

# MY SUNDAY NEWS

PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF SUN CITY IN HUNTLEY

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Meet the designing women Donna Scott (L) and Carol Burgett, who create the costumes for the Sun City Theatre Company's productions. Here they model some costume pieces off the rack.

## Behind the seams

Costumes bring life to the stage, these women bring life to the costumes

**By Christine Such**  
For My Sun Day News

When the house lights dim and the stage illuminates, the actors' garments command the audience's attention. The genuine magic of these theatrical wardrobes begins months earlier.

Sun City residents Donna Scott and Carol Burgett are behind every flawless silhouette, historically accurate bodice, and quick-change seam, transforming fabric into living art.

Scott said, "Costumes and sewing have been part of my life since the first Barbie came out in 1959. My mother said I was too old for Barbie, but my younger sister got one. My sister wasn't interested in the doll, but I was. A friend of my mother gave me books of fabric swatches. I used these to create the best clothes a doll ever had."

Scott earned a blue ribbon for a skirt she had made in 4H. In 8th grade, she made a three-piece suit.

"Creating costumes has been my real love. My first show with the Sun City Theatre Company was Brigadoon in 2009. I had one line, 'She's upstairs,'" she said.

On the playbill for Brigadoon, Scott was listed as a member of the costume committee. The Wizard of Oz was the first time Scott created costumes for a show. She made the costumes for Glinda and the Mayor of Munchkin City. For the performance of Beauty and the Beast, Scott was listed as a costume designer. This

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**Carol Pavlik**  
Columnist

# Growing up at summer camp

Having never been to summer camp myself, I'm living vicariously through my daughter, who is working this summer as a camp counselor. The camp she's at could be right out of a Wes Anderson movie: picnic tables by the lake, tiny, brightly painted cabins with bunk beds and screen doors; a mess hall with huge serving platters and ladles and pitchers lined up, freshly washed.

We visited my daughter the other day, for a brief 30 minute-stopover while we happened to be driving through the quaint Wisconsin town where she works. As she met us on the gravel lane between the road

and the camp, I could already detect a difference, the way her messy ponytail bounced with every step. She looks casual and comfortable, as if she's recently discovered that her skin fits her perfectly.

All up her tanned arms are woven friendship bracelets, and she goes through each one and tells me about who made it for her. She gives us a tour of the arts & crafts building, which smells pleasantly damp and has shelves lined with markers and glue and scissors.

My oldest son went to summer camp after 7th grade. I still remember picking him up, seeing his pre-orthodontia smile light up at the sight of his younger siblings, and the hug-a-palooza that ensued. He was covered in mosquito bites, and seemed to have grown about 3 inches. After only two weeks of not seeing him, I was convinced his voice was lower.

Seeing my daughter now, my heart tugs a little. She is my youngest child, so letting go is a bit more bittersweet. Even though she already has a year of college under her belt, her time working as a camp counselor for only a few weeks seems to

have aged her in a different way. She is more grounded and more confident. For the brief moment I see her interact with a camper, an eight-year old named Dorothy, I see a kind of patient wisdom come over my daughter's face. Where college is teaching her to think, discuss, and challenge peers and older adults, summer camp is bringing out another side of her. She is there to nurture, to think of others first, to make sure the little kids have fun in a safe place. Since she was their age not so long ago, she seems to know instinctively what they need. Dorothy has lost track of her brother, and wants to find him. My daughter listens patiently, nodding and leaning in slightly. Then they're off, skipping across the campus, while I marvel at this young woman I'm just starting to know.

This brief visit is precious to me, since there's been very little communication from her since she moved into her counselor cabin nearly a month ago. As summer camp should be, she rarely has her phone on her, so my motherly texts of "How RU?" and "Having a good day?" often go unanswered for days.

Then, out of nowhere, a flurry of photos without context will arrive: a sunset, a turtle, a selfie with her and her co-counselors, petting a dog who has sand on his nose and is unmistakably smiling. These are digital kisses that I will treasure. It's her way of saying, "I'm happy. I'm living in the moment."

She will return to me, sun-kissed and filled with memories that I'm not a part of. This is the strange transition of parenting: going from an onslaught of shared memories to only a precious few; each year since birth, her circle widens while I hold on to the tenuous spider web that connects us as she ventures farther and farther away. I stand perfectly still, as though she's a feral animal, trying not to make any sudden movements that could spook her. I want her to come back to me, if only for a moment, and share some of those precious memories with me. I'll store them away in my heart, marveling at how some experiences bring forth baby steps of growth, while others, like this job experience at a feature film-perfect camp, is helping her leapfrog into the adult she is becoming.

# Han's Your Hat



The views in these letters are the writers' own.

"To be Black and fight for America is to know that America may not fight for you." Written in the Atlantic Daily 6-19-26. This statement is sad but is it true?

From the beginning of time, humans migrating north, all the way to the North Pole, adapted to the environment. The further north

they went, their skin became lighter and their bodies more compact. It is foolish to believe that humans are so different from each other. We all descended from a common dark-skinned mother. In everything that humans' experiences, from birth until death, they can find fear. They can also find joy, sometimes in what others fear. We live in a wonderful world that we can touch and that touches us. We are fluid in our ability to adapt, to learn, to change how we think, and how we live through our choices.

We have always dealt with fear of changes and differences; between people, such as skin colors; gender classifications, of which there are many, and a multitude of other fears. Every human develops ways to conquer those fears, and some do not. Today religions sometimes guide worshiper's choices. Fear can be used to control and manipulate others. Our choices make a difference between who or

what we are willing to fight for. Choice is free to everyone; money and status do not hinder the ability to choose.

