

Food, Glorious Food!

Easter Grand Buffet

The Easter Buffet was delicious, enjoyable AND action-packed!

-Patsy Nelms, content;

Kevin Ahmadi, Bill Castine, and Marcia Brant, photos



Vendor Food Show

Approaching the Oak Room on Friday afternoon, March 22, a crowd of residents inhaled savory aromas and found a festive atmosphere. Oak Hammock food purveyors lined the walls and generously filled small plates with everything from delicious meats to power salad and ice creams. Residents relaxed and visited across tables while watching Florida Gator men's basketball on the big screen. Very few felt the need to seek a meal afterwards!

-Sandy Furches



Welcome Phil and Mary Ann Parsons

Phil and Mary Ann are new residents in the Outback. It is evident they will be vital members of our community.

Mary Ann grew up in Wisconsin and earned her degree in Secondary Education and a minor in theater from Marquette University. She moved to Illinois where she worked for AT&T Bell Labs. She completed her MBA from Illinois Benedictine University outside of Chicago.

Mary Ann has been a Lee County (Florida) UFL/IFAS Master Gardener volunteer for 22 years, teaching "Florida Friendly Landscaping." She has always been interested in the environment and was involved with a water quality group in Cape Coral. She was a co-founder and project manager of SWFL VegFest, an annual festival attracting thousands, featuring speakers, vendors of plant-based foods, and health providers. She also started a non-profit organization LSHP (Lifestyle Solutions Healthy Planet, Inc) which educates the public on healthy lifestyle choices and alternative medical options. Mary Ann's name is on one of the Oak Hammock Garden plots.

Phil grew up in Connecticut and attended Boston's Wentworth Institute, earning an A.Eng. degree. He was hired by AT&T Bell Labs and started his 32-year career in New Jersey working on equipment that detected and tracked submarines. When the naval contract ended, Phil transferred within Bell Labs to the Chicago area. He earned a computer science degree from Northern Illinois University and an MBA from Illinois Benedictine University. This is where Mary Ann and Phil crossed paths.

Phil enjoys biking, auto racing, building and flying drones, computers and software and tinkering in the garage. In his younger days, Phil and his son raced go-karts. Then Phil and a friend built 2 Cobra kit cars. He drove the car in the photo in high performance driving events, becoming an instructor for SCCA PDX activities. His latest project is to build a racing simulator.

The Parsons enjoy traveling. They have been to Africa, South America, to the British Isles, the Mediterranean, and throughout the Caribbean. They are dog lovers, especially rescue dogs. Welcome to the Oak Hammock family, Mary Ann and Phil.

- Beth Paul, content; Beth Paul and Phil Parsons, photos



New Neighbors, Jim and Peggy Dodge

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting new neighbors, Jim and Peggy Dodge. During lively conversation in their lovely home, I learned they are active, outgoing, and ready for new adventures!

They were born in different Midwest cities, but their families settled in Grosse Pointe, MI. They met in high school and dated. After different colleges, Jim rejoined Peggy at the University of Michigan. Romance blossomed. They married on graduation day, skipping that ceremony for a more important one of their own!

Jim graduated with an MBA. Special interests were in financial planning, marketing, and later urban renewal. His increasingly important positions with major energy companies took them to 5 states then Rhode Island.

In the 1980s, Peggy opened a home accessories shop. For several years they enjoyed searching through New England for interesting pieces needing their special brand of TLC. Peggy returned to school and became a licensed social worker with families affected by dementia.

Estero, FL, was their second then primary home. They were enthusiastic sailors in New England and Caribbean islands in boats big enough for their three daughters and dog. When thoughts of retirement beckoned, they looked at CCRCs. Their oldest daughter, Karin Martin, lives in Gainesville. Oak Hammock was their obvious choice.

Jim plans to indulge his passion for golf, his love of learning with ILR classes, and his hobby as a builder of model ships. One of his masterpieces has pride-of-place in their living room. He will be a great addition to our OH woodworkers!

While Peggy golfs, she loves to read and will explore bridge, mahjong, and all creative opportunities. She enjoys gardening and is an accomplished floral arranger.

It is indeed a treat to welcome this delightful couple to Oak Hammock!

-Jan Havre, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Congratulations to our Director of Plant Operations Bill Griffin (pictured far right), and the P. K. Yonge Roaring Riptide robotics team that he has mentored for years. They earned the prestigious FIRST® Regional Engineering Inspiration Award at the 2024 FIRST® Robotics Tallahassee Regional Competition and a NASA-sponsored registration to the World Championship Competition. Roaring Riptide was noted for “their innovative outreach initiatives, dedication to mentorship, and commitment to diversity and inclusion.” They competed against 44 teams from 5 states. They build robots but also design and develop Assistive Technology solutions and derive much joy from adapting and delivering toys to local kids with disabilities. Oak Hammock wishes them the best as they move to the Championship competition in Houston, TX, April 17-20. *-Sandy Furches, content; Alachua Chronicle, photo*



Alzheimer’s Pie Sale on Pi Day

March 14 (3/14) is known as Pi Day because the value of π is approximately 3.14. Oak Hammock holds an annual sale of pies to benefit Alzheimer’s and this year was no exception. Thirty pies were donated, and \$660 was collected for the Alzheimer’s Association.

We received pies donated from several of our community partners, including Community Hospice, Concierge Care, Haven Hospice and Granny Nannies. Many of our talented Independent Living residents baked and assisted at the sale on Pi Day. Our SN residents made a homemade key lime pie together to donate and our AL residents created homemade Oreo pies together for the cause. Plus, many wonderful staff members took the time to make pies and contribute to a great cause!

It was such a treat to meet residents from across the community who stopped for a sweet treat along with the many staff and even family members who joined in on the fun. Thank you to everyone who participated in some way, shape or form ... this was truly ONE OAK HAMMOCK!

