at home but always use devices that are recommended

by your healthcare provider.

Remember, your healthcare team is an invaluable resource, so don't hesitate to reach out to them with any questions or concerns you might have. They can provide personalized advice and adjustments to your treatment plan based on your specific needs.

I hope these tips are helpful in managing your AFib and enhancing your overall well-being. If you have any further questions or need additional support, please feel free to ask.

• 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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SHELDON CLARK'S CREATIVE CORNER

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Please consult your doctor or regular healthcare professional before following suggestions found in any MHN/MSDN health columns/stories.



WHAT'S NEW ON THE KNEE FRONT?

By Joan Davis
For My Sun Day News

Knee deep in treatments. But which ones work? Nearly half of adults over the age of 50 report knee pain in a one-year period with

osteoarthritis (OA) being the most common cause. OA happens when the cushioning (cartilage-lining of joints) breaks down faster than your body can build it back up. Outside of knee replacement, medical treatment has focused on methods to re-

lieve pain and stimulate the cushioning that the body's cartilage naturally provides.

How well do these approaches work?

"A Shot to the Knee," the April 2024 AARP Bulletin, investigated the research on four common injection approaches: corticosteroids, hyaluronic acid, platelet-rich plasma (PRP), and stem cell therapy. Although sharing your questions with your healthcare provider is recommended, the AARP article can help with general questions and provides detailed explanations of each injection and is accessible online: (<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2024/knee-injections-for-pain.html>).

While each treatment described is promising and may offer temporary relief, the article concluded that "Studies in recent years have found that most of these injections actually do very little to improve osteoarthritis in the knees and are only slightly more effective than a placebo."

Guidelines of the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) reflects that conclusion, only conditionally recommending the use of one type of injection-corticosteroids for short term pain relief. AAOS advises against hyaluronic acid injections and at this point does not recommend either PRP and stem cell injections which are

not fully approved by the FDA and are regarded as experimental by insurance companies. Research shows that corticosteroids can provide short term pain relief, although some patients report having success with injections every three months for several years.

So what else is available other than knee replacement?

You may have seen the May 2024 headline, "Orthopedic surgeon among first to place new shock absorber implant for knee." Although this treatment is not yet available widely and may not be appropriate for those with severe knee osteoarthritis, shock absorber implants are a promising new development. (To learn more just type in the above headline into a Google search.)

Other approaches which are not new but have proven successful are physical therapy and weight loss for those who are carrying extra weight. These approaches are recommended as front-line therapy, even if other treatments are anticipated.

In one study ("Weight loss: the treatment of choice for knee osteoarthritis? A randomized trial") obese osteoarthritis patients who lost weight improved their knee function as much as those going through surgery – within just eight weeks. The researchers concluded that losing 20 pounds of fat "might be regarded as an alternative to knee

replacement."

An anti-inflammatory diet focusing on whole foods with emphasis on fruits, vegetables, legumes, seeds, nuts, and whole grains has also been shown to decrease inflammation and arthritis pain.

One study (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25871017/>) zeroed in on a particular food that has shown to be especially beneficial in terms of blocking inflammation: sesame seeds. Although the study was small, involving with only 50 patients with osteoarthritic knees, the results after 2 months of taking ¼ cup of sesame seeds per day resulted in significant improved total blood antioxidant measurements. The study concluded "Sesame seed is a natural and safe substance that may have beneficial effects in patients with knee OA, and it may provide new complementary and adjunctive treatment in these patients."

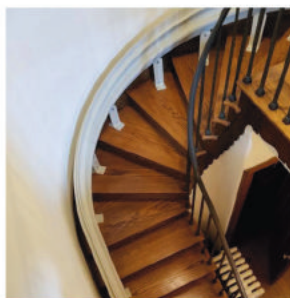
Bottom Line:

While at this point research has not yet shown successful ways of regenerating cartilage that work as well as the cartilage we were born with, there are successful approaches beyond joint replacement that provide pain relief and lessen inflammation -from physical therapy, diet, weight loss and corticosteroids injections — and perhaps even sesame seeds!