I chose the idea of the American Republic and to adhere to The Constitution of the United States. I chose to fight for freedom for everyone. I am choosing to vote on my beliefs.

**Gail Talbot**  
Huntley resident

I applaud your addressing the inclusion of the Political Place column regarding political opinions in the Sun Day newspaper. That column needs to continue. I believe in the freedom of the press and the need for fair and responsible journalism. While I bristle when people submit their editorial opinions as facts, we still need a forum to safely express political viewpoints.

I hope that someday soon it will feel safer to do this without fear of repercussions from those who disagree with what is being written and submitted. Part of the issue is that we are no longer disagreeing about politics and policies, but rather we are challenging moral and ethical values. I don't expect that anything I write will change someone's value system. And expressing any disagreement in that regard is likely to result in others digging in deeper to defend their position.

In that regard, it was refreshing to see an example of what leadership looks like with the dedication of the Obama Presidential Center this past week. And that gives me hope for a better tomorrow.

Thank you for taking the appropriate stand on this.

**Patricia White**  
Sun City resident

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

(L to R) Leo Garcia with older brother Marcos chase bubbles at the Grandma, Grandpa & Me's annual picnic.

## Annual GG&Me picnic reaches new milestone

By Christine Such  
For My Sun Day News

The annual Sun City Grandma, Grandpa, & Me (GG&ME) Charter Club's picnic once again

brought energy, laughter, and cherished memories to our Sun City community. This beloved tradition continues to be one of the highlights of the summer, bridging generations through shared games, food, and quality

time. While the event is always a success, this year's picnic featured a special milestone that highlights the lasting impact of this club. For years, Aiden and Logan

Sutherland have been familiar faces at GG&Me gatherings, participating in countless GG&ME events throughout their childhood. Over the years, they grew up alongside the club, building bonds and making memories right here in the community with their grandparents Kathy and Kurt Wendhack. Kathy has served as a Vice President of the club.

This year, the club was fortunate enough to have both Aiden and Logan return in a brand-new role: as volunteers. Instead of just playing the games, they stepped up to help run them.

The duo spent the day managing activity stations, coordinating youth games, helping wherever needed. Their transition from enthusiastic participants to dedicated volunteers brought immense joy to the organizers and a wonderful energy to the younger children in attendance.

Club secretary Nedra Reeves and her daughter teamed up to sketch a magical chalk obstacle course for the grandkids. The children jumped, hopped, skipped, and danced their way through the challenges, which included roaring like lions, neighing like horses, and reaching for the stars. The course finished with the best requirement

of all, a giant hug for the grandparents.

The event featured hula hoops, bubbles, spoon races, crafts, duck races, and a dinosaur hunt. The all-ages water balloon toss was a massive hit. To wrap up, even cleaning up the popped balloon pieces became a fast-paced race.

Ann Malandrucolo, chair of this year's event said, "This is the third year, with the help of many, that I've chaired or co-chaired the picnic. Every year I believe we have more fun and laughs than the year before. Thanks to all who shared in a great time."

Having former youth participants return as teenage or young adult volunteers is a testament to the strength of the GG&ME Club. It proves that the connections made here stick with these kids as they grow.

Kathy said, "Aiden is thirteen and Logan is fifteen. They both enjoyed helping out. All my grandkids had a fun time at picnic. The granddaughters loved the crafts."

The club extends a massive thank you to Aiden, Logan, and all the volunteers who made the 2026 picnic an unforgettable day.

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## theviewfromplanetkerth

# A pane-pecked tale of woe



**TR Kerth**  
Columnist

**A**s I write this, a robin is pecking at my bathroom window. He's been at it, off and on, since before 5 a.m. this morning.

And as irritating as that is, he has been pecking at my window every morning at dawn's first blush since early May — more than two months now.

I have tried everything I know to stop him. Post-it notes on the glass. Even pictures of cats and wolves.

Nothing has deterred him or slowed him down. Each morning I crawl out of bed, rattle the drapes to shoo him off, and he's back pecking away before my head hits the pillow again.

I'm pretty sure it's his own reflection that he's attacking, so I trimmed the tree just outside that window, clipping off the branches that would offer him a perch for the best view of himself. But that didn't work. Now he just sits on a lower branch and leaps up to peck the same beak-smear spot over and over.

And over.

You would think that a bird would learn over time that it's only his own reflection that he's bonking his beak at day after day, right? After all, that guy in the glass looks exactly like him. If nothing else, even if it is a handsome rival bird he's matching pecks with, you would think he'd learn that the other guy is exactly as tough and ornery as he is. Morning after morning, week after week, month after month, that guy in the window never backs down.

So maybe he already knows that the other bird is just an image, but he still embraces the illusion that he's a fearless, battle-hardened warrior trading blows with a foe that can't really hurt him.

Could it be that kind of simple stubborn arrogance that drives him to peck the window incessantly? Even if he knows that it's just an illusion, and that he's started a meaningless war against a non-existent threat, is he stuck now with no exit strategy that would allow him to retain some shred of dignity? Is that what drives him day after day to wage his senseless war with himself?

Whatever his bird-brained reasons, I want him to go away and leave me alone.

