

The Season's Best Stairway!

The Oak Hammock Singers and their fellow residents filled the Upper and Lower Commons on December 10, together making a heartfelt "joyful noise" during Christmas On The Stairs, a beloved Oak Hammock annual tradition.

- Jan Havre, content;
Bill Castine, Bill Zegel,
photos

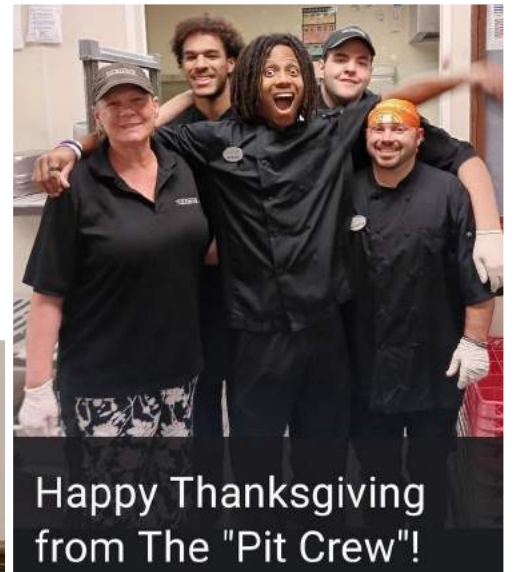


Isn't it Grand?

Continuing a years-long tradition, Dining Services again spread an extensive grand buffet in celebration of Thanksgiving Day. It was served in the Grille, which incidentally afforded a sneak preview of renovations prior to its reopening in early January.

Thanks to the "Pit Crew" in the kitchen, probably no one left the buffet hungry.

- Bill Castine, content; Bill Castine, Rose Crowder, photos



Happy Thanksgiving
from The "Pit Crew"!



Bill Griffin, Director of Plant Operations

I had the good fortune to meet our new Director of Plant Operations, Bill Griffin, on the day of the December staff party when he was able to comment that one third of his time at Oak Hammock had been at a party. I assured him that although we liked to party at Oak Hammock, we would also find enough challenges to keep him engaged.

Bill comes to us with a varied background both in plant operations and in education. His most recent position was at the University of Florida where for the last several years he supervised maintenance teams working on technical, plumbing, and fire alarm issues. His undergraduate degree was in mathematics and his graduate degree in Education which led him to work at Oak Grove Academy with young men who required a supportive educational program. Bill has also served in the Navy working on nuclear submarines. He and his wife have eight children between them but only one twelve-year-old at home, although several are nearby, including two working at Baby Gator. Additionally, the current count is two grandchildren.

In his spare time, Bill works on his eight-acre farm and enjoys working with his hands including on a vintage sailboat. Be certain to attend one of the RC meetings at which the Plant Operations Director usually appears so that you have a chance to introduce yourself.

- Karen Miller



Welcome New Staff Member, Andrew Ragsdale

Andrew Ragsdale, who described himself as a good friend of Nickie Doria for the last fifteen years, worked with her in corporate communications and seems to be very pleased to be again with her on the same team. He grew up in Melbourne and has had experience in marketing, development and community relations as well as experience as a teacher. He and his wife, who is an Emergency Room nurse, have one child who is a senior in high school and another who is a junior at Florida State. He just started at Oak Hammock recently and is busy learning all about senior living and those who live and work here. He is assisting the other staff in marketing with all phases of office administration. He extended an invitation to come in to his office and say "hello" and I encourage you to welcome him to Oak Hammock.



- Karen Miller



Abigail Aspell, HP Activities

Congratulations to our December, 2023, Master's graduate, Abigail Aspell, who earned her graduate degree from the University of Florida in Arts in Medicine. Abigail, whose family is in the St. Pete area, works in the Health Pavilion in the Activities Department, primarily in Skilled Nursing. She has been working at Oak Hammock while finishