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MY SUNDAY NEWS

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quickshot



**Tennis Club secures
USTA support for
pilot program 11**

quickquote

**Floyd at 92 is like
the old woodcarver,
Geppetto. He
creates somethnig
enchanting out of
wood 7**



Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

Mame cast members (L to R) Cynthia Church, Dee Ann Woods, and Judy Stage rehearse a scene for the upcoming performance.

Mame lights up the stage

By Carol Pavlik
For My Sun Day News

Dee Ann Woods is set to take the stage for the first time with the Theatre Company of Sun City in their spring production of Mame, the madcap musical about an eccentric socialite suddenly faced with the task of raising her young nephew. Woods portrays nephew Patrick's faithful nanny Agnes Gooch, who sticks out like a sore thumb in Mame's world of elegant New York parties.

"Gooch wears these orthopedic Oxfords

and she dresses like a frump," says Woods about her character. "It's a fun role. She's the good Catholic girl and she's in with Mame who is a high-flying, big-living, big-life type of person. She has to kind of grow into this family."

Woods wasn't familiar with the musical until this past January, when she and her best friend sat down to watch the 1974 movie version, Auntie Mame (starring Lucille Ball) together.

"She told me, 'oh yeah, you'll get the part of Gooch!'" remembers Woods, who says she would have been thrilled just to get a background part in the ensemble. "But my

best friend sort of spoke it into being, if you believe in that kind of stuff. She just put it out there."

Since moving to Del Webb in 2020 with her husband, Woods says even if they are traveling out of town, they make sure to get tickets to the Sun City Productions. "We don't miss the musicals," she says.

Assistant Director Linda Davis has been with the theater company since the very beginning, when her husband Peter co-founded it in 2003. She says this is only the second time Mame has been performed since it was staged at Sun City in 2009.

"It's amazing when you think about the fact that there are people on stage in their late 80s, singing and dancing," she says. "Once you get into the show, you totally forget that the people on stage [other than the child actors] live in Sun City. I'm in awe of what they're capable of doing."

Amongst the veterans of the stage, Woods feels welcomed as the newcomer. "I hope I can do the cast good," she laughs. "I'm the klutziest of the bunch. They're so professional and they have a system, but they are patient with me while I catch up. Mame, oh my word! Cynthia Church, who plays the lead role, shows up to every rehearsal and she has her lines, she has her music, and she's one of the most encouraging people. It's phenomenal."

Woods thinks the audience will appreciate Mame for the same reasons she sought out live theater: "I needed something lighthearted and upbeat, you know. The world is not an upbeat place right now. I hope the people who come see it get a few good belly laughs."

Mame Performance Dates:

Thursday, May 1 at 7 p.m.; Friday, May 2 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, May 3 at 1:30 p.m.; and Sunday, May 4 at 3 p.m. Tickets for Mame can be purchased Tuesday, March 25 in Drendel Ballroom 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Monday, April 14 in the Cedar Room, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; or Monday, April 21 in the Cedar Room, 1-4 p.m. Cash or check only. Ticket information: (847) 515-8545 or (847) 515-1583. ■



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lifeinfocus



Carol Pavlik
Columnist

300,000 decisions

My parents, still enjoying good health and living independently in their 90s, are sorting through their belongings in their home of nearly 40 years as they prepare to downsize to an apartment.

It is a big job, and my sister and brother-in-law are doing a lot of the heavy lifting, by virtue of them living nearby. In their spare moments, of which they have very few, they go to Mom & Dad's house and pick up boxes to take to the donation center. They offer moral support. The job of sifting through a lifetime of belongings is not only physically strenuous, but each unopened box holds the potential of releasing a flood of memories, good or bad: a letter from a long-gone relative; Mother's Day cards on brittle paper with "I love yous" scrawled in cray-

on; a serving bowl that brings back a long-forgotten detail from their wedding day.

I know my mother has treasured belongings she would like to pass on: like her beautiful Wurlitzer piano, which she bought used around 1960 when she was newly married and looking to make extra income playing piano at churches. It's the same piano where I sat for hours at a time with the dreaded kitchen timer, ticking off the minutes until I was released from practicing my scales and arpeggios and could go outside to play. I own my own piano now, so there's no room for Mom's Wurlitzer. My kids won't want it either, seeing as none of them are settled in their own homes yet.

There is a lifetime of clothing, shoved to the back of the closet when it didn't quite fit anymore or was dreadfully out of style. Quilts sewn by my great-aunt are neatly folded and tucked in a cedar chest at the end of the bed. Each quilt was lovingly made from leftover fabric scraps from her sewing projects.

I'm not as sentimental as my parents are: at least, I don't think I am. I look at their home and think it is too full, too cluttered with things no one will want. They have not lived a lavish

life, and many of their possessions were not purchased new, so it is easy for me to dismiss it as mostly junk. But I know that isn't true. It's a collection of photographs, dishes, Christmas cards, and books collected over eight decades; it tells the story of 66 years of marriage, four kids, seven grandkids. It all means something. Yet when they leave this world, they can take none of it.

There is an old comic strip that I've come across from time to time over the years: In it, a man has lifted his garage door to reveal that it is completely packed with old toys, tools, and other stuff. "Someday," quips the father, "this will all be yours, son!"

Margareta Magnusson's book, *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning* (2017), frames the act of clearing clutter, as well as emotional baggage, as a responsibility and act of love toward our families, to relieve them of the burden of sorting through clutter once we are gone.

Magnusson writes, "A loved one wishes to inherit nice things from you. Not all things from you."

There are 300,000 items in an average American home. At least, that's what has been re-

ported by both the LA Times and the Boston Globe. While my parents undertake this herculean task of downsizing, I am recognizing it as a radical expression of the love they have for their children. They are not leaving us to make 300,000 decisions when they are gone. They are intentionally weeding out the excess, and only keeping the best things for their new apartment. Not only is it an act of love, but a liberation of sorts.

