

MY SUN DAY NEWS

PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF SUN CITY IN HUNTLEY

VOLUME 17 - NUMBER 19



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SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 7, 2026

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Sun City Birdwatchers Club members point binoculars to help see birds during a walk at Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove Nature Preserve.

Sedge Meadow trail improvements enhance birdwatching experience

Knight: You feel like you're not even in Del Webb



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lifeinfocus

It's September and I'm feeling 'vine'



I've always admired the tiny, white, star-shaped blossoms of Sweet Autumn Clematis, the vine that spills over fences and ledges in a profusion of sweet-smelling blooms in late summer.

Years ago, a neighbor shared a tiny little sprout, digging it up near her fence. Cradling it like a baby, I took it home, where I lovingly put it in the ground. But for years, it just didn't get going the way I thought it would. I needn't have worried. The perennial vine, years later, has firmly taken root.

This year, our house appears to stand the risk of being overtaken and returned to the earth by the Sweet Autumn Clematis. Glinting with dew in the early morning sun, the vines are at the same time beautiful and threatening, the way their amoeba-like tendrils reach further and further up and out. The cor-

ner of our house is draped in the delicate white flowers. Rogue morning glories are in the mix, too, fighting wildly to show their faces through the tangle of vines, and our bedroom windows are so surrounded by leaves that from the inside, it looks as though we're living in a treehouse in the middle of a lush jungle.

I feel a strange camaraderie with these vines, wild and a little directionless, holding on to anything it can grasp ahold of.

Change swirls around me: my children growing into adulthood and moving to other cities is perhaps the starkest reminder to me that time is passing, tick tock tick. I cling to simple comforts and rituals, using familiarity to balance the other ways my life is shifting.

Likewise, my husband, the chief gardener in our home, would usually be hacking back these vines, keeping them orderly and at bay. But he seems to have decided to let them be. Why not? Let's see how far they'll go.

The sweet September sun smiles down on us. The garden

looks wild, mostly tall native grasses that are turning gold, and bee balm, coreopsis, and cone-flower that are past their prime. The zinnias and marigolds are the last holdouts, pointing their colorful heads toward the sky until the very last moment, when the first frost will cruelly dull their colors and send them home, the last lingering guests to leave the garden party.

September brings my sentimental side to the surface, I suppose. I sense the winds of change blowing, and I'm desperately holding on to anything nearby that might keep me rooted to the ground.

Another source of comfort, the prolific singer/songwriter, actress, and literacy advocate, Dolly Parton, left this earth last month at age 80. Her passing hit me hard, taking away a person who seems absolutely timeless to me. In the days after her death, I cued up "Jolene" and "I Will Always Love You" on my playlists. I lined up snacks and Kleenex beside me while I stayed up way past my bedtime in my dark living room, my face awash in the glow of Dolly por-

traying Truvy in Steel Magnolias.

Sentimental September is why the serpentine foliage is allowed to grasp onto our fence and devour the back corner of our house. Some days I wonder if it might turn on itself, like a snake eating its own tail. We let it reach and continue growing, because we know it can't go forever. The frost will come and the blooms will drop. Bitter cold will shock the system of those lush green vines, turning them dark, limp, and droopy. Some day later in the fall, wearing flannels and work gloves, we'll take garden shears to the vines, and clear them all off, dumping them unceremoniously into a wheelbarrow for its final trip to the compost pile. But when it's September, it's best not to think of all that. It's best to bask in the deep golden sunlight and breathe in as much of the perfumy blossoms as you can. The shearing and the clearing come later. For now, reach out your arms and cling to the things you love, while keeping your feet planted firmly on the ground.

politicalplace

The views in these letters are the writers' own.

The damage to our US institutions, like higher learning, weather forecasting, the military, the FDA, the EPA, all of our scientific communities from the CDC to the NIH National Institute of Health have been under attack by the Trump administration. It will take decades to rebuild, even as we inject new ideas as we build. He has destroyed the White House. He has done projects, with no reviews

of his contracts, which have turned out shoddy, such as the reflective pool in D.C. He has ruined a magnificent memorial building by putting his name on it and destroying the Italian marble in the process. America is less safe and less resilient against disasters because of Trump.

To those who are not convinced America needs a change in their government go, with disregard to

published recall information and eat heartily, as the rest of the public is working to keep their voting rights. Yes, Trump is illegally railing his United States Post Office in schemes to stop people from being able to vote by mail. He's lost a majority of cases in court and now he's thumbing his nose at the courts and plowing ahead. You see, the people who vote for candidates don't like the policies in place nor how Re-

publican candidates won't listen to them. The GOP and Trump fear the midterm election is going to be a Tsunami. If they cannot win legally then they must rig the system.

Check (often) that you are still registered and be prepared to fight for your right to vote.

Nov. 3rd is 60 days away.

Gail Talbot
Huntley resident

andthefunstuff

On the BRIGHT Side

AN OPEN CALL FOR LETTERS

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- When submitting photos please provide captions. Photos should be at least 300 dpi.
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Despite what some historians say, Halloween, as we know it, is a modern holiday. Hear about the true origins of the spookiest night of the year, some of the wildest ways people have celebrated, and the legends that surround it. From ancient traditions rooted in folklore to modern-day practices, this presentation is designed to enlighten and entertain, ensuring that every participant leaves with a newfound appreciation for the magic and mystery behind Halloween.

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Provided | MSDN Photo

The Sun City Photographers Club joined the Sun City Birdwatchers Club for a bird walk at Wildflower Lake in late July. Bill Kucera of the Photographers Club captured an image of this mourning dove perched on a branch. Photo courtesy of Bill Kucera.

A lovely improvement

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

A group of 16 who have a shared interest in birds, donned binoculars, wore protective gear, and headed out to the Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove Nature Preserve Trail.

It was one of the Sun City Birdwatchers Club regularly scheduled walks, on Aug. 26, and they attend such walks at area preserves. The Sun City Nature Preserve area's three-fourth mile path has been improved as wood chips were added last year.

"It is a wonderful place, so quiet and peaceful," club member Allison Dunmore, a member for about two years, said.

A passing blue jay caught the group's attention.

"That's a blue jay. I saw it," member Russ Sandt said. He added there is an app you can download for the purpose of identifying birds and their sounds.

"You feel like you're not even in Del Webb," Linda Knight said of the property.

Sun City Birdwatchers Club President Amy Sanecki said the improvements at Dell Webb Sedge Meadow Grove Nature Preserve have been welcomed.

"What a lovely improvement the Sun City Community Association Board/FSR

Management made in creating the Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove Nature Preserve Trail," Sanecki said. "The approximately three-fourth mile wood chipped trail was created last November. There were so many people who contributed to the creation of the trail - residents, management, Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves, and the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission. The Sun City Birdwatching Club walks at the Nature Preserve on the last Wednesday of each month. Last month, members of the Sun City Photography Club joined us."

Marsha Behrens' interest is in the bluebird, and she explained how a bluebird box works. She has been involved in efforts at the local preserve since 2010, when it was owned by the Del Webb Sun City Homeowners Association but no work had been done yet.

"A representative of Illinois State Department of Natural Resources came out to show us what was there," Behrens, the club historian, said.

The Sun City Birdwatchers Club officers are: Amy Sanecki, President; Ann Weider, Vice President; Phyllis Cronsell, Secretary and Irene Camp, Treasurer.