I even tried taping a patch of window screen over the glass, hoping it would cloud his mirror image enough to make him stop. Or at least send him to peck elsewhere. If he leaves my window alone and decides to do battle against that cocky puffed-up robin sneering at him

from the neighbor's reflective window, oh well. Call me a bad neighbor, but a 5-a.m. wake-up call month after month can drive a guy to some pretty uncivil action.

But no, the robin couldn't be deterred that easily. He simply dug his claws into the screen and pecked away until the tape gave way and the screening fell to the ground. More unfettered pecking ensued, day after day.

It goes on still, because I have run out of ideas. At least, I'm out of ideas that I can live with afterwards.

I have considered slathering the glass with Bon Ami, that whitish-pinkish smeary stuff that some folks use to "flock" their windows with snowflakes and frost at Christmas time. But if I painted the inside of the windows, they would still reflect like a mirror on the outside surface, so that wouldn't help. And if I painted the outside of the windows, it would run down the siding when it rains, flocking the east side of my house.

So, no thanks. I've given the neighbors enough quirky goings-on at the Old Kerth House to fuel rumors.

I suppose if I lived in a different time and in a different place, I might have solved the problem in a simpler, more direct way. After all, I remember poring over Red Ryder BB Gun ads plastered over the back of Boy's Life Magazines — ads that extolled the joys of "plinking" at crows and other "varmints," even if they were minding their own business far from your pre-dawn bathroom window.

But no, we live in a kinder, gentler time and place today, and I guess I'm glad for it. I don't want to hurt or kill that little birdbrain. I just want him to go away and stop ruining my mornings.

And so that pesky pre-dawn pane-pecker will go unplinked by me. And the witless pecking will go on until he decides to stop doing it.

Because I'm at my wit's end.

At least that's my attitude on the subject for now, after just two months of early morning wake-up calls. It'll be hard, but I'll wait him out. Because a robin can't keep pecking a window forever, right? Even the peskiest of pecky robins has to move on to other business eventually, right?

Right?

But hey, if Thanksgiving rolls around almost five months from now and a sleep-deprived guy stops by your house to borrow a half-cup of stuffing mix, don't ask him where he got the tiniest turkey carcass you ever saw.

• *TR Kerth is the author of the book "Revenge of the Sardines." Contact him at [trkerth@yahoo.com](mailto:trkerth@yahoo.com)*

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- September 5:** Jay Highland
- September 12:** Grant Milliren
- September 19:** Andrew Huber
- September 26:** TBD
- October 3:** Jay Highland

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# PICKLEBALL PROVES FUN FOR INSTRUCTORS, MEMBERS



Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

By Steve Peterson

For My Sun Day News

The Sun City pickleball season is in full swing, with lessons on all courts in the morning, for players rated 1.0 to 5.0 locally.

“The pickleball season is off to a fantastic start,” Sun City Pickleball Club President Pam White said.

Members enjoyed a picnic social, then it was back to lessons on the first Monday of summer, June 22. In addition to Sun City instructors, coaches from Pickle Haus Pickleball have offered lessons.

Ken Kirkendall is one of the long-time players and helped his 3.0-3.5 rated players go through drills.

“It’s the social part – people here are super friendly,” Kirkendall said of being an instructor. “I have been playing pickleball for 11 years and I was self-taught. I remember when we did not have any dedicated pickleball courts and had to use temporary nets.”

Kirkendall has competed in doubles tournaments over the years. In 2017 he and partner Rick Johnson of Crystal Lake won a national pickleball title at Naples, Florida.


Fellow instructor Ken Stone is also a long-time pickleball vet of 12 years.

Wendy Modenhack worked on drills with Paul Thompson. “I love the lessons,” she said. It’s easy to learn, but hard to master.”

Instructor Mike Christy said the key to learning the sport is putting in the court time. He noted there are new pickleball paddles members can try before investing in a new one.

Wendy Modenhack, left, and Paul Thompson participate in a Sun City Pickleball Club lesson.


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# askanangel



**John Barrett**  
Columnist

**Q** I'm an older adult who usually enjoys the change of seasons, but I'll admit, summer has started to feel more like something to get through rather than something to enjoy.

After a long, cold winter, I'm already feeling restless. The spring provided ample opportunities to get outdoors, but as summer heats up, it's just too much for me physically. I find myself stuck indoors more than I'd like, and the days start to feel long and lonely.

Do you have any ideas to help me make the most of the summer while stuck indoors? I'm looking for ways I can stay en-

gaged and keep the boredom at bay.

**A** I want to start by saying that you're not alone. Summer can feel limiting for many older adults, especially when the temperatures surpass the 80s and the humidity kicks in. Even though you don't want to be indoors, you're doing what's best for your health, and I applaud your discipline to take care of yourself.

The good news is that there are plenty of ways to make summer feel full without having to brave the midday heat.

Start by stocking up on a few go-to activities you can enjoy at home. Purchase word puzzles, print crossword puzzles, or dig out a few jigsaw puzzles to help keep your mind active. Audio-books and podcasts are another

easy way to stay entertained and learn, especially on quieter afternoons.

Your local library can be a great source this time of year. In addition to checking out books, many libraries offer indoor programs, book clubs, or events. Some even provide delivery services for seniors, so it's worth asking what's available in your area. The library is also considered a cool space, meaning it provides local patrons a safe, air-conditioned space to keep cool on those hot, summer days. If the walls start feeling like they're caving in at home, you can always head over to the library for a change of scenery.

You might also want to look into other indoor options available in your community. Senior centers often host activities, classes, or social gatherings in

air-conditioned spaces. Some local fitness centers offer senior fitness classes to help keep you active even when it's hot outside. If transportation is a concern, many areas offer transportation services that can help you get there and back.