What do we keep and what do we dispose of so the younger generation doesn't have to? I worry about what becomes of the stack of love letters written between me and my husband before we were married? Who will read my old journals, written when I was a melodramatic and self-indulgent college student? Would my children recognize me in those pages I wrote so long ago? Do I want them to? Maybe I'll build a fire in my backyard and ceremoniously light a match, watching my old missives go up in smoke. I'll clear out my closet and my drawers. As my parents eliminate the excess, I'm inspired to show that same type of love to my own children someday. I'll take on the 300,000 decisions so my kids don't have to.



The views in these letters are the writers' own.

I want to commend you on publishing an interesting newspaper every two weeks. The regular contributors should be complemented for their thoughtful columns.

I have enjoyed reading TR Kerth for several years. His observations are perceptive and entertaining. He always has something interesting to say about everyday life. In the same spirit, I recently started reading "Life in Focus" by Carol Pavlik. Again, her obser-

vations on day-to-day life are enlightening. She offers a different view than TR Kerth, but with the same warmth and humanity.

Joan Davis always has something interesting to say about healthy living. The Dining Duo, although I may not always agree with their culinary choices, put together a cleverly written column and introduce readers to restaurants that may not be familiar to them.

All in all, you have a talented group of writers who deserve recognition.

Lastly, I commend you on presenting a diversity of opinions in your letters.

Richard J Quigley
Huntley resident

Joan Davis's article missed why Irish are so healthy. After spending some time in Ireland, we learned that the state implemented a tax on sugary drinks (\$.30 per liter) in 2018 that has expanded to candy and baked goods. The reasoning is that obesity

was a huge health problem in Ireland, and sugar was correctly blamed for the problem. In order for state sponsored healthcare to continue, the state went after sugar.

An example while we were there: Subway's sandwiches were re-classified as a cookie because of the high sugar content in the buns. Grocery stores had no candy on the shelves, there are no chocolate shops, etc. There were only diet sodas to be found.

Here is an article I found when the laws were first changed:

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/the-sugar-tax-questions-and-answers-1.3479487>

Potatoes are in the nightshade family along with tomatoes, eggplant and ground cherries. We could no longer find tomatoes being used in our last trip to Italy, another topic of lengthy discussion certainly.

Rich Scherer
Sun City resident



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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Janet Fry and Orv McElfresh partners in life that bring music to the community.

Music and moments with McElfresh & Fry

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Orv McElfresh and his wife, Janet Fry, are ambassadors for the artist series programming offered for free at Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church in Huntley, 10805 Main Street. On Friday, March 7, the featured program was the Wartburg College Castle Singers and Kammerstreicher. The Wartburg College Castle Singers have a special meaning to McElfresh.

“I joined the Castle Singers in 1961. It is a fairly large group of singers, around 35. I enjoyed being part of the group back then and having them here is quite a thrill for me and a treat for our community. The group started in 1950,” he said.

Today, under the direction of Dr. Nicki Bakko Toliver, a wide variety of selection from Byrd to The Beatles. They enjoy performing both on and off campus. They also tour the United States annually and travel overseas.

Kammerstreicher is one of four

nationally and internationally touring ensembles at Wartburg College. The group was formed in 1914 by Dr. Daniel Kaplunas Kammerstreicher and is now led by Dr. Rebecca Nederhiser. The Wartburg College site states, “The mission of Kammerstreicher is to provide meaningful aesthetic experiences for members and audiences alike. This includes celebrating works by underrepresented composers and engaging the community through educational clinics, performances, and outreach.”

McElfresh moved to Sun City after his first wife passed away.

“My friends asked me what I was doing here,” he said. “They pushed me to look at houses in Sun City. I needed one that would accommodate a Baby Grand Piano. I found three houses that fit the bill. One of my friends was a realtor and helped with the process. I sold my house and moved to Sun City seven years ago.”

McElfresh was a Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Group member and started attending a grief

group. There, he met Janet Fry.

Fry said, “We had so much in common. We were both grieving, and we both attended Lutheran Colleges, and it was just meant to be,” she said.

McElfresh said, “It was a minor miracle. We’ve been together four years on April 24.”

Fry said, “We enjoy working together to help promote and bring these programs to the community.”

The mission of the Shepherd of the Prairie Artist Series is “to provide a platform where gifted artists can share their God given talents. This series will serve as an extension of our steadfast commitment to community outreach.”

• *If you haven't attended a program yet, mark your calendars — it's free. The next two Artist concerts are: Youth Ensemble of DuPage, a talented group of young musicians, on Sunday, May 4, at 4 p.m. and Lakes Area Swing Band, a local favorite, on Saturday, July 19, at 7 p.m.*

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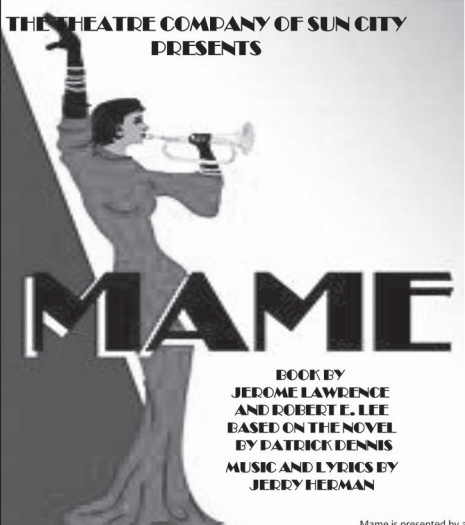
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theviewfromplanetkerth

And yet, somehow, here we are



TR Kerth
 Columnist

Digging through the junk drawer the other day, I found one of those plastic plugs you shove into an electric outlet to keep the grandkids from getting zapped. It was in the junk drawer instead of in an outlet because my grandkids are now all high-school-age or older, and if they haven't learned by now what kinds of things belong in an electric outlet and what kinds of things don't, then maybe it's time for them to learn the hard way.

