

MY SUN DAY NEWS

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Stingrays swim 500 miles to celebrate America's 250th

Provided | MSDN Photo

This year, the Stingrays challenged themselves to swim 250 collective miles in celebration of America's 250th anniversary. The challenge a success, they doubled that goal and swam 500 miles.

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

The Sun City Stingrays Swim Charter Club recently channeled the ultimate spirit of American grit to honor the nation's historic semi-quincentennial.

The club launched an aquatic challenge on April 25, rallying its members to collectively

swim and water-walk a monumental 250 miles. Crushing that initial milestone with waves of enthusiasm, the determined athletes refused to slow down, instantly resetting their sights on a second goal.

Nancy Cihlar, club vice president, said, "We doubled our effort and swam over 500 miles as a club. We will honor this achievement at our club meeting."

Beyond honoring national milestones, the Stingrays thrive on a year-round friendship and competition.

Linda Kucera, President of the Stingray Swim Club, said, "Irene Camp and Nancy Cihlar routinely create dynamic, fun challenges that keep members motivated and the entire club eagerly embraces. Previous adventures have seen swimmers track their progress to conquer

the virtual swim of the Fox River challenge, while others have tested their endurance by virtually swimming across the massive width of Lake Michigan."

Going forward, the team is already focusing its momentum on a meaningful new initiative.

Kucera said, "Our next challenge honors past president Bill Roth. Bill was a lifelong swimmer and devoted coach."

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lifeinfocus

The emancipation of my inner twelve-year-old



By Carol Pavlik
For My Sun Day News

It was one of those days when we were caricatures of ourselves. On a hot afternoon, my husband and I waited in line for coffee at our favorite little locally owned coffee shop. As we age, our coffee orders get more and more pretentious: Now we throw in “oat milk” or “half sweet” or “do you have a light roast?” at the barista, hoping she’ll notice that her customers are truly discerning coffee consumers. (She never seems impressed.)

Anyway, we’re ordering our pretentious drinks when I see my husband carefully punching in his card number on his phone.

“What are you doing?” I asked him.

“I just ordered e-bikes for us,” is the reply.

I was mad. After 30 years of marriage, didn’t he know our

rule about not making purchases over \$100 without asking each other first? I would’ve definitely said no. We absolutely do not need e-bikes.

Come to think of it, maybe that’s why he didn’t ask me.

I steamed silently for about five days, until two boxes arrived on our doorstep.

But I can’t stay mad for long. My husband springs into action when there is something to be unboxed and assembled. He whips out his Swiss Army knife, expertly cuts open the boxes, takes out the directions, and begins giving them the old once-over. He tests the seats, makes sure the tires are filled with air and properly aligned, and clears a dedicated spot in the garage. His enthusiasm is contagious, so I follow him to the garage, where he shows me how to charge the battery, turn it on, and adjust the speed. I am intrigued.

I know I’m going to out myself by saying this, but ... I’ve never worn a helmet before. Before you judge me, remember that I am a child of the 80s. I was singing along to Madonna’s “Like a Virgin” and “Papa Don’t

Preach” when I was waaaaay too young to understand what I was singing about. We passed candy cigarettes around at recess in elementary school. My brothers and I played with our own set of lawn darts — and lived to tell the tale.

But I’m not a kid anymore. So for the first time, we have helmets and lights on our bikes. We are responsible grown-ups, riding bicycles for noble reasons, like reducing our carbon footprint and getting reasonable exercise.

Except.

The first time I hop on that bike, it feels like a time machine. Whoosh! I’m transported back to 1986, when I used to ride my big brother’s BMX dirtbike, gold with black grips on the handlebars. I feel the vibrations of the tire treads on the pavement. On the surface I may be a perimenopausal woman who has a tendency to overload on carbs, but inside, I’m 12 years old again.

“What do you think?” asks my husband.

I keep my emotions in check. To him, I say, “Yeah, it’s okay.” Unfazed, like a cool kid.

For the next few nights, we hop on our bikes and go for nighttime rides. We try bike paths, side streets, and explore neighborhoods where we see families inside their warmly lit houses, going about their evening rituals. We sail silently through parks, occasionally coming across gaggles of early teen boys, who are riding bikes that look exactly like ours. They can’t help but heckle us.

“Look, it’s a bike gang,” sneers one boy from under his mop of curls. His friends snicker as we whiz by.

“Hey, can you do wheelies on that thing?” calls another boy.

“Yeah,” I yell back. “I just did one. You missed it.”

I’m wearing my sensible sneakers, helmet strapped firmly beneath my chin, and it’s all I can do not to kick out my legs from the pedals and squeal “wheeee” as we speed down the street. Freddie Mercury wails at the top of his lungs in my mind. I am, after all, a child of the 80s:

I want to ride my bicycle/I want to ride my bike.

I want to ride my bicycle/I want to ride it where I like ...

obit

Mary Werner, age 97, of Huntley, Illinois, passed away on June 28, 2026.

Mary was born on April 26 in Lyons, Illinois, to Antoinette and Matt Kik. She lived a long and meaningful life marked by kindness, generosity, and a genuine concern for others. A devoted friend to many, Mary embraced life with warmth, compassion, and a welcoming spirit.

After moving to Del Webb Sun City Huntley in 1999, Mary became an active member of the community, participating in numerous clubs and activities while forming many lasting friendships. She was especially passionate about volunteering and generously gave her time to a variety of organizations throughout the years. Her willingness to help others and her commitment to serving her community left a lasting impact on those who knew her.

Above all, Mary cherished her family. She found great joy in spending time with those she loved and took immense pride in watching her grandchildren grow. She will be remembered for her loving heart, generous spirit, and the many lives she touched through her friendship and service.

Mary is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Vicki and Ken Stevens; her grandchildren, Mason Stevens and Danielle Stevens; and many dear friends whose lives were enriched by her kindness. She was preceded in death by her parents, Antoinette and Matt Kik, and her brother, Edward Kik.