At home, summer can be a great time to try something new or revisit an old hobby. Watercolor painting, baking, or even indoor gardening can be both relaxing and rewarding. I also suggest using the time indoors to tackle those closets, declutter your home, or do a bit of late spring-cleaning. Organization and smaller home projects can give you a sense of accomplishment without overexertion.

Although you may need to avoid the peak heat of the day, I recommend finding some time to get outside. Early mornings

or later evenings tend to be more comfortable. A short walk or sipping coffee on your porch can help lift your mood. Getting some sunshine still matters, even in small doses.

Don't forget to stay connected with friends and family. Invite friends over for iced tea, a game, or just good conversation. This can help break up the monotony of a day spent alone in a meaningful way.

Finally, I suggest you lean in to a slower, cooler summer. The season doesn't need to feel dull. With a little planning, it can feel rich and enjoyable.

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

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# Remembering Tinker



Provided | MSDN Photo

**By Christine Such**

For My Sun Day News

**S**un City bids a heartbreaking farewell to a tiny neighborhood icon, Tinker the Chihuahua, who passed away on Sunday, May 3, at the incredible age of 17.

Tinker came into Mary and Al Novak's life when Mary retired. Mary said, "She only weighed half a pound when we got her."

At just four pounds, Tinker spent over 15 years melting hearts as Yappy Hour's smallest regular, and she was a frequent star of the pet Halloween costume contests. Her most legendary win was alongside her best friend, the late Wrigley, a St. Bernard. The mismatched pair took first prize as bride and groom.

Mary said, "I started each year thinking of costumes for Tinker. I made all her costumes. Over the years, she was a lion, a unicorn, a witch, a clown, and a butterfly. Every year, our wonderful vet would

ask us 'What is Tinker this year for Halloween?' Huntley Veterinary Hospital doesn't just treat animals; they treat them as part of the family. Every time I walked through those doors, I knew Tinker was receiving the same deep love, respect, and thorough care that the staff would give to their very own."

Al said, "Her best friend was Wrigley. She just loves Wrigley. She loved meeting him at the pavilion. Once Wrigley passed away, she did not want to go to the pavilion. She just knew he wouldn't be there. We had to carry her in. She also loved walking around Wildflower Lake."

All the trips taken by the Novaks included Tinker.

Al said, "On our trip to Niagara Falls, she did not like the mist off the falls and the wet sidewalk. She just stopped and would not cross the wet walk. I had to pick her up and carry her. She did not like getting her paws wet. She would not walk in the snow. We had to wipe her feet immediately when she came in from

a rainy or snowy day."

Mary said, "Tinker was definitely daddy's girl."

Tinker had her routine at home.

"She would tell us when she wanted to eat or go out. She protected our home. If someone walked past the house and she was inside, she would bark. But for some reason, when she was on the patio or outside, she didn't bark," Al said.

Tinker had a favorite toy, a little stuffed monkey that she loved.

"She would take care of it. She brought it treats, groomed it, and didn't want to play with any other toy. We have so many toys that she got, but she loves her little monkey," Mary said.

Tinker's legacy will live on.

Mary said, "Tinker was the light of our life and brought smiles to everyone she met. We will miss her beyond words, but we find comfort knowing she is running free at the Rainbow Bridge, reunited at last with her favorite big friend."

Two years ago, *My Sun Day News* ran a story on the passing of the well-loved St. Bernard Wrigley. The little Chihuahua above was Wrigley's best friend Tinker, who passed away at the ripe old age of 17 in May. Tinker loved dressing up for Halloween, walks around Wildflower lake, and her owners Mary and Al Novak.

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# THE HUMAN MICROBIOME - THOSE BACTERIA WE DEPEND ON

By Joan Davis, RN, MS

For My Sun Day News

In the latest issue of My Sunday News, T.R. Kerth's column "All roads lead to bugtown," cited recent research on the importance of our "friendly microscopic buddies." Mr. Kerth accurately and rather imaginatively described bacteria that reside in our body's

cells as "taking over," making you more "bugs than body."

While that thought might make some readers squeamish, looking at these microscopic bacteria from a medical perspective might prove reassuring. As Cleveland Clinic has reported, "The gut microbiome is a hot topic these days in medical and wellness communities, and it's easy to see why. These critters seem to have so many

tentacles in so many different body systems that it's possible to imagine they might hold the key to understanding and treating a wide range of intractable diseases."

Already in 2026, several research studies focusing on the microbiome were published including a March article in Nature heralding the groundbreaking discovery that 50 new bacteria on which humans de-

pend have been identified in the human gut alone.

So what is a microbe? Microorganism? And a microbiome? And what do they have to do with bacteria?

Let's start with some definitions. Although the terms microbe and microorganism are used interchangeably and both are too small to be seen by the human eye (thus "micro"), microbe is a slightly broader term. It includes bacteria, viruses and fungi, while microorganisms refer to only those microbes that are considered living organisms which technically narrows the focus to bacteria. Bacteria are microorganisms with a much simpler cell structure than other organisms. Although simple in structure, their ability to affect the human body is amazingly complex.

Because Americans are familiar with the damaging effect bacteria can have on our health causing infections and illness, for many people bacteria carry negative connotations. Thanks to recent medical discoveries, the truth is that bacteria are indeed, as TR Kerth so clearly pointed out, not only beneficial but essential to our survival. It turns out the vast majority of bacteria are helpful, not harmful to humans. Mayo Clinic estimates that fewer than 1% of all known bacteria are harmful to human health. The great majority are either completely harmless or directly beneficial to human survival.