But when they were little, my wife insisted that every treacherous death-dealing outlet be blocked from the grandkids' imaginative explorations. I actually wrote about it once in my column, long ago.

And as I looked at that little plastic plug in the junk drawer the other day, I shook my head and said: "How did we ever survive childhood?"

The question was rhetorical, I guess, because if those little plastic safety devices even existed when I was a little kid, my parents never got the news.

But then I wondered if the question was something more than rhetorical, as memories from my childhood flooded back that made me wonder, in a literal way: "How DID we ever survive childhood?"

Take the Christmas when I was no more than two or three years old, and Dad had removed one of the big electric bulbs from the string of lights on the tree. Remember those big bulbs? They burned hot enough to scald your hand and dry the tree into kindling, with a metal base that was almost exactly the size of a little kid's fingertip.

While Dad went to get another bulb to replace the dead one he had removed — with the string of lights still plugged in — I stuck my finger into the empty socket...repeatedly. And each time I stuck in my finger, I said, "Ooh, what a funny feeling!"

The line became a running family gag throughout my childhood, any time somebody did something stupid and got stung as a result. Usually they did the stupid thing only once, but not me, the poster child for repeated rechargings.

And yet, somehow, here I am to tell the tale.

And it wasn't only electricity we found a way to survive, was it? Not a bottle-cap in the house was childproof — not medicine, cleaning fluids, or even bottles whose murderous purpose was obvious, like rat poison. Unlike today, where hermetic seals and plastic rings protect us from groceries of mass destruction like milk and ketchup.

Back then, heat steamed from radiators that could sear a permanent stripe on a careless kid, and yet nothing stood between a kid and a hot radiator except common sense and the memory of what happened the last time he pressed his face against the scalding steel.

And yet, somehow, here we are.

Cars probably had seatbelts back then, but they were tucked deep between the cushions, and Dad happily obliged our pleas to speed around curvy country roads while we tumbled in the back seat.

Kids rode bikes wherever bikes could be ridden—on sidewalks, streets, railroad ties, and even down stairs. If a kid ever wore a helmet, it was an army surplus World War II helmet-liner that bounced around until it covered his eyes as he pedaled. With a metal kazoo in his mouth.

And yet, somehow, here we are.

In winter, we were sent outside to play without supervision, and the expectation was that each of us would freeze our tongues to the iron porch handrail no more than once. Well, except for me, of course. I got stuck three times, which surprised nobody who was in the living room that Christmas when I discovered funny-feeling electricity.

In summer, our playground was the street, where we played Running Bases between two strips of tar. Caught in a run-down between two taggers, it was easy for both runners and taggers to forget that the DeSoto bearing down on you could reach the base faster than any of you could.

If traffic got too heavy, we would move to the grass and toss metal Lawn Darts high into the air, then crane our necks to watch them fall back down.

And yet, somehow, here we are.

Back then, restaurants sold trans-fat food without the health inspector raiding the joint, and it was a race to finish eating before Mom and Dad lit their cigarettes. At family gatherings you had to be careful when you climbed up on Uncle Charlie's lap or you'd get burned by his cigar.

Whenever Uncle George came to visit, he always brought some interesting plaything for us. Sometimes it was toy army men made of lead, coated with lead-based paint. Or a marble-sized ball of mercury, which we would roll around in our hands or chase across the wooden floor. Or maybe a toy bow and arrows that we could use to hunt the rats in the woodpile by the alley — once we removed the rubber suction cup from the arrows and sharpened the points with the pocketknife Uncle George gave us last week.

And yet, somehow, here we are.

I'm glad to say that all of my grandkids have survived to young adulthood, thanks to electric outlet plugs and countless other safety features that didn't exist when you and I were kids. My safety-stewardship of them is over.

But now that my great-grandkids are lining up, should I re-invest in more of those little plastic electric outlet inserts? Would I sleep better if I installed them in every outlet again to protect my darling little rug-rats?

Or would I lose sleep wondering if they'll find a way to pry them out and say, "Ooh, what a funny feeling," as they turn them over in their mouths?

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

moneymatters



Deborah Haglund
Columnist

The good news is that most of the products we are watching were the same price on March 15 as they were on January and February 15. The bad news is that the two exceptions are whoppers. Ground beef was \$5.84/lb in March, an increase of 25.86% since January 15; and eggs were \$5.97, an increase of 43.51%.

Here are the Huntley Walmart store brand and Thornton gas prices for March 15, and the percentage change in those prices since January 15:

- Yellow onions/lb: \$0.97 (no change)
- Russet potatoes/lb: \$0.84 (no change)
- Bread (white): \$1.42 (no change)
- Creamy peanut butter/16 oz: \$1.94 (no change)
- Ground beef/lb: \$5.84 (+25.86%)
- Boneless chicken breast/lb: \$2.67 (no change)
- Rice/lb: \$0.92 (no change)
- Dried black beans/lb: \$1.76 (no change)
- Whole milk/gal: \$2.57 (-\$1.91%)
- Eggs/doz: \$5.46 (+43.51%)
- Gas/gal/reg: \$3.29 (no change)

Overall, the price of the products we are watching went up 11.73% between January 15 and March 15, driven entirely by the price of ground beef and eggs.



A POPS CONCERT

The Sun City Concert Band presents "A Pops Concert" in the Drendel Ballroom at the Prairie Lodge in Sun City Huntley on Thursday, May 8th at 7PM and Saturday May 10th at 1PM. Tickets are on sale for \$15 each on April 30, May 1st, 2nd and 5th in front of the library at Prairie Lodge from 9am to 2pm. You can also order tickets now from Rob Lindsey, phone 847-904-3088 or email ralco14180@gmail.com.