If anyone wants more info, feel free to contact the club at birdwatchingsch@gmail.com

TRAIN RIDE WITH SANTA

Happy Holiday Railway at the Illinois Railway Museum returns this holiday season! Tickets are now on sale for all event dates: November 27, 28, 29; December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, and 21. Embark on a magical 40-minute train ride through the winter countryside with Santa Claus himself! Enjoy a visit with Santa, caroling, hot chocolate and treats on the train, gifts for the kids (and the young at heart), holiday lights on the museum grounds, and more. Happy Holiday Railway trains run weekends November 27 - December 21. Advance purchase of tickets is strongly suggested as trips sell out fast.



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For ticket information on 11-19 and 11-20, call 847 - 515 - 8545

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Who assembled these assembly directions, anyway?



Some people see the words “Some assembly required” and consider it a deal-breaker, but for me it’s a challenge.

Especially when it’s two identical gizmos that require assembly, and you can challenge yourself to beat your record time in building the second one.

And, of course, getting them both built without reading the instructions — that little slip of paper that I often use to stanch the flow of blood that inevitably comes with instruction-free assembly.

Of course, when I’m assembling something for somebody else, paid for by their money, I take the high road and follow the directions. Grudgingly.

And not always with better results.

That happened recently when my artist friend Donna asked me to help her assemble a pair of gizmos that Amazon had delivered to her. I eagerly volunteered to build them both myself, rather than robbing myself of the chance to beat my own assembly-time record by building only one.

She agreed, because she suffers from someassemblyrequiredphobia.

The gadgets were a pair of wooden racks, each designed to hold tubes of artist’s paint in three rows of six. Because she has a lot of paint tubes, she needed two racks, which would hold up to 36 paint tubes.

Altogether, each rack was made of about a dozen wooden pieces, with plenty of tabs to be slipped into plenty of slots, along with elastic fastening bands to hold the whole thing together. It would have been a snap to assemble without the instructions, but I was taking the high road on this one. I followed the instructions point by agonizingly obvious point.

From the very beginning to the end. Step by step.

Resisting the urge to get ahead of myself and go off on my own renegade self.

It was an uncharacteristic display of self-discipline for me. Which, it turns out, was a problem.

As instructions go, these looked pretty good, because it was a single sheet of paper printed on one side with both pictures and words—real words, arranged in patterns that at least approximated English, like: “Slide B (X3) into center A slots” and “slot C (X3) at center & elastics at ends.”

There were five steps altogether, and I had the first gizmo built in no more than ten minutes. Then I raced to build the second gizmo without a glance back at the instructions, and I finished it in record time.

And then, as I cleaned up the packaging to throw it away, I looked at the very last sentence of the instructions. It was a sentence I hadn’t noticed before because it was printed off to the right of the last diagram, at the very bottom of a big blank white space, as if it had been added as an afterthought.

The final sentence said: “The side marked with a corresponding letter should face the bottom or inside of the rack, depending on piece placement.”

I put down the instruction sheet and gazed at the finished paint-rack gizmos I had just built. And there on top of each of the tiered racks was a letter — A, B, or C — displayed so prominently it would be hard to miss, even if the rack were stuffed with paint tubes.

Not too appealing.

Of course, if that last sentence of the instructions had been printed at the very beginning, those assembly-guide letters would have been invisible, on the bottom of the tiers.

As I started disassembling the gizmos to rebuild them according to the last line of the directions, I couldn’t help but remember that episode of “Mash” on TV, when an unexploded bomb landed in the Mash 4077 compound, and Hawkeye had to disarm it with a few basic tools as a timer on the bomb ticked down. Two wires — one red and one white — led from the timer to the detonator.

“Cut... the red... wire,” Colonel Blake called out, reading the bomb-disabling directions in a no-nonsense voice while hiding behind a blast shield.

And as Hawkeye slipped the wire cutter over the red wire and started squeezing the snippers, the Colonel read the next line of instructions: “But first....”

That line surely got a big laugh all across America, because everybody has a story about those maddening instructions that wait until it’s too late to tell you....

I was halfway through gizmo-reassembly with a Mash-memory smile on my face when I took a closer look at those A’s and B’s and C’s that were causing me such a headache and rendering my record-breaking construction time moot.

And I realized that each of those letters, so unappealing right there in plain sight, were just little pieces of lettered tape stuck to each part. Rather than worrying about which side of each piece was facing upwards and disassembling and reassembling gizmos according to late-breaking instructions, I could just peel the little tabs off in a second or two.

Now that would have been a handy tidbit of information to include for a mook like me who actually followed the damn directions for once.

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



Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

Huntley Fire Protection District, Huntley Police Department and Huntley American Legion Post 673 all paid tribute to those killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks 25 years ago. Fire Chief Dan Wagner, Police Chief Linda Hooten, and Mayor Tim Hoeft all gave remarks at the Town Square event.

Village honors lives lost, patriotism on 9/11

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

Huntley American Legion Honor Guard leaders recalled the impacts of the terrorists’ attacks on September 11, 2001, at a village ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of that fateful day. Huntley Mayor Tim Hoeft also gave remarks.

Terrorists killed about 3,000 people, using four airplanes at the World Trade Center towers north and south, the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia and passengers and crew fought back to crash an airplane at Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Audience members wore patriotic shirts to catch the spirit of the day.

Tom Smith of Sun City was working as a commander in the Palatine Police Department when terrorists struck the United States on September 11, 2001. He proudly wears a “9/11” hat.

Smith recalled his visit to Ground Zero where the World Trade Centers collapsed in New York City.

“I went to Ground Zero the next May,” he said. “We went to check in at the officer at the desk, who told someone to take us to Ground Zero,” Smith said at Huntley’s ceremony recognizing the 25th anniversary of 9/11. We went through several floors.”

Huntley Fire Chief Dan Wagner remembers the day, as he was a firefighter at Elgin Fire Department.

“What I remember most, though, are the people still working,” Huntley Fire Chief Dan Wagner said. “FDNY firefighters were there around the clock. They were tired. They were grieving. They were covered in dust. Yet they kept searching. They were looking for their brother and sister firefighters. And they never gave up looking for the thousands of innocent lives lost. That, to me, is one of the most powerful images of September 11. Not just the firefighters running into burning buildings, who, after losing hundreds of their own, kept going back into the ruins because they refused to leave their fellow firefighters behind and they refused to stop searching for the people they were sworn to serve.”

Wagner added that many felt a sense to join military service, and it went to war, with our veterans who carried that fight, for more than two decades, standing watch in places most of us will never see.

“Flags appeared on homes, businesses, bridges, and overpasses,” Hooten said. “Communities supported first responders. We grieved together, prayed together, and stood together. It should not require a tragedy for us to remember we have far more in common than we sometimes allow ourselves to believe. September 11 reminds us that evil does not have the final word. Today the legacy we have a responsibility to carry forward. For those of us who were in uniform that day, September 11 is more than a chapter in our nation’s history. It reminds us of the responsibility that comes with the badge, the uniform and the oath we have taken.”

Hooten noted the immediate impacts of September 11.

“May we never forget September 11, 2001,” Hooten said. “But just as importantly, may we never forget who we became on September 12. God bless those we lost, God bless the survivors, God bless those who continue to serve and God bless the United States of America.”