-Chrissy Smoak and Bill Castine



Solar Eclipse Thanks – “Ms. Griffith, thank you for sharing this experience with my little guy. He was so sad I didn’t have glasses last night and has gotten very into learning about space and planets at school recently. Needless to say, he was excited about today and this sweet experience. Thank you so much!”

-Chrissy Smoak, content; Abby Aspel, photo



Tassel Tree
- Walter Wynn

Health Pavilion Fun!



-Chrissy Smoak

The View from Assisted Living

Founding Member Fred Harden moved from Independent Living to Skilled Nursing to Assisted Living, giving him an overview of all Oak Hammock facilities. In January, 2022, Covid and pneumonia sent him to skilled nursing. He returned to independent living with his wife, Pat, but a family conference including Pat, their daughters, and folks from AL agreed Fred could really use the services of AL.

One of the things Fred particularly likes about AL is the friendliness of the staff. Amenities in AL include a library, group activities, a nurse on duty, and special events, plus his bed is made daily, someone comes in several times a day to empty his trash (and make sure he's OK), the "hydration station" offers beverages, fruit, and snacks. He loves the amazing variety of folks he meets there.

In addition, he has use of all the facilities and activities of Independent Living. Fred often joins friends—or Pat—in the IL dining room or enjoys coffee and conversation in the Upper Commons.

His bird feeders bring countless species to his window. Fred amuses himself (and keeps his brain active) by reading 3 books at the same time, keeping all three plots in his head. Louise Penny is his current favorite author (all her novels are in our library).

Fred is a painter who began with watercolor but changed to acrylic because he couldn't correct watercolor errors. Next, he tried colored pencils (frustratingly slow), and now works in pastels, the messiest media. His works decorate his apartment!

For more information about moving to AL, see "[Why should I move?](#)" on [Infoh.us](#), or talk to Fred, who is currently the AL representative to the Residents' Council. - Nancy Dickson, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Our NAAP National Award Winner

Phil Morrison has volunteered at Oak Hammock with Music & Memory since 2017. I have partnered with him for 3 years observing interviews with residents and loved ones. Phil plays clips of musical hits from the resident's childhood for each year to age 30 noting their response. At times, previously non-responsive residents have started tapping along or have gotten up to dance with their spouse due to memories triggered. It is a rewarding experience to witness.

Phil downloads hundreds of songs onto a player personalized for each resident, placing it in a bag with instructions, and delivering it to the Life Enrichment team. Phil sends family members directions, benefits, and tools for using the player during visits.

He has completed this process for 103 individuals and has hosted group programs including the recent Disco Day in Ashton Place.

I nominated Phil for NAAP (National Association of Activity Professionals) Volunteer of the Year award. Calling him upon learning he won was one of the favorite calls of my career. I am excited to go with him to the NAAP Annual Conference in Minnesota, as he receives his award! I'll be Phil's personal paparazzi sharing photos with everyone!

While a big honor for Phil and Oak Hammock, the award also emphasizes the importance of Music & Memory! We look forward to the ripple effect this program will have on the quality of life for others at Oak Hammock and across the country.



-Chrissy Smoak, Life Enrichment Manager

Everyone Is Irish on St. Paddy's Day!

A Lovely St. Patrick's Day at Oak Hammock was enhanced by a stellar performance by **Scattered the Bruce** in the Oak Room. Performers included Katherine Osman's husband, Todd Osman. - *Patsy (Flanagan) Nelms*



The Recycled Garden Window

Peg Owens gathered material from Recycled Riches (RR) sales, her apartment, and the community garden to assemble her beautiful garden display case. The large floral backdrop was a RR unsold, framed painting that she thought might be useful sometime. Jeani Valter made the "Welcome to Our Garden" sign for the scarecrow festival, and the dog should look familiar to all of us since it and the security scarecrow welcomed us for three years as we drove onto the property.

Artistic Peg made the GROW box during her earlier woodworking days. She made the Botanique pillowcase which she originally fashioned into a book with stuffing inside. Thank you, RR, for the hat on the plant trellis which Peg usually keeps in the garden and thank you RR for the decorative plate which she used as a backdrop for one of the other plants. Topping it

all off are some bunny ears which Peg explains is an "intriguing common name for a plant" she bought a couple of years ago for the shady street side of the garden cottage.

We can look forward to Peg's coming up with a new window each season. She is our role model on how to be on the lookout for potentially reusable items. - *Beth Paul, content; Bill Castine, photo*



Choices in Education

On March 12, the League of Women Voters presented a talk by Sue Legg, retired professor from UF's College of Education. She spoke about K-12 education in Florida and how it is funded. Parents are now able to choose from the following schools for their children: traditional public, charter, private, and home schooling. All are funded at least in part by the state.

Sue also discussed rules and regulations covering charter schools, and the situation now in Newberry where there is a move to convert their public schools to charters. Many questions arose from her most informative presentation.

- Mary White, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Then and Now: The Acorn Book Club

The Beginnings: Would you believe the Acorn Book Club started even before Building One was completed? Nancy Green gathered book lovers into a class to share books much like our current ILR classes. The first official minutes for the club are dated August 17, 2005. The book discussed at this meeting was *Snow Falling on Cedars*. The meeting was held in the present IT Computer Room, way in the dark back area. Discussion was held to move either to the MPR or PDR depending on the number of expected people.

Who were some of the early members? Janet Janke, Betty Hilliard, Gloria McDonald, Edna Hindson, Kay Koons, Gladys Bowie, Buddy Kramer, Cynthia Clements, Bodil Schmidt-Nielsen, Fred Specht, Una Law, Bill Peck, Nancy Green, Nita Beckman, Andy Adams-Smith, and others.