LIONS CLUB SEEKS MEMBERS

Help make a difference in your community! The Huntley Area Lions Club is seeking new members. Among its major fundraising events are the Brat and Brew Fest, the Pancake Breakfast, and the Annual Flower Show. All proceeds go back into the Huntley Community. If interested in joining this great organization, contact us at huntleyarealions@gmail.com

SHALOM GROUP

The Shalom Group of Sun City Huntley offers fun and fellowship for members of the Sun City Huntley Jewish community, their spouses, significant others, singles, and Jewish interfaith couples. For further information contact Lynne Shkolnik, program chair, at lynneshkolnik48@gmail.com.

iheardthisquote... By TR Kerth Columnist

The only way to prove that you're a good sport is to lose.

- Ernie Banks

There are two kinds of people in this world: Those who believe there are two kinds of people in the world, and those who are smart enough to know better.

- Tom Robbins

I don't believe that power always corrupts. Power reveals.

- Robert Caro

Men are more influenced by words than by the facts of surrounding reality.

- Demitri Vaselivich Pavlov

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo
Each piece of Donley's work is handcrafted with care and precision.

Out of the woods

Sun City resident shares his latest carvings

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

This is the story of a family tree, a walnut tree, and a cherry tree. But not just one; quite a few.

Floyd Donley, a Sun City resident and member of the Woodchucks, recently fulfilled a request from his daughter.

"My daughter has a glass coffee table. She is tired of seeing the dust on it as the sunlight streams through the window and the fingerprints and smudges," he said.

Donley used some of his mother's farm wood to build a coffee table for his daughter.

Mike Shortridge, vice president of the Woodchucks, had praise for Donley.

"Floyd at 92 is like the old woodcarver, Gepetto," he said. "He creates something enchanting out of wood."

Donley hand-carved the table's legs, which are turned to lend a touch of traditional elegance. The entire piece is hand-sanded to perfection.

Donley said, "I started this project in August of 2024, and now it will leave the shop to add the final touches at home."

His daughter anxiously awaits the coffee table to replace the glass table, and the grandchildren are eyeing the table. The piece is a one-of-a-kind conversation piece that hopefully will be passed on from generation to generation. Friends and family sit around the table, telling how the wood came from Donley's mother's farm, made by Donley for his daughter and inherited by grandchildren. It's a piece to be cherished and appreciated for all the hard work and time put into it.

When asked about his next project, Donley said he might choose a smaller-scale work.

"Nothing big," he said. "I may make a bowl or something similar."

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John Barrett
Columnist

Q I'm in my seventies and trying to take care of myself, but I feel overwhelmed by all the conflicting nutrition advice out there. One day, I hear I should cut carbs, the next, I'm told to eat whole grains. Some people swear by high-protein diets, others say too much meat is bad for me. And don't get me started on all the different opinions about dairy!

I just want to know, what do I really need to eat to stay healthy, maintain a good weight, and age gracefully? I'm not looking for a fad diet or anything complicated, just simple, realistic advice

that makes sense for someone my age. I want to keep my energy up, stay strong, and enjoy my meals without feeling guilty or confused.

Can you please help clear things up?

A I'm thankful for your honest question. With so much nutrition advice floating around, it's easy to feel confused and frustrated. Fortunately, eating well doesn't have to be complicated, and you don't need to follow extreme diets to stay healthy as you age. The key is balance, variety, and consistency.

For healthy aging, focus on whole, nutrient-dense foods that give your body what it needs to

stay strong, energized, and independent. A good rule of thumb is to fill your plate with a mix of lean protein, fiber-rich carbohydrates, and healthy fats. Protein helps maintain muscle mass, which naturally declines with age. Aim for lean sources like fish, poultry, eggs, beans, and nuts. If you enjoy dairy, Greek yogurt or cottage cheese can be great options. If you prefer plant-based protein, lentils, tofu, and quinoa work well.

When it comes to carbohydrates, the key is choosing the right kinds. Instead of cutting them out entirely, focus on whole grains like oatmeal, brown rice, and whole wheat bread, which provide fiber and keep your blood sugar stable.

Fiber is especially important for digestion and heart health, so make sure to include plenty of vegetables, fruits, and legumes.

Healthy fats are another essential part of aging well. Olive oil, avocado, nuts, and fatty fish like salmon help reduce inflammation and support brain health. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish and flaxseeds, may also help with joint pain and memory.

Hydration is just as important as food. As we age, our sense of thirst can decrease, so make a habit of drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Herbal teas, broth-based soups, and water-rich foods like cucumbers and watermelon can also help keep you hydrated.

Rather than stressing over

strict rules, listen to your body. Eat a variety of foods, practice portion control, and enjoy meals that satisfy you. It's okay to indulge in treats occasionally. Balance is what matters most.

If you're still feeling unsure, consider consulting a registered dietitian who can offer guidance tailored to your specific needs. Rest assured, aging well doesn't require a fad diet. Stick to simple, wholesome eating that supports your body and keeps you feeling your best.