Huntley Fire Department Battalion Chief Steve Young, who joined the fire department profession shortly after 9/11, performed “Amazing Grace” on bagpipes, and a bell service, which notes the beginning and the end of a shift, was performed as well.

Huntley Fire Protection District Lt. Matt Schulien and Lt. Chris Jagels performed the firefighters’ bell service. Active Army Reserve Chaplain Amy Feltis performed taps.

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Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

Sunflower Garden Club officers (L to R): President Elaine Rowinski, Treasurer Joy McGahan, Vice President Marsha Natkins, Buddy Groups Betty Aiello, and Recorder Darlene Pratt.

Sunflower Garden Club recognizes volunteers, students

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

The Sunflower Garden Charter Club has always played an active role in the Sun City community. And this year is

no exception. Elaine Rowinski is the newly elected president of the club. Rowinski said, “With me on the executive leadership team are vice president Marsha Natkins, recorder Darlene Pratt, and treasurer Joy McGahan.” In addition to the executive board, there are additional operational roles within the club to secure smooth programming and outreach for the coming term. Rowinski said, “Betty Aiello coordinates the club’s Buddy Groups. Carol David oversees the

task of membership administration and recruitment.” The club relies heavily on volunteer efforts to achieve its civic goals. “Our organization is incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated network of members who generously step up to assist with our various events and projects,” Rowinski stated. “For our monthly meetings, Mary Jo McElwain does an outstanding job coordinating the guest speakers.” Showing its ongoing devotion to education and local youth, the Sunflower Garden Charter Club recently honored local high school seniors. The club officially presented academic scholarships to three selected students from Huntley High School. The selection process proved to be highly competitive for the club’s leadership. “Every single student who applied for our program was highly deserving, which made narrowing the field down to just three recipients an incredibly difficult task,” Rowinski said. The club’s presentations followed an earlier district-wide celebration. “While we initially revealed the names of our scholarship winners during the high school’s official recognition evening, we wanted to invite them to our formal Sunflower Charter Club meeting to personally hand out the financial awards,” Rowinski said. Among the students recognized by the Sunflower Garden Club was Wyatt Ellis, who was awarded a scholarship to pursue a degree in forestry at Southern Illinois University. Inspired by his grandfather to deeply respect the natural world, Ellis, a varsity athlete and dedicated community volunteer, ultimately plans to pursue a career as a conservation officer right here in Illinois. Matthew Kokes also showed a strong passion for the environment, aspiring to build a career focused on ecological restoration, wildlife conservation, and public education. Driven by a determination to succeed that was also inspired by his grandfather, Kokes completed over 100 hours of local volunteer work. “Zaina Malik was unable to attend the presentation ceremony due to a prior family commitment,” Rowinski noted. Malik was in the Huntley High School Medical Academy and a youth gymnastics coach. She will study human development and family studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She is inspired by her late grandmother, a gynecologist and breast cancer survivor, who originally taught her how to garden. Malik plans to advocate for child health by researching how nutrition, clean air, and green spaces shape early childhood development. The generous financial awards presented to these students are made possible directly through the club’s popular annual fundraisers: the spring hanging basket sale and the fall mum sale. Going forward, the club has a busy calendar of events planned to keep members engaged. Rowinski said, “Our major end-of-year event involving our buddy groups will be organizing the holiday decorations at the

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Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

The Adjuster take the championship for Sun City softball.

ADJUSTERS’ WAIT FOR SOFTBALL TITLE ENDS

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

It’s been a long time, but the Adjusters are once again champions of the Sun City Softball League 16-inch postseason tournament. In a tense battle, the Adjusters took home the title with a 5-4 victory over the Lumbarjacks. The champs went 5-0 in the tourney, winning it for the first time since 2014. “We jelled at the right time this season,” Adjusters manager Phil Tarrant said. “It went down to the final inning and we scored a run in the eighth for a 5-4 lead. We didn’t have a lot of hits, but we were able to get them at the right time when we really needed them.” Bob Banks had the key RBI hit for the lead, and John Toth was the winning pitcher for the team. The champs were 8-8 regular season before their unbeaten tournament run. So congratulations to the team members, the Adjusters, also: Don Grex, Joe Jablonski, Paul Townsend, John Garland, Dan Vitale, Mike Grantham, Roger Lambert, Mike Gaynor, Jesse Rosas, Mike Netkow, Dave O’Neil, Ed Leukulich, Bob Ruckoldt, Larry Bunge, Newell Chiesel and Gary Struck.

The Adjusters won the first game of the championship series with the Lumbarjacks 4-2 Sept. 10. The Lumbarjacks won the regular season title in the 16-inch evening league with a 14-2 record. “Winning the league and finishing second in the tournament is still a great accomplishment to cap off two great seasons,” Lumbarjacks manager Joe Gattone said. The Lumbarjacks were a combined 18-5 a year ago, so 37-9 total over two seasons. “The Adjusters got the better of us in the championship series,” Gattone said. “We hit the ball hard many times, but right at them. They are a great team, too, congrats to the Adjusters. Seeing a team of dedicated players who give 110 percent on the field and the Lumbarjacks that I had the privilege of managing, and more importantly, these guys are all phenomenal people. I will miss the camaraderie, since the redraft of the entire leaguer will most likely be occurring next season.” The tournament games were all a challenge for the Adjusters, who had to overcome an 11-3 deficit to the Coyotes for a 15-14 win. They also beat the Mustangs, 5-4 and Capitals, 3-2. “It was a great game by both

teams,” Tarrant said of the 15-14 win. “We scored a couple of runs to make it 11-5, then 11-7 and got it to 11-11 after nine innings. They went up 12-11, but we tied it in or half of the 10th. They scored two runs in the 11th, but somehow we got three runs in the 11th.” Tarrant spoke triumphantly about the former curse. “We broke our curse. We haven’t gotten past the second round of the tournament in 12 years. We just jelled (late in the season).”

Lumbarjacks advance

Some other exciting tournament games included, on Sept. 4, down 6-5, a three-run double by Jeff Spiller and subsequent errors scored Don Wickersheim and Bill Russell, who had singled ahead of him in the bottom of the eighth inning for an 8-6 lead over the Travelers. They added another run for a 9-6 win over the Travelers. The Travelers did not score in the top of the ninth inning, so the defending tournament champs Lumbarjacks moved on to a consolation title game against the Coyotes Sept. 8, which they won 5-4. The Lumbarjacks trailed the Travelers by 6-1 after three innings before scoring four runs in the sixth inning. Wickersheim, Spiller and Pete Kilolbasa had RBI singles in the comeback. Gattone summed up the game. “As far as the entire tournament goes, I don’t feel we’ve played as well as we are capable of playing,” he said. “But we have done what it takes to win, other players picking up the team if one or two others were having a down day. That’s been our theme. No one person can mean everything in a victory or a defeat. It’s always a team effort. Our defense is usually pretty solid in most games, but our hitting could definitely be more consistent like it was through the regular season, which is a large reason we finished first with a 14-2 record. As I said before, every team in this league can be a threat on any given day. Game by game, one inning and one at bat at a time. That’s how we roll.”