Did you have authors speak at some of your meetings? Yes. Mallory O'Connor, *American Rivers*; Susie H. Baxter, *Pumping Sunshine*; local artist and writer, J. T. Glisson, model for Jody in *The Yearling*, *The Creek*; Shelley Mickle, *The Polio Hole*; and Staci Goldring, *On Wooden Wheels*.

What types of books have been presented? All types of books are discussed: Fiction of all kinds, such as historical fiction and mysteries, and nonfiction, including memoirs and biographies. Any book which the discussion leader thinks members would enjoy reading and discussing is possible.

What rules or regulations has your club followed through the years? Our club has no rules and is open to all Oak Hammock members. We do have a format where members select what book and which month they would like to lead the discussion. The monthly leader also serves as the chairperson for that meeting. If some regular members cannot attend, we keep a "wait list" to fill our 12 seats available in the PDR.

Do you have a service project?

For many years we have donated funds for books for children. The Acorn Dental Clinic is just one of the recipients. Janet Janke has been the project organizer. Janet also presents an annual December program featuring children's books. What fun and fellowship we have each year, laughing as she reads us these colorful children's story books.

Our book club has come a long way from those early days meeting in a small area in the back of the IT Office. We now have 17 members, both regular and those on the "wait list." Once a month we come together to share our love of reading.

As writer Will Schwalbe says, "... Reading is the best way to both escape and engage with the world."

- Edna Hindson, content;
Sandy Furches, photo



Founding Acorn Book Club members gathered recently to reminisce: Janet Janke, Nita Beckman, Andy Adams-Smith, Edna Hindson, and Nancy Green.



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Special Treasures Spring Sale

The Special Treasures team held their Spring Sale on March 15, selling a variety of quality goods for \$1,224.06 plus \$251.50 for staff lay-a-way purchases over \$50. A total of \$1,475.60 was raised.

The bigger payoffs are the smiles of our staff who get first dibs, and then those of residents and guests on campus who love our bargains. Unsold items go to future sales, e-Bay, and local charities. Our team collects donations year-round from residents and their families, often as they downsize or transition.

What is a Special Treasure? It is usually something we collected during our lifetime attached to memories like wedding, birthday, or special gifts. Jewelry, home décor, entertaining items, fine cookware, beautiful crafted goods, objects from living and traveling all over the world, small household appliances, special tools, hobby items, and collections are all included. Most items are something you would pay \$5 or more for pre-owned. Any donations need to be in good, usable condition without damage or cracks, and in working order, if an appliance. We love knowing the "story" behind unusual items. It helps us in our pricing research.

- Judy Plaut, content; Judy Plaut and Beth Paul, photos



A thank you to our Recycled Riches Volunteers: "The time you give, the work you do, and the money you raise is truly special. It fosters good relations among residents, is a meaningful way to involve new residents (it surely did for me) and provides much-needed funds for special projects to enhance the Oak Hammock community."
-Donna Johnson, President, Residents' Council



Tom Smith and Tucker show us there is something for everyone at a Special Treasures sale. - Beth Paul

The Needlers Display Case

Paulette Gird is the person to thank for this creative window display. She said, "This window went together fairly easily. It is sometimes hard to come up with a theme for the display window. The holiday themes are easy, but they come and go so quickly."

She found the tricycle at a yard sale. Paulette visits the Recycled Riches (RR) sales for items to display in the window. It is amazing how many items can be repurposed for decorating. Everyone needs to scour the RR sales for creative ideas. The flower quilt was made by Paulette, Brenda Thomas made the top needlepoint, and the small purse with the red roses was made by Sandra Smith. The bottom needlepoint was found in the needle arts room without the name of the creator.

-Beth Paul, content; Bill Castine, photo



Mill Creek Farm

It was a breezy day last January when I took my daughter visiting from Maine to meet Baby, a beautiful little horse that Susan Bankston and I adopted a couple of years ago. This working farm near High Springs is a retirement home for abused or retired law enforcement horses. Oak Hammock sponsors George, another horse living there.

The bucolic setting is magnificent. Over 300 acres of fenced green pastures are dotted with towering oak trees. On weekdays it is serene, the only activity being one or two resident horses having a joyful gallop across a field, or one of the volunteers driving a golf cart to a distant paddock. Visit on a Saturday (the only day open to the public) and the air is filled with happy shouts of children running along the trails and stopping along the way with parents to feed carrots to the horses waiting at the fences for the treats they anticipate.

Veterinarians bring the horses back to health and keep them that way with regular visits. Each horse has its own name, history, and is “housed” in a separate pasture or with others who are compatible. Our Baby, her sister Red, and their mother were all severely abused. They have their own paddock where we can visit them, even on weekdays, since we are adoptive parents. Mill Creek depends on donations, volunteers, and “parents.” It is a magical place to visit, even if you don’t adopt. The price of admission is a bag of carrots! Donations are gratefully accepted. www.MillCreekFarm.org

- Jan Havre, content; Mill Creek Farm, photo



We are planning a trip to Millcreek Farm—watch your calendars for details.

Rhapsody in the Oak Room

Dr. Hsiang Tu arrived in the Oak Room with his electronic keyboard and three students and began by playing Bach’s “Well Tempered Clavier Book 1 Prelude” and “Fugue in C Major.”

The first student to perform, senior James Crossman from Daytona Beach, performed another of Bach’s intricate collection, playing “Book 2 Prelude and Fugue in C Major,” followed by Beethoven and Liszt pieces. The next performance was by Pennsylvania’s Grace Neilson, a sophomore, who enchanted everyone with her performance of a Chopin selection.

The final performance was by Michael Gonzalez, a sophomore from Tampa. Then we learned what the electronic keyboard’s part would be! Dr. Tu played with Michael, playing the orchestral parts for Michael’s selection from George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue.” Michael concluded the program with Louis Armstrong’s “What a Wonderful World,” and indeed the event left us all wandering home humming and thinking—what a wonderful world that enables us all to share such an inspiring event.