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Mike & Eileen Giltner
Columnists

Situated in the Pacific Ocean 600 miles off the coast of South America, the Galápagos Islands proved to be a unique environment that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. Situated on the equator and at the confluence of three major ocean currents, the islands are inhabited by a strange assortment of wildlife, thus one of the major reasons to visit. We all know about Darwin and his theory of evolution and that the islands were the inspiration for his work. The same species evolved differently based on the island on which they lived.

Our daughter and her two sons recently visited and called it "Amazing."

They flew from the US to Quito, Ecuador's capital, to begin a guided tour. Caution: South America is experiencing a major increase in crime and tourists are highly targeted. A Del Webber winters there and says he is considering NOT returning due to the crime increase. You have to be extra cautious. DO not hold your cell phone in your hand, do not wear expensive jewelry, and do not wander off shopping alone. Tour groups that stay together are the safest route if you plan on visiting. OK, on to the good news.

They had a wonderful time and have memories that will last a lifetime. They arrived in Quito and checked into the Wyndham Quito Airport

hotel. The following day they moved to the La Mirage Garden Hotel & Spa, a lush oasis with peacocks strolling across the area. There they were treated to Ecuadorian music and dance.

Next, they moved to the Hacienda Zuleta Luxuriate, an idyllic 17th-century hotel on a 4,000-acre working farm and living museum owned by a former Ecuadorian president and his family. As you can see, they moved several times so pack accordingly. From there they took a trail ride on home-bred Zuletano horses. There are options for the ride. You can visit waterfalls, or Caranqui 'tola' pyramids dating from before the Inca Conquest. For something different, you can experience Zuleta from the eyes of a condor as the route takes you up Santa Rosa Hill behind the main house. Half-day or full-day rides are available. Afterward, they were given a tasty treat: roast guinea pig. Yes, your pet is considered a delicacy in the country. While they said it did taste good, it did contain a lot of tiny bones.

One unique event was when they straddled the equator with one leg in the northern and one in the southern hemisphere. They were also surprised at the temperature. Most of the time, even at sea level, they were in 60-degree weather. But that changes in our winter season, when the temperature rises into the 80s, so make any plans with this in mind.

The following day, they loaded onto a plane and headed westward to the primary island of Santa Cruz, and checked into the Royal Palm Hotel Galápagos. It's unique in that its grounds include lava tubes and natural lava tunnels.

TRAVEL | Pg. 12

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Provided | MSDN Photo

The Galapagos Islands straddle the equator. Here marks the center.



•TRAVEL

There is also access to a few giant tortoises and if you're still awake, stargazing through telescopes. The crisp, clear air offers spectacular views of the heavens.

There are 127 islands in the archipelago, all of volcanic origin and mostly uninhabited. Upon arriving, they were greeted by a menagerie of animals: blue-footed boobies, land iguanas, colonies of seals, and marine iguanas. They were told to stay at least six feet away from all the animals as they are protected. The Galapose is a World Heritage site. Doubt the animals would hurt you so it's more to protect them. There were a number of situations where you might want to go up close to feed or photograph them, but no, stay back.

They finally got to the island with the giant tortoises sanctuary and they are large. At the island center, there is a shell from one and you can climb inside, if inclined. Our 19-year-old, 6-foot, 185-pound grandson easily backed into the shell and then, mimicked the turtle, walking on all 4's across the room. We watched the video of his experience and laughed. He stated he was surprised at how light in weight the shell was!

As they walked on the beach, they encountered an abandoned baby seal. Yes, they were inclined to help but were told not to interfere. Its mother might be

around and could attack you.

One thing they noticed was the vast variety of plant life. Seeds have been blown in from across the world and the islands offer a variety of landscapes for both the plants and animals. Some are desert with cacti, others more bountiful, with local flowering plants. The islands are volcanic and still active in some areas, so don't be surprised if the ground begins to shake a little while you're there.

The last stop was the Golden Bay Galápagos resort situated in a privileged location on the Playa de Oro (Golden Beach) of San Cristobal Island. Directly on the Pacific, you'll see sea lions, blue-footed boobies, and other animal citizens of Galápagos.