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

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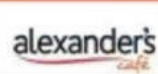
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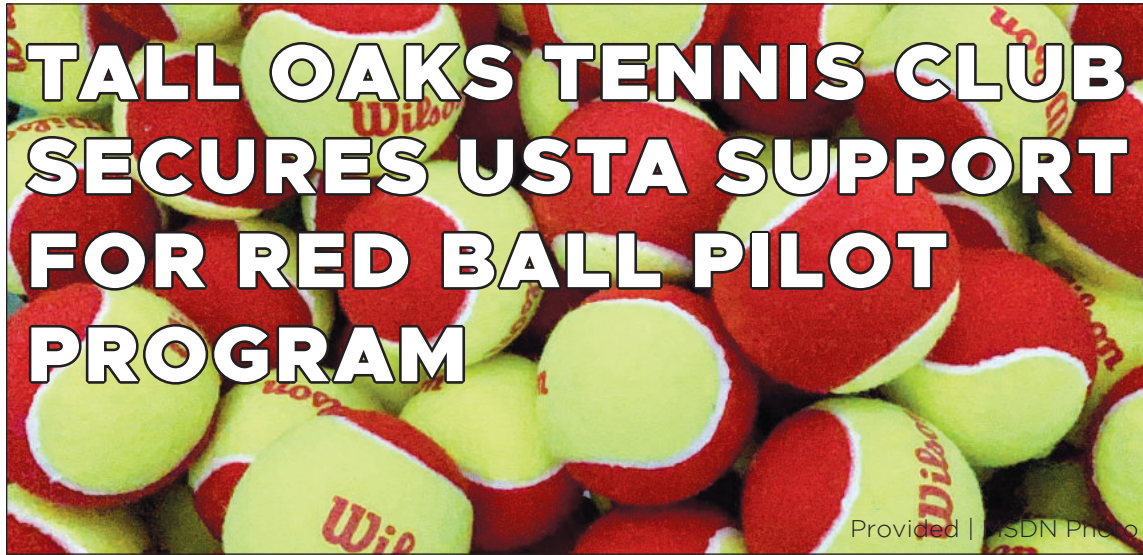
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TALL OAKS TENNIS CLUB SECURES USTA SUPPORT FOR RED BALL PILOT PROGRAM



Provided | USDN Photo

By Michelle Moreno

michelle@myhuntleynews.com

The Tall Oaks Tennis Club has scored a major win, securing support from the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to launch a red ball tennis pilot program. Thanks to the efforts of club president Duane Fontana, the USTA has provided the club with new equipment to help introduce its members to the sport in a more accessible and enjoyable way.

"If we go back maybe seven, eight years ago, I saw that the population of Sun City was getting older and a lot were getting

injuries or they can't do what they used to...I had shoulder surgery so I understand now. So, I said, 'There's got to be a way that I can make it easier for older people or people that have injuries to do this.' So, I came up with this brilliant idea that if I had a slower ball and a smaller court, it might make it easier for the older people," Fontana told My Sun Day News.

This ultimately led Fontana to discover Masters Tennis, a modified version of the sport that is played on a smaller court and uses slower balls and lighter racquets. With the help of Fontana's wife, the Tall Oaks Tennis Club formed a sub-charter

section of members who only participate in Masters Tennis. While Masters Tennis has grown in popularity within the club over the years, Fontana realized that there was more potential to attract those who are still intimidated by the sport. After some online research, Fontana found yet another modification of tennis that was far more beginner-friendly.

Red ball tennis, which uses larger, softer, and slower-moving balls on a smaller court, is designed to make tennis more approachable for beginners and those with limited mobility. The modified equipment helps players develop their skills at a

comfortable pace, reducing the physical demands of the traditional game.

"[The USTA] had a pilot program in 2024 and if you signed up for this program, they would supply you with equipment to get started," said Fontana. "They've been rolling it out nationwide. The pilot program is over. I got in under the wire and they're rolling it out and they're going to make a big deal about this in 2025. So, I figured we're in a perfect position because we are older and we do have injuries and it's something that everybody can try. So, when I filled out the application they gave me 12 tennis racquets, they gave me 12 sleeves—so 36 balls, they gave me the net, they gave me regrips for the tennis racquets, and instructions on how to set it up, for free. It's like \$500 worth of stuff."

Fontana added that in return for the free red ball tennis equipment, the Tall Oaks Tennis Club must provide feedback to the USTA on the progress of red ball tennis within the club.

Starting sometime in April, Fontana says that the Tall Oaks Tennis Club has secured the Birch Room in hopes of getting Sun City residents to try red ball tennis. The club also has two dates at the Meadow View

Lodge where residents from the community will be invited to try the modified version of the sport.

"We start our tennis season on May 16, I believe. We're going to have an expo out there on the tennis courts for people to try it," said Fontana. "But our first rollout is going to be I think in April. When the season starts, if [residents are] interested, we'll start them in [our] Tennis Academy. We'll have some of our experts rate them and we'll start them maybe with the foam [red] ball to get them over some of the intimidation, the fear of getting hit or hurt, and build up some confidence and some basic strokes."

Fontana may not be sure of the future of red ball tennis in the club but is hopeful it will have a positive impact on Sun City.

"I really believe that it's going to have a play in Sun City and for the Tall Oaks Tennis Club because it's going to keep the people who used to play but quit because of injuries. It's going to bring them back and let them enjoy the game," said Fontana. "Looking forward five years from now, there's going to be a good portion of Sun City residents in the Tall Oaks Tennis Club either starting or continuing to play red ball tennis more than even I can imagine."

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gardenersforum

New blooms: a look at the latest plants of 2025



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

Mary, my adult daughter, and I recently went shopping. Thanks to her patience and good decorating abilities, I now own a few new home décor items. While certainly not extravagant, each time I walk into the kitchen or living room I smile because these new items that seem to make the rooms more inviting and pleasing.

Spring brings the chance for us to add a few new things to our garden. Much like adding new items to the inside our home, adding something new to the outside of our home will often add interest and brings joy. Thankfully, plant growers and hybridizers have spent years researching and developing new plants for our yards. Often times these plants have been growing in trial gardens across America as a way to ensure that when they are planted in our yards, they will thrive.

For this column, I have curated a list of plants that are new for 2025. The list includes a mix of perennial flowers, ornamental grasses and flowering shrubs.

While some do better in full sun others do best in shade. They vary based on flowering time, color of the flowers and their mature height and width.

Delosperma 'Orange Glow' (Ice Plant)

The vibrant orange flowers on this perennial plant have yellow centers and pink tips on the petals. These very unique blooms are present continuously May-September. They grow about 6" tall and 10" wide. They are low maintenance and do well in rock gardens or mass plantings. They perform best when planted in full sun.