-Tallulah Brown, content; John Furches, photo



Shalom Strings was a delightful dessert after dinner. Internationally acclaimed virtuoso violinist Attila Sautov drove in from Houston TX with his wife to share classical music masterfully in the upper commons with spellbound residents for well over an hour. His humor, warmth, family stories, and exquisite music were compelling. He has performed on every continent in prestigious venues and is a winner of international violin competitions. The son of a composer, Sautov has played violin since age 3. What a treat!

-Sandy Furches

Interested in being more involved in the 20th Anniversary planning? Watch for details!

Wanna' be a Puncher?

Then sign up for Oak Hammock's "Boxing for Life" program, where you get to do *all* the punching, and *nobody* ever gets to hit you back. Nope, it just doesn't happen.

Residents meet for one-hour classes twice a week in the Oak Hammock Punching Room (*a.k.a. The Studio*), which is just beyond the gym. Each session, led by instructor Dakota Clemons, begins with warmup and stretching moves followed by 3-minute sets of boxing routines and select exercises.

As Puncher Gail Robinson declares, "It's great for my balance...my stamina...and for aerobic exercise."

After 40 minutes of hitting, bobbing, weaving, and stepping, the gloves come off and the class ends with a series of relaxing cool down moves.

You can do this! To join the Punchers, stop by the Physical Therapy Room in the Health Pavilion and tell them you're interested in the Boxing for Life class.

You will need to have your doctor's ok and pass some balance and agility tests. Finally, there is a charge of \$100 to purchase your equipment and a recurring fee of \$10 a month billed by Oak Hammock. Capacity is limited, so sign up now.

The OH Punchers pictured: Kathryn Clark, Bill Conner, Pat Harden, Jane Levy, Larry Lowenthal, Gail Robinson.

-Larry Lowenthal, content; photos captured from a video by Frank Townsend



Guess Who Is Imitating a Jazz Big Band Sound?

Twenty-four musicians on seven types of clarinets compose the UF Clarinet Ensemble and were a delight to hear on campus recently. Anna Lim, Winner of the 2024 Clarinet Studio Concerto Competition, was featured. Six seniors were recognized. Two conductors, Lindsay Gassman and Ana Mattos-Lebron, led them. Professor Mitchell Estrin is their Music Director.

Clarinet duets, quartets, and solos composed the first half of the program. The full ensemble played several selections and demonstrated the range of each clarinet playing variations on "Hickory, Dickory, Dock" which concluded with "Hickory, Bickory, Bop!" John Phillip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" closed the enjoyable program.

Oak Hammock provides transportation to campus. Music lovers, check the transportation book and sign up for the next opportunity to hear UF's talented musicians.

-Sandy Furches



Then and Now: Oak Hammock Woodshop

The woodshop was started in 2000 before Oak Hammock was even built. While Leon Glaze was still in Texas, he worked with Oak Hammock (Praxeis), along with several other future residents who were interested in a wood shop. Oak Hammock agreed to provide a shop and buy the tools.

Over the doubts of the members, it was decided to put the shop in the main building where the maintenance area is currently located. They could not convince management that was a bad idea until the dust collector was installed and started up for the first time. The noise could be heard all over the building. The plan was to move the woodshop into the maintenance building that was being built. However, maintenance moved into it and there was no place for the shop.

In August of 2004, Leon, Arthur Saarinen, Dan Keane, and other founding woodshop members met with Praxeis management. A plan was agreed to; however, the building was not built because Oak Hammock said that it would cost too much; it wasn't until a change in management that things started to fall into place.

It was finally decided to build a building near the back gate to be shared by maintenance and the woodshop. Construction was started about March 2006 and by August it was pretty well finished. The next step was to identify and purchase the tools Oak Hammock would purchase. These were installed even as they were finishing the inside of the building. It had been a long and difficult process. Leon was the leader before and during the construction of the shop and served as President of the Oakwoods for many years.

In March, 2022, there was a big rainstorm. Because of some improper grading on the road behind the building, the shop flooded. It flooded again in 2023. A line of sandbags has been created which we are all hopeful has solved the problem. There is a project to make the berm more permanent.

The shop has functioned now for eighteen years. We have an amazing collection of tools, some of which were purchased by Oak Hammock and many others that have been donated by members over the years. (We hate to give up our tools.) Hundreds of projects have been completed from furniture to art items.

On his birthday this year, we expressed appreciation to Leon for his more than 20 years of devotion to a dream that has come to fruition by presenting him with a commemorative plaque and some birthday cake.

The Oakwoods currently has 23 members. If anyone is interested in learning woodworking as a hobby, we would love to talk to you. Woodworkers and prospective woodworkers of all skill levels are welcome. We have experienced craftsmen in our shop who are happy to show new members how to use the shop safely.

-Steve Gird, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Fall Detection and Prevention

Apple Watches and iPhones offer tools to detect and potentially prevent falls. Some residents have these, but many are not fully using them.

Fall Detection is available on Apple Watches SE; Series 4 or later; and Ultra or later. If a fall is detected while wearing, an alarm sounds and an alert is displayed. If your Watch detects that you're moving, it waits for your response to the alert and won't automatically call emergency services. If your Watch detects you're immobile for about a minute, it will make the call automatically, providing your location. After the call ends, your watch sends a message to contacts on your Medical ID letting them know your location and that your watch detected a hard fall and dialed emergency services.

Medical ID feature on Apple devices is designed to provide critical information to emergency responders in case of an emergency without needing to unlock the device. The information may include allergies, medical conditions, medications, blood type, and emergency contacts. It's always a good idea to keep the information in the Medical ID up to date and accurate.