The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to everyone who offered their love, prayers, kindness, and support during this difficult time.



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Who’s ready to go first?

John Parker
Sun City resident

Isn’t it wonderful that President Donald J Trump won the Senior Championship at his Bedminster, NJ, Club! At 80 years of age he shot a 70!!! Amazing feat! One for the ages perhaps! A true champion! I hope he got a huge golden trophy to adorn the mantle behind the resolution desk in the Oval Office.

So sad.

John Zeller
Sun City resident

Have an opinion or some commentary?
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He taught and coached at Culver Academics High School in Indiana. Bill served as president of the Stingray Swim Club and enjoyed workouts with his teammates. The challenge will include his favorite strokes, the back and breast stroke."

Considering how far the group has come, the club's leadership takes great pride in its friendly atmosphere and deep roots within the community.

Kucera shared, "The club started with twenty members in 2002. Four original members, Joannie Koplos Sandy Sterling, Lisa Yost, and Margaret Liedtke, are still in the club and participate in swimming and our social events. We have members who didn't know how to swim and have progressed to become avid swimmers. We also have members who just enjoy walking in the water."

The club is more than a group of swimming enthusiasts.

Cihlar said, "We are also a social group who enjoy making new friends and having fun."

While the club's achievements in the pool are great, its vibrant life out of the water is what cements its tight-knit community. To keep that bond strong, the organization has a lively social calendar.

Kucera said, "The Social Committee co-chairs, Pam and Mike Winberg, along with a dedicated group of 13 other Stingrays, routinely plan group events and activities. We have pizza on the drive, dinner, concerts, group trips to educational/entertaining places, festive holiday gatherings, and sunny summer picnic."

The Stingrays community supports its members both in and out of the water. When hardship strikes, the team instantly rallies to lighten the load for families in need.

Lucera said, "When a member of our Stingray family faces illness, the team rallies with compassion. Whether organizing meals or checking in, these gestures remind families they are not alone. We step in to support each other and ensure every newcomer feels instantly at home."

The club warmly welcomes new members and has established a wonderful ambassador program, led by Joyce Konczyk and Randy Biagioni. This helpful network is further strengthened by an outstanding leadership team on the pool deck.

Cihlar said, "We also have a great team of coaches. Len Lencioni, who coached us for 14 years, continues to be part of the Saturday morning coaching rotation. Marilyn Kulak runs our Wednesday clinics."



Provided | MSDN Photo

On Tuesday, September 22, Sun City residents can take advantage of free health screenings by Lions Illinois Foundation Mobile Screening Unit, which also offers advanced vision and hearing screenings.

Free vision and hearing screenings coming to Sun City

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

SUN CITY - The Sun City Lions Club is teaming up with the Lions Illinois Foundation to bring a valuable health service to Sun City.

Carol Didricksen, Lions Chairperson and a Sun City resident, shared, "Since 1965, Illinois Lions have traveled throughout the state offering free vision screenings to the public. Today, it includes retinal screening and hearing screenings in their Mobile

Screening Unit. Trained technicians staff it."

On Tuesday, September 22, the Lions Illinois Foundation Mobile Screening Unit will be in the Fountain View Parking Lot, offering free wellness checks for residents. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the mobile medical van will provide free, advanced vision and hearing screenings.

The retinal vision exam checks for eye conditions like macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. Since diabetic retinopathy is a top cause

of preventable blindness in adults, regular screenings are very important. The unit also offers hearing tests. Hearing loss is one of the most common long-term health problems in the country, and finding it early makes treatment and management much easier.

Didricksen said, "Getting a professional checkup every year is a great way to take care of your vision and hearing. Conditions like macular degeneration can develop slowly, so regular screenings help you catch any changes early. The program especially encourages people aged 55 and older to join, but the screenings are free for everyone."

To help everything run smoothly and keep wait times short, everyone needs to register in advance. You can sign up on the official Sun City website or at the welcome desk. Remember to use the event code LCV55 when you register.

Didricksen said, "Don't wait to take care of your health. Set aside a few minutes on Tuesday for your wellness and peace of mind. The Lions of Illinois Foundation is a nonprofit organization and has taken the challenge given to them by Helen Keller. Helen Keller has stated that the Lions are the Knights of the Blind in the crusade against blindness."

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Another season of wicker-basket family ties



TR Kerth
Columnist

I suppose you might gaze at a wicker laundry basket and ponder all the ways it suggests “family” to you, but my basket says “family” in a way that might not occur to you.

That’s because I keep an old wicker laundry basket on the patio, and I fill it not with laundry but with garden weeds until I figure out what to do with them next — compost, or yard-waste bag for disposal? But before the basket gets full enough for me to make that disposal decision, it gets visited daily by the latest addition to the family.

It started last year when I noticed that my goldenrod plants were being trimmed clean of leaves for the bottom foot or so of the stem. It had to be that little bunny I saw hopping along the pavers between the flowers. The leaves were trimmed about as high as a young rabbit could reach standing on his hind legs.

When the goldenrods grew a bit too invasive, I pulled them up by the roots and threw them into the wicker weed basket. Some were so tall that they drooped over the basket’s edge, almost down to the pavers.

And that’s when I noticed that the little bunny hopped out of the garden to visit the basket early each day. After all, as summer progressed and the garden grew tall, the only way he could enjoy the sweet young leaves of his favorite goldenrod plant was if I yanked them and drooped their tender tips back down to his level.

And so, every day I made a point of pulling a few goldenrods and drooping them over the edge of the basket. And every day the little bunny came to visit his own personal breakfast bar, a cornucopia that never ran empty.

He had a distinctive lightning-shaped mark on his forehead, so we called him “Blaze.” And just like that, he was more than just a visitor, more even than a pet.

He was family.

In the evening after dinner, we liked to sit on the patio, not ten feet from the basket, and each evening Blaze would creep cautiously from the garden to graze on the tender tips I had left him.

We would talk gently to him, so he was certainly aware that we were there. And gradually, over time, he would come more boldly each evening and even sit with his back to us as he ate, unconcerned that we might do him harm.

