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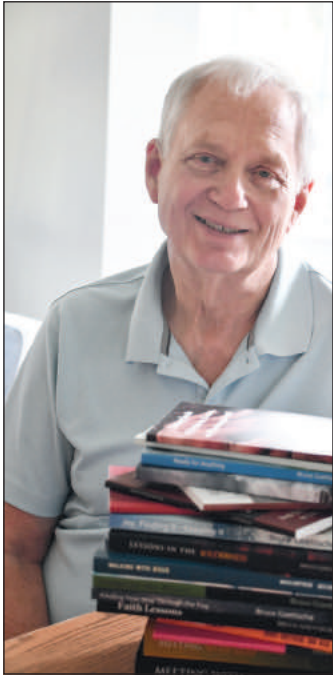
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OCTOBER 8 - OCTOBER 21, 2026

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Galesburg was where the round-house was 11

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Doomscrolling over social media can be a daunting exercise that can leave you drained and unmotivated. 18



Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

The cast of *Cinderella* rehearse for the Theatre Club's upcoming performance of this classic tale.

If the shoe fits...Cinderella comes to SC

Carol Pavlik
For My Sun Day News

Sun City Theatre's fall musical has it all: jealous stepsisters, a grand ball, a lost shoe, and a fairy tale ro-

mance with a handsome prince. This adaptation of Cinderella sets the familiar story of the unlikely princess to a beautiful musical score from the famous composer-lyricist duo of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II.

Mary Reuter, a Sun City resident, has appeared in nearly all of Sun City's productions since its inception in 2002. A member of the Sun City Strutters, she gets to use her dance skills as a member of the ensemble, dancing the waltz and the gavotte at

Cinderella's ball. Brett Bradfield, by comparison, is making his very first appearance on the Sun City stage. He was coaxed to audition by a friend who knew he does ballroom dancing. "I feel it is an

CINDERELLA | Pg. 4


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hello
FALL

lifeinfocus

The flipside of childhood, or why is it so hot in here?



In my own home, I am queen of the castle. Duchess of the Dwelling. Empress of the Estate.

I'm a full-grown adult with a degree and a career. I drive my own car. But when I go up to visit my parents, who are in their 90s and live in an apartment for seniors, it's like I'm a kid again. It's confusing, especially because now, our traditional roles are not as clear cut. In fact, they've been flipped on their head.

They are the parents, but I'm reminding them to take their medicine and buckle their seatbelts.

As a child, I looked up to my Dad, who held my hand firmly in his when we crossed a busy street. Now, I extend my arm so he can grab onto it to walk across the uneven asphalt in a

parking lot.

Growing up, Mom taught me how to bake bread, to tie my shoelaces, how to read, and endless other things. Now, I am showing her how to navigate her new laptop and how to scroll through pictures on my smartphone. I occasionally order things for her on Amazon because she doesn't trust buying anything over the internet.

Other things haven't changed. Mom insists I don't drink enough milk. Dad wishes I didn't stop going to church. I still desperately want their approval. When Dad is out of the room, Mom complains that he doesn't help with dishes. When Mom is out of the room, Dad complains that she just can't seem to throw anything away. But after 68 years of marriage, there is a softness behind their complaints. The minor irritations that seemed to build over time are receding gently into the tide. Now, they are each other's lifelines. They are holding onto each other more, and I marvel at

the way their life has settled into a comfortable rhythm.

There's also the issue of the thermostat. For years, Mom ran hot. Dad was cold. Echoes of epic thermostat wars remain in my memory from my childhood.

"It's burning up in here!" my mother would yell.

"Then go outside and cool off!" Dad would respond. "I'm freezing!"

Well, guess who needs to cool off now? Granted, I'm a "woman of a certain age," but spending two nights sleeping on the couch in their living room feels like being locked in a sauna. While they both pad back and forth wearing slippers, flannel pajamas and robes, I dramatically throw off my blankets, suspicious that despite the comfortable temperature outside, they have turned up the heat. Thank goodness for the ceiling fan and the sliding door that I open wide as soon as they retire to their room — I stand beside it for a few moments, greedily breathing in cool night air. I still

wake up slick with perspiration.

I'm so lucky to have my parents around this long. Despite their age, their minds are sharp, they enjoy their neighbors, and events in their community. Dad is active in the local chapter of American Legion and sings in a choir. Mom still teaches knitting and volunteers at a local farm. I admit that now, each time I say goodbye at the end of a visit, I get a bit choked up once I'm out of their sight. It crosses my mind that this could be the last time when everything is "normal" and virtually the same. Maybe we should all live our lives that way, aware that any time spent with a loved one could be our last.

No matter how old they get, they will always be my parents. I will always need their approval. It remains to be seen if I will start drinking more milk or go back to attending church regular. But some things will never change: I will always want to make them proud.

I will always be their daughter.

politicalplace

The views in these letters are the writers' own.

Continuous, unverified claims of stolen elections replace factual governance with dangerous chaos. Our democratic republic is built on public trust, a foundation currently being chipped away by partisan theater and manufactured distractions.

Protecting our republic means ensuring voting is accessible to every legal citizen and thoroughly secure. Fact-based evidence shows that current security measures, including mail-in voting protocols, remain resilient—a reality recently affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Furthermore, data confirms that noncitizen voting is not occurring in numbers that impact outcomes. It is entirely possible to advocate for strict election integrity while

rejecting conspiracy theories that divide neighbors.

While political arenas fill with cheap name-calling, critical policy issues are treated as background noise.

To ensure long-term stability, leadership must pivot toward actionable, bipartisan solutions for at least some of the crises ignored by the headlines:

- Economy Stabilization
- Resource security amid changing weather patterns
- An exit strategy for the war in Iran
- Regulation of rapid artificial intelligence
- Immigration reform
- Healthcare affordability
- Election Integrity

- Money and Corruption in Politics
- Gun Violence
- National Debt

Politicians weaponize scare tactics like "socialism" or "communism" to distract from an ineffective Congress and an alarming erosion of our legal foundations. When government ignores the courts, legal precedent, and basic human rights, it becomes an existential threat to our survival.

We must reject cynical distractions and demand absolute transparency. Look at the facts, demand real policy solutions, and vote for stability over chaos.

Patricia White
Sun City resident

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EDITORIAL

Publisher/Owner
Chris La Pelusa
Direct: 847-207-4679
chris@whitesilomedia.com

Assistant Editor
Kelsey O'Kelley
Office: 847-658-6090
kelsey@mysundaynews.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Christine Such.....Stories
Steve Peterson.....Stories
Joan Davis.....Health
Tony Pratt.....Photos

CLASSIFIEDS
847-658-6090

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Andrea Garcia | 847-351-0513
andrea@whitesilomedia.com

Jamie Kayser | 224-242-5114
jamie@whitesilomedia.com

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at Holiday Time

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Tony Pratt | MSDN Photo

Starting 6:30 November 19, the classic tale Cinderella hits the stage in Drendel Ballroom.

•CINDERELLA

honor to be selected to share a dance with Mary, who has been in the Theatre Company productions for many years. A newcomer with the Grande Dame!”

“It’s a cute and fun play, and I like the music” says Reuter, who says this is the second time she’ll perform in Cinderella as a longtime veteran of the Theatre Company of Sun City.

“Diane Scott has been doing costumes and she’s so talented, making the beautiful ballgowns and the men’s costumes,” she says. “Certainly the children who come will enjoy it.”

Bradfield agrees. “I joined the performance since a classic fairytale is the type of thing my two granddaughters will enjoy seeing me participate,” he says.

But adults will also be enchanted by the story that most have known their entire lives, starting off with Cinderella’s unglamorous life heeding to the demanding beck and call of her stepmother and stepsisters. “I hope the audience takes a step back in their make-believe minds and remembers the story from their childhoods,” says Bradfield.

In the long history of the Theatre Company, Reuter has only missed two shows, when she broke both her femurs at dif-

ferent times. She bristles away from the traditional way of wishing performers good luck. “Don’t say ‘Break a leg’ to me! I take it literally!” she laughs. “Another gentleman [from the theatre] broke a leg too, so now we just say, ‘Stub a toe!’”