Fall Prevention is on iPhones running iOS 15 or later. This feature provides an assessment of your walking steadiness. After a few days of collecting your data, your phone will compare you to people who have not fallen. Walking steadiness below par indicates you may be at risk of falling and preventive measures may be needed. This could include physical therapy; strength and balance exercises; or changing your environment to reduce fall risk. Your healthcare professional may suggest further assessments or interventions.

-Bill Zegel

Then and Now: The Birds and Woods of Oak Hammock

The birds. We have been birding together since we took up the activity in the late 1970s. Birding is always a feature of our vacations. We have also escorted international birding trips and given Elderhostel (Road Scholar) programs on the birds of the Everglades.



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When we moved to Oak Hammock, we began going on Alachua Audubon field trips and often went to local sites such as Sweetwater Wetlands Park. It did not occur to us to go birding within Oak Hammock until the early days of the pandemic, when walking around the community by ourselves became our only safe form of activity.

On these walks we were hearing a lot of bird songs in Oak Hammock. We started keeping a list of species seen or heard on each walk and have continued to do so. In the past four years our cumulative list at Oak Hammock has reached 91 species!

To share our findings, we put together a video in 2021 featuring photos and sounds of these species. Called "The Birds of Oak Hammock." it can be viewed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/XI2RIHtofzc>

The woods. Having moved here from South Florida, we were accustomed to woods that were poor in species and overrun with exotics. The first time we stepped inside Oak Hammock's woods, we were stunned by how imposing and diverse it was.

Tom was already interested in plants and had taken a plant taxonomy course, so he was excited to begin learning the species here. To share what he was learning, he put together a program on our woods. It covered not only plant species, but the kind of woods we have and what we know of its history. It was well received in 2017. This year the Natural History Society was receptive to showing an updated version. The capacity crowd in the Oak Room demonstrated even more interest than before. Tom has now recorded that program and posted it (unlisted) to YouTube: https://youtu.be/TDc_GrTeZfg



We are glad to be living within such a wonderful natural environment. It has been gratifying to know that so many of our fellow residents enjoy and appreciate this environment too.

-Judy and Tom Gire, content; John Furches, photo

When in Doubt, Throw it Out!

Most of us feel good when we put something in the recycling bin, but improper recycling costs Oak Hammock (us) between \$1000 to \$1500 monthly, which translates to \$12,000-\$18,000 annually. Improper recycling is more than putting something in the wrong container. Anything contaminated with food waste cannot be recycled. Some things are tricky. Examples: paper towels and Kleenex are made of paper but cannot be recycled in the paper bin; aluminum foil and metal trays cannot go with metal cans. Paper needs to be just paper to recycle: no clear windows in envelopes, no tape, and no plastic coating on paper.

Rebecca Snowden, Housekeeping and Laundry Manager, heads our recycling efforts and points out: When one individual contaminates a recycling bin with a piece of non-recyclable material, the entire batch is diverted to landfills, incurring additional charges for improper recycling practices.

Please read the new recycling brochure recently placed in your cubby. Be a true green recycler. More (in the recycle bins) is not necessarily better. Save us all money; if you don't have time to sort, put everything in the trash bin.

The four bins for paper shredding also require some sorting. The bins look enormous, but often are filled with items that don't need shredding (junk mail, catalogs, bits of plastic). This fills up the bin and forces others to hold their shredding until the next two-week cycle. Shredding is crucial for personal information: bank statements, tax worksheets, Social Security information, etc. Everything else that's paper can go in the paper recycling bin or trash.

Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with proper recycling practices.

***Reduce Landfill *Make Oak Hammock Green *Save Money**

-Nancy Dickson

The circus is coming to town on May 8! Check the calendar and the invite for details.

Oak Hammock Singers Welcome Spring

Colorful flowers and songbirds awaken the zest to enjoy the lighter side of life—It's Spring! Time to enjoy the Oak Hammock Singers' traditional spring concert entitled "Let the Song Begin." Selections will include Andrew Lloyd Weber's *Phantom of the Opera* and Fredric Loewe's *Camelot*. The premier presentation of an Oak Hammock Singer's original song and lyrics—"We've Got Style"—will have toes tapping. There's something for everyone. Don't miss your chance to welcome spring on a happy note—Sunday, May 5, at 3:30 in the Oak Room. *-Barbara Dockery*



A Musical Saturday

The Sabella's Shining Stars Music Academy students' recital filled the Oak Room with happy music performed by happy students. Preperformance stretching, marching, and practicing taking a bow released the young artist jitters. This music academy offers private piano, guitar, vocal, and drum lessons—taught at home—to 400 students. Learning to play simple melodies such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" and familiar patriotic songs appeals to early learning. The academy offers scholarships to Florida's Step-up for Students. Music lovers look forward to the Shining Stars' return recitals. *-Barbara Dockery, content; Sandy Furches, photos*



Left: A father-daughter vocal duet; Right: Students made thank you cards for residents.

Oak Hammock's Art in April

The "Repurposed Art" exhibit is up in the Oak Hammock Art Gallery and will remain until July 6. This interesting mix of creative art pieces will be judged by Dulce Roman, a Harn Museum curator. The awards and discussion will be during the opening reception on Sunday, April 21, 3 to 5 pm in the Upper Commons.

Steve Gird is the Oak Hammock Artist of the Month. His magnificent, segmented woodworking works of art are featured in our studio resident show with a well-attended opening reception on Sunday, April 14. Then on May 23 at 4 pm, Steve will be in the Oak Room to show us just how he does his segmented woodwork. This will be the final Art League program until September.

Oak Hammock art students will be featured in the Art Studio from June through August with an opening reception in June. We hope that each student will submit at least one painting. If you would like to have your own exhibition in the art studio, please contact Mary Sue Koeppel.