Dianthus 'Milk Cherry' (Milk Cherry Carnation)

The flowers on the dainty plant start out white and age to a bright cherry-red. The contrasting gray-green foliage makes for a dramatic look. With fragrant flowers this makes a wonderful cut flower. The plant grows to about 8" tall and wide and flowers in the spring. It does best in full sun.

Gaillardia aristata Spintop Red (Red Blanket Flower)

There are many blooms on each well branched stem. The long bloom time means red flowers appear throughout the summer. It grows 12" tall and wide and does

best in full sun to part shade. The beautiful flowers attract butterflies and are heat tolerant.

Nepeta subsessilis 'Purple' (Purple Catmint)

The mint scented leaves are complimented by large, deep purple blooms. The flowers are present from spring until late summer. This plant is rabbit and deer resistant making it a good choice for most gardens. It grows about 30" tall and 24" wide.

Sedum 'Midnight Velvet' (Rock N Grow Stonecrop)

The dark purple foliage on this dome habit perennial flower makes this an interesting succulent plant. It is very reliable and quite trouble-free. It does best in a rock garden and can be used as a groundcover. It grows about 24" tall and 12" wide and does well in full sun. The purple-colored flowers are visible late summer into early fall. It often attracts butterflies.

Amsonia ciliata var. tenuifolia 'Verdant Venture' (Verdant Venture Bluestar)

The powder blue petals on this perennial flower are visible above thread like foliage that turns bright yellow in the fall. The flowers, which are present spring through early summer, at-

tract pollinators and butterflies. It grows tall, reaching about 3' at maturity, and grows about the same diameter. It does best in full sun to part shade.

Asclepias purpurascens (Purple Milkweed)

This native plant is similar to *Asclepias syriaca* (Common Milkweed) but has much deeper pink flowers. The sturdier stems mean it is much less likely to fall over. It does best in full sun to part shade. It grows about 30" tall and wide and has fragrant blooms in mid-summer.

Heliopsis helianthoides 'Summer Eclipse' (Summer Eclipse False Sunflower)

These bicolor flowers have orange centers with yellow edges and are present June, July and August. The foliage is a very pretty dark burgundy color. Summer Eclipse attracts butterflies and pollinators and does best in full sun. The mature height is 30" tall and wide.

Carex elata 'Gurre Soe' (Nordic® Blade Sedge)

The striking black flower heads on this ornamental grass appear in the spring and mature to fuzzy brown spikes that persist throughout the summer and fall. It has an upright and clump forming habit. It is extremely drought tolerant and grows about 30" tall and 42"

wide. It does best in full to part shade.

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Bailmacseven' (Eclipse Hydrangea)

The deep purple foliage on this flowering shrub is present spring, summer and fall. The foliage adds to the interest of this unique plant. The deep cranberry-colored flowers rebloom throughout the summer and into the early fall. Does best in partial shade and grows about 42" tall and wide.

Rosa 'SRPylwko' (Easy Buzzy™ Knock Out® Rose)

The light yellow semi-double flowers on this rose offer a citrus fragrance. The flowers are plentiful from early summer all the way through the fall. It grows about 3' tall and wide and does best when planted in full to part sun.

Sorbaria sorbifolia 'Bococot' (Cherry On Top Sorbaria)

The chartreuse leaves are tinged with red in the spring. Plumes of white flowers turn to bright red seed pods as the season progresses. It does best when planted in full sun to part shade and will grow to a height and width of 5'. It is part of the Bloomin' Easy plant family.

GARDENERS | Pg. 19



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- *Daily Herald* March 11, 2025

Key Info

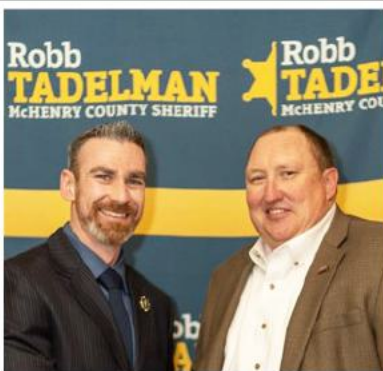
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- McHenry County Sheriff Robb Tadelman

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- Representative Jeff Keicher

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Friendly events, friendly competition, and friendships are what draws members to the Thursday Lady's Bowling League.

WOMEN'S BOWLING LEAGUE STRIKES UP FUN

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

Pam Figolah enjoys bowling, not only for the sport but for the friendships and the fun. Paralleling Sun City History, the group has been around for about 25 years.

Figolah said, "A group of ladies from Sun City started a women's bowling league at Huntley Bowl Hi. Originally, the ladies named the league The Sun City Ladies Bowling League. This ladies' group aimed to meet neighbors who also enjoyed bowling. The league was very social, with some friendly competition. A few years later, the

league expanded and changed its name to Thursday Ladies Bowling League."

The league continues to bowl on Thursday mornings at Bowl Hi in Huntley. There are now twelve teams and forty-eight bowlers. Most of the women are from Sun City. Others are from Huntley and nearby communities like Lake in the Hills, Algonquin, Woodstock, Dundee, and Elgin.

The bowling year brings fun during the cooler months.

Figolah said, "Our "season starts mid-September and ends the last Thursday in April."

The Thursday Lady's Bowling League is also a handicap league. Figolah said, "We welcome bowlers of all skill levels. Some of our bowlers started bowling as young children, while others are new to bowling. Our handicap is based on 100% of 200. That means every bowler's average plus their handicap will total 200. Everyone is on an equal playing field. Our bowler's averages range between 100 and 160, with most averages around 120."

The group does some fun things throughout the season and some fun, friendly competition.

"We have holiday sweepers where prizes are given to the top ten bowlers who bowl the most pins over average, and a prize is given to the most improved bowler, handicap game, and handicap series. We also have the dreaded weekly kitty. It will cost you a quarter if you don't do your average in the second game. To end the season, there is a roll-off for first and second place and a 9-pin-no-tap game. A 9-pin-no-tap is when a bowler knocks down nine pins with their first ball, which will be a strike. If the first ball knocks down eight or fewer pins, the bowler throws a second ball for

a spare."