Cinderella

SHOW DETAILS:

Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella
November 19-22, 2026
Thursday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 20, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 21, 3 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 22, 1:30 p.m.
Tickets: \$25 (limit 10 tickets per purchase)

TO PURCHASE TICKETS:

Tuesday, Oct. 20 in the Drendel Ballroom, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 27 in the Cedar Room in Prairie Lodge, 1-4 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 10 in the Cedar Room in Prairie Lodge, 1-3 p.m.

All seats are reserved. Checks or cash for an exact amount, please.

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INVESTING IN VOLATILE MARKETS

Presented by Cheryl Red

Market volatility tests the nerves of even seasoned investors. Your rational brain may know not to overreact, but your emotional brain is susceptible to anxieties that can tempt you to stray from your investing strategy.

Fortunately, preventative steps—based on proven investing principles—can help you stay the course.

1. ASSESS YOUR COMFORT WITH RISK

If you get anxious when markets dip, reassess how much risk you can handle. Ask yourself:

- Emotionally and financially, how much fluctuation in the value of your investments can you tolerate?
- Do you need your portfolio to generate income now or in the future?

Depending on your answers, you may need to adjust your portfolio to find a mix that allows you to pursue your goals and sleep at night.

2. DIVERSIFY

When a handful of investments accounts for the lion’s share of your portfolio, they can have a greater impact on its performance—for better or worse. It can be important to spread your money across and within asset classes to aim to provide a cushion when markets are volatile. Ask yourself:

- Does your portfolio’s success depend heavily on a few investments?
- Are your investments concentrated in a single industry, sector, or country?
- Do you hold the same securities in different funds within your portfolio?

3. TAKE THE LONG VIEW

When markets are volatile, each fluctuation seems disastrous. But emotional reactions—like cashing out—can put you at risk for further losses. In fact, by the time you react to significant market declines, the worst may already be past. By cashing out when the market is down, you’re locking in those losses and limiting your portfolio’s ability to capture the recovery. Moving into cash for just one month following a significant market decline could reduce your returns by nearly 45% after one year, versus staying fully invested.*

Timing the market’s ups and downs is nearly impossible. Instead, ensure your portfolio mix aligns with your risk tolerance, your holdings are diversified, and you’re committed to sticking to your plan even during rocky times. For long-term investors, your time in the market can be more important than timing the market.

So, when markets get rocky, take a deep breath, think about the long term, and know that with a balanced portfolio, you’re better positioned to withstand volatility.

*Source: Schwab Center for Financial Research and Morningstar. Data analyzes the five periods from 10/1974 through 3/2022 during which the S&P 500® Index fell by 20% or more. Market returns are represented by the S&P 500 Total Return Index, and cash returns are represented by the total returns of the Ibbotson U.S. 30-Day treasury Bill Index. Cumulative returns are calculated using the simple average of returns from each period and scenario. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Investing involves risk, including loss of principal. Diversification strategies do not ensure a profit and do not protect against losses in declining markets.

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Cheryl Red, CFP® is a Financial Consultant at Charles Schwab with over 25 years of experience helping clients achieve their financial goals. Some content provided here has been compiled from previously published articles authored by various parties at Schwab.

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Cinderella

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST
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theviewfromplanetkerth

Acquiring a sweet appreciation for one of Dad's lessons



TR Kerth
Columnist

Of all the many lessons my father taught me, the most valuable one that I live by every day may be his lesson about “acquired taste.”

I’m sure you know that term — the process of learning over time to like something that you found distasteful when you first experienced it.

If you think about it, you can probably come up with several things that you have come to like but that causes some people around you to scrunch up their nose whenever you enjoy it in their presence. Caviar, maybe — although it’s hard to understand why anybody would spend any amount of time (or money) to gain the “acquired taste” of choking down some smelly slimy goo leaking out of the north end of a southbound fish.

But my dad was a simple man — a laborer who worked in a steel mill — so it wasn’t caviar or other bougie stuff he urged me to acquire a taste for.

It was simple everyday stuff — like black coffee.

Although I loved the smell of coffee in the kitchen when Dad drank it in the morning when I was a kid, I scrunched up my nose when I tried a sip of it.

“It’s an acquired taste,” he said.

But then later, when I was a teenager with a summer factory job, I headed to the break room to snag a Coke at lunchtime, and I was dismayed to see that all they had was a coffee machine.

“Well,” Dad said when I got home that day, “I guess you’ll have to learn how to drink coffee. But here’s a tip — you should drink it black.”

“But black coffee tastes lousy,” I whined.

“It’s an acquired taste,” Dad said. “But if you load it with cream and sugar, you’re not acquiring a taste for coffee. You’re just blocking the coffee taste and feeding your taste for sugar and cream. And if somebody offers you a cup of coffee but they don’t have sugar or cream, then you’re right back where you started.”

Good advice. By the end of that summer, I found black coffee not only tolerable, but palatable.

And it’s stayed that way all through my life. Thanks to Dad’s advice, these days I start each day with a bracing cup of black coffee.

And then another.

And another and another....

And as I take a moment this morning between my 4th and 5th cup to do the math and add up how much sugar I have not swallowed with my coffee, teaspoon by teaspoon, over the past sixty-some

years — Yikes!

Mama Google tells me there are 108 teaspoons in a pound of sugar. So if I had plopped just two teaspoons of sugar into each of my five or six cups of coffee each morning — a reasonable amount for a coffee-with-sugar kind of guy — I would have downed a pound of sugar with my morning coffee in no more than ten days or so.

And in a year? That would add up to more than 36 pounds of sugar — about the weight of an average kindergarten child.

Now, if you want to see what that looks like, go to Jewel and get 36 pounds of sugar and stack them up like bricks to build your own sugary preschooler. And then consider that, while it takes a normal kid five years to grow to kindergarten size, it only took your sweet little spud a year to grow that big. Thanks to your sweetened coffee habit.

Yikes!

But why stop at just one year? Over my lifetime, how much sugar have I avoided swallowing since I choked down my first unsweetened cup of machine-spewed java in that factory break room some sixty years ago?

Well, my sugar-starved mental math clicker hints that it would be somewhere north of 2,160 pounds. Much more than a ton.

Now, go back to Jewel. Bring a trailer. Pile up a couple thousand of those Jewel sugar-bricks to see what that would look like. But do it in the garage, because you’ll be building a sugary lump as heavy as a 1966 VW Beetle.

A lump which I have avoided gulping, thanks to leaving the teaspoon alone at morning coffeetime over the past 60 years.

And I haven’t missed the extra sweetness one little bit.

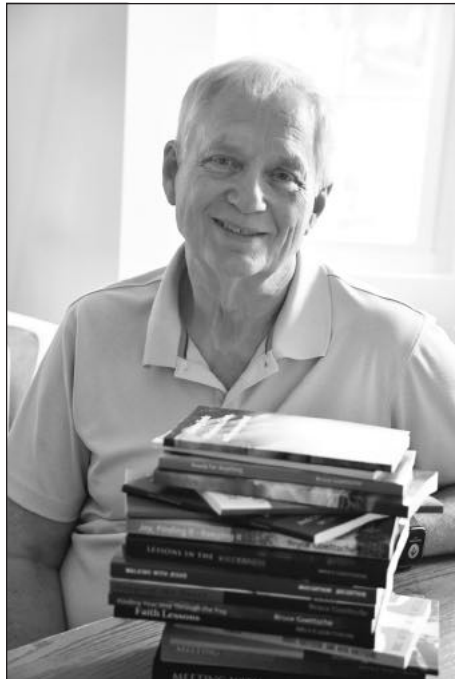
In fact, once my “acquired taste” drink of preference was black coffee, I un-acquired any desire to guzzle other sweetened drinks like Coke or Pepsi, each of which contains ten full teaspoons of sugar per can! Had I downed a couple cans of pop a day for lunch or dinner over a lifetime, I’d have swallowed an additional schoolbus-sized pile of sugar by now.

But I didn’t. I haven’t touched a single Coke or Pepsi in more than 25 years, which is the last time I sampled one to see if I had been missing anything. And, having satisfied my curiosity, never touched another.

And all because Dad told me long ago that drinking black coffee was an “acquired taste.”