Lynn Ferris will return to teach a watercolor workshop for all levels on May 4. This will be our last workshop until September. Residents interested in sponsoring an award during a future Art Exhibit—for any type of artwork or in memory of someone—should email Jane Levy. *-Nancy Dickson, content; Sandy Furches, photos*



Above: Steve Gird's Opening Reception
Below: Repurposed Art by Ginny Schrader



Mimi Ryan's birthday surprise from friends included a balloon with a goal for the future! *-Maryalice Nelson*

Teaching Adults to Read

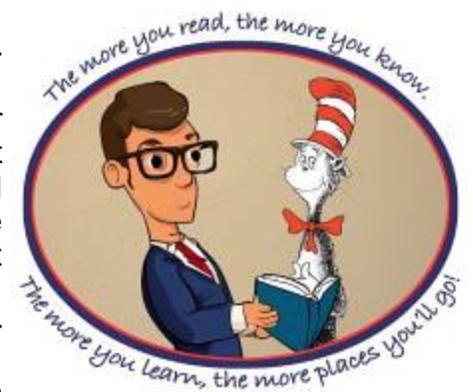
Imagine living in Gainesville not being able to read. Two Oak Hammock residents share their tutoring experiences.

Bev Cone through the Literacy Council of Highlands, NC, tutored for 12 years. Bev shares, “We had a widower with no idea about the alphabet or sounds letters make in a word! He was diligent for several years and now reads books for pleasure! Some adults had jobs that did not require reading. They raised children and managed families as non-readers. It was wonderful to add a new dimension to their lives.”

Ann Elnicki shares: “After retirement I volunteered for an adult literacy program. Some students had high school diplomas, others did not. Many held menial jobs. All felt embarrassment about their inability to read. All had defense mechanisms to hide their reading struggles. I taught using words pertinent to their jobs and life roles. One woman wanted to read recipes to bake with her granddaughter. The experience was eye-opening. Such a basic skill many of us take for granted. Hopefully my efforts helped them feel better about themselves.”

Dr. Suess would applaud these ladies saying, “The more you read, the more you know. The more you learn, the more places you’ll go!”

The Alachua County Library District Literacy Program offers free reading and math tutoring services for adults. Sixty trained volunteers provide one-to-one and small classes for four adults! To volunteer: ACL Volunteer Office Coordinator (352) 334-3929. Orientation and training are provided. *It’s hard to escape the need to read. Volunteer and help others turn the page!*



*-Barbara Dockery, content;
John Furches, AI generated photo*

Oak Hammock Volunteer Landscapers – (l-r) Gene Ziegler, Pat Harden, George Arola, Robert Virnstein. According to Robert, “residents need to get involved so they feel some ownership of their surroundings.”
-Rosalee Sprout



By the Numbers April 1 Independent Living

	Total	Sold	Available
Houses	57	57	0
Apartments	212	210	2

Health Pavilion

	Total	Occupied	Available
Assisted	51	52	0
Memory	12	12	1
Skilled	73	69	4

Andrew Davey and Nadia Luna



Moonset, 7:00 a.m.

- Mike Plaut

Appleton Museum Tour

Members boarded the Oak Hammock bus and faithful driver Robbin Stubbins took us to the scheduled tour of Ocala's very beautiful Appleton Museum. Italian marble, a master tour guide, and unique art were all enjoyed. The Dachshund pictured was created from recycled objects. Marilyn Crosby and Pat Toskes arranged the tour and lunch at a popular Chinese restaurant. The return trip was handled safely amid rain, wind, and tornado warnings. Robbin, an excellent driver, got us home on time!

-Margarete Ruth



Rhonda Smith's Orchids

Vanda orchids are air plants with long hanging roots that generally do not get trimmed, so they must be hung high. The trellis is a perfect place because they love the warm sun and prefer the outside air. Rhonda Smith, pictured here, has found the perfect spot to display her collection. Residents are encouraged to visit the garden area and tour the greenhouse, which holds the results of hard-working hobbyists who love their bromeliads, bonsais, orchids, and many other plants. However, please do not touch the plants. Just use their beauty as a gift for your eyes.

- Don Smith and Beth Paul, content; Don Smith, photo



Eleven residents joined driver Myra Jones on the bus for a few Saturday morning hours at Santa Fe College admiring artwork and enjoying perfect Spring weather.

-Sandy Furches



Ode to Building Two Atrium

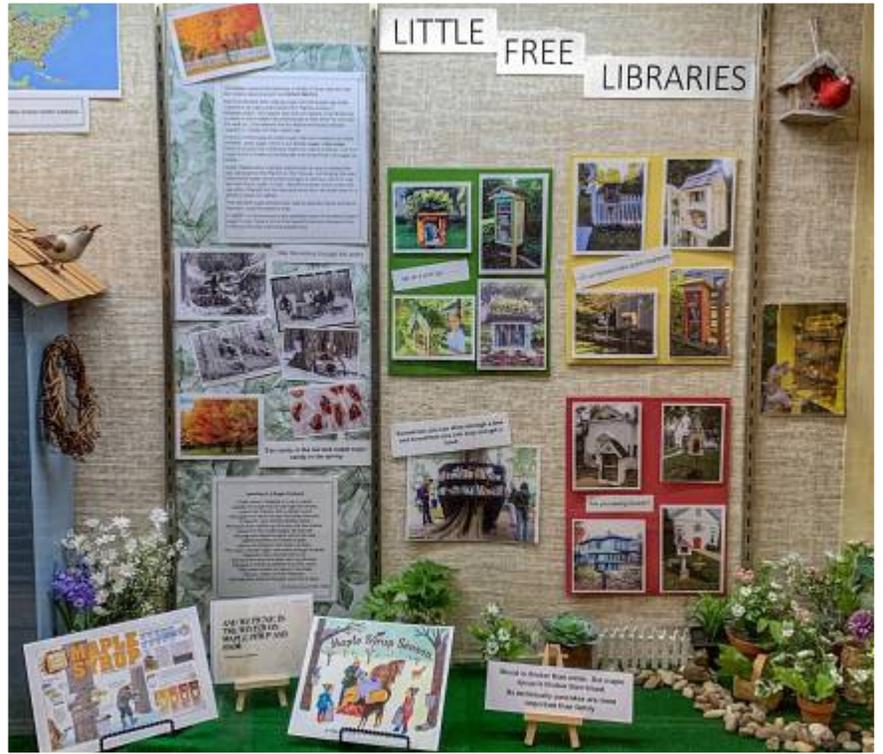
Orange blossoms scent the air. Yellow pollen's everywhere! Maybe a cute CURRANT observation!