Bacteria coexist with other microbes in communities residing in the human body. Those communities are known as the microbiome. The critical role of the microbiome is not surprising considering that there are more microbes in the human

body than cells. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH) approximately 30 trillion human cells to 38 trillion bacterial cells. Despite their great number, bacteria are also very small (Bacterial cells are generally 10 to 100 times smaller than human cells.

That results in a microbiome that is very small but very powerful. In other words, micro in size but macro in the way they contribute to human health and wellness. They protect us against pathogens, help our immune system develop, and enable us to digest food to produce energy.

## Where is your microbiome?

Although the gut microbiome is the best known, each body site – for example, the gut, skin, and oral and nasal cavities, all have different communities of microbes and that microbiome is composed of a collection of different and unique microbes to help the human body survive.

Because the microbiome in the gut is the most active and has been studied more than others, next month's Health Report will focus on the busy community of microbes in the human gastrointestinal tract. Research suggests that microbes in the GI tract may help support weight management, mood, immune function, and longevity. Stay tuned for studies that explore the remarkable abilities of the gut microbiome in ways scientists are only beginning to understand.

• *Reader follow-up — The BBC Science Focus has published a helpful guide: The human microbiome: Everything you need to know.*

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## gardenersforum

## Allerton Park: A garden retreat



**Kathleen Carr**  
Columnist

A change of scenery, as they say, is good for us. Getting out of the house and experiencing new things offers emotional benefits such as reduced stress and physical benefits such as better sleep. It was with great excitement that I discovered Allerton Park and Retreat. Located in Monticello, Illinois, a short three-and-a-half hour drive away, it is the perfect combination of a Georgian Manor house and 14 formal gardens.

For this column, Micah Putman, the Associate Director of Park Operations, has graciously agreed to answer a few questions.

**Micah can you please tell us about the history of Allerton Park and Retreat Center?**

Allerton Park was established in 1946 after philanthropist Robert Allerton donated the property to the University of Il-

linois Urbana-Champaign. Robert grew up on Prairie Avenue in Chicago, the son of Samuel Allerton who was instrumental in establishing the stock yards in Chicago. Robert studied art in France, decided he was no good, burned all his paintings and asked his dad what to do next. Samuel offered Robert to manage his 12,000 acres of farmland in central Illinois and gave him funds to build a residence-the mansion that still stands today and houses the conference center.

**What types of gardens can visitors explore during their time at Allerton?**

Allerton has several formal gardens, many of which were developed by Robert Allerton through the first several decades of the 1900s. The gardens are very typical of the time period, heavily influenced by European style gardens with some Asian flare. Robert was a world traveler and collected thousands of pieces of art and many pieces are still on display in the gardens.

**Do you have a favorite spot in the garden?**

I have many favorite spots at Allerton! The river overlook is very neat, standing on top of Robert Allerton's old pump house which used to be used to irrigate the gardens. The path past the square parterre garden is also a fun spot with views of walls, plantings, ornaments and an original glass and wood greenhouse still in use today.

**What makes the Allerton Gardens unique?**

The expanse of the gardens is very surprising, especially nestled out in the country off the beaten path. Long allées define many of the spaces but have some to include updated plantings that awe and inspire. The ornaments and statues dotting the landscape along with the mix of formal garden and natural spaces is very unique. But the best part is the community of people that all add to this place — the volunteers, donors, and visitors and conference goers from around the world all add beauty and depth to the history of Allerton.

**In addition to the 14 formal gardens, there is an extension**

**trail system. What do visitors experience on the McDonald Family trail?**

The park is over 1500 acres so there is a lot to see! Our trail system encompasses more than 15 miles of trails through upland and lowland oak hickory forests and prairies. Additionally, we have started to develop a multi-use/bike trail with our first mile being finished last year.

**In addition to plants, there are also numerous sculptures throughout the gardens. Where did these predominate come from?**

Many of the sculptures, ornaments and art pieces Robert Allerton collected on his world travels. There are a few pieces he had commissioned such as the Primitive men statues. There are over 100 pieces on the grounds today.

**If someone is interested in visiting Allerton, where might they find more information?**

Our website: Allerton.illinois.edu is the best access to information but we also regularly post events and other information on our Facebook page.

**Is there an admission fee?**

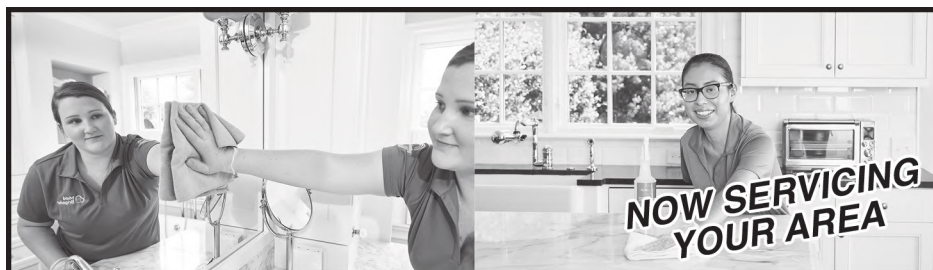
The park is open every day

except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day, from 8 a.m. to sundown. It is free to enter and explore but we do encourage donations to help us keep the park up and running. The mansion can be viewed during mansion tour times, which can be found on our website. On the website you will also find information about Folk school classes, events and overnight accommodations.