Thanks, Dad. It was sweet of you to teach me that lesson.

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



Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Reverend Bruce Goettsche poses here with a collection of his books. Throughout his pastoral career, Goettsche authored 23 books on Christian theology and daily living.

From pulpit to pen

By Christine Such

For My Sun Day News

Bruce Goettsche (pronounced Getchy), of neighborhood 13B, and his wife, Debbie, moved to Sun City in September 2025. Goettsche retired from pastoral ministry earlier that year after 43 years serving the same Bible-teaching church in La Harpe, Illinois.

Before he left, he officially passed the spiritual mantle to his son, Rick, who joined the church staff as Associate Pastor back in August 2006.

"We had 18 years together, serving the community," Goettsche said. "We had so much fun."

Recognizing that a renewed chapter was beginning for the church, Goettsche's move to Sun City was a deliberate, loving choice to ensure Rick could lead with full authority.

"By stepping away geographically, I wanted to let Rick establish his own pastoral identity without my presence."

Throughout his 43 years in La Harpe, Reverend Goettsche became a vital, trusted anchor for families during their darkest moments. He developed a compassionate ministry focused on grief counseling and crisis support. He frequently stepped in to guide families through sudden, tragic losses that many found too difficult or uncomfortable to address.

Goettsche's pastoral care included a tradition he maintained for decades.

"I wrote an original poem for every single funeral," he said.

Rather than delivering generic messages, he spent hours listening among grieving families to capture the deceased's unique essence, quirks, and faith journey. These custom, poetic tributes gave families a source of comfort to hold on to, drawing on his literary talents and strong love for his congregation.

Beyond Sunday morning sermons, he also had his daily radio program, God's Truth for Daily Living. Goettsche has also authored 23 books centered on practical Christian theology and daily living. Among these is a distinct trilogy exploring human relationships that arise from his pastoral encounters.

Goettsche said, "This includes People I've Met Along the Way, which uses verse and reflections to draw word pictures of community fixtures; Ready for Anything: The Heartaches, Blessings, and Surprises of Pastoral Ministry; and Difficult People: A Christian Approach to Dealing with Those Who Drive You Crazy."

His talents including writing books for children.

Goettsche said, "Masterpiece, teaches self-worth; Just Different, a tool to combat childhood bullying; and Chocolate Words, addresses gossip and rumor-spreading in a way a child can understand" Other books for children include What is Kindness? and Facing Fear.

Goettsche said, "At the end of June, my latest book was released, Unshakeable: Finding a Solid Faith Even When Life Is Falling Apart, a study of 1 Peter."

It is a book written in the practical and pastoral style that is his reputation.

Goettsche said, "The book is not written for scholars but for ordinary people who want a deeper walk with God. I believe one of the most important questions when reading the Bible is 'So what?' The book is filled with practical information."

Unshakeable is his seventh book anchored to the Bible.

"It was actually the very first manuscript I ever wrote," he said. "My readers' feedback convinced me it wasn't ready, so I set it aside."

Years later, drawing on many more years of ministry experience, he returned to the manuscript and rewrote it.

When asked whether he plans to keep writing, Bruce said, "I have no immediate plans, but it will depend on how the spirit moves."

For now, he is embracing life in his new community.

"I am enjoying my time here in Sun City," Goettsche said. "I am a member of the Woodchucks, the Computer Club, and Pencils and Palettes."

True to his pastoral heart, he also hopes to start a co-ed Bible study in his home and welcomes anyone interested to get in touch.

• Details on all of Bruce's books, along with his YouTube videos, sermons, and radio broadcasts, are available at www.BAGbooks.net. If you are interested in joining his upcoming home Bible study, you can connect with him at revbag3245@gmail.com.

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Sun City Sunflower Group members visit with Sheri Cummings (center), who holds the world record for the largest ladybug collection at 6,047 pieces.

6,047 LADYBUGS AND COUNTING

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Every milestone has a modest beginning. Sheri Cummings has a passion that would eventually capture a global title. It began with a single, childhood gift.

"My parents gave me a tea set that had ladybugs on it for my

fourth birthday, and I started collecting items that featured ladybugs," Sheri said.

Years later, that tea set remains the center of her massive collection. Today, she holds the official Guinness World Record for the largest collection of ladybug-related items, at 6,047 distinct pieces.

The majority of her collection

is in Sheri's basement.

"It's my happy place," she says, and it is here where visitors can see the global scale and diversity of her items. Her collection features rare, cross-cultural treasures, including a Ladybug Supergirl figurine from a Japanese series, a unique reusable cloth grocery bag from Denmark, and a collectible Barbie doll dressed in signature red-and-black spots. The room even features a set of unique chairs completely upholstered in ladybug fabric.

Her husband, Greg said, "The chairs are very comfortable."

Maintaining this degree of precision became vital when Sheri found herself amid an international tug-of-war for ladybug supremacy. After claiming her first title in 2007 with 2,050 pieces, a competitor in Belgium broke her record in 2009. A decade later, in November 2019, the title moved to Ukraine when Nadiia Komarova entered the Guinness World Records with an audited collection of 5,555 items.

Seeing her hard work eclipsed by international collectors remained challenging, but she had a powerful support system at home. Greg was among the first to help test and audit her collection numbers, though he recalled initially underestimating the task.

"I thought, how hard could this be?" Greg said.

Despite the overwhelming scale of the challenge, he refused to let her give up and encouraged her to try again. This triggered a

massive, multi-year effort to reclaim her crown, ending with her winning back the title on February 28, 2022.

Reclaiming the title meant managing the incredibly slow, traditional administrative process of the world's most famous record-keeping organization. According to Sheri, the modern digital period has not yet reached every corner of the tracking process.

"Guinness doesn't answer phone calls or emails. Everything is done by snail mail," Sheri said. This lack of electronic communication also leaves record holders in the dark about their status. When Sheri's record gets broken, she doesn't receive a notification from Guinness. Because the official Guinness World Records book comes out every year in November, Sheri must flip through the newly published pages to find out if she still holds her crown or if an international rival has quietly overtaken her.

"Guinness World Records guidelines for collections are notoriously strict," Sheri explains. "Duplicate items do not count. If a collector owns five identical mugs, Guinness counts them as a single item because each piece must be distinct. Additionally, all pieces must be purchased and commercially available. No handmade or custom-fabricated items are allowed." To keep up, Sheri logs every item by hand.

"I keep a careful handwritten journal, updating it whenever I get a new piece," she said.

The sheer difficulty of this auditing process is best illustrated by a fun challenge Sheri gives to visitors in her kitchen. The room is densely packed with ladybug-themed items, including a kettle, a spatula, individual doorknobs, and even custom floor patterns. Sheri recently tasked the visiting Buddy Group, Painted Pansies from the Sun City Sunflower Garden Charter Club.

Sheri said, "Pair up with someone and count each ladybug in the kitchen and breakfast nook."

On the first try no team guessed the correct number, and on the second go around only one team guessed the exact number. This lighthearted exercise perfectly captured the immense pressure and accuracy required of official record keepers.

Beyond its sheer size, the collection's magic resides in how it brings people together. Sheri frequently hosts community groups at her home, turning the display into an interactive experience. While handling the items, Sheri shares the history behind her rarest and most valued pieces, transforming a simple collection tour into an educational, social event centered on community and common wonder.