Another adventure they experienced was swimming with the sharks. Reef sharks congregate just offshore in the shallows. You can snorkel in the waters around them and observe them. There have NOT been any incidents with the sharks in the last 20 years so they felt safe. Just use caution while observing. If you want to stay dry, there are boat tours and you might even see a whale shark, the largest mammal in the world. Also, Hammerhead sharks migrate to the area for mating with schools in the hundred's but you may have to get into deeper water to observe them.

So, ready to travel? Plan accordingly, pack lightly, and enjoy the adventure.

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A compilation of quotes worth thinking about

By TR Kerth
Columnist

Man is the best computer we can put aboard a spacecraft...and the only one that can be mass-produced with unskilled labor.

- Wernher von Braun

Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler.

- Albert Einstein

Whining is not only graceless, but can be dangerous. It can alert a brute that a victim is in the neighborhood.

- Maya Angelou



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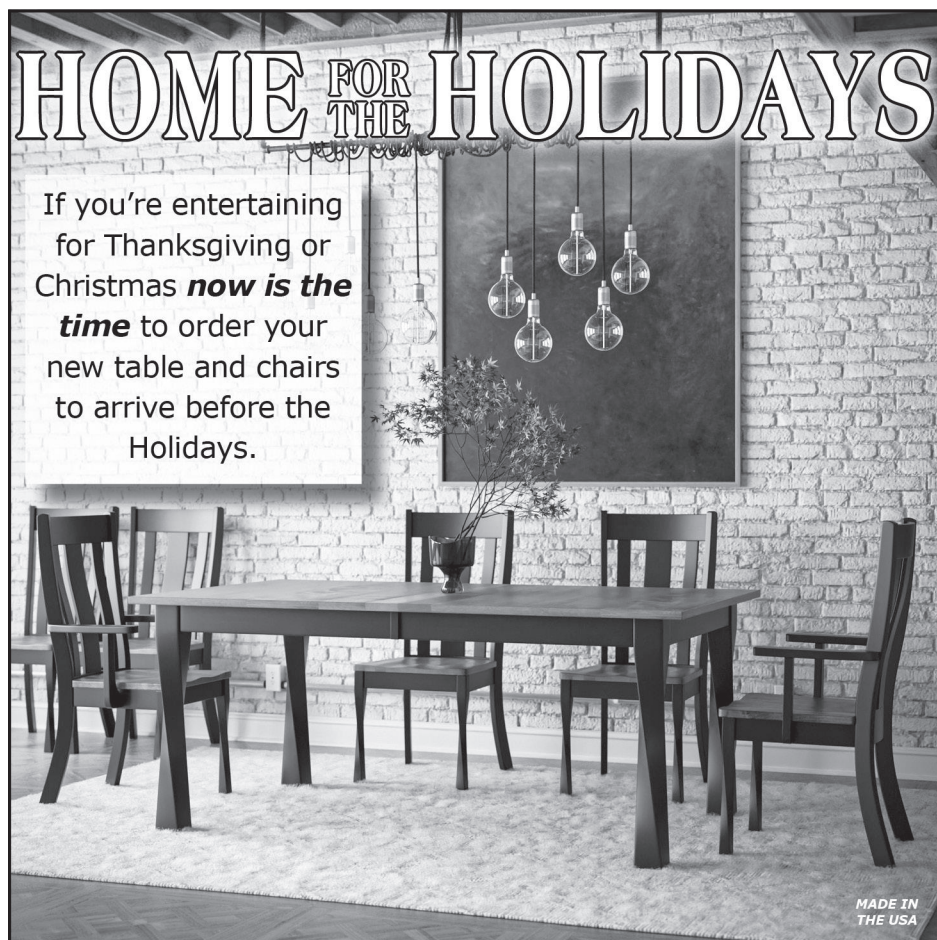
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gardenersforum

20 ways to support your garden this fall



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

Chris, my husband, and I recently traveled to Nashville for Labor Day weekend. Christopher, our 23-year-old son, moved into his first post college apartment two months earlier, and this was the first chance we had to help him with the move. By my count, this is the ninth time we have helped our adult children make the transition from one living space to another. We know the drill. First day: show up with a bunch of used furniture and furnishings, start cleaning, measure the windows for curtains, begin unpacking and evaluate what else is needed. Second day: head to Goodwill, Wal-Mart, and Home Depot, finish unpacking and with any luck, have enough time to enjoy a family dinner out. The pressure was on, but in 48 hours, we were able to make a huge difference and Christopher genuinely appreciated our efforts.