**Lodging is also available on the grounds. What types of accommodations are available and what is the price range?**

We have lodging at the historic mansion and 3 other outbuildings. Prices range anywhere from \$90-150 depending on season, events, etc. More information on lodging can be found on our website or by calling 217-333-3287.

• *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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### • COSTUMES

show was paused due to COVID.

Scott said, “Jeanne Pfothenaur and I met and sat on a sidewalk on Del Webb Blvd to talk through costume ideas and plans.”

Burgett has assisted Scott for six years, “Carol is the organizer. She does the planning and the research for the costume. We try to reuse what we have, altering costumes to fit other roles. Sometimes it works, sometimes we have to start from scratch.”

Burgett said, “We moved here from Wisconsin at the end of 2019. I found out about the Theatre Company and that there were many behind-the-scenes activities, including costume work. I had learned how to sew from my mother when I was a teenager, but had not sewn for about 40 years. Luckily, I moved my old sewing machine when we moved here, so I went to the next Theatre Meeting and met Diane there. Then Covid happened, and the next show wasn’t until 2021. I started sewing just a few things for that show, Beauty and the Beast, and have continued since then. It’s a fun way to be involved, get to feel creative, and you meet so many nice people.”

Long before auditions even begin, Scott dives deep into historical research to establish the visual blue-

print for the upcoming production of Cinderella. While entire wardrobes of ballgowns and peasant dresses are carefully selected and conceptualized for every single role in advance, the real work cannot begin until the show is cast. Once the actors are chosen, the costume shop springs into high gear. The team starts to carefully customize pieces to exact measurements, altering existing inventory from the racks, and sourcing raw materials to build new garments from scratch.

Burgett says, “We pay attention to the smallest details of the costume. For Fiddler on the Roof, we had to research the details of the prayer shawls and learn how to tie the knots properly. For that production, we made the Sabbath coats, the pants, and all of the women’s skirts, blouses, and headpieces.”

The costume shop also knows exactly how to surprise an audience. In a recent production of Nunsense, the nuns performed a flawless can-can dance that brought a roar of applause and appreciation from the crowd. As they kicked, they lifted their traditional black skirts to reveal a hidden rainbow of tulle underneath, adding a perfectly frivolous and joyful touch to the entire routine.

Cultivating this kind of theatrical magic for Cinderella requires an

enormous amount of hands-on labor, and the costume shop is actively calling for reinforcements. The company wants community members to know that you do not need to be a master stitcher to get involved; volunteers do not even have to know how to sew.

Scott said, “We often need extra hands for simpler, yet critical, prep work. For instance, during the production of Hello, Dolly! Carol and I invited friends because we thought it would be fun to do some projects together. And it was. We cut fabric and stuffed dress bustles using ordinary plastic grocery bags to give the garments their historical shape. Whether you are wielding a pair of fabric scissors, packing a bustle, or arranging materials, every bit of help directly shapes the magic seen on stage.”

While the actors receive applause, these designers and stitchers work behind the scenes, armed with measuring tapes, needles, and extensive knowledge of the character. These are the unrecognized artisans whose technical ability and tireless labor bring the theater company’s visual world to life.

• Any interested in helping get ready for the next production, Cinderella, can contact Scott at [dianeolenscott@gmail.com](mailto:dianeolenscott@gmail.com)

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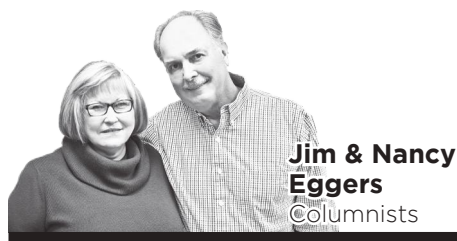
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# Suzaku field forever

*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 My Sun Day News.*

A hhhh, the circle of life. Restaurants close and new ones sprout up. This simple fact has allowed us to bore you with our reviews for the last 14 years. Nancy needed a piece of jewelry repaired, so we ventured out on Randall Road and lo and behold, what used to be Georgia's Restaurant has been transformed into Suzaku Field Sushi Restaurant in Algonquin.

What's more important, jewelry or food? Despite Nancy's objections and because I was driving, we made a mad dash to the restaurant.

We were amazed at the transformation from Georgia's Restaurant to this upscale Japanese venue. You are immediately greeted by silk cherry blossom trees before you go to the hostess stand. The décor had beautiful bamboo dividers between the booths, red hanging lights, and oriental lanterns.

Their huge menu is mainly sushi, but they do offer traditional Japanese entrees. For you BIG eaters out there, they have an all you can eat option for \$33.99 with a large assortment of sushi, hibachi, fried rice, udon noodles, and ramen dishes to pick from.

We started off with something different. We tried their (6) Shrimp Tempura (\$8.95) for our appetizer. These were served piping hot with a light and airy coating with lots of crunchy Japanese breadcrumbs (aka panko breadcrumbs) on them. These were not greasy because of the panko breadcrumbs. They absorb less oil and that is what makes them really crunchy. These were delicious and Nancy wished they were offered as a full entrée.

Jim wanted sushi and ordered their lunch special of Three Rolls (6 pieces each) for \$14.99. He went with the Boston Roll which is avocado and shrimp with mayo on top. For his second choice he decided on the Spicy Crab Stick, which is a crab stick mixed with spicy mayo and a crunchy topping. And lastly, the Shrimp Tempura Roll which consisted of shrimp tempura, cucumber, avocado, topped with eel sauce. This was served with miso soup or house salad. He chose the house salad and the ginger dressing on top was delicious. He enjoyed each one of his sushi rolls.