"Sheri is an awesome host," said Cathy Herman, one of the members of the Painted Pansies. "We were amazed by her diverse collection as she shared the rules for Guinness World Records, the counting requirements, and, of

LADYBUGS | Pg. 15

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Before I even begin explaining my situation, I want to say that I'm feeling guilty even writing this. My grandparents played a large role in my life growing up. They attended nearly every sporting event or school function of mine. I have fond memories of spending Sunday afternoons at their house with my cousins. Most of my holiday memories include them, and some of my favorite holiday traditions came from them. Now, I'm an adult, and my grandparents are well into their 90s. While I love them deeply, visiting them has become difficult. I recognize that aging has tak-

en a toll on them. They move more slowly, conversations are often repeated, and within a few minutes of our visit, I've already run out of things to talk about. Their world has gotten significantly smaller, and I often leave our visits feeling sad. I know their time with our family is limited, and I don't want to regret not spending more time with them, but I'm struggling with how to show up when being with them feels so different from how it used to be. Do you have any suggestions to help make our visits more meaningful? First, thank you for saying something that many people quietly feel but rarely admit. One of the most challenging parts of growing up is realizing that our grandparents don't stay frozen in the ver-

sions we remember. The people who once hosted, entertained, told stories, cheered us on, and kept everyone together eventually began to need more from us than they can give. That shift can feel sad and uncomfortable, and, to your point, make visits feel emotionally heavy. However, let me state clearly that different doesn't mean less meaningful. One thing that helps is adjusting expectations. Instead of trying to recreate the visits you had ten, twenty, or thirty years ago, think of this season more as preserving your connection with your grandparents. One tip to create more meaningful visits is to come prepared with something to talk about. Bring printed old photos and ask questions about them. Who's in the photograph? Where was it taken? What do you remember

about that time in your life? Reminiscence is often a wonderful tool in guiding conversation. If they tell the same stories again and again, try listening as if you're hearing them for the first time. Repetition can be part of aging, but stories often reveal what matters most to people. You might even consider recording your grandparents as they share familiar stories about their childhood, family traditions, or other important life events. Those recordings will most definitely become a treasure later. Another tip is to keep visits manageable. Longer visits aren't necessarily better. Consider shorter, more frequent pop-in visits instead of waiting for the "perfect" afternoon. Thirty intentional minutes can feel more connected than three hours of

trying to fill the silence. I also recommend bringing a favorite treat to share. It sounds like your grandparents enjoyed hosting, but now they may not think to put out a plate of cookies or offer a hot cup of coffee. By bringing along a special treat, you are quietly sharing the work of hospitality and turning your visit into a special occasion. Above all, remember to be patient with them and yourself. You're all in a new season of life, and it takes practice to learn how to love your grandparents as they grow older. • Have a question for our angel correspondent? Send our angel an email at jcbarrett@visitingangels.com or write in to Ask An Angel at 65 Woodbury St., South Elgin, IL 60177.

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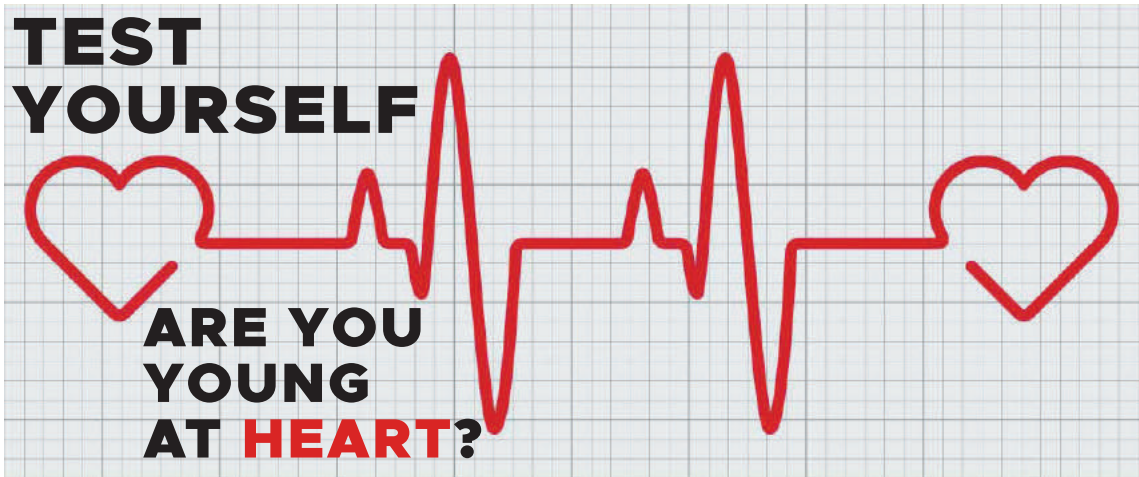
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Please consult your doctor or regular healthcare professional before following suggestions found in any MSDN health column/story.



By Joan Davis, R.N.
For My Sun Day News

The August Health Report detailed the online scoring tool of the American Heart Association Hear (AHA) that calculates a simple yet evidence-based score to determine heart health focusing on risk factors which users can control while including some they cannot. Those who take the challenge can now better focus on what efforts they can make to

cut their risk — and thus make themselves more young at heart which translates to not only less likelihood of having a heart attack or stroke but also dying prematurely of chronic disease. In other words, a low score means you're not only young at heart but more likely to enjoy younger health in general. The AHA heart assessment tool factors in both risk factors you can't change (family medical history and age) as well as risk factors you CAN change. Knowing both is helpful be-

cause instead of "giving up" concluding that "I'm too old" or "There's heart disease in my family" saying I'm at higher risk and can't do anything about it, they can take the opposite approach and by being motivated to work harder at reducing those risk factors they have control over.

THE 8 COMPONENTS
OF HEART RISK YOU
CAN CHANGE

The AHA organized the eight

metrics into two groups. The first four are health behaviors, the things you control through daily choices. The second four are health factors, the things measured by your body or a lab test. Both groups matter equally, and each component scores from 0 to 100.

1. Diet is scored against how consistently your meals and snacks are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, and healthy fats with minimal processed food, added sugars, and excess sodium? Americans consistently score the lowest in this component in the country, with mean scores ranging from the low 20s to the upper 40s. While that's bad news, the food news is almost everybody has room to improve here.

2. Physical activity is measured as minutes of moderate or vigorous activity per week. For adults, the benchmark for a perfect 100 is 150 minutes or more of moderate-intensity activity (or the equivalent in vigorous activity, where each vigorous minute counts double).

3. Nicotine exposure was sig-

nificantly updated from the earlier framework. The old metric only counted cigarette smoking. The current version includes e-cigarettes, vaping devices, and secondhand smoke exposure. If you live with an active indoor smoker, your score takes a 20-point hit even if you've never touched a cigarette yourself.

4. Sleep is the newest component with the optimal range for adults is 7 to under 9 hours per night. Both too little and too much sleep reduce your score, reflecting the well-established U-shaped relationship between sleep duration and health outcomes. Six hours drops you to 70 points, five hours or 10-plus drops you to 40, and under four hours earns a zero. Sleep is associated with every other component on the list, affecting blood pressure, blood glucose, weight, dietary choices, and activity levels.

5. Body mass index is scored using standard BMI thresholds, with a perfect score generally assigned for a BMI under 25.

HEART | Pg. 15

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Christine Such | MSDN Photo

Dave McElwain has been a train lover all his life. And in his teens, he modified cars. Here he brings both passions together with this modified golf cart made to look like a train.

Well trained

Sun City resident shares passion for locomotives

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

Some people spend their retirement relaxing on the porch, but Sun City resident Dave McElwain prefers to keep moving and creating. McElwain recently unveiled his latest and most ambitious project: He has completely transformed his golf cart. For McElwain, the project brings

his life story full circle. As a child, he devoted countless hours playing with trains, starting with a classic Santa Fe locomotive set.

“It’s funny to me that my very first set was a Santa Fe,” McElwain said, “considering both my father and grandfather worked for the Burlington line in the town of Galesburg, Illinois. My father was a detective for them, and my grandfather worked in the roundhouse.”

That deep family connection to rail history has given him a lasting appreciation for the sheer scale of classic power.

“Galesburg was where the roundhouse was, as well as a junction between the Santa Fe and the Burlington,” McElwain said. “I’d never made that connection until now, my family’s roots and the two rail lines converging there.”

“A true thrill was seeing the legendary Union Pacific Big Boy steam locomotive when it pulled into nearby West Chicago,” McElwain shares. “Standing right next to it, the wheels are literally as tall as I am.”

Like many enthusiasts, life eventually took center stage, but the passion never genuinely faded.

“My love for railroading was interrupted by cars, dating, career, and family,” McElwain notes. “When we moved here, I started building a layout and got involved in the Model Railroad Train Vlub.”