Gardening in the fall is a bit

like our Labor Day weekend. The ground will freeze, the temperatures will drop, and the window of opportunity to accomplish tasks outdoors will close. While perhaps the pressure isn't on, it is important to make the most of the next six weeks. Here is a list of gardening activities that you may want to do this fall.

1. Continue to water plants if the soil is slightly dry. It is important that all plants, but especially evergreen shrubs and trees are watered thoroughly as we transition to winter.
2. Add some color to your yard by planting perennial flowers or flowering shrubs. Cool air temperatures and warm soil temperatures combine to make fall an idea time to plant.
3. Evaluate any tree branches that are hanging over your home. Consider pruning those branches before ice and snow weighs them down. This will also help to keep your gutters clean.
4. Document your garden. In the spring, sometimes it is difficult to remember what things looked like the previous year. Make note of any areas that you

liked or didn't like in preparation for any changes that you may decide to make.

5. Invite a friend over for a lunch outdoors. For many, fall is their favorite season.
6. Remove any weeds from your planting beds. Many weeds develop seed heads in the fall. Removing them now will help to control their growth for years to come.
7. Fertilize your lawn. The turf roots continue to absorb nutrients even when the foliage stops growing.
8. Lay sod or spread seed. Cool temperatures make it a great time to enhance your current lawn.
9. Core-aerate the lawn. The act of core-aeration helps to reduce thatch and soil compaction.
10. Spread mulch. A layer of mulch acts as a blanket to insulate plants and moderate the soil temperature. Mulch can also be used to protect marginally hardy plants such as butterfly bush and some roses.
11. Cutback perennial foliage after we have a hard frost. Although the foliage on some perennial flowers should remain in place, consider cutting back

foliage affected by diseases or insects. Flowers that spread by seed or are aggressive can also be cutback in an effort to try to control their growth.

12. Plant spring blooming bulbs such as, hyacinth, crocus, scilla, tulips or daffodils. A bit of work this fall, will lead to a welcome sight as the snow is melting.
13. Bring annual flowers indoors. Certain annual flowers, such as geraniums, can be overwintered successfully.
14. Evaluate and prune summer blooming shrubs. To maximize the flowers next summer, summer blooming shrubs should be pruned now.
15. Invite a member of your family to spend time with you outdoors. Although asking for help can be difficult, they may actually be grateful for the opportunity to spend time together and help you. As they say many hands make light work.
16. Divide perennial flowers. Perennial flowers such as hostas, iris, and daylilies start flowering less and less if they are not divided approximately every three to four years.
17. Protect your plants from rabbits. If you had rabbits eating your plants this summer, they may continue to eat them

this winter. It is important that you protect your shrubs over the next five months.

18. Collect cut flowers. Dried flowers can be brought inside and preserved through drying.
19. Evaluate and store your gardening supplies and tools. Cleaning gardening tools and properly storing plant care chemicals will lead to few surprises when you go to use them next spring.
20. Take time to admire your yard. There are many beautiful aspects to nature and your yard in particular. It is yours. Own, admire, and appreciate it.

As Labor Day weekend came to a close, I gave Christopher a hug and said goodbye. It was the first time that I truly wished we lived closer and could do more for him. Thankfully, Chris was there to whisper, "He has to do this on his own."

• 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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Schwan brings home pickleball gold

By Steve Peterson

For My Sun Day News

MILWAUKEE — Sun City resident John Schwan has kept a memorable pickleball season going strong.

Schwan recently won two gold medals in two Illinois Senior Olympics competition singles for age 75 plus. Illinois Senior Olympics conducts the games, offering with many sports for ages 50 and above.