We all know Nancy loves garlic, so she chose the Spicy Garlic Shrimp (\$16.95) from their hibachi menu. It comes with veggies (carrots, onions, zucchini, and broccoli), and served with white rice. She chose to upgrade for \$2.95 more to the fried rice. This entrée also comes with either soup or house salad and she went with the house salad. When her plate arrived, she had a heaping portion of the veggies (she ate all of her veggies minus the zucchini), and a huge mound of fried rice. The garlic shrimp was to die for, but she thought the fried rice could have used more flavor. Next time we go she is ordering a side of teriyaki sauce to season the fried rice (50¢ upcharge).

FYI: This restaurant is handicap accessible.

The price for our Japanese lunch was \$56.01. 🎵 Suzaku Field forever.... 🎵

The restaurant surprised us in so many ways. The décor was beautiful, the food plentiful, and the price was delightful.

## He Said / She Said

**JIM'S TAKE:** My favorite sushi is the Shrimp Tempura and the eel sauce gave it a "spark" of flavor. Who knew I would like eel sauce???

**NANCY'S TAKE:** The spicy garlic breadcrumb mixture on my shrimp had a good kick from the cayenne pepper. I was "shrimply" amazed with my dish.

• Have comments or restaurant suggestions for the Dining Duo? Send them an email at [thediningduo@gmail.com](mailto:thediningduo@gmail.com)

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# Proud to be an American



**Will Moore**  
Columnist

What's sad about this year is that, in the 250th year of this great nation, there isn't a plethora of films or television specials dedicated to its memory. True, there is a lot of coverage planned for by news outlets on July Fourth. However, very little has been present in the lead up. Larry David and co will have a program on just after the deadline of this article entitled HBO Max's *Life, Larry and the Pursuit of Unhappiness* on June 26. He and many others like Jerry Seinfeld and John Hamm created sketches lampooning various points in our history. As fitting as that is given the current state we are in now, I can't help but feel like some mode of reverence in the Founding Fathers is deserved.

Enter *The American Revolution* from PBS Passport. The multi-part documentary miniseries from Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David P. Schmidt, like all of Burns's previous, expands on the War for Independence in order to tell the story from several different angles. What stuck with me was the fact the we all started

from a small group of writers seeing the impact that our then-sovereign England had our well-being and lives. The section on Thomas Paine was particularly interesting. For he was a student of the Enlightenment in France and through the creation of his most seminal work *Common Sense*, he was able to speak to the public on their level about why being their own nation would be more beneficial. The idea of speaking plainly and with honor to laymen seems part of a by-gone era in the face of current political discourse.

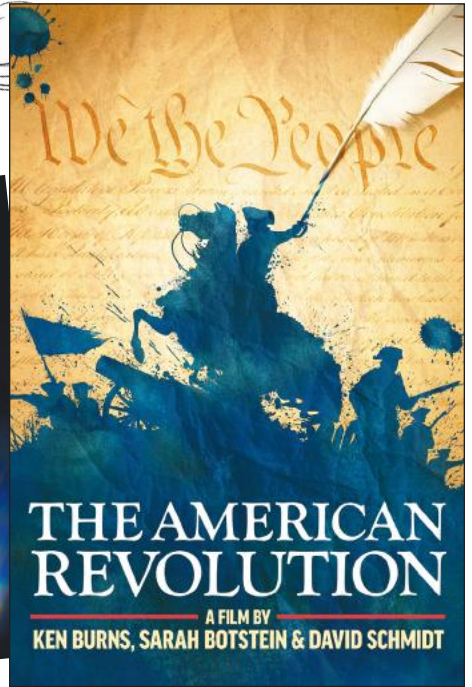
Another striking aspect of the doc was when they turned attention to the more marginalized segment excluded from the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation. One particular segment came from Annette Gordon Reed about how Thomas Jefferson found it hard to square owning slaves when he was seeking freedom from tyranny. This only goes to show that these foundations of our government have, and always been, living and breathing documents subject to changes when needed. That can be a scary thought for some but a powerful statement, speaking the grand experiment this nation always was.

Moving further ahead to the late 20th century, *Plainclothes* on streamer MUBI takes us back to a time when some groups were still discriminated against even

by their own judicial system. Here we meet Lucas (Tom Blyth), a police officer who works undercover to lure unsuspecting men in malls.

The goal: to entrap them into performing indecent exposure and arresting them. This isn't a thing that was new to the 90s in which the film takes place. Midway through the film, Lucas and other officers are shown a short film from the 60s where a one-way mirror was used to film similar encounters. All of this is under the guise of keeping the public safe, when it was really a way to prosecute gay people. Like many things still happening today. But this isn't just a simple procedural; it's a stealth romantic thriller.

One day Lucas is on the job when he runs into Andrew (Russell Tovey), a married man who hooks up on the side. As we have seen from Lucas, there is some lingering attraction to men and this sparks something in him. He spares Andrew and later finds a way to meet with him again. Through small, clandestine meetings,



Lucas unwisely develops feelings.

First time filmmaker Carmen Emmi has a great sense of the time period. Using music and making Lucas's vision almost like grainy camcorder footage helps establishes mood and atmosphere. Lucas is a troubled man who lives everyday on the brink. When it comes to nostalgia, we all forget the reality of the moment. Those fears were mine in the 90s. I was Lucas. When I hear about making America great again, this is not the vision of greatness that remember. As *Pride* is coming to a close and the celebration of our founding is upon us, let's take some time to reflect on what values we hold dear.