HAUNTED TRAIL RETURNS AT EMRICSON PARK

The Haunted Trail is returning at Emricson Park on Saturday, October 17, bringing an evening of Halloween fun, frights and family-friendly festivities to Woodstock. The Haunted Trail will offer two experiences throughout the day, giving visitors the opportunity to choose their level of spooky. From 3 to 6 p.m., the Candy Walk will offer a family-friendly adventure for younger children and those looking for a not-so-scary Halloween experience. Costumes are encouraged, and children should bring a candy bag to collect treats along the trail. As darkness falls, the Haunted Trail will transform for the Zombie Walk from 7 to 10 p.m. With the sun down, the zombies get a little bolder and the trail gets a lot spookier. The later you arrive, the more frightening the experience becomes. The Haunted Trail begins near Hilltop Pavilion in Emricson Park. The trail follows a dirt and uneven path, so participants should wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a flashlight. Dogs are not permitted at the event. There is no admission charge for the Haunted Trail, although donations are encouraged to help support the event.

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askanangel



Q My wife and I are of an age where we're starting to think about our last chapter in life. We're in our late 70s, our kids are grown, and we're considering moving to a senior living community. Our house has become too much to manage, and we'd like to be surrounded by an active community where we can make new friends and enjoy life.

Candidly, my wife is showing early signs of memory loss. Dementia is in her family history. Both her mother and grandmother suffered from it, and I'm concerned that she, too, will have to walk through this journey. I would like to find a senior

living community where she will not only have the care and support she needs, but where I can find support as well. As a son-in-law, I watched my father-in-law struggle to care for his wife and saw the devastating toll it took on his own health.

As we pursue the next steps, I'd like some advice on what sort of questions to ask during our tours. What should we look for during our tours to make a confident decision?

A First, I want to commend you for thinking ahead and having these conversations now rather than waiting until decisions feel urgent. It sounds like you and your wife are approaching this next stage of life thoughtfully and with a clear goal.

During tours, I encourage you

to pay attention to more than floor plans and amenities. Take time to observe the people you see. Are the residents out and about? Are they engaged in activities, friendly towards each other, and spending time in common areas? A community shouldn't feel quiet or deserted. Look for signs of life and relationships. Also, pay attention to how the residents look. Do they seem well cared for, comfortable, and treated with dignity?

Observe the staff. Do they seem friendly, unrushed, and genuine? Do they know residents' names and appear to have a good rapport with them? Remember, the staff will be caring for you and your wife, so as you walk around the community, think about how you'd like to have that staff as your caregiver, nurse, or server.

Given your concerns about your wife's memory and your desire to remain together, ask detailed questions about future care options. Can the community accommodate changing needs over time? Specifically, if your wife needs memory care in the future, does the facility have a separate memory care unit that would allow you to remain under the same roof and maintain daily connection? Understanding that path now can prevent difficult transitions later.

Since community seems to be one of your goals, ask about the social life of the facility. Look for a vibrant and diverse calendar that's filled with a variety of activities, not just games and entertainment. Does the facility offer outings, creative programs, and fitness classes? Would you be able to build real friendships?

I also recommend asking about men-specific programming and memory loss support groups. Should your wife's memory decline, you'll want to have a strong support system already in place so that your health and well-being don't suffer as your father-in-law experienced.

Trust your gut. As you walk around the community, ask yourself if you can picture your life here. Remember, you're not simply choosing a place to live. You're choosing the environment for your next season of life.

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

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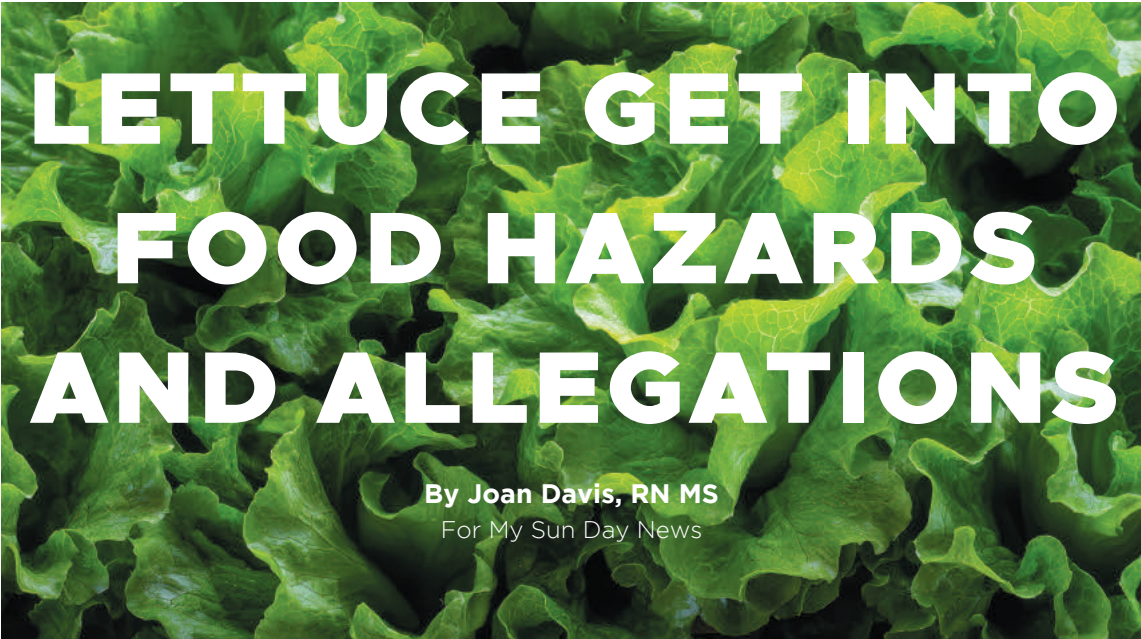
SHELDON CLARK'S CREATIVE CORNER

What can you do with MSDN after reading it?

Fall is here! A great craft project to do with kids is cut sheets of newsprint into leaf patterns, color them, and string them together to make a cute, seasonal garland you can hang over a door!

Submit ideas to
mycommunity@mysundaynews.com

Please consult your doctor or regular healthcare professional before following suggestions found in any MSDN health column/story.



LETTUCE GET INTO FOOD HAZARDS AND ALLEGATIONS

By Joan Davis, RN MS
For My Sun Day News

Several serious public health outbreaks occurred this summer and continue with headlines announcing:

- the alarming rates of Cyclosporiasis
- sharply rising rates of Measles cases
- and one new worry - the New World Screwworm (NWS) outbreak.

Each of these outbreaks not only affects our health, but involves consequences, financial and otherwise, and often are fueled by questionable allega-

tions. Let's focus on each one examining the where, how, popular misinformation and consequences about each outbreak.

Cyclosporiasis

Where? This intestinal illness has hit close to home. While isolated cases of this disease occur annually and are easily contained, this year rates are much higher. Since June of this year the McHenry County Department of Health had identified 61 cases of cyclosporiasis, more

than five times the number of cases reported during the same timeframe in 2025. As of August 2026, the Kane County Health Department reported 64 cases reflecting a significantly higher number than previous years (9 cases in 2025 and 13 in 2024). Statewide Illinois has climbed to over 1,400 confirmed and probable cases. The good news is cases are now tapering off, although lingering questions on future outbreaks remain.

How? The Cyclospora parasite is most often linked to contaminated fresh produce, al-

though it can spread from contaminated water. This year it was first thought to be caused by contaminated lettuce imported from Mexico, but subsequent testing was inconclusive and to date no specific cause has been identified.