Schwan won tournaments at Springfield for Illinois Sept. 14 and earlier in Milwaukee for the Wisconsin state titles.

“I was quite elated to win the gold medal in Springfield,” Schwan said. “I was behind 5-0 in the gold medal match before winning 15-7. I noticed some weaknesses in my opponents’ game.”

The gold medals qualify him for the Senior Olympics nationals next year in relatively close Des Moines, Iowa. He plans to represent Illinois. As previously reported, Schwan won the gold medal at the US Pickleball Championship held this spring.

“I entered both states’ competition to better my chances at gold,” Schwan said. “At Wisconsin, I had to win six rounds and three at Illinois,” he said. At Wisconsin, I beat someone who played at the 4.5 skill level at nationals. I was in the 75-79 age bracket and there was some tough competition.”

Schwan noted that the Springfield area had some impact of Hurricane Francine, which led to some tournament changes.

Schwan keeps busy playing his favorite sport.

“I split my time playing pickleball at Sun City as well as Hanovertown Park,” Schwan said. “I train with a couple of players at both locations. We see a lot of improvement in pickleball, it’s still a relatively new sport.”

About Illinois Senior Olympics “ISO offers quality competitions for athletes age 50 and over,” according to the ISO Facebook page. “We host over 20 events at various locations in central and northern Illinois that promote active lifestyles and create a socializing atmosphere amongst senior athletes.”



Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

Sun City resident John Schwan won the Illinois Senior Olympics pickleball gold medal as well as the Wisconsin state gold medal.

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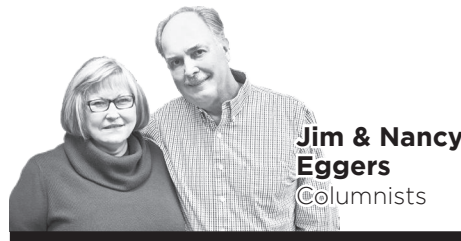
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thediningduo Crusin' for food



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.

Everyone needs medications at some point in their life. Our little puppy, Rosie, is no exception. Her medications are necessary to keep away those nasty fleas and ticks when she goes outside. We have tried everything, like putting her pill into liver sausage, peanut butter, or her (and Jim's) favorite, the aerosol squirt cheese in a can. In the end, she will succeed in spitting the pill out on the floor while staring defiantly at us. The irony of this is, when she does go outside, her main diet consists of ants, spiders, and the occasional lightning bug. On our way to the vet to pick up her pills, we passed by a restaurant in Gilberts named Cruisin' and decided to try it.

How appropriate was this? Rosie's "cruisin'" for bugs outside and we're "cruisin'" for food on a beautiful fall afternoon. Of course, Jim being the moron that he is, parked the car by the wrong door and we had to walk through the bar area (they had a long bar) to get to the dining area. The restaurant strikes us as a nice neighborhood bar and grill with ten booths and eight tables. They had a lot of automotive memorabilia hanging on the walls.

After Nancy played hostess and we seated ourselves, our waiter came over and dropped off some menus and their Friday Specials list. As we looked at the menu, Jim decided on soup instead of an appetizer, so he ordered the Famous French Onion Soup (\$6). This was a piping hot crock of French onion soup baked with mozzarella cheese and croutons. The soup was a very rich and flavorful way to start off his lunch.

Nancy was looking at the Friday Fish Fry menu choices and almost fell off her chair. She spotted the Shrimp and Lobster Combo (\$30) and didn't need to look any further. This was a six-ounce broiled lobster tail with four grilled large shrimp. She asked for the shrimp to be breaded and the waiter didn't have a problem with that. For her one side she chose the waffle fries (for a slight upcharge). When her meal arrived, she became anxious and tore into her lobster. Her joy was short lived when she

discovered the lobster was undercooked. She never experienced this before, so she unknowingly ate it. She found out the hard way later in the day, that eating the undercooked lobster was not a good decision. Now she knows why there is no lobster sushi!!! The shrimp were delicious and the waffle fries were plentiful.