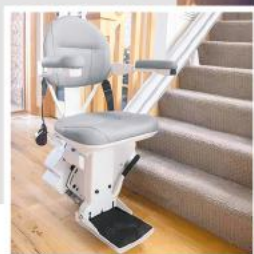


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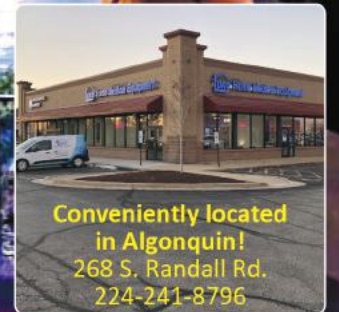
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\$2.75/word per edition  
Photos  
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**CALL 847-658-6090**

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

**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 SOFTBALL CLUB**  
Looking for Softball Players for the 2026 Season (Age 55+). Hit, field, throw, and run like you are in your twenties again. Make new friends, have loads of fun and experience team camaraderie. Season (May through August). Three leagues to choose from (all use mitts): 16" p.m., 16"

**SERVICES, cont.**

**FURNITURE REPAIR**  
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**FOR LEASE**  
Storage Building. Cold Shell Warehouse 55' x 52' metal storage building ideal for contractor/trades for equipment storage or someone with more toys than room in their garage. There are 2 drive-in doors (16'x14' and 16'x10') with a 16' high ceiling and new concrete floor. Want more information? \$1950 per month Call Chris 815-790-1247

**SEEKING**

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

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

a.m., and 12" p.m. Choose to play in one, two or all three leagues if you wish. All games are played at our beautiful Veterans Memorial Field. For registration information, please contact Club President, Chuck Hund at 847-456-0229 or at suncityhuntley-softball@gmail.com.

**ONGOING ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, HARMONY**  
St. John's United Church of Christ, Harmony, will worship at 9 a.m. Pastor David Bateman will be following the lectionary for his sermon, following Children's Time with Pastor Dave the children will go to church school classes. The church is located at 11821 E Grant Highway, Hampshire, the corner of Route 20 and Harmony Road. For more information call the church office 815-923-4263, visit us on Facebook or at our website www.stjohnsuccharmony.org.

**ONGOING POKER**  
Join our poker group. Every other Tuesday from 6-10 p.m. The stakes are very reasonable as is the companionship. Call Ray at 708-917-6141 to discuss.

**ONGOING BARGAN BARN**  
The Bargain Barn located at First Congregational Church of Huntley, 11628 E. Main St., Huntley, IL is opening the first Saturday of May. Due to its' pop-

ularity, we have added a second Saturday each month and the dates are as follows: June 8 and 20, July 4 and 18, August 1 and 15, September 5 and 19, and October 3 and 17, 2026: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information about donations or volunteering call Cheryl 847-331-1463 or Nancy 815-353-0597.

**JULY 10 BUNCO PARTY**  
The Women's Circle of First Congregational Church of Huntley, 11628 E. Main St., Huntley is hosting a BUNCO Party in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, July 15, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Refreshments and prizes. Call Jeannie, 847-624-4237 for tickets, \$10 each. Deadline is July 10.

**JULY 11 GRAFTON FOOD PANTRY COMMUNITY SHOWCASE**  
Presented by the Huntley FireProtection District 10am-1pm, July 11 in the parking lot of Jewel-Osco at 13200 Village Green Drive in Huntley. Bring a nonperishable food donation or consider contributing household items, toiletries, or paper products. Enjoy an up-close look at emergency vehicles, public works equipment, and more. It's a great opportunity for families to meet local first responders and explore the big rigs that keep our communities safe and running. Join us for a community



event benefiting the Grafton Food Pantry in Huntley!

**AUGUST 22 CINDERELLA AUDITIONS**  
The Theatre Company of Sun City's fall musical is, Rogers and Hammerstein's, CINDERELLA! Show dates: November 19-22, 2026. AUDITIONS: SATURDAY, August 22, 2026 (NOTE: this is a new date). If you would like to audition, please call Judy Stage at 517-927-8535.

We encourage all Sun City residents to know that they are more than welcome to audition. If you or anyone you know is interested in the position of MUSIC DIRECTOR, Set design and helping with set build or costuming don't hesitate to contact Russ Howard, President at: 847-659-9144.

**ONGOING SUN CITY FANTASY FOOTBALL LEAGUE**  
We are starting a 10-man fantasy football league for Sun City residents only. \$100.00 league fee per player for a \$1,000.00 total prize winnings, divided among the top 3 finishers. We will pay out 100% of money collected. If interested, please call Gerry at 931-444-9001.

By TR Kerth  
Columnist

**iheardthisquote...**  
*Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.*  
- Dr. Seuss  
*Life is like a landscape. You live in the midst of it but can describe it only from the vantage point of distance.*  
- Charles Lindbergh

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**NO JOB IS TOO SMALL!**

**HIDE THE HAT LOCATION:**  
Feeling patriotic with Americas 250th Anniversary coming up? Great! And since you're in the mood, check out Will Moore's review of the documentary The American Revolution on Page 14 and you might find the hat peeking out from behind the movie poster in the upper-left corner.

Official system. Here we (Blyth), a police officer discover to lure... calls.

**Try again next edition!**

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