To test how comfortable he was with the arrangement, we sometimes dropped fresh goldenrod leaves closer to us, until he often came and hunkered on his haunches no more than a foot or two from our toes, munching peacefully away.

I am convinced that he thought of us

as family as much as we did, and maybe even more so. After all, to a bunny, a garden in a yard bordered by an oak-covered ridge and a wildflower meadow is full of dangers. Dangers that might want to eat him, especially when he’s eating and his guard is down.

But once Blaze decided that these particular two-legged giants that shared his garden were no threat to him, he probably figured that they might actually provide some kind of protection. Because, after all, we were bigger than hawks. Bigger than foxes. Bigger even than coyotes.

And if the hawks, foxes and coyotes were too wary to approach these giants, so much the better. Nobody knows who first said, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” Who’s to say it wasn’t a bunny?

So Blaze joined us on the patio almost every evening, like clockwork, as we sat enjoying the sunset.

Just like family.

Of course, gradually Blaze grew older and bolder, wandering as far as the back of the yard and even into the oak forest at dinner time. Sometimes two or three days might pass before he would come join us on the patio under September sunsets.

He was, after all, a teenager by now in rabbit years, and you know how teenagers can be.

By November, with the garden cut back to the ground and darkening evenings too cool to sit out, we lost touch with Blaze. He had moved on and we wished him well, as you do with family that has grown up and moved on.

He never returned this spring when the garden bloomed again, but in his place was another young bunny, just about the size Blaze was when we first met him last year.

He was a bit skittish at first, just as Blaze had been, but over time he got used to seeing us come out the back door, and he would hop only to the edge of the patio to gaze at us with suspicion. By late July, he would only amble away.

And then, over time, he stopped moving away from us at all.

Today, the little guy comes every day to the bunny breakfast bar to nibble at the tender goldenrod sprouts I refresh for him every day.

He has no identifying forehead mark, so we have no proof that he’s related to Blaze, but we like to think he is.

That’s why we call him Junior, because we’re convinced that when Blaze moved on to start his own family, he raised his son right, teaching him not to fear those two-legged giants that share the patio with him by the cornucopia of fresh goldenrod.

Because, after all, that’s what family does, right?

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

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Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

Participants learn pickleball skills at the Sun City Pickleball Club and Grandma Grandpa & Me event Aug 8.

PICKLEBALL FUN SPREADS AT SUN CITY EVENT

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

Youth learned the basics of pickleball as the Sun City Pickleball Charter Club hosted an event on National Pickleball Day at Tall Oaks

courts August 8. The event was held in cooperation with Sun City’s Grandparents, Grandchildren, and Me group. “This is the third year we have offered it and it grows every year,” Sun City Pickleball Club President Pam White said.

After a fun session of tossing balls into buckets, “Grand Prize Game” style, instructors demonstrated the skills needed and then gave individual and small group lessons. About 77 players, some as young as 4- and 5-years-old, joined in and 40 volunteers helped out.

“Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the U.S.,” Phil Haugens said, before giving the crowd a quick lesson on scoring, how the court is laid out and shots. “We have one club member who is 101.5 years old, and another who is a national singles champion.” John Schwan (the local national champ), Jennifer Malalina, John Misto and Lori Klein did the honors of a brief doubles game. “Aug. 8 was fantastic and how our Pickleball Club volunteers came to cover all 12 pickleball courts with six or seven grandchildren on each court was heartwarming.” Haugens explained how his interest in pickleball began. “Personally, (it was) when my wife Kathi, and I moved from the Peoria area to be closer to our two sons and their families (four grandchildren),” Haugens said. “Having been involved in playing softball, golf, and being an IHSA varsity basketball official for 50 years, I wanted to become involved in all sports being offered in the Sun City community, which would lead to meeting new friends and continue my love in playing sports.” He added, “Pickleball was just getting started in Sun City, and I became actively involved from the outset in the organization, learning and playing the game of pickleball and continued in volunteering my time, like numerous other Sun City Pickleball Club members, instructing new members the fundamentals of pickleball.”

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Linda Wadman (L) and Carolyn Gordon welcome Sun City residents to explore the “Colors of Sun City” Gallery Show on September 19.

Third annual Colors of Sun City gallery exhibition set for September

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

The artistic genius of Sun City residents will take center stage this fall at the third annual

Colors of Sun City Gallery Exhibition. This two-day event, put on by the Pencil and Palette Charter Club, showcases the amazing talent right in Sun City. The exhibition will take place in Prairie Lodge, occupying the Fountain View, Birch, and Cedar rooms, on Saturday, September 19, from 1-5 p.m., and will continue on Sunday, September 20, from 1-4 p.m.

Admission is completely free, though voluntary donations are accepted.

The mission of the club focuses entirely on nurturing artists at all skill levels. The club embraces beginner, intermediate, and advanced talents alike — within a warm, supportive, and social environment.

“The club invites Sun City residents to discover, understand, and appreciate the artist within,” said Linda Wadman, vice president of the Pencil and Palette Charter Club. “This annual exhibition acts as a grand culmination of that creativity. Attendees may expect an expansive display featuring over 160 original, handcrafted pieces meticulously created by over 50 distinct local artists.”

The assortment highlights a stunning variety of traditional and contemporary mediums, making sure there is something to capture every eye, including rich oil landscapes, vibrant acrylics, delicate watercolors, soft pastels, detailed pencil sketches, and unique mixed-media pieces.

Bringing an art event of this massive scale to life requires an immense amount of planning, coordination, and cooperative teamwork. Event co-chair Carolyn Gordon emphasized that volunteers operate behind the scenes to make the weekend an effortless experience for visitors.

“It takes a lot of volunteers to put this event together,” Gordon explained. “We have eight individual committees taking care of setup and teardown, serving the appetizers, working the mocktail bar, and coordinating the intake, display, and eventual return of the art pieces, along with all the other activities including the raffle. It takes about 30 dedicated people to help make the event a success.”