Sun City resident Pat Cox said, "It is such a fun experience bowling with all the ladies on the Thursday Ladies League. They are very friendly and encourage all teams to bowl well. We all get excited when we manage to get strikes and spares."

Bowling is the great equalizer when it comes to fun. The bowling industry is currently enjoying a period of unprecedented popularity. Using new technology and broadening its customer focus, bowling is one of the top participatory sports. Over 67 million people bowled at least once last year, and almost 2 million actively participated in league play.

Kathy Janonis said, "I have been bowling for seven years. I enjoy the league. It's not competitive and a sociable time."

Sun City Resident Judy Keegan agrees.

"This is a great group of ladies; we have a lot of fun," she said.

Overall, the consensus is clear.

Figolah said, "People who enjoy bowling are the same people who enjoy a wide variety of activities such as golf, tennis, pickleball, bocce ball, and swimming. Bowling provides an option for those wanting to continue some winter activities and social gatherings. We have no age restrictions, but most bowlers in our league are 60 to 85. The league has an enjoyable group of ladies to bowl with. They are excited to bowl, no matter their average. We cheer each other on and high-five the other team, even when they win. As we gear up for the next season, there are some open spots on a team."

If you're interested in joining the Thursday Ladies Bowling League contact Pam Figolah at 224-339-1943 to learn more and secure your spot.

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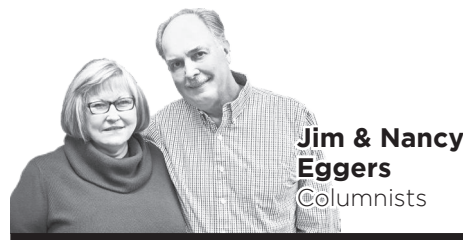
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A burger round-up



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.

Ah, the wild west!!! A time in American history of lawlessness, cattle rustlers, and gun slingers. This was immortalized by such historically accurate TV shows (NOT) such as Have Gun Will Travel, Bonanza, and our personal favorite, Gunsmoke. This show had memorable characters such as the 6'7" Marshall Dillon, the vivacious Miss Kitty (who we always suspected of running a promiscuous business on the side), and comic relief provided by Chester who was desperately in need of orthopedic work. With this in mind, Jim put on his chaps and spurs, which for reasons we won't go into, he just happened to have lying around the house, jumped on our faithful steed "Mini," and blazed a trail to Cattlemen's Burger and Brew in Algonquin.

This venue is a standalone building in downtown Algonquin with limited street parking, so be prepared to walk a block or two. The inside of this saloon is small and compact with seven booths, one large corner booth, six high-top tables, and a large bar. We moseyed up to the bar and sat down and were given tablets which contained the menu.

To start off our wild west afternoon, we ordered Nashville Mozzarella Sticks (\$9) for an appetizer. This was seven Italian breaded mozzarella sticks with a fiery hot buffalo coating which was served with Ranch dressing. Jim liked the spicy addition to a plain mozzarella stick, but I'm not a big fan of buffalo sauce. I ate one stick and it burned my britches and I downed my glass of Coke and lime in two seconds flat.

Nancy wanted to roundup some good beef and had the Angel's Cheddar Melt (\$18) which was Italian beef topped with grilled onions, melted cheddar and mozzarella cheeses all served on toasted Italian bread. It came with crispy fries and

au jus. This sandwich was so big she had a hard time folding it up so she ate it with a knife and fork. It was a tasty surprise, but the fries were battered and fried and didn't impress her. Half her sandwich came home with her in a "git along little doggie" bag.

Jim was in his wild west glory and went with the Bourbon Cowboy Steak Burger (\$18). This was a hearty steak burger topped with sharp cheddar cheese, Applewood bacon, and crunchy onion rings. It was drizzled in Jack Daniels barbecue sauce and served on a brioche bun. He upgraded his fries to tater tots (\$3). This huge burger lived up to its name, it checked all the boxes, and half of it came back to the bunk house for later.

FYI: This restaurant is handicap accessible but be forewarned, the tables are very close together.

To round this all up, the food was tasty and the portions were huge. Kudos to the cook in the chuckwagon. We also had one of the best waitresses ever. She handled the entire busy restaurant by herself and was also the bartender. She didn't miss a beat. I, Nancy, would have been flustered but she took it all in stride.

The price for our wild west adventure was \$58.86. Bellying up to the bar at High Noon, priceless....

He Said / She Said

JIM'S TAKE: My burger was unbelievably tasty. It was charred on the outside and juicy on the inside.

NANCY'S TAKE: The melted toasty cheese on top of my beef hit the bullseye.

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

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let'sgetreel



Will Moore
Columnist

It's in the bag

How does a relationship last? This is a question that has plagued smarter men than myself. Marriages are tougher. You promise to stick it out through thick and thin. Then there's the needling and bickering; the yearning for your own individuality while maintaining a unit. And don't get me started on how to hang the toilet paper roll. (It is

over the roll, welcome to my Ted Talk). However, what if your respected jobs require discretion and even a bit of duplicity?

Enter Kathryn and George, the spies and spouses at the heart of Steven Soderbergh's latest *Black Bag*. And let's just say welcome back Steven. Not so often do you get two good movies from the same creative team in one year. Lately, you are lucky to get even one. Hot on the heels of January release *Presence* (see previous review from February 13), he returns with writer David Koepp for a different kind of slow burn thriller. As we follow George (played by Michael Fassbinder) through a club, we get a subtle nod in the camera work toward their last outing. But by the end, we are in a different world, as a fellow spy informs George of a heinous act of thievery that has perpetuated on their agency. A dangerous item has been stolen by someone on their side and George is tasked at flushing out the traitor. Some early signs point to his wife Kathryn (played by Cate Blanchett). And now the game begins.