When McElwain looked for a new hands-on hobby to tackle, his childhood passions collided with his teenage ones. “I modified cars when I was in high

school and really wanted a similar project to dive into today,” McElwain explains. “However, I don’t have a three-car garage anymore, so space is pretty limited. That’s when I got the idea to modify my golf cart instead. I chose to pay tribute to the legendary Santa Fe Super Chief. The car features that iconic Warbonnet crimson red, a bold and beautiful color scheme that defined the golden age of American passenger rail.”

The cart’s stunning look required a combination of steady handiwork and online sourcing to get every detail just right.

“I spray painted the red, brush painted the yellow, and the black is one-eighth-inch pinstripe tape,” McElwain says. “The logos on the front and sides were customized on Etsy, and the Super Chief light came from eBay. It was a lot of fun.”

While some might joke that he has a bit too much free time on his hands, McElwain views it as the perfect alignment of history, personality, and pure enjoyment.

“I’ve taken my love for all things railroad and projected this onto my golf cart,” McElwain shares. “Goofy? You bet, but we have to have fun, right?”

The custom cart brings a whimsical locomotive flair to Sun City Huntley, attracting attention among generations and instantly connecting McElwain with his community.

“Today some high school kids actually gave me big smiles and head nods,” McElwain said. “A big deal from teens.”

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gardenersforum

The fall back plan: thinking ahead for spring



Kathleen Carr
Columnist

Mornings at our house, while filled with the excitement of the coming day, can also be a bit busy. There are chores such as laundry and dishes that need to be done and Annie, our beloved dog, also needs to be let out and fed. Completing all of this before heading to work can be a challenge. In an attempt to make mornings a bit easier, I start preparing the evening before. I set out everything needed for breakfast, pick out my clothes and make sure my schedule for the next day is written out. This preparation allows me a few extra minutes to drink my tea and ease into the day by playing a crossword puzzle. When occasionally I am too tired prepare everything, I regret it the next day.

Late fall gives us the brilliant opportunity to prepare for

what will inevitably be a busy spring in our gardens. A bit of time spent now will not only result in a more beautiful yard, but also give you more time to enjoy the warm weather as spring approaches. This column details what can and should be done now to make sure that your lawn and plants are healthy and strong next year.

When caring for your lawn, consider an application of fertilizer. When applied in late October to early November, the fertilizer promotes root growth and will cause your lawn to green up a bit earlier next spring. Herbicides that control broadleaf weeds may also be applied in the fall. Core-aeration, when done correctly, helps reduce thatch and compaction. Make sure to remove the leaves on the lawn, especially those leaves that fall in November. A thick layer of leaves can damage the lawn.

Most perennial flowers can be cutback in the fall. Evaluating the foliage of perennial flowers after a hard frost helps to determine if they should be cut back.

If the foliage still looks good, consider leaving it alone. If the foliage has naturally started to die back, then most plants can be cut back to about 3-5" above the ground. Typically, the foliage on coralbells and perennial geraniums still looks good in fall, so you may not want to cut those back. The foliage on daylilies and hostas looks rough in late fall. Those would be examples of plants that can be cut back. Leaving some plant material in place and removing it in early spring does help provide food and protection to native pollinators, beneficial insects, and birds.

Butterfly bush, lavender, hibiscus, and some roses are considered marginally hardy plants. This means that if the temperature gets too cold during the winter, these plants may not survive. Proactively protecting plants that are considered marginally hardy is recommended. Place a protective layer of mulch near the base of these plants late in the fall and make sure to remove it in early spring.

Applying mulch to your planting beds in the fall has several benefits. It helps to retain moisture in the soil through the long winter. It also moderates the soil temperature and provides a blanket of insulation to the plant's roots. Mulch applied near perennial flowers is typically about 1" deep and around shrubs and trees it is 2" deep.

Transpiration is the process in which water evaporates from the leaves of plants. Evergreen shrubs and trees continue to lose water through their broadleaves or needles throughout the winter. This causes evergreen to be susceptible to winter burn. It is very important to continue to water all evergreens, as needed, until the ground is frozen. In our area that means that you should continue to check the ground near your evergreen shrubs and trees until about Thanksgiving. If the ground is dry, then water the plants deeply and thoroughly. In addition to watering your evergreens, you may want to apply an anti-desiccant spray to the needles. This spray

adds a waxy layer that helps to slow down the water loss out of broadleaves or needles. Wilt-Pruf and Wilt Stop are two examples of anti-desiccant sprays.

Removing weeds while always an important gardening task, takes on more relevance in the fall. Cool season weeds such as chickweed and deadnettle germinate in the fall. Removing them now will prevent them from overwintering in your yard. Perennial weeds such as thistles and Creeping Charlie are starting to move their nutrients into their root system. Proactively trying to reduce or eliminate them from your landscape before they come back even stronger next year is the best way to approach these tough weeds.

• *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.*

ADVERTISEMENT



Medicare Advertorial 2027: (This article is educational and not an enrollment solicitation) "HMO's will be popular" says Sun City Resident, Ellen Muradian, RN. We have found that most Specialists in Kane and McHenry Counties are asking for a referral number. PPO's have been popular, previously because technically no referral was needed. However, that is no longer a benefit when the "office policy" of the Specialist is to insist on the referral number.

Ellen points to how a Medicare Advantage Plan from "Devoted Health" offers a HMO which features a \$2,514 "Part B Giveback", although Northwestern Medicine hospital is not in network, but the Advocate hospitals are in - network. In 2027, Humana will have the lowest in-network cap at only \$2,150.

When asked why she became a Certified Medicare Plan Broker after a long career as an Registered Nurse at Lutheran General and Sherman hospitals, Ellen replied: "Advocate instilled the heart of a servant", and I saw so many Patients fret over high Medicare bills". Her calling has led her to sponsor Medicare Plan complimentary "dine & discover" seminars and "lunch-n-learn" workshops in our Solarium at the Prairie Lodge. The focus is comparing Medicare Supplement to Medicare Advantage.

"Since I can compare all 50+ Medigap Plans and all 67 Part C Plans, I can include a Sun City Residents' budget and network preferences." Ellen adds, "The Medicare Advantage Improvement Act" will be a popular and important topic this October and November, as the prior authorizations have been a concern. I also hope to educate our Residents on a new zero cost "custodial" home health care plan.

This plan offers the full array of care, beginning with home care, to memory or institutional care.

MEN'S TOURNEY CROWNS PICKLEBALL WINNERS

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

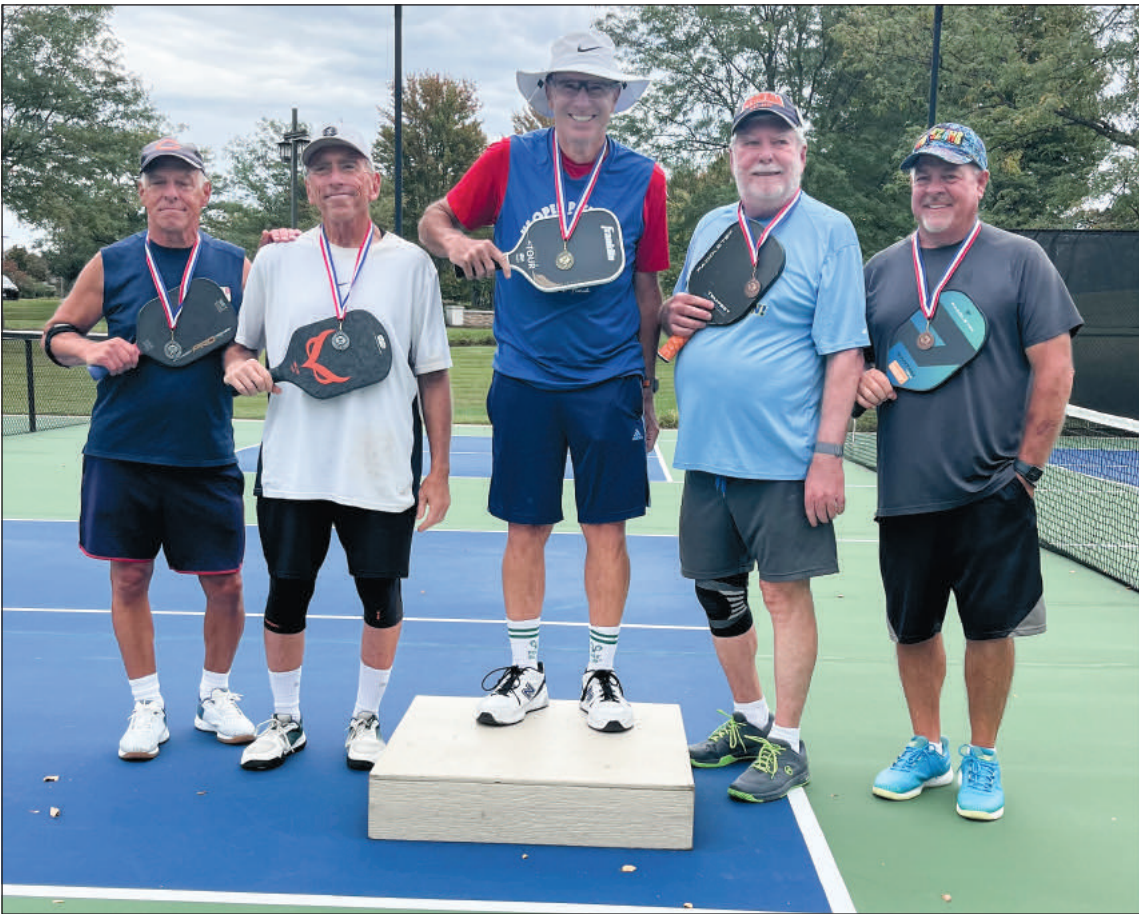
The Sun City Pickleball Club hosted its men's division tournament at Tall Oaks Courts Sept. 18, which was the lone division held that day due to the weather.