Gordon also extended an enthusiastic, open invitation to any residents looking to explore their own creative side, encouraging neighbors to stop by the Pencil and Palette Charter Club’s art room during normal

COLORS | Pg. 12



SENATOR DAVE SYVERSON

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A cartoon illustration of the Grim Reaper. He is wearing a black hooded robe and has a white skull for a face. He is holding a large scythe in his right hand. There are some small star-like sparkles around him.

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Q As summer winds down and the back-to-school season picks up, I'm feeling pulled in more directions than ever before.

My husband and I have two teenagers who are involved in sports, clubs, and other activities this year. They're excited, and we want to support them, but they aren't driving yet. My husband travels a lot for work, which means that I'm the default transportation coordinator for all after-school events.

At the same time, my parents are getting older and relying more on me. Although I work remotely and have some flexibility, my parents have come to expect me to stop what I'm do-

ing and swing by their house to help whenever they ask.

I want to be there for them, especially since they've always shown up for me. However, I'm feeling stretched too thin. How do I find more balance during this season of life without feeling like I'm always letting someone down?

A I empathize with your struggle and want to start by saying you are not alone. Many adults, daughters in particular, are caught between caring for their families and caring for aging parents.

Before we dive into a few solutions, I want to encourage you by reminding you that working remotely does not mean being constantly available. Work on setting boundaries so that everyone is on the same page.

One way to establish bound-

aries is to create more structure. Consider setting a standing rhythm with your parents instead of responding to requests as they come. This can look like establishing a certain day of the week as your visit day, or setting Tuesdays/Thursdays as appointment days. This predictability can help reduce stress for everyone.

Next, look for ways to automate tasks that don't require you to actually be 100 percent involved. Grocery delivery or curbside pickup can save hours each month and reduce last-minute errands. The same applies to pharmacy delivery or recurring household supplies.

It may also be worth looking at your household as a team effort rather than assuming you need to carry every moving piece yourself. Your teens are busy, but they're also old enough to contribute. Are they helping more with household chores at home during this season? Could they spend an occasional Saturday helping their grandparents with light cleaning or yard work? This can create more space for you while also helping your teens build responsibility and strengthen relationships across generations. And don't overlook transportation support; explore carpooling with other families whenever possible. Sharing rides can free up time and reduce the feeling that every activity depends entirely on you.

After you've automated some tasks, think critically about where your time is actually going. If your visits turn into cleaning bathrooms, vacuuming, or mowing, consider outsourcing some of those tasks if financially feasible. Hiring help for house cleaning, lawn care, or seasonal chores can free you to spend your time as a daughter, and not always as the person managing the household.

It may also be worth exploring in-home care support. Even a few hours a week can provide help with errands, companionship, meal preparation, or light household tasks, creating more breathing room for you and your family.

Your teenagers still need you. Your parents also still need you. However, neither group needs all of you all the time. Balance rarely comes from doing more; it often comes from deciding what only you can do and building support around the rest.

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

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SHELDON CLARK'S CREATIVE CORNER

What can you do with MSDN after reading it?

It's back to school time and plenty of messy projects. Save as many copies as you can for your grandkids' take-home projects and crafts.

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Christine Such | MSDN Photos

SC resident Rob Dombro spent a career as a research chemist then picked up a brush in his retirement and became a locally renowned artist. Pictured right is a costal motif Dombro painted on a violin for a Symphony Orchestra of Illinois auction.

When science meets art you get Rob Dombro

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

For 45 years, Sun City resident Rob Dombro dedicated his life to scientific research. As a research chem-

ist, he split his lengthy career among the petroleum, polymer, and environmental industries, with milestones taking him from the Chicago area, to Clinton Iowa then to Springfield Illinois. Today, Dombro has exchanged his lab coat for a paint-

brush, channeling that same lasting passion into a vibrant second career in photography and water media. “My current focus is centered on blending the accuracy of photography with watercolors,” Dombro explained. His transition into the art world relies on formal training and continuing education. A former student of the Art Institute of Chicago, Dombro constantly refines his skills through immersive workshops nationwide. His studies include a Santa Fe session with renowned Chicago watercolorist David Becker hosted by the Madeline Island School of the Arts, ranked among the top arts and craft schools in the nation. Past workshops were with Carol Carter, Irving Shapiro, Joye Moon and currently with Linda Wadman of the Pencil and Palette art club. When Dombro moved to Sun City in 2007, he immediately sought out the local creative community. “Joining the Pencil and Palette Club right after my move was a wonderful experience because the group does an absolutely fantastic job supporting local artists,” Dombro said. Beyond his time at the studio easel, Dombro keeps a busy schedule within the community as an active member of both the Camera Club and the Tennis Club. His devotion to visual arts also extends far beyond the neighborhood, as he holds professional memberships in the Transparent Watercolor Society of America and the Chicago

Chapter of the Photographic Society of America. That devotion has translated into critical success, including multiple first, second, and third-place awards, as well as a People’s Choice award, across several competitions. Today, his work is featured in rotating mixed-media and photography exhibitions at the historic Dole Mansion in Crystal Lake. Dombro’s paintings have also been showcased at the Norris Gallery in St. Charles, the Lloyd Gallery in Decatur, and the Strawn Gallery in Jacksonville. He has even headlined solo exhibitions at the Carillon, Chatham, and Gables Fine Art Fairs throughout Central Illinois and Sun City. “Sharing my work in these galleries across Illinois has been extremely fulfilling, but it is equally meaningful to stay connected to my roots right here at home,” Dombro said. Dombro remembers one of his most memorable creations. In 2003, the Symphony Orchestra of Illinois hosted a unique charity auction featuring violins transformed into visual masterpieces. Among the contributors was artist Rob Dombro, who collaborated with the Sangamon Watercolor Society to paint a striking, custom design onto a violin. His artwork beautifully highlighted a peaceful coastal

motif, featuring a radiant full moon and a detailed lighthouse cast across the instrument’s body. Dombro later reflected on the creative process. He said, “Blending the visual arts with music for such a great cause allowed me to see the instrument not simply as a tool for sound, but as a medium to tell stories.” The exceptional piece drew the attention of the orchestra’s own conductor, Karen Lynne Beck, who ultimately placed the winning bid to secure the artwork for her personal collection. Dombro’s artwork is available for purchase at the Huntley Art Hub Gallery, located inside the Big House at The Shops on Main (11879 Main St., Huntley). “My boxes of cards, which feature reproductions of my artwork, are quite popular,” Dombro said. Local art admirers can also view his work at two upcoming events: the 2026 Colors of Sun City Art Gallery on September 19 and 20, and the Sun City Artisan Fair on November 1. For Sun City resident and artist Dombro, inspiration is as simple as a rainy day, a glass of wine, and a preferred playlist on the patio.