-Barbara Dockery, content; John Furches, photo

Who Doesn't Like Maple Syrup?

Log Cabin and Aunt Jemima didn't invent it. To get the real story, visit the Library Display featuring the history of the sugar maple tree. Native Americans were making sugar from the sweet sap of the sugar maple tree before the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts. One legend says that an Iroquois chief threw his tomahawk into a sugar maple, and when he removed the weapon, the sap began to flow. Thinking that the ax slashing harmed the trees, the Pilgrims changed to drilling a half inch hole into the tree, inserting a tube, and collecting the sap. This valuable sugar product continues to provide sweet commodity profits. The sugar maple tree's beautiful autumn colors are a bonus to leaf peepers visiting the area—or visit the display case, on the Lower Level, near the pool table. A variety of trees will be featured over the next few months. Ann Elnicki and Beth Paul will provide printed information and creative displays. Keep your hiking boots handy.

-Barbara Dockery, content;
Bill Castine, photo



Why Does the Easter Bunny Bring Eggs?

Since rabbits are mammals (and give birth to live young), it might seem like a case of mistaken biology to say the Easter Bunny lays eggs on the holiday. Adding another miracle to the festivities, perhaps? The answer may lie in combining iconography. Eggs, just like the rabbit, have long been considered an ancient symbol of fertility, rebirth and new life, all associated with the springtime celebration of Easter!

From a Christian perspective, Easter eggs represent Jesus' resurrection and his emergence from the tomb. According to History.com, the tradition of [decorating eggs](#) for Easter may date back to the 13th century, when eggs were traditionally considered a forbidden food during [the Lent season](#). That's why people decorated them as the fasting period came to an end, to make eating them an even more celebratory way to feast on Easter Sunday.

Of course, if you want to keep your Easter celebrations copacetic with the grandkids' science classes, you can always tell them the bunny just brings the eggs and leaves the laying to the chickens.

-Margarete Ruth, content; file photo



Peter Cottontail stopped by the Therapy Room to hand out Easter eggs.

-Bonnie Umphreys



Amaryllis

- Walter Wynn

Nancy Perry Turns 60 Again!

What a bash! Oak Hammock showed up in force—75 of us celebrated with the local band Hard Luck Society playing their music. Cowboyz Bar-B-Q and Catering fed us. Another 73 residents helped support the evening with their donations, and the success story amounted to over \$178,000 benefiting Take Stock in Children.

An additional 36 at-risk students will be offered a college education because of Oak Hammock residents. This totals 215 students being assisted because of Oak Hammock’s generosity. The state of Florida legislature will now match that donation bringing the total to almost \$357,000.

Santa Fe College president Paul Brodie was the keynote speaker. Additional speakers were a TSIC alumna named teacher of the year at her school, TSIC Executive Director Tia Brock-Paul, and Sandy Ahmadi, Kevin’s wife, who mentors a 10th grade student and offered practical tips on how to be a mentor.

Residents Phil Morrison, Ray Goldwire, and Steve Gird all mentor TSIC students and are happy to share their experiences with you. A total of 19 residents have mentored students in the past few years. Contact Tia Brock-Paul brocktt@gm.sbac.edu or visit edfoundationac.org to volunteer or donate. Thank you, Nancy, for celebrating your birthday in such a generous manner.

-Beth Paul, content; Kevin Ahmadi, photo



Monarch caterpillar from Patsy Nelms’s garden plot.

– Janice Malkoff

Great Grandparents!

On April 8, 2024, Lori and Ron Hoopes met their FIRST great-grandchild, Morgan Grace Hoopes, at her home in Maudsville, near Morgantown, WV. She was born 3 weeks early on February 12, weighed 7 pounds, and already knows to look at the camera!

*-Lori Hoopes, content;
Zac Hoopes, photo*



Palm Crosses

In a little over an hour, the six of us made over 100 palm crosses for the Protestant Weekly Chapel and to share with our Catholic friends at their Weekly Mass. A blessing was said, from afar, by our Catholic deacon son, Hal, in Denver CO.

- Anne Goldwire, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Scholarship Fund Quarterly Financial Report March 31, 2023

Balance as of Dec 31, 2024	\$ 145,055.55
Donations received in Jan 2024	\$ 3,595.00
Scholarships awarded in Jan	\$ -
<i>Balance Jan 31</i>	<i>\$ 148,650.55</i>
Donations received in Feb 2024	\$ 12,550.06
Scholarships awarded in Feb	\$ 2,556.00
<i>Balance Feb 29</i>	<i>\$ 158,644.61</i>
Donations received in Mar 2024	\$ 16,654.70
Scholarships awarded in Mar	\$ -
Balance March 31, 2024	\$ 175,299.31

Memorial Donations: Katherine and John Lowe; Cecelia Caton; Susan Young; Ken Berns; Kay Koons

Honorary Donations: Pat Liston

- Lori Fishel

Sad News from Tampa

You may recall that, in 2016, University Village CCRC in Tampa went bankrupt. It had been illegally taken over by a dishonest operator who failed to pay bills and was draining its reserves. Due to a weakness in the law, the bankruptcy prevented Florida's Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) from taking control.