There were 55 participants and 35 volunteers, who contributed with cooking hot dogs to singing the National Anthem.

At the 2.5 rating, Dan Farmer took gold while Richard Cooney won silver and Dan Ramirez captured the bronze medal.

At 3.0 rating, doubles, Larry Colonero and Steve Galligan won gold while Doug Anderson and Bobby Brown won silver and Mike Neveaux and Roger Lewis took bronze.

At 3.5 doubles, Keith Moderhack and John Hecker prevailed



Sun City Pickleball Men's Division tournament winners were (L to R) Ken Storm, Barry Newman, John Schwan, Mike Christy, Paul Grant. Photo provided.

for gold; Dick Campbell and Joe Jablonski and Bob Oelson At 4.0 doubles, it was Jim Jerry Seyffert won silver and won bronze. Daciolos and John Schwan win-

ning gold while Barry Newman and Ken Storm won silver and Mike Christy and Paul Grant took bronze.

Schwan earlier this summer won the gold medal at Chicago SixCounty; two gold medals at the Wisconsin State Senior Olympics and silver at Illinois Senior Olympics.

"The competition gets tougher each year as new, younger players enter my bracket (4.0-4-5, ages 75-79)," Schwan said. "It's fun because each year is a bigger challenge than the year before. I had a good summer season Interestingly, I found the Sun City tournament the most competitive of them all. Our club is developing more very competitive players each year as evidenced by over 12 players in the 4.0 bracket in this year's tournament."

Mixed doubles players, 3.0 rating, competed in a tournament Sept. 26 at Tall Oaks Courts. There were six teams who played five rounds and 15 volunteers assisted,

Fred and Kathryn Senft won the gold medal, while Linda Lindgren and John Hoaglund earned silver and Nancy Jenks and Larry Colonero won the bronze medal.

Steve Peterson | MSDN Photo

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Sun City resident Bob Mianulli stands at the third base dugout at Sun City Veterans Memorial Field.

**‘TERRIFIC THURSDAY’
CELEBRATED BY CUBS, SOX FANS**

By Steve Peterson
For My Sun Day News

Baseball memories for Chicago Cubs and White Sox fans began flowing as freely as the champagne when both teams clinched MLB playoff spots at about 4 p.m., Sept. 24, aka “Terrific Thursday”.
The teams advanced to the post-season together, as the Cubs were 89-73 record and the White Sox 84-

78, for the fourth time in their histories, the first since 2020 (COVID shortened year) and since 2008 in a full season. Both The Cubs and White Sox won National and American League wild-card spots, respectively. The Cubs clinched with a 2-1 win over Miami and the White Sox’s 9-1 win in Kansas City, so they were in the first best-of-three round.
Memories may have been from the White Sox World Series appearance in 1959, the White Sox’s

win in 2005 or the Cubs seventh game World Series championship in 2016, among others.
“I remember having a ticket to Game One of the 1959 World Series, but thinking I had many more chances, gave it to my dad Harold,” Sun City resident Glenn Groebli said. “I followed the team in the 1950s with the ‘Go Go Sox’ and 1960s with Nellie Fox, Louis Apocicio and later Paul Konerko.”
Groebli founded an area Chicago White Sox Fan Club in 2019, organized a playoff watch event.
Two long-time baseball fans in Sun City, Bob Mianulli and Steve Galligan, have been following the game since their youth, one for the Cubs, the other for the White Sox.
“I started to root for the Cubs when I was nine or ten years old,” Bob Mianulli said. “I remember the same lineup every day, Don Kessinger, Glenn Beckert, Billy Williams, Ron Santo. And the disappointment of ‘69, when they were eight games ahead in August and finished eight games behind. I thought 1984 ended in a disappointment, when we lost in five games in the playoffs in San Diego.”
The Cubs’ 108-year title drought wait was over the night in Cleveland when the Cubbies grabbed the Commissioner’s World Series trophy (which now stands in a public room at Wrigley Field), after an 8-7, 10-inning win over the Guardians in Game 7.
“That was the best for me, ever. I remember banging pots and pans

after we had won,” Mianulli said. “And others in my neighborhood in Sun City were doing the same, and texting the whole family.”
Galligan also celebrated a World Series title in his lifetime, in 2005 with the White Sox’ win over Houston, completing a four-game sweep and 11-1 playoff record.
“I remember when owner Bill Veeck had Minnie Minoso play one game one year to get him to play in, at the time, a record fourth decade,” Galligan said. “I really admired catcher Carlton Fisk as well as Konerko.”
“What I like most about this year’s team is we have someone different stand out every game,” Galligan said. “I’m surprised by the whole season. We improved from 19 games two years ago (from 121 losses in 2024) to 24 games this year.”
Meanwhile, Mianulli watches nearly every Cubs game on TV, about 155 of 162 a year. He played little league baseball, and was big into whiffle ball and pick-up softball games. He admired Cubs legend Ron Santo as a youth growing up and attending Proviso West High School.
“As an adult, I admired Ryne Sandberg,” Mianulli said of the late Hall of Famer. “I remember meeting Hall of Famer pitcher Ferguson Jenkins, and once when Ernie Banks hit a pinch-hit home run to win a game, he gave me a high-five on his way back to the clubhouse. I remember, before the Internet,

always getting sports magazines to see how they would predict the Cubs to finish.”
As for the current Cubs team, he sees the core as being very good – from new 40 home run, 40 stolen bases achiever Pete Crow-Armstrong, who joined the 40 homers, 40 stolen base club against Miami, to third baseman Alex Bregman and shortstop Dansby Swanson (signed to long-term deals).
Galligan plays pickleball in Sun City, while Mianulli plays softball. Mianulli joined the Sun City Softball League the year after he moved here.
Members of a ladies softball group, gathering for Sunday night practice, were Cubs fans, too.
“I watch all the Cubs games, and send texts to my mom,” Sun City resident Sharon Johnson said. “I grew up a Detroit Tigers fan, but moved here in college. Nico Hoerner is my favorite Cub.”
Susan Level, also of Sun City, remembers 2016 Cub Kyle Schwarber when he was a catcher at the University of Indiana and she lived in Bloomington, Indiana.
Derek Nelson, meanwhile, wore a big “Sox” t-shirt as he attended a Sun City event with his mom.
“I went to the Ozzie Guillen jersey retirement ceremony game on Aug. 10,” the Huntley resident said. “It was very emotional.”
His hopes for the playoffs?
“I hope both teams make it to the World Series,” he said.