During a casual dinner at their residence, friends and work colleagues are invited for a seemingly innocuous night of frivolity. Through George's keen observations, he is honing in on their strength and weaknesses. Is this person in front of me capable of the deception that would jeopardize the agency? But just him and Kathryn, those around the

table are couples embroiled in their own mini game of cat of mouse with each other. The lies and deceit don't just end when they clock out; the office is never left at the office. They sit at a dining table with orbs of light shining up into them like a bare bulb interrogation.

I am glad to see director Steven working with this kind of cinematic chiaroscuro not seen since the *Ocean's* trilogy. It is featured in scenes throughout, but are most effective here. These guests are being grilled even though they are completely unawares. The streets lamp send auras out as Kathryn strolls a rain slick avenue. Defuse club lights flank George's journey in the beginning. But this lighting is most striking in the main couple's tender moments. Never has an espionage film been so sexy without ever showing a hint of the act or nudity. Where gratuity would be par for the course, the steamy chaste nature of these conversations and interactions become downright explicit. A simple chat about spy craft becomes foreplay.

In casting that may seem like stunt, Pierce Brosnan shows up as the boss as well as former *Money* Naomi Harris as the agency's physiologist. Humorous to see two *Bond* alumni showing up in a film that couldn't be less so. Fassbinder's look evokes John le Carré's Smiley more than 007. Rounding out the cast is Rege-Jean Page of *Bridgerton* fame, Tom Burke from HBO's *C.B*

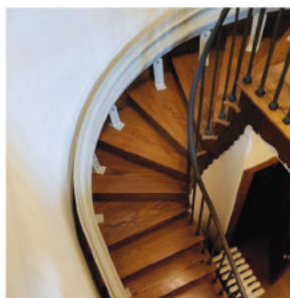


“Strike,” and *Industry's* Marisa Abela. All keen to show who has the quicker wits in both profession and personal life. But as the ninety-three minute run time winds down, couples will end and others will flourish. And question still remains: how does the perfect relationship work? With patience and a little bit of communication; even the most iron-clad operative can be a successful husband, wife, lover. Just don't bring unnecessary baggage into the equation. And, possibly, leave your firearms at the door.



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ONGOING CALLING ALL CHICAGO SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS!!!!

The Chi-Town Sports Trivia Group is up and running. Friendly competition - the FIRST FRIDAY of each month, 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Huntley Library. All questions covering the BEARS, BLACKHAWKS, BULLS, CUBS, WHITESOX, and the Chicago sports scene.

ONGOING SUN CITY MEN'S GOLF LEAGUE

The Sun City Tuesday Men's League is seeking full-time and substitute golfers for the 2025 season. Contact Andy Jones, heyaj50@yahoo.com for additional information.

APRIL AND MAY THE THEATRE COMPANY OF SUN CITY: MAME

The Theatre Company of Sun City will present, MAME for their spring musical production! SHOW DATES:

MAY 1, Thursday at 7 p.m.
MAY 2, Friday at 7 p.m.
MAY 3, Saturday at 3 p.m.
MAY 4, Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
TICKET SALES: TICKETS are \$25.
Tuesday, March 25, in Drendel Ballroom 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Prairie Lodge
Monday, April 14, in the Cedar Room 9 am to 12 pm, Prairie Lodge
Monday, April 21, in the Cedar Room 1-4 p.m., Prairie Lodge. Limit 10 tickets per purchase. Checks or cash for the exact amount please. Please let us know if a ticket is for a person with a scooter or wheelchair. Ticket Info: 847-515-8545 or 847-515-1583.
If you or anyone you know is interested in Directing, Set design, helping with set build or costuming for the Theatre Company don't hesitate to contact Myron Shellist, President at: 847-515-8545.

APRIL 6 FIRST ANNUAL SOFTBALL OPEN HOUSE
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•GARDENERS

Syringa x hyacinthiflora 'SMNSHBBL'(Scentara® Double Blue Lilac)

This strongly scented lilac brings back memories of the days gone by. This profuse spring bloomer boasts double flowers with blue tones. It attracts butterflies and does best in full sun. It grows about 6' tall and 7' wide at maturity.

Cornus alba 'Byboughen'(Neon Burst Dogwood)

This heat and drought tolerant shrub has attractive chartreuse leaves. The leaves are tinged with

bronze in the spring and the stems are bright red throughout the year. In the fall the foliage becomes a beautiful purple color. It grows about 5' tall and wide and does best in full to part sun.

Spirea 'Bailcarol'(Sundrop Spirea)

This compact shrub has a rounded shape that requires little to no pruning. It is frequently used as a border due to its 15" mature height and 24" width. It is covered with bright pink flowers in the early summer. The golden foliage provides a beautiful con-

trast. It does best in full to part sun.

As we spring into 2025, I hope that you are able to enjoy the newness of spring and the joy that it brings.

• 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.

The views in these letters are the writers' own.

politicalplace

To All Sun City Residents,
I am stepping away from being a Trustee on the Huntley Village Board in May after having served for 12 years. I have been proud to have represented you and all of the 30,000+ residents in Huntley. I started out in 2006 here and became very involved in Sun City Huntley: on two Marketing Committees, chair of N33, helped to rewrite the bylaws for NAC, was a ten-year member of The Life Long Learning Committee, and attended the Rutland Township meetings regularly for years. I belong to two Clubs: The Italian Club and the Shalom Club. I also was appointed to two Senior Commissions: one in Kane County and the other in McHenry County. I was appointed to the Huntley Zoning Board, was VP of the Huntley Civilian Police Academy, VP of the Huntley

Historical Society, was on the Financial Advisory Committee of D158, belonged to the Huntley Chamber of Commerce from 2012-2024, and won an award from them, the "Unsung Hero Award." Thank you for your support!

Ronda Goldman
Huntley resident

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