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



NEED ASSISTANCE?

- Questions/Feedback on Legislation or State Issues
- Help Accessing State Programs or Resources
- FOID and CCL Applications
- Upcoming Local Event with State Services

Dear Huntley Neighbor,

Governor Pritzker championed affordability as one of the majority party's top priorities this year. Not surprisingly, his rhetoric failed to match his actions, and instead, we ended up with the largest budget in state history at \$55.9 billion. Illinois families need lower taxes, lower costs, and responsible spending, but the new state budget that took effect in July did the opposite. The budget includes at least \$220 million in pork projects, sweeping surplus gas sales tax funds to close budget holes, and no direct property tax relief.

The most frightening part of the new state budget is that the majority party invented first-in-the-nation novel ways to start taxing our citizens' use of the internet and digital assets. This is on top of recent tax and fee increases on everything from renting to cellphones. Illinoisans pay nearly \$1,700 more in state and local taxes than the national average, and Governor Pritzker has approved more than 40 tax and fee increases since taking office. It's unsustainable and is making it increasingly hard for retired Illinoisans and seniors on fixed incomes to make ends meet.

We cannot tax our way out of problems; we need to grow our way out of them. Illinois should focus on economic growth through real structural reforms and sound policies, with no tax increases. We should be addressing our broken property tax system that is forcing families and seniors out of their homes. We need to cut wasteful spending and stop funding the expansion of new programs Illinois cannot afford. The problem is out-of-control spending and waste, not a lack of revenue.

In the end, transparency was severely lacking as the final night of the legislative session spilled past a midnight deadline and into the early morning hours of June 1. Normal transparency rules were waived or suspended, and this left no time for review, oversight, and public input. You deserve better from your state government.

We continue to speak up and vote against the irresponsible tax-and-spend decisions being made in Springfield and propose legislation to lower costs and reduce the cost of living in Illinois. Please feel welcome to contact us with any questions or concerns, or for help with accessing services from a state agency. It would be our pleasure to assist you.

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•COLORS

club hours to see what members are doing, gather more information, view inspiring artwork, and pick up membership forms.

Beyond simply browsing the static gallery walls, attendees are given the unique opportunity to experience art coming to life through spontaneous, pop-up live demonstrations scheduled throughout the entire weekend. These participatory sessions give guests an up-close view of the creative process, delivering a rare insight into the technical mastery required to build a professional piece.

“There will be demonstrations by Jim Gruber as well as other random demonstrations in various media on a pop-up basis,” Wadman said.

While observing these live techniques take place on the exhibition floor, guests can also indulge in complimentary appetizers and visit a mocktail bar featuring a menu of refreshing drink options. Lively, festive, and joyful music will ring through the lodge rooms, courtesy of live musical entertainment provided by the Ukuladies.

For art enthusiasts hoping to bring a piece of the exhibition home, select original works of art on display will be available for purchase.

“The key is to look closely at the individual title card placed next to each painting,” Wadman explained regarding how to identify which pieces are available for acquisition. In fact, Wadman noted, “at least six of our artists have items for sale at the Huntley Art Hub gallery at the corner of Main and Route 47.”

To respect community rules and maintain the venue’s non-commercial nature, specific rules apply to these purchases.

“All sales of these paintings must take place privately, after the show ends on Sunday, outside of the lodge and other Sun City common areas,” Wadman clarified.

Another massive highlight of the weekend that visitors will not want to miss is the special art raffle featuring Mighty Minis. Wadman described these exclusive raffle prizes as “small, 5x7 beautiful paintings created with mediums of acrylic, watercolors, and multi-media, with some presented in elegant black frames. These are perfect prizes that are easily giftable.”

Sun City residents interested in joining the Charter Club and exploring membership benefits can do so by visiting the official Sun City Community Association Huntley website at www.sccah.com under the Charter Clubs section. Please contact co-chairs Carolyn Gordon at 772-343-8189 or Linda Wadman at 847-707-2278 regarding the exhibit. Membership questions can be directed to Barbara Schramm at 847-436-0780 or Linda Wadman.

money matters



Deborah Haglund
Columnist

The Walmart store brand and Thompson gas prices we are tracking show a continued upward trend since January. Some items are down slightly, but overall, our basket of goods increased by 6.67% since mid-January.

Here are the mid-August prices:

- Gas: \$4.39
- Onions: \$1.28
- Potatoes: \$0.88
- Bread: \$1.36
- Peanut Butter: \$1.98
- Ground beef/lb: \$6.94
- Chicken/lb: \$2.23
- Rice/lb: \$0.92
- Dried black beans/lb: \$1.37
- Whole milk/gal: \$2.92
- Eggs/dozen: \$1.67

Last month, many of the shelves were almost empty. This month, the shelves were full, excepting only the store branded milk and eggs, which were a little sparse.

WRITERS WANTED

The Sun City Resident Special Interest Group, Write On, is seeking new members. We offer an outlet for your writing passion be it poetry, prose; fiction, non-fiction, or historical. We meet 2x a month to discuss our writings, get advice, and even help with publishing. If interested in writing at any level, please contact Mary Ann Weissmann (847) 669-2508, twope-as123@comcast.net

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By TR Kerth
Columnist

We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

- Aldo Leopold

Age is no mark of merit unless you do something constructive with it.