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obit

Lt. Col. Nancy J. Krier (nee Carlson). Died July 16, 2026, at age 77. Nancy was born to mother Alice E. (nee Sahlin) and father Alfred E. Carlson and was predeceased by both parents, in 2006 and 1992 respectively. She was also predeceased by husband Lt. Col. Andrew Michael (Mick) Krier (1947-2014) and eldest son Andrew (Joshua) (1974-2025). She is survived by her son Zachary. Nancy was born in Akron, Ohio on August 19, 1948 but spent most of her elementary and high school years in Mokena, Illinois, graduating from Lincoln-Way High School in 1966. She was a high honor and popular student in high

school, then entered the nursing program at North Park University in Chicago. She entered the US Army Student Nurse program in 1968 while she finished her nursing degree. After graduating in 1970, she attended Officer Basic training in San Antonio, Texas as a 2Lt and then was assigned to Ft. Devins, Massachusetts as her first duty station. She met her future husband while they were both stationed at Ft. Devins in 1970. Husband Mick was part of the Army Special Forces and was assigned to Vietnam. He and Nancy were engaged at Fort Devens before he left. Shortly afterward Nancy was assigned to the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon along with several other close friends and nurses from Ft. Devens. Nancy and Mick were married in Saigon in 1972 at the same hospital's chapel and had a reception at the officer's club there.

In 1973, both Nancy and Mick were temporarily reassigned to Fort Devens where they retired from active duty and joined the National Guard. They first built a house and lived in Acton, Massachusetts where Nancy worked in local hospitals and got her Masters of Nursing at Boston, University. In 1975 they moved to Chicago and she taught Nursing at Elmhurst College and served as the Director of Nursing for Nursefinders. She then joined the Il-



linois Hospital Association as Vice President of Nursing. Nancy became well known in Illinois for her legislative and policy initiatives in support of nursing and healthcare and upon her retirement from the IHA she started a successful consulting company working with various Schools of Nursing and Hospitals around the state of Illinois. While Nancy was in the reserves, she was promoted to LTC, her rank at her retirement. After her husband's death in 2014, she retired to Sun City in Huntley, Illinois. Throughout her life, Nancy was very active both professionally and personally. She loved to travel, was an avid golfer, and socialized with many friends she made throughout her life. She is survived by her sister Maureen Burt (Arizona), her brother Al (Indiana), and her brother Richard (Kathy) – New Hampshire. Nancy's Memorial Service and honor guard will be on October 23rd, 2026 at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois at 12:00 noon.

•HEART

25. The AHA explicitly acknowledges that BMI is an imperfect metric. It doesn't distinguish between muscle mass and fat mass. Clinical judgement rather than automatic scoring may be appropriate for lean individuals with high muscle mass. Despite its limitations, BMI remains the most widely available and routinely calculated measure, which is why the framework uses it.

6. Blood lipids were updated to use non-HDL cholesterol instead of total cholesterol. The calculation is simple if you have a standard lipid panel: take your total cholesterol and subtract your HDL cholesterol. The number you're left with is your non-HDL cholesterol.

7. Blood glucose is measured by fasting blood glucose or HbA1c. For someone with no history of diabetes, a fasting glucose under 100 or A1c under 5.7% earns a perfect 100.

8. Blood pressure is scored using the thresholds from the 2017 ACC/AHA hypertension guideline. Optimal is under 120/80 for a full 100 points

While it would be unrealistic to score 100 on each of these modifiable cardiac measures, the higher you score, the more you can claim to be "young at heart." Here's to a high score!

•LADYBUGS

course, her favorites." To capture the pure happiness of the occasion, Sheri ended the group's memorable visit on a high-energy note, leading the Painted Pansies in a lively, spirited ladybug dance.

Ultimately, what turns Sheri's happy place into an outstanding project is how she uses her global platform to change lives locally, turning her passion into an interactive classroom.

"I encourage groups to collect. It's a healthy habit to have," Sheri says, promoting the mental and social benefits of the hobby. "I read books, explain the life cycle, and how ladybugs keep our gardens free of aphids."

Sheri directs donations from these group tours straight to Turning Point Inc., a domestic violence agency in McHenry County.

"My ladybugs can help the ladies," she explains.

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iheardthisquote...

By **TR Kerth**
Columnist

Try not. Do or do not. There is no try.

- Yoda

I wish I could tell you it gets better. But it doesn't get better. You get better.

- Joan Rivers

Funny thing, the present tense. Technically, it cannot exist at all. Once we're aware of it, it's gone, no longer present. We dwell, then, in the constant past, even when we're dreaming of the future.

- Colum McCann

After you've heard two eyewitness accounts of a motor accident, you begin to worry about history.

- John McNab



Christine Such | MSDN Photo
Jim Vitte is one half of the “Jim & Jim” team that help keep the Woodchucks running smoothly.

Jim & Jim

The story of two Woodchucks

By Christine Such
For My Sun Day News

In a community as active as Sun City, charter clubs thrive on the dedication of volunteers who quietly work behind the scenes to keep everything functioning properly. For the

Sun City Woodchucks, the credit goes to the Jim & Jim team. Jim Vitte holds the wrenches, and Jim Jiran provides the logistics. Vitte said, “When parts and supplies are needed, I tell Jim Jiran. He provides the backup with the goods. We are the finely balanced team that keeps the shop running smoothly.” Whether they are tuning up heavy machinery, mentoring fellow artisans, sharing camaraderie, or lending their skills to neighboring clubs, both embody the true spirit of volunteerism. While Jim Jiran manages the planning, Jim Vitte provides the master-level mechanical aptitude — a skill that didn’t hap-

pen by accident, but rather from a long-term passion. “I’ve always been taking things apart just to see how they worked,” Vitte said. “I took apart a lawnmower when I was five years old. I guess it’s just in my DNA.” That passion led to a 39-year career as an aircraft mechanic with United Airlines. After graduating from the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics in 1963, Vitte began his aviation career on January 21, 1964. While operating primarily out of the Chicago area, his expertise took him across the globe. Vitte’s work included foreign and partner carriers. He traveled worldwide as a top-tier technician performing complex maintenance. Later, he brought that wealth of knowledge back home to train and instruct fellow mechanics. Despite his extensive mechanical background, Vitte didn’t initially have much experience in woodworking. “The only experience I had working with wood was cut, split, and burn. That was my specialty,” Vitte joked. “But I worked with metal for decades, and it’s easy to convert the core basics from that process over to working with wood.” When Vitte first joined the

Woodchucks, he started out building a few projects of his own. Along the way, he discovered some familiar corporate kinship: “I found out that there were a few guys in the club who worked for United also.” Before long, however, his instinct to fix things took over. Minor equipment issues caught his eye, and soon, the care and repair of the shop’s heavy machinery consumed all of his time. “It is self-gratifying to be able to fix these machines,” he said. Vitte treats the workshop with a mechanic’s discipline. He arrives at the shop every day at 9:00 a.m., ready to inspect and address whatever needs attention. When a machine goes down, he approaches it like an investigator. “I need to find out who used it and what they were doing before it failed.” Today, that lifetime of precision maintenance directly benefits the Woodchucks. A fellow Woodchuck, Donna Bordsen, notes, “His technical expertise is an important asset to the club. [Vitte] does all of the maintenance on all machinery in the woodshop, saving us a lot of money.” Rich Escalier, another member of the club, said, “As one of the more experienced Wood-

chucks, I value what Jim Vitte brings to the shop. Whenever there is a problem or a question about hand tools, technique, or machinery, he is our first, and usually last, stop because he always has an answer. Woodchucks universally consider him our most valuable asset.” Escalier added that Vitte is “our favorite member of a subgroup that we ‘lovingly’ call ‘The Sunshine Boys.’” Fellow Woodchuck John Belue echoed that affectionate sentiment, stating, “We pick on him, but we appreciate him.” Beyond maintaining the shop, Vitte also leads community projects, making important contributions across Sun City. Last summer, he teamed up with fellow Woodchuck Bob Duke to build a bridge for the outdoor display of the G-scale railroad. That project is immortalized by a photo hanging in the woodshop, affectionately dubbed “The troll under the bridge.” That troll is Vitte. In a community founded on bonds and shared passions, residents like Vitte remind everyone what it means to build a better community, one project at a time. Thinking about his tireless devotion to the shop and his fellow members, Vitte keeps it simple, “It gives me a sense of worth.”