Popular Allegations

Although some considered the initial lettuce statement a deliberate lie on the part of the Federal Department of Agriculture (USDA), some experts have concluded claim that the more likely cause was federal cuts to crucial food safety programs and staffing. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lost 20% of its staff; the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has lost 25-27% of its staff, which negatively affects various programs (such as Alzheimer's research). In addition, DOGE made cuts to the Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network—better known as FoodNet — which is a federal-state monitoring program between the CDC, FDA, USDA, and state health agencies. The result was that instead of monitoring for 8 different pathogens, including cyclosporin, FoodNet is now only required to monitor two foodborne pathogens: Salmonella

and E. coli. Source: CDC, FDA.

Consequences

As predicted by this headline: "American food safety could be headed for a breakdown. Food safety experts warn that federal cuts will leave people more vulnerable to foodborne illness." (Source: Stat: Public Health News Research) Fortunately after this latest cyclosporiasis outbreak, some positions/programs have been restored but experts and consumers remain concerned about effectiveness of present food safety efforts.

Measles case increases

Where? On August 20, 2026, the Centers for Disease Control reported 2,777 confirmed measles cases in the United States so far in 2026 as compared to a total of 2289 cases in 2025.

How? Measles is very contagious. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You can get measles just by being in a room where a person with measles has been. Historically the childhood measles vaccine given with Mumps

LETTUCE | Pg. 17



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- *Plan benefit changes
- *Part D formulary, deductible, and co-insurance

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Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

A group of Sun City US Army veterans participates in Honor Our Veterans event, Sept. 12 at Sun City Memorial Field.

Sun City Veterans Club hosts special softball day

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

SUN CITY - A total of about 100 Sun City area veterans, representing all branches of military service – US Army, Department of the Air Force, Department of the Navy, US Marine Corps and US Coast Guard, stood by groups at the edge of the Veterans Memorial softball diamond’s infield.

The military servicemen’s tours of duty ranged from the 1950s to 1999. And for seven plus years, they have been honored at the Sun City Honor Our Veterans event.

“I think it’s a great event,” Army veteran and Huntley village trustee Vito Beguni said.

Two members, Frank Sansone and Rich Jamrozy, were presented with Valor Quilts by the Gazebo Quilting Committee. Both said they

were honored to receive a quilt.

“The quilts sometimes bring the veterans to tears,” Bev Kenny said. “We make them at home from books and patterns.”

Sansone, a Navy veteran, mentioned another honor he received.

“I just took an Honor Flight,” he said, of the trip for veterans to Washington, D.C. “They bused us to Milwaukee, then flew to D.C and we saw all the patriotic sites, including Marine Helicopters that fly the president.”

Navy veteran Pete Karambelas, a 101-years young Sun City resident, had the honor of throwing out the first pitch. Also, the McHenry County Veterans Affairs Commissioner Nate Johnson presented him with the certificate for his military service and becoming 100-years-old. Karambelas fired a strike to the catcher, and later received a softball autographed by other players.

“It was real nice to be recognized,” soft-spoken Karambelas said.

Emcee Glenn Grobeli, a planning committee member, summed up the purpose of Honor Our Veterans.

“Each year this event gives us a chance to showcase the brave men and women of Sun City, over 100 of them are here today,” Groebli said. “They are proud to call themselves veterans. We call them heroes today. As we look around the problems of the world, we are still and always will be, the best country in the world due to the heroes you will meet today. May we never for-

get the men and women that served our country.”

Sun City Marine Corps Color Guard members Doug Logan, Joe Scorn, Mac McCarthy, Tom Culumber and Cliff Krueger posted the colors after veterans were arranged by service branch. Rich Anlenbrandt performed taps. Also, Kimberly Behrans sang the National Anthem and God Bless America; Retired U.S. Army Col. Cliff Dungey led in the Pledge of Allegiance, and Gary Krewer and Rich Anle

Gold Star families, immediate relatives of U.S military service members who died in the line of duty, took a bow. This includes spouses, parents, siblings, and children.

Also, Blue Star Families, who are immediate family members of someone currently serving in active duty, National Guard, Reserve forces, and those transitioning out of service.

BraveHearts Therapeutic Riding of Harvard brought two horses and representatives explained how their program assists veterans, Training sites are in Harvard and Poplar Grove.

“BraveHeart saved my life,” Army veteran Mitchell Reno said, “They gave me my voice, sanity. They have younger horses, but some can live up to age 39. They have a program where 20 veterans ride for 20 miles, to raise awareness because 20 veterans die by suicide each day, and we hope to make that zero. We go through major cities, such as New York and Chicago.”

money
matters



Deborah
Haglund
Columnist

There is some good news regarding the prices of the Thompsons gas and Walmart food items we have been following. Five items (potatoes, bread, peanut butter, rice, and dried black beans) are the same price they were in January. Also, the price of chicken breast and eggs has come down since the beginning of the year (15.25% and 17.96%, respectively).

The bad news is that the overall increase in the price for our basket of items since January 2026 was 5.69%. The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculations show that the increase in consumer prices for the nation as a whole was only 2.99% for January through August 31, 2026. The 5.69% increase for our much, much smaller sample was attributable to the following price increases (again, compared to January 2026 prices):

Gas - up 29.34% to \$4.09/gal
Onions - up 9.43% to \$1.06/lb
Ground beef - up 7.20% to \$6.94/lb
Milk - up 10.27% to \$2.92/gal

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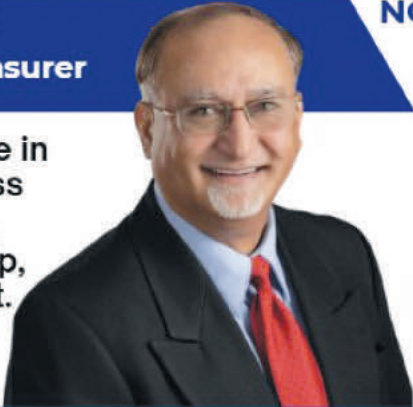
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Plant recommendations from a professional



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

passion for creating healthier, more beautiful landscapes.

In addition to working with plants, do you also have any opportunities to garden in your free time?

Yes! I am always working in my own garden and trialing new varieties. I like to test plants in different environments to see how they perform so I can advise from experience. For example, if a plant is labeled for sun, I may try it in shade to see how it handles those conditions and what performance may be lost.

Hocus Pocus Groundcovers is a unique selection of plants. Can you please tell us a bit more about the collection?

Midwest Groundcovers was founded on groundcovers, so this program was a natural fit. It includes more than 90 varieties that offer solutions for many landscape conditions, from dry sun to walkable spaces. The program also has a website, hocuspocusgroundcovers.com, with plant lists by site condition to help people choose the right plant for the right place.

Homeowners are often looking for plants that will give them color throughout the year. Are there any particularly col-

orful evergreen shrubs that you recommend our readers check out?

Fire Chief™ Arborvitae (Thuja occidentalis 'Congabe') is one of the most colorful evergreens you can plant, with foliage that ranges from bright lime green to orange and red-tipped growth. It almost looks like it glows. It is a medium-sized shrub that does well in full sun to part shade and well-drained soil.