- Irving Berlin

Better the cottage where one is merry than the palace where one weeps.

- Chinese proverb

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LIFESTYLE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE HOSTS UPCOMING GAME

By Christine Such
My Sun Day News

SUN CITY - Looking for a fun way to spend a Tuesday afternoon with your neighbors?

Mark your calendars for September 22, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Drendel Ballroom is hosting Anybody's Guess, a lighthearted afternoon of Sun City fact and fiction. The event

organizers will be sharing some fun, surprising statements about Sun City Committees and the community. Sheri Goldstein, Chair of the Lifestyle Volunteer Committee,

said, "All you have to do is sit back, relax, and guess which ones are facts and which ones are fiction."

Here is a quick sample of a "fact or fiction" question coming up: You need 10 years of Sun City residency to serve on a committee; fact or fiction? Find out if your guess is correct by attending Anybody's Guess on September 22.

This gathering is completely casual and low-pressure. Whether you have lived here for decades or just moved in last week, everyone is on the same page. It is a simple, relaxed way to see what the local committees are up to and find easy ways to get involved if you want to.

Helene Weston, Strategic Planning Advisory Committee member, said, "Come for the community, stay for the connections. Serving on our HOA committee gives you an important voice in our neighborhood, but the best part is the social bond.

It is fulfilling to work together with such a welcoming group of people, share some laughs, and develop lasting friendships right where we live."

To make the afternoon even better, attendees can enjoy free appetizers and a dessert bar after the game.

Goldstein shared, "We will also have fun raffles throughout the game, featuring beautiful, handcrafted items donated by our talented residents. You must be present to win."

After the event, residents are encouraged to mix and mingle with committee members to learn more about their work and vital contributions to the community. While the event, appetizers, and desserts are complimentary, an advance headcount is required for seating. Please register by the September 17 deadline using registration code LSE1041 on the resident portal, or submit it directly to the association desk.



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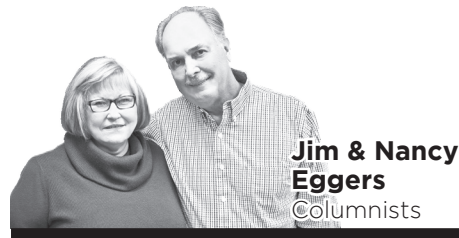


REGISTER HERE



thediningduo

MAMA MIA, PASTA MIA



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 My Sun Day News.

As you see on social media are like betting in Las Vegas. Everything looks good on the internet until you “throw the dice.” Sometimes you win, and sometimes you lose. It’s a real “crap shoot.” We were very skeptical since we’ve been burned in the past, with restaurants that looked totally different when we went there. We found a restaurant that we thought was a sure “bet” because it had an item on the menu that Nancy hasn’t had in 40 years, a deep-fried panzerotti. With this in mind, we decided to “roll the dice” and head out to Pasta Mia Pizzeria and Pastaria in Bartlett.

This venue is an end unit in a shopping center with a beautiful exterior. They have lots of outdoor seating with outdoor lights, heaters, and flowers. You know you are in the right spot when you see the parking space curb stops are painted green, white, and red, the colors of the Italian flag.

The interior was spacious with painted brick walls which made the dining area feel homey. As a matter of fact, this restaurant has been family owned since 1988. There were 20 tables, a bar with high-top tables, and a gaming room.

We started off with a classic Italian appetizer (?) the Quesadilla Italiano (\$17). This was a 15-inch diameter flour tortilla with Italian beef, giardiniera, mozzarella cheese, and served with marinara sauce. This was awesome, and we were surprised that other Italian restaurants never thought of it. The waitress warned us that the giardiniera was really hot, so you can have it inside the tortilla or on the side. We “gambled” and ordered it inside the tortilla. She was right, it was hot, hot, hot!!! On a scale of one to 10 on Jim’s sweat head-meter it measured a 16!!! It was so hot. How hot was it? My tongue was even starting to sweat.

On to our entrees. Nancy’s main purpose today was to get her Panzerotti (\$14). This was a pizza turnover stuffed with mozzarella cheese and sauce. She added pepperoni for a \$2 upcharge. The waitress asked if she wanted it baked or

deep fried, and of course she had to have it deep fried, the way she remembered it. For those of you who have never had one, it is a ginormous Italian pierogi and it is out of this world.

Jim spotted Auntie Vera’s Pasta Caprese (\$19). This creative dish was cherry tomatoes sauteed in garlic, olive oil, basil served with penne pasta and fresh mozzarella. He added a side of their Italian Sausage (\$6). My eyes popped out when the waitress placed the sausage in front of Jim. It was the longest sausage I had ever seen. Jim said his dish was differently delicious.

We were on a “roll,” so we decided to have dessert. We chose our all-time favorite Tiramisu (\$7). This was a welcome finish to a great meal.

FYI: This restaurant is handicap accessible.

The only downside to this restaurant would be all the entrees are ala carte, soup or salad is not included. For some reason, we didn’t even receive any bread at our table. Otherwise, this restaurant is a keeper.

The price for “gambling” on a new restaurant and “winning” was \$78.52. Nancy finally getting a panzerotti, priceless....

He Said / She Said

JIM’S TAKE: My pasta dish was different and delicious, but the sausage stole the show.

NANCY’S TAKE: I loved everything from the appetizer, to the entrée, to the dessert. They were all spot on.

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

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Companion planting: how to grow together



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

Companionship is often an important part of our lives. We are innately social creatures that benefit from interaction with others. The companionship that we crave may come in the form of a spouse, a family member, a neighbor or a pet. Someone who will listen to our problems and celebrate our successes. The knowledge that someone cares for us reduces feelings of loneliness, increases our happiness, gives us a sense of purpose, and lowers our stress level. These all have both mental and physical health benefits. Companions encourage and enable us to be the best versions of ourselves.