Jim had the EMTs standing by while he ordered the Springfield Horseshoe Burger (\$16). This was white toast with a half-pound burger topped with fries and smothered with a white cheese sauce. He went the extra mile and substituted tater tots for the fries. This was a culinary masterpiece. It had all of Jim's favorites, white bread, a deliciously charred burger, tater tots (for a slight upcharge) and a mysterious cheese sauce. He ate the whole thing and survived!!! There wasn't a crumb left on his plate.

FYI: This restaurant is not handicap accessible.

If you are near Gilberts and getting hungry, why not stop in and check this place out. The food is delicious, but if it's a Friday and you want what Nancy ordered, make sure your lobster is firm, otherwise, send it back.


The price for our "cruisin' for food" was \$66.42. Jim not taken away in an ambulance, priceless...

He Said / She Said

JIM'S TAKE: What a delicious lunch, now it's time for a nap.

NANCY'S TAKE: No nap for me, the lobster did me in....

• 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

Curl up with a good show



Will Moore
Columnist

With Autumn swiftly approaching, some of us are scrambling to find some indoor activities to involve ourselves in. Working with books as I do, it has become abundantly clear that streaming services are snatching up properties to adapt. Now, I can't speak to the source material. However, after watching these two shows, a question lingers. Does a show work because of the novel or are there other factors that supersede?

AppleTV Plus has been fiendish in acquiring talent and intellectual property. "Bad Monkey" is one of the latest. Based on a mystery novel by Carl Hiaasen, our first introduction isn't to our detective but to the severed arm that kickstarts the whole mess. A vacationer chartering a fishing excursion hooks the gruesome detritus; in a piece of gallows humor, it is flipping everyone the bird.

Vince Vaughn is asked to take this appendage to the mainland from where it was found in the Keys, the local sheriff wanting nothing to disrupt the resort town's cashflow. But like all great gum-

shoes, he can't let this case go. Even when the arm is given over to the widow for burial, his curiosity keeps getting the better of him. I use Vince's name instead of the character's only because he has played this guy so many times, he has created a brand. This is USDA grade A Vaughn here. With an ex-wife who he lost his job over, he wilds away his day drinking and admiring the fauna. That is until this case, and a horrible yuppie neighbor played by SNL's Alex Moffat, breaks the monotony. Moffat plays this beautifully too, like an extension of his sketch work as a guy who owns a boat.

Carl Hiaasen's swampy tales of crimes are so ubiquitous with Florida; they might as well be a part of the tourism board's website. There are constant asides to industry's encroachment on the surrounding environment, from a resort developer ready to bulldoze a side character's family home on an idyllic beach to repeated mentions of the red lights in downtown Key West. From the first episode I was hooked, if it wasn't for the next show that held me up.

Netflix has been the primo place to find bestsellers turned their latest scrolling victim. All I can say is, I hope The Perfect Couple is a better novel because whoa boy. There should be a name for this kind over the top rogues gallery of family members/murder suspects that

populate these collective pulp fictions. Maybe they should be called tragicomic neuroses, the series. Rich people are just ruthless people with money, right? During a weekend wedding rehearsal dinner, a murder takes place overnight and everyone in this fractured wealthy family is a potential culprit. Only as the show went on, I just wanted to yell out that they all did it so the show would end. What follows is your most nightmarish telenovela with a heavy dose of "The Californians," minus the humor.

Nicole Kidman has played these icy matriarchs so well already, however here she is so arch that it borders on parody. When her husband (a criminally under-utilized Liev Schreiber) asks what she is doing in one scene; she says, "Just tying up some loose ends." You almost expect her to break the fourth wall. This kind of exchange happens twice.

I thought to myself, Liane Moriarty is a better writer than this. That is when I realized that it was actually from Elin Hilderbrand. It all feels like an inferior version of Big Little Lies, interesting because Kidman was featured there as well. Reading that she is no longer writing about Nantucket must come as a relief to the island. Six episodes transpire with such soapy nonsense that is genuinely a shock to see this in September. This is the new "no white after Labor Day."



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The Theatre Company Facebook page,

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OCTOBER 19 ROSE DAY SALE

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