If blue is more your style, Nordic® Blue Juniper Juniperus virginiana 'Blue Mountain' is a great option. Its steely blue-green foliage and blue fruits add color, and birds love it. It is a tough plant that performs well in full sun and poor soils.

For yellow tones, Japanese False Cypress (Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Filifera Aurea Nana') is a unique choice. Its soft, thread-like yellow-green foliage gives it a different look than most evergreens. It is very slow growing, but its texture and color make it worth the wait.

As our community matures, the growing conditions become shadier. What are the top five most popular shade loving plants?

1. Noble Spirits Dwarf Goatsbeard – Bright white flow-

ers for shade and performs especially well in dry shade under established trees.

2. Alexander's Great Siberian Bugloss – Larger foliage than older varieties and better heat tolerance.

3. Crested Surf Fern – A newer fern with more frill and bolder texture; it performs very well in my own garden.

4. Carnival Watermelon Alumroot – One of the best-performing Heucheras we grow, with strong winter color and a bright red pop in the landscape.

5. Autumn Glow Toad Lily – An underused shade plant that blooms in fall with unique orchid-like flowers.

Vines do a great job of adding color to vertical spaces. Is there a vine that you grow that is particular floriferous?

Summer Cascade™ Wisteria (Wisteria macrostachya 'Betty Mathews') from First Editions® has incredible flower power in June and a wonderful fragrance. It was discovered in Minnesota, so it handles Midwestern winters well. We have grown it next to our office for several years, and it is a staff favorite.

Fragrance in a garden can transform the experience into one that engages the senses. Are there any particularly fragrant plants that you

would encourage our readers to plant in their own yards?

Heaven Scent Jacob's Ladder (Polemonium 'Heaven Scent') is a fragrant spring bloomer with beautiful blue-purple flowers.

Phenomenal® Lavender (Lavandula x inter. Phenomenal®) has highly fragrant foliage and flowers in summer, and it also dries well.

Grape Delight™ Bearded Iris is another favorite, with large purple blooms and a scent often compared to grape bubblegum.

Roses have earned the reputation as being susceptible to insects and diseases. For someone who wants to plant a low maintenance rose, what do you recommend?

I am a big fan of Easy Elegance® Roses. They were bred in Minnesota and perform very well in our climate. My favorite is Sweet Fragrance for its bright orange-pink blooms and excellent fragrance.

• 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.

Nikki, can you please tell us a bit more about Midwest Groundcovers?

Midwest Groundcovers is a wholesale nursery dedicated to growing and supplying quality plants throughout the greater Midwest. With deep roots in horticulture, we serve landscape professionals, garden centers with dependable products, knowledgeable support, and a

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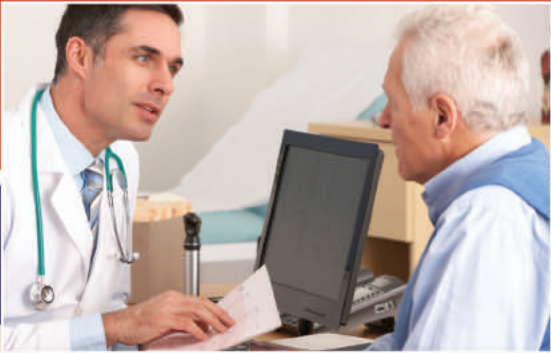
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



As we work to make Illinois a better place to live for people of every age, we are pleased that three new laws will provide important benefits and protections for senior citizens across our state.

Together, these laws provide seniors and their families with greater fairness on the road, greater transparency in health care and improved access to treatments. We will continue working to ensure Illinois remains a state where seniors can live safely, independently and with dignity. 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.

HOUSE BILL 1226

the Road Safety and Fairness Act, reduces barriers for older drivers. As of July 1, 2026, the age drivers are required to complete an annual behind-the-wheel driving test to renew their driver's license is raised to 87. To ensure safety, immediate family members can report credible medical concerns to the Secretary of State for review, which law enforcement can already do.

SENATE BILL 3114

addresses the cost and availability of health care by preventing health insurance companies from downcoding a claim, which is unsustainable for providers and leads to higher out-of-pocket expenses for patients. These new protections take effect January 1, 2028.

SENATE BILL 126

expands insurance coverage for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Effective January 1, 2027, coverage must include medically necessary diagnostic testing and FDA-approved treatments or medications prescribed to slow the progression of these diseases.

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo
Model Railroad Club Members (L to R) D. Applegate, D. Hattendorf, D. Levy, R. Greenspan, D. Von Burgen, D. Svoboda, and R. Melka outside the patriotically decorated clubhouse.

Model Railroad Club displays impressive patriotic artifact

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

The Sun City model railroad was all aboard this year to celebrate the United States’ 250th year. This year, the club hosted

an open house. Organizers decorated the main building with patriotic displays and added decorations outside at the G-scale model train exhibit. The entrance was filled with patriotic decorations to welcome visitors. Outside, a 20-by-50-foot American flag

hung from the building’s upper railing. The flag stood out not just for its size, but also for its historic design with 48 stars. The unique artifact belongs to Sun City resident Maury Fisher, who shared the personal and historic story be-

hind the banner. “I have had the flag since I was 12 years old,” Fisher said. “My father bought it at an antique shop in Tennessee. Before I moved to Sun City, I was known for my 4th of July decorations in Highland Park. Among all the decorations was this 50-foot flag.” The 48-star flag is an important part of American history as the second-longest-serving U.S. flag. In fact, it was the official flag for 47 years, from 1912 to 1959. The flag was officially retired on July 4, 1959, after Alaska became the 49th state. One year later, on July 4, 1960, the 50-star flag was adopted when Hawaii joined the Union. By law, new stars are added to the flag only on Independence Day after a new state is admitted. This change marked the end of an era. The 48-star flag stood for an America that had lived through world wars, making the Sun City display a meaningful link to history. Fisher said, “Although the exact history of the flag is unknown, it was suggested it may have flown at several major Army sites in Tennessee between 1912 and 1959.” Fort Oglethorpe was a key post during both World Wars. Fort Campbell, built in 1942, often flew large flags over its training grounds. The Johnson City Armory, another important site in East Tennessee, was also known for displaying historic flags.

iheardthisquote...

By TR Kerth
Columnist

Loyalty to petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul.

- Mark Twain

A sense of continuity with the generations gone before can stretch like a lifeline across the scary present.

- John Dos Passos

Wisdom lies in knowing what to ignore.

- William James

You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.

- Mae West

What do we live for if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?

- Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot)

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I'm Christine Hamm.

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•LETTUCE

and Rubella has been very effective and well accepted so herd immunity (95%) has been achieved minimizing outbreaks. (Source: CDC)

Popular Allegations

Vaccine hesitancy has surged in recent years, driven by vaccine denial and persistent alleged myths — especially the false claim that vaccines cause autism. That claim originated from a small study of 12 children that was later retracted, after the study author was found to have falsified research. Despite this, the alleged myth continues to contribute to vaccine hesitancy.

The safety of the measles vaccine has been studied extensively with the CDC declaring “The measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is very safe and effective. When more than 95% of people in a community are vaccinated (coverage >95%), most people are protected through community or herd immunity.

Historically the childhood measles vaccine is given in combination with Mumps and Rubella. However, a recent Presidential order called for the combined vaccine to be split into three separate injections given across multiple visits.