Human beings are not the only living things that benefit from companions. Plants benefit from them as well. Companion planting is a gardening technique that includes planting at least

two different types of plants near each other. It is a proven gardening practice that has been in existence for thousands of years. There is evidence that Romans and Grecians knew the benefits of companion planting. Indigenous Americans used the three sisters method of planting beans, squash, and corn together to the mutual benefit of all three crops. Through companion planting, plants grow stronger and healthier. Certain plant combinations deter pests, enhance the soil, reduce weeds, attract hummingbirds and support pollinators. This column will spotlight annual flowers, perennial flowers, herbs, groundcovers, and native plants that can be planted in partnership for the benefit of your landscaping.

When planted closely, Yarrow (*Achillea*) and Little blue-stem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) repel harmful insects. Roses and garlic paired together also tend to reduce the number of insects in an area. The annual flowers nasturtiums and marigolds lower the quantity

of harmful insects in a garden. The aromatic leaves of lavender when paired with stonecrop (*Sedum*) also help to repel insects. Many herbs can be incorporated into a perennial flower bed to assist in lowering the population of mosquitos. Basil, parsley, oregano, and lemon balm also help to protect us from getting bit by mosquitos.

Native plants not only maintain soil health, but also help to restore it. Switch grass (*Panicum*), with its deep roots, helps to break up compacted soils and can be planted with Spigelia (*Spigelia*). Meadow Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*) when paired with Yellow Corydalis (*Corydalis lutea*) will also improve the soil structure. White Baptisia (*Baptisia alba*) and Blue Baptisia (*Baptisia australis*) are both considered nitrogen fixing plants. Nitrogen is a vital nutrient for plant growth. These plants take nitrogen that is present in the air and turn it into a form that surrounding plants can use as a fertilizer.

Underplanting and inter-

planting of flowers help to keep sunlight from reaching weed seeds. This reduces germination rates and lowers the amount of weeds in a landscaping bed. The dense foliage of Coreopsis (*Coreopsis*) and Black eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*) pair well together to suppress weed growth. Creeping thyme (*Thymus praecox*), sweet woodruff (*Galium odoratum*), and hostas (*Hostas*) may be intermingled with other plants to help suppress weed growth. Weeds are often choked out due to the voracious growth patterns of Yarrow (*Achillea*) and Liatris (*Liatris*).

Coneflowers (*Echinacea*) may be planted with Black eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida*). This combination will allow for the attraction of pollinators. To support monarch migration, consider planting Goldenrod (*Solidago*) and New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) together in your yard. Anise Hyssop (*Agastache*) and Garden Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) also work in unison to support pollinators.

Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium fistulosum*) and Blue Flag (*Iris versicolor*) both work together to attract hummingbirds. Bee balm (*Monarda*) and Milkweed (*Asclepias*) are very supportive of pollinators, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Tubular-shaped flowers such as Cardinal flower (*lobelia*) and Obedient plant (*Physostegia*) both provide excellent food sources for hummingbirds.

Just as the plants in our garden benefit from others, we benefit as well. I wish you a garden full of plants and a life full of friends. As Misty Copeland once said "Anything is possible when you have the right people there to support you."

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

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Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo
Sun City Bocce Ball player Gus Lucia concentrates during league play.

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Bocce ball tradition thrives in Sun City

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

Bocce Ball is a sport which has a rich tradition and is thriving in Sun City. According to local Sun City Bocce Ball Club enthusiasts, Bocce Ball was developed in its current form in Italy. Bocce is derived from the word “bacio” which means to kiss, which is what you try to do when you roll the Bocce balls. Bocce Ball has been documented as early as 5200 B.C. in Egypt. Bocce is the third most popular sport in the world after soccer and golf. An estimated 25 million people in the US alone play Bocce Ball.

In Del Webb Sun City Huntley, bocce ball started in 1999 with 75 charter members now growing to over 700 active members in 2026. The Club continues to have positive growth every year. The season runs from the beginning of June until the end of September. Players register for the leagues they want to play in and they can also register as a sub and get called to play on other days. Currently there are 16 leagues ranging from 24 to 48 members each and playing once a week. The schedules run Monday through Friday with leagues up to four times a day at 9 a.m, 12:30 p.m, 3:30 pm., and 6:30 p.m. The club has six outdoor Bocce Ball courts that were resurfaced in 2025.

“Bocce Ball in Sun City is a low physical impact sport which fits perfectly with Del Webb residents. It is a game one can learn in five minutes and enjoy playing all summer. The bocce ball itself weighs 2.03 lbs so really anyone can play. We do have training days at the beginning of the season to go over the rules with new players and allowing all players to roll the balls a few times,” according to a Sun City Bocce Ball Club press release.

Bocce ball play begins with rolling the white target ball, called a “pallino”. It must rest between the middle and end lines. Then both teams take turns rolling their bocce balls to get close to or “kiss” the pallino. The closest color earns points which you accumulate to win the game which is 11 points. Our leagues play three games per day. Scores are kept for the season to determine an overall winner for each league at the end of the season.

The season ends with a Sun City Bocce Ball Club tournament with each of the 16 leagues sending a champion and playing in the single elimination tournament until a winner is crowned. Many residents bring chairs and come to watch this final day of the season and cheer on their friends. There is also an end of the year celebration banquet to bring together players from all leagues to celebrate another season completed.

Sun City Bocce Ball board members are president Jon Kipp, vice president Jean Gill, secretary Barb Helfers, and treasurer Barb Colson.

“Personally, I got interested in the sport as a new Del Webb resident a few years ago and it seemed like a fun sport that I hadn’t played before,” Kipp said. “With the three other volunteer members form the current bocce ball board we oversee the overall running and rules of the club. Each of the 16 leagues has a captain who is charged with running their league and reporting to the board.”

Players all agreed bocce ball is a fun sport. Jeff and Kim Thiel of Sun City are newcomers who like the sport.

“The game is enjoyable, something both myself and my wife play. We also bowl in the winter and were looking for something to do in the summertime,” Jeff Thiel said.