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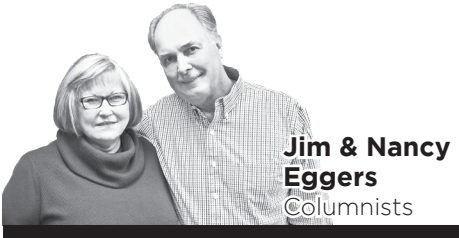
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Deal of the decade



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.

We’ve all seen those ads on Facebook. Everything looks good and the prices seem fantastic. Some are legitimate, and others not so much. Case in point, Nancy and I are still waiting for our wind chimes we ordered from a third world nation three years ago. Because of this, we decided to take Facebook ads with a grain of salt. But, we saw an ad for a restaurant in Geneva offering a Five Course Meal on Monday or Tuesday for \$25 for lunch, and \$30 for dinner. Nancy is very “frugal” and said, “we can’t pass this one up, what have we got to lose???” So, on we went to the Portofino Trattoria.

We pulled up to the restaurant and were lucky to find a street parking spot right in front of the restaurant. Portofino Trattoria is located at the south end of the Geneva shopping district adjacent to the railroad tracks. If you can’t find street parking, they have a parking lot in back of the restaurant. Is it handicap accessible? Technically, the restaurant is, but navigating the sidewalk leading up to it could be challenging.

The interior was very modern having an abundance of tables that are VERY close together, plus they have an outdoor al fresco dining area.

We were seated inside and given some warm bread with olive oil and parmesan cheese to dip into while looking at their many menus, including the special that we came for.

Their Facebook special is a fixed menu. Each person receives the following. First course is Bruschetta Romano which is a toasted garlic crostini topped with tomatoes, basil, and fresh mozzarella. The second course is the Portofino Salad which is romaine and radicchio lettuce, carrots, cucumbers, and tomatoes with crumbled bleu cheese all tossed in their house balsamic dressing. The third course was linguini with your choice of meatball or sausage in their house made tomato sauce. The fourth course is the Pollo Arrosto Romano which is a pan roasted chicken breast in garlic, olive oil, lemon, and rosemary with a white wine sauce served with a side of roasted potatoes. The fifth and last course was

their Tiramisu. This is layers of espresso-soaked lady fingers and marscarpone cream.

What arrived first was a large plate with our first and second courses. The bruschetta was delicious and well-seasoned with garlic. The salad was awesome, not just lettuce like you get at most restaurants. The sweetness of the dressing was a nice touch.

Jim went with the Linguine and Italian Sausage, and I went with the Linguine and Meatball. We each received another huge plate containing the third and fourth course. The pasta was a perfect al dente and my meatball was delicious. Jim’s Italian sausage was sliced diagonally and lightly browned and was also delicious. The Pollo Arrosto Romano was new to us and we enjoyed every bit of it. Last, but certainly not least, we were presented with two perfect portions of their tasty Tiramisu.

This promotion is brilliant. It gives you a taste of a variety of different dishes with perfect portion sizes. We still came home with doggie bags!!!

The cost for our “Deal of the Decade” was \$64.78. The best \$25 each of us has ever spent.

Dining Duo Note: This promotion is only available at the Geneva location. We asked the waiter how long this will last and he said, “for a while.” Please call before you go to make sure they are still running that promotion.

He Said / She Said

JIM’S TAKE: They served really great food at a really great price.

NANCY’S TAKE: Five delicious courses and a doggie bag to boot!!!

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





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let'sgetreel



Will Moore
Columnist

Yuck, yuck, amuck

As the adult children and grandkids are back to work and school, things are getting back to seriousness. Reading *The New York Times* the other day, you would believe that there is no joy in the world at this moment. And, in some ways, that would seem to be correct. Doomscrolling over social media can be a daunting exercise that can leave you drained and unmotivated. However, I have been trying to look at the positive in life more. So, in a bid to not fall into a complete existential crisis, let's put the

drama away (for now) and focus on more comedic efforts. We can turn our attention back in due time for awards season. Back in August the RuPaul-led *Stop That Train* landed with a thud in theaters not unlike an Amtrak derailment. Thankfully, Netflix has picked it up so we can watch it in the comfort of our homes. The best way to describe this would be: what if Mel Brooks or the Zucker Brothers directed a drag show? The jokes are a mile a minute, so no worry if there are any duds. True, this is the type of comedy that is a bit outdated and bawdy. But for lovers of *Drag Race* and *Airplane*, you will feel right at home.

Queens Ginger Minj and Jujubee play Tess and DeeDee, two railway stewardesses who are about to lose their jobs and have hit rock bottom. When they hear that there are two openings at the high-speed Glamazonian Express, they see this as their opportunity to better themselves. The passengers play as a who's who of random celebrity. Wait, is that Nicole Ritchie? Jerry O'Connell? Lisa Rinna? Charo?!?! The list goes on and on. There was in fact one cameo that became a running gag throughout that gave me a chuckle every time.

But this isn't just a simple traveling experience. As there is a storm coming dangerously close to breaking the train up, it is up to our heroes and a hunky (but not so bright) co-conductor to facilitate the movie's title. Not sure if it was the in-

tention of the actor or the filmmaker for the young stud to have a Keanu Reeves accent. Speed was on a bus, but I get what they were going for.

Some of the more drag-centric joking may go over the heads of those not versed in the culture or watch RuPaul's show. This isn't a deterrent as there are plenty of humorous moments for all people. But I do warn you that the performers can get a tad dirty. Is it going to be a masterpiece like *Blazing Saddles* or *The Naked Gun*? Absolutely not. However, as a fun afternoon, I can see worse things to be doing with my time.

Speaking of endless checking in on socials, between the hot gossip there was nothing but mentions of the Hulu show *Adults*. Yes, the TikTok and Threads phenomenon is back for a second season. Late in August I decided to finish the first in anticipation of this. And it was still a bit of mixed bag. There was a redemption of sorts, in the presentation of some of the characters. I was still rather trepidatious as there was some scatological bits that turned me off.

So what are my feelings about the next go-around? Well, the cast comes off more integrated and engaging. Owen Thiele



and Jack Innemen are great in their will-they-won't-they and Amita Rao has toned down Issa's more annoying tendencies. Each generation needs their representation with their unique problems, like social media scrubs and

egg freezing. There is also more in common, like the want to remind young and fun as well as dealing with jobs. Quirky as this show is, I kinda feel like it has its heart in the right place. We shall only see if this is the next *Friends* or *New Girl*.



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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.

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

FIND THE HAT LOCATION:
We get it. Sometimes the hat is hidden so hard, it'll have you seeing spots before you find it. And this edition is no different, only the spots you're seeing are literal. Like ladybugs have spots, so does the hat in this edition. See page 15, where the story on the SC resident who holds the record for the largest ladybug-themed collection continues and see if you can spot (get it?!) the hat!

Try again next edition!

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 btcriscione@gmail.com.

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Nov. 22, Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
TICKET SALES: TICKETS are \$25
Limit 10 tickets per purchase
Oct. 20, Tuesday - Drendel Ballroom 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Oct. 27, Tuesday - Cedar Room in Prairie Lodge 1-4 p.m.
Nov. 11, Tuesday-Cedar Room in Prairie Lodge 1-3 p.m.
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Saturday and Sunday, 11-21 and 11-22 call: 847-515-1583
If you or anyone you know is interested in in Set design and helping with set build or costuming, don't hesitate to contact Russ Howard, President at: 847-659-9144.

NOVEMBER 7 FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HUNTLEY
Join us for our Annual Holiday Boutique Saturday, November 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Crafts, baked goods, jewelry, home decor, vintage clothes and so much more! First Congregational Church of Huntley, 11628 E. Main St., Huntley, IL

LADYBUGS

comer favorites." To capture the pure happiness of the or Sheri and the group's memorable visit on a high-energy note, the group performed a lively, spirited ladybug dance.

Ultimately, what turns Sheri's happy place into an outstanding is how she uses her global platform to change lives locally, turn



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