Consequences

Several respected professional medical groups including that American Academy of Pediatricians, the American Medical Association and the World Health Organization have come out against this order citing the following reasons: Increased risk of disease, increased unnecessary medical visits and costs, unfounded safety claims, and lack of product availability: (Measles-only, mumps-only, and rubella-only vaccines are not currently FDA-approved or available in the United States.) A further consequence of the new order is parental confusion and potential delay/denial of vaccines. Speaking with the child’s doctor is advisable.

New World Screwworm

Where? Central American countries and Mexico reported more than 209,400 NWS cases in animals and 2,500 cases in people. On June 3, 2026, USDA reported the first animal case in the United States.

The good news is that the risk is minimal. There have been no reports of human infestations with NWS acquired in the U.S. However, the New World Screwworm Outbreak is a real biological threat to cattle.

How? The Screwworm is a parasitic fly whose larvae eat living flesh rather than dead tissue, burrowing into open wounds or body openings of warm-blooded animals, especially those living outside in warm climates. The US eradicated the screwworm fly in the 60s through a sterile fly program but isolated cases have occurred since, the present one being the most concerning.

Popular Misinformation

There have been rumors that you could get infected with screwworm larvae by eating meat, but the screwworm lives outside and is attracted to warm-blooded animals making burrowing into a cold package of ground meat in your grocers or at a restaurant impossible. In addition, beef carcasses are inspected and any larvae would be removed or the carcass rejected, so you can rest assured about this issue.

One alleged rumor is that illegal cattle from Mexico crossed borders causing screwworms to spread to the US.

With no definitive answer on whether infected cattle from Mexico were responsible for the spread, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller told NBC News “(We) pleaded with the government to step in as they monitored screwworm infections moving north through Mexico-but were ignored.”

Consequences

Although it is unlikely that your personal health may be affected by the Screwworm outbreak, your budget, if you eat meat, could suffer, as well as the finances of the livestock industry. A serious threat to livestock industry could cause massive losses with USDA estimates up to more than \$1.8 billion

While last month promised Part 2 of What’s Your Heart GPA? due to the desire to keep the reporting on these disease outbreaks timely, this report is appearing now with Part 2 of Heart Check? coming next month.



WHAT HAPPENS IN SUN CITY...

Las Vegas-style gaming coming to Sun City

By Christine Such
For my Sun Day News

SUN CITY - Tickets are officially on sale for Sun City Huntley’s upcoming Casino Royale night, bringing the high-stakes energy of a Las Vegas casino floor directly to the local community. The event will take place on Friday, October 2, from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Prairie Lodge.

“The Lifestyle Department is very excited to offer our inaugural Casino Night at Prairie Lodge next month. Our department goal is to continually bring the residents new, exciting, and large-scale events. Our event has a little of something for everyone. We will offer numerous gambling tables run by professional dealers, a money wheel table, bingo room, and Jameson’s buffet and cash bar. At the end of the night, chips will be cashed in for a chance to win a valuable prize. Gambler or not, come out enjoy an electric and very social atmosphere full of fun, friendly competition, and Vegas-style gaming. Casino and food Tickets are selling fast so act soon. This will be a memorable night

you won’t want to miss,” said Melissa Hornick, Lifestyle manager.

Attendees will step into a fully-transformed casino environment. Upon arrival, every guest will receive a \$500 entry chip to start their run, a chip holder, and an official admission wristband for room access.

The grand raffle drawings will take place from 8 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., featuring a pool of valuable prizes. To keep the evening relaxed, participants do not need to be present at the time of the drawing to win their raffle prizes.

Due to expected high demand and table capacities, a limited number of tickets are available. Organizers have set a strict deadline to register by Friday, September 25, at 12 p.m. Guests can choose between two separate ticket tiers. Entry to the casino only costs \$25, while a combined casino and buffet ticket is available for \$40. The buffet option can only be purchased with the casino ticket. Residents are encouraged to secure their passes early by picking up their Sun City Huntley ticket at the Member Services or Fitness at Prairie Lodge Desk before the registration window closes.

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An industrial cafe



**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.

Our process for choosing restaurants to review is very complex. We see ads on Facebook, we receive recommendations from our loyal readers, and we google like crazy. But when all is said and done, the restaurant is decided by whatever Jim and I have a taste for. Jim has been whining for days wanting to go to a place for breakfast food. I spotted on Facebook a café in McHenry that serves breakfast and lunch, so off we went to Kim and Patty's Café.

We followed our GPS and thought it was wrong when it led us to an industrial complex. We parked our car and were surprised to find a flight of stairs leading to the entrance. They do have a handicap ramp in the middle of the industrial building parking lot, so technically it is handicap accessible.

Walking in we noticed a sign telling us to seat ourselves, so we did. We were impressed when we noticed the ceiling had flags hanging from it and the walls were covered with over 350 pictures of military and first responders.

After we sat down, we checked out their menu. As usual, Jim was starving and wanted to try everything, but I held him back. He was trying to decide between two menu items. He was intrigued with the Stuffed Potato Pancake or a special called the Southwest Chorizo Chile Relleno. Since we have had a number of bad experiences in the past concerning potato pancakes, we asked the waitress about theirs. He wanted to know if they were real old fashioned potato pancakes or are they like most restaurants now, basically shredded potatoes. She assured him they were the real deal, so because of this he chose the Stuffed Potato Pancake (\$15.95). This was two potato pancakes stuffed with scrambled eggs, diced ham, cheddar cheese, and served with sour cream or applesauce on the side. To his dismay, these potato pancakes turned out to be shredded potatoes formed into

a pancake. The inside was stuffed with a huge amount of scrambled eggs, ham, and cheese, but unfortunately the pancake contained a seasoning which we still can't identify and the rest of the breakfast was over cooked and dried out.

Nancy went with their luncheon special of the week, namely Triple Play (\$16.95). This was a scoop each of three homemade salads: egg, tuna, and chicken, served on mixed greens, red onions, cucumbers, black olives, and tomatoes. She went with the homemade ranch dressing. They were generous with their scoops, but the tuna and egg salads were just that, tuna and egg and no onion or celery to season it up. Bland, bland, bland. The chicken salad was tasty with the cranberries, pecans, and apples to give it flavor.

FYI: Again, in case you didn't see it in the article, this restaurant is handicap accessible, but you have to look carefully for the ramp in the middle of the parking lot.

Jim is still looking for a good breakfast venue. Kim and Patty's portions were generous, but the food was disappointing.

The price for our breakfast in an industrial complex was \$42.65. Getting phony potato pancakes, bummer....

He Said / She Said

JIM'S TAKE: I had high hopes for my breakfast, but was totally disappointed.

NANCY'S TAKE: My Triple Play turned out to be a single play. Only the chicken salad was a hit.

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



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ARTISTS FROM SUN CITY SHINE AT HUNTLEY ART HUB GALLERY



Provided | MSDN Photo

Sun City resident and artist Karen Cluchey demonstrates sgraffito, pottery carving, live at the Huntley Art Hub.

By Carol Pavlik

For My Sun Day News

When customers stop by the Huntley Art Hub Gallery, one of the Shops on Main, owner Cindy Rafkind tells them to look high and look low. Her bright, sunny space inside the Hackett House, provided by the Village of

Huntley's Incubator Program, is small, hovering around 200 square feet — but it is filled to the gills with colorful art on the walls and shelves of unique jewelry, woodwork, stained glass, pottery, and more, representing artists from Huntley and the surrounding area.