The community was eventually taken over by another operator and upgraded but the debt load has proven to be too much. On April 5, the new operator announced that it has gone bankrupt and the community will close. The Florida OIR had staff on site at the announcement. All residents have received options to move to other CCRCs and, where possible, transfer most provisions of their current contracts. FLICRA's staff is reviewing the materials that the residents were given to examine their opportunities and rights. Fortunately, such unlawful conduct is rare and the law is stronger now. And fortunately for us, we have honest, competent ownership and management, with good communication about finances and plans.

-Tom Gire



Needlers Meet Need

A heartfelt thank you goes to the group of Needlers here who took the time to make clothing protectors for our residents in Ashton Place

- Brittany Matus-Ray, AL Administrator, content; Paulette Gird, photo



Newest Oak Hammock Quilter is Pat and Fred Harden's great-grandson Levi. He made his first quilt for his dog Daisy while visiting.

- Paulette Gird





Publix Grocery Shopping days are Mondays at 11 am and Thursdays at 1:30 pm. Oak Hammock residents sign up in the Transportation Book for the bus trip to Publix. Kenneth Curry and Justin Walter are our friendly and helpful bus drivers. They help us unload our heavily filled bags on to our private carts for us to bring the food to our individual apartments. They are very kind, sensitive, and gentle with us. We have wonderful Oak Hammock employees. Not many men have this kind of patience! We all love both and are very happy and thankful to have this great shopping experience. *- Margarete Ruth, content; Pat Harden, photo*

The Benevolent Fund

A total of \$482 was received in memory of Nancy Horowitz and in honor of Pat Liston. *- Johnathon Mann*



The Oak Leaf Archives



<https://infoh.us/oak-leaf-issue-index-2004-2023/>

The Man Behind the Sunglasses

If you've wondered about Dan Flok's personal story, he recently offered an interview following an enjoyable hour of his music in the Oak Room. A native of Hellertown, PA, he retired from the Xerox industry after a 30-year career. In 1978, he met the love of his life in junior high school and they married 10 years later. Moving to Gainesville 4 years ago, she is employed at the Cancer Center. Dan pursues his music sharing from his over 900 songs from every era 5 to 6 days weekly, sometimes twice daily from Jacksonville to Tampa, mostly in the Ocala area and The Villages.

Dan has held a guitar since 1978 when he was 13. By 1983 he was in the Johnny Cass Band, a 6-piece show band. He played with them for 7 years. He had his own band, The Members, in PA for 30 years. About 3 years ago Dan first performed in the HP at Oak Hammock thanks to Chrissy Smoak. Katherine Osman learned of him and has regularly scheduled him for our enjoyment since.

Always on the road, Dan no longer has pets after their 2 golden retrievers died. He is into Martial Arts, works out daily, and enjoys fishing on the west coast of FL. When asked why he always performs in sunglasses, he says "So I can see. They're prescription and I figure if Elvis could wear them, I can too!" Follow Dan at www.facebook.com/dan.flok *-Sandy Furches*



Contact new resident Sandy Halsey (913) 558-4169 or sandyhalsey@yahoo.com if you are interested in playing croquet for fun at Oak Hammock. No white outfits required! Sandy has the equipment; she needs eight to kick off this new venture. Join the fun! *-Sandy Furches*

Donate to ReRun Sneakers

Do you have old sneakers that are still serviceable? Bill and Deborah Rossi's grandchildren, Nicholas and Isabella, are collecting sneakers for ReRun Sneakers at Oak Hall School. Since 2012, ReRun has collected thousands of gently used sneakers and distributed them to underprivileged aspiring athletes throughout the world.

Please place your pre-loved sneakers in the grey box in the fitness center. ReRun and our grandchildren say thank you!

-Deborah Rossi, content; Stephanie Rossi, photo





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Katherine Osman, Layout

Events

Kathy Subak

A Wonderful Season of the Year

It's called "blackberry winter." Never heard of it? Wikipedia shares "this is a colloquial expression used in the South referring to a cold snap that often occurs in late spring when the blackberries are in bloom." A great time to enjoy cool weather, no humidity, no mosquitos. The real reward comes in July: blackberries for a warm cobbler. Topped with vanilla ice cream, of course.

-Barbara Dockery, content; Tom Palmer, FL Native Plant Society, photo



2024 Residents' Council (updated)

President: Donna Johnson johnsodc01@gmail.com

Vice President: Nancy Dickson nancyjackathens@hotmail.com

Secretary: Nancy Wood nancywood.oh@gmail.com

Assisted Living Representative: Fred Harden gatorfred552@aol.com

Committee	Meeting Time	Chairperson	E-Mail
Active Lifestyle	1 st Monday 11:00 am	Marilyn Crosby	mcrosby908@aol.com
Charitable Giving	1 st Tuesday 3:00 pm	Mike Plaut	smplaut@gmail.com
Food & Nutrition Services	1 st Friday 10:00 am	Steve Gird	stevegird097@gmail.com
Growth & Renovation	2 nd Wednesday 3:15 pm	Martha Rader	martharader1@gmail.com
Landscape & Grounds	2 nd Thursday 10:00 am	Bob Virnstein	seagrass3@gmail.com
Health & Wellbeing	3 rd Tuesday 3:30 pm	Ellyn Ahlstrom	e.ahlstrom@me.com
Buildings & Infrastructure	3 rd Wednesday 1:30 pm	Bob Brown	robertbaldwinbrown@gmail.com
Finance & Stewardship	3 rd Thursday 1:30 pm	Pat Kelley	pkelley@khsatty.com
Technology & Communication Services	3 rd Friday 10:00 am	Bill Zegel	wzege@gmail.com

The Council meets at 10:00 am on the second Friday of each month in the Oak Room and via Zoom. Committees meet using a variety of formats and locations. Please contact the Committee chair for specifics.