Bernie Winker is a bocce ball veteran of 20 years. He is one of the league captains.

“Our rules are to have fun, be safe, and the scores are what they are,” Winker said. “It’s the tournament at the end of the season, where the keys to winning are that both players have to be hot.”



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Will Moore
Columnist

Flop or bop

Now that title usually applies to music, songs and the like. However, I feel it can work in many contexts. Movies are the best example. And studios and the people who run them don't seem to know which is which. The prevailing theory is that CEOs running the movie industry are from the Silicon Valley set, tech bros who only see the world through algorithmic optimization. When, in fact, the public don't want to be pigeonholed into carefully curated boxes. That isn't to say all tech companies are that way, shoutout to Letterboxd and MUBI. It has been a problem for a while, especially this summer.

The box office seems to have spoken about franchise films. Unless you are Spider-Man or Christopher Nolan, you

are toast. Not the least of which was Amazon's *Masters of the Universe*. Less than two months after it premiered in theaters, it landed on Prime Video with a thud. And from frame one, it was apparent why. First of all: who wrote this script? After I heard the line about big armies being more targets, I knew we were in trouble. Having that come out of Idris Alba's mouth like he was Carl Weathers Jr doesn't scream nostalgia, it sounds dated even before he finishes. Twenty minutes into the movie (all back story), we finally meet He-Man himself Adam (Nicolas Galitzine) now older and forced to live on Earth with the knowledge of where he came from. This segment of the film starts with his job in HR in whatever business he works for while he searches for his fabled sword so he can go back to his home planet and be a hero. Writer Chris Butler (along with director Travis Knight) don't seem at fault. Their stop motion films are some of the best and they come off as hired guns here. But the Née brothers (Aaron and Adam) who developed the story I don't let off the hook. With the product placement (even an Amazon delivery van saving the day in one scene, I am sure Bezos had some input as well. Even Knight's usual eye for visuals has gone, making these sets (digital or otherwise) look like a Heavy Metal magazine cover left out in the rain. I am not going to talk about all the cheesy cameos and references and poor jokes. *Guardians of the Galaxy* has

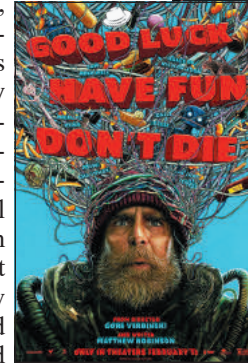
poisoned all superhero/action blockbusters. Sincerity isn't the problem. Last summer's Superman proved that. It's the facade of which that's alienating.

One element of this film that irked me was the corporate angle, akin to *Fight Club* but at our expense. None of that can be found in *Good Luck Have Fun Don't Die* over on Hulu. Released and buried back in February, Gore Verbinski (yes, Disney's Pirates guy) directs a dystopian sci-fi comedy about an AI program and the man from the future tasked to save us all. He lands in a diner, looking for recruits among the patrons. The trick is, which combination will work? He has come back multiple times to do this.

With great use of flashback, Verbinski and writer Matthew Robinson constructs a fantastic group of motley potential heroes who we engage with as the story progresses. Juno Temple, Haley Lu Richardson, Michael Peña, Zazie Beetz and Sam Rockwell (as the man) all get ample time to flex and grow their characters. Noticed how I mentioned them and only Nicolas and Alba from *Masters*? That's because we were made to care about them here. Allusions to other films like *Twelve Monkeys*, *They Live*, and *Night of the Living Dead* abound; however, they are employed and expanded on. This film is not kind to government



or corporate interests in realm of technology either, shocking in this day and age. Each sequence gets more dystopian about modern issues like cell phone addiction and school shootings, the second dark comedy to use the latter this year. That said, the film has a lot of heart to it with whip-smart commentary. Unexpectedly, it's an ode to human existence. To rephrase Timothy Leary's quote to surmise the filmmaker's vision; Turn Off, Drop In, Go Out.



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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.



HIDE THE HAT LOCATION:

Admittedly, this one is very difficult, challenging even the most astute hat seekers. It's on page 18, hidden inside the movie poster for Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die, which is what we hope for all our Find the Hat seekers!

Try again next edition!

ONGOING TUESDAY 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' popularity, 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.

ONGOING FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HUNTLEY

First Congregational Church of Huntley, United Church of Christ, Sunday worship 9 a.m. Rev. Doctor Michael Smith leads a biblically based, inclusive church; whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey you are welcomed and valued here. Bible Study Tuesdays at 12 p.m.

ONGOING MONTHLY POKER

There are many poker groups in Del Webb. We are looking for a



few individuals that would like to play in a monthly group with one-to-three-dollar stakes? If anyone is interested, please call Buz Criscione (630) 476-0934 or email at btrcriscione@gmail.com.

SEPTEMBER 8 VALOR QUILTS CULVER'S FUNDRAISER

Culver's Scoopie Share Night & Valor Quilts fundraiser is Tuesday, September 8

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

The Huntley Gazebo Guild Valor Quilts organization, honors our local Veterans with red, white and blue homemade quilts. We need your support to continue our work.

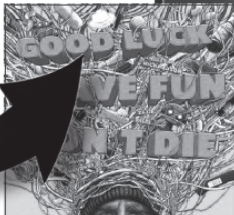
Huntley Gazebo Guild Valor Quilts will earn a percentage of all sales: dine-in, take out, and drive thru. Participate in a 50/50 raffle drawing for that evening. Please come out and support our Veterans.

On the BRIGHT Side

AN OPEN CALL FOR LETTERS

Do you have anything sweet to share? An act of kindness from a neighbor or a beautiful moment by Wildflower Lake? Please drop us a note (along with a picture, if applicable) about it at mycommunity@mysundaynews.com.

which combination will work? He has come back multiple times to do this. With great use of flashback, Verbinski and writer Matthew Robinson constructs a fantastic group of motley potential heroes who we engage with as they progress. Juno Temple, Riley Lu Richardson, Michael



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