"The Huntley Art Hub Gallery is the only place in Huntley

where every single piece is created by local artists," said Rafkind. "I called it a hub because I wanted it to sound alive and interactive, not just a place to go see and purchase art, but where you can see art being made."

During weekend business hours, artists often do live demonstrations, offering opportunities to ask questions and witness the process of painting, sculpture, or printmaking with a linocut press. Rafkind also offers workshops, like pottery glazing or watercolor, led by local artists.

Of the 40 artists represented, 12 of those are residents of Sun City, a credit to the talent among the Del Webb community.

"In the fall [2025, when the gallery first opened], shoppers asked me whether I had artists from Del Webb. People raved about their neighbors and how talented they were," said Rafkind. "Their reputation preceded them." Shortly after, Rafkind set out to connect with the artist community at Sun City, where she was met with a wide range of artists who wanted to share their work.

A Destination for Art

Linda Wadman, a painter, showcases her beautiful fused glass pieces at the gallery. She serves as the Vice President of Pencils and Palettes, the long-time club for painters and sketch artists at Sun City.

"It was nice to find the Art Hub," said Wadman. "It's really close, and Cindy's amazing. I personally know all the people displaying there from Sun City

and they're all excited about it. We joke that we're not going to pay our bills with our art because we are usually selling at cost. We're not looking to make a living. We're retired. But it's really gratifying to see if people appreciate it and want to take it home, use it as a gift, or display it in their own home."

As soon as Karen Cluchey moved to Sun City a few years ago, she couldn't wait to join Clayground, the group of men and women who love to create using clay. "It's a wonderful way to creatively connect with others of like minds," she said.

Having the creative outlet of Clayground allows her to commune with other artists and share her passion for creating with clay. Selling some of her pieces at the Art Hub gives her a meaningful destination for her art.

"I love to create pieces, and to be able to share my passion for clay with others here in the local area sounded wonderful," she said. "There is something for everyone at the Gallery, from small, intricate creations to larger canvases. The centralized location makes it especially convenient to browse and see the creative talents of so many artists."

Rafkind began her career as a nurse practitioner, but art was always nearby, an antidote to a stressful job.

"I found it relaxing," she said. "It was something I could use to get into the flow state that is so healthy and beneficial." Today, her nursing career has taken a backseat to her art and jewelry making, and Rafkind's focus is on creating a community of local artists, where art and cre-

ativity seem to be in plentiful supply.

"The Huntley Art Hub Gallery is proof that our community is overflowing with talent," she said.

The following artists from Sun City display and sell their work at the Huntley Art Hub Gallery:

- Joel Bambas – woodwork
- Carolyn Gordon – watercolor, acrylic, jewelry
- Jerry Pond – plein air, etching
- Karen Cluchey – pottery, sculpture
- Kathy Stallone – pottery, sculpture
- Laurel Sroka – acrylic and oil painting
- Tammy Haman – encaustic art
- William Kucera – fine art photography
- Rob Dombro – watercolor and photography
- Linda Wadman – fused glass
- Bonnie Fogg – watercolor
- Linda Bambas – mixed media

• For more information, visit <https://huntleyarthubgallery.com/>



Provided | MSDN Photo

This Huntley Art Hub customer shows off a stoneware vessel crafted by Cluchey.



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Indie summer

Hope everyone had a wonderful Labor Day. Now it is back to business as usual. However, some of us don't want the warm season to end yet. Mother Nature certainly doesn't. Despite all the blockbusters, some smaller studios released some gems for us.

Tony, in theaters from A24, tells us about a summer when a young Anthony Bourdain went to Provincetown in order to pursue a girl from his class. With no money and stuck there, he is forced to take a job as a dishwasher so he can go back home. However, in his journey, he finds himself enthralled with the lifestyle of the kitchen and the work they do. Over the course of that summer, he gains a newfound love for the craft through his mentor at a local seafood restaurant.

Dominic Sessa is Bourdain, a scrappy no-nothing who is forced to fend for himself in this strange new environment. After

The Holdovers, I am afraid Sessa might be a bit typecast. Antonio Banderas is a delight as his employer/boarder/sage, that familiar glint in his eyes making every syllable stick. Leo Woodall plays a jerky foil who takes Bourdain under his wing for a time, showing him the ropes but simultaneously teaching the worst way to live one's life. Director Matt Johnson creates an amazing film that captures a moment in time that is nostalgic, but clearly lived in. No museum piece here. For lovers of *The Bear* and Johnson's previous biopic *Blackberry*, this is essential viewing.

Trips don't have to be in the states. They can also be international. *Erupcja* (Polish for Eruption) from director Pete Ols takes place in Warsaw and follows several characters. Nel is a florist, happily dating Ula. Bethany is traveling with her boyfriend Rob on holiday. But as the film progresses, we learn that their choice of destination wasn't by accident. You see, Bethany has known Nel for years. And as she suspects that Rob is about to propose, leaving Bethany wondering if he is the right one. There is no spark, but with Nel so much more. The next day Mount Etna explodes, leaving flights in limbo. Bethany and Nel have convinced themselves since childhood that they have caused these volcanic disturbances. But as one character points out, these natural occurrences can also be destructive.

Charli XCX is everywhere lately, but this is the first time I have seen her devolve into a role. As Bethany, we see the fear of settling down but also the impulsive behavior that can be quite careless. Her chemistry with Lena Gora as Nel is palpable, no

rock star posturing. At an hour and eleven minutes, the film breezes by like the best French New Wave fare armed with a propulsive score. If you have the streamer MUBI, I suggest checking it out.

Over on Hulu, *The Christophers* is the latest from Steven Soderbergh. On a role of late, here we have a bit of a heist movie that couches a beautiful character study. Michaela Coel plays Lori, an artist and restoration worker who is hired by the ne'er-do-well offspring of a celebrated artist. Ian McKellen portrays this reclusive painter Julian, hiding the last series of unfinished works. Lori's task: to get hired as assistant to steal and finish the paintings to sell.

But what seems straightforward turns into an exploration of the complex relationship between Lori and Julian. And it is electric. Much like *Erupcja*, a lot of the dialogue was improvised on the spot by the actors. If true, bravo. There is not an inauthentic moment. Coel and McKellan are fascinating to watch, one-upping each other in how many quips they can get out. Between this and *Mother Mary*, Coel is a force unto herself in the indie movie scene. Hope to see more of her in the future. This is a film that will test some people's patience. If you stick with it, you will be richly rewarded.

**Dominic Sessa
Emilia Jones
Leo Woodall
Antonio Banderas**

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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.

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ONGOING BARGAIN 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 & OCTOBER 14 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.

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, October 14, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Refreshments and prizes. Call Jeannie at 847-624-4237 for tickets, \$10 each. Deadline is October 9.

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

FIND THE HAT LOCATION:

One of the rules we have for Find the Hat is the hat can't appear inside a paid advertisement. But nobody ever said anything about it appearing between two ads, as it does on page 12 of this edition, nestled way at the bottom between an ad for OrthoIllinois and Madigan Insurance. At least if you strain yourself looking for the hat, you have two great options to cover the cost of getting better and place to get you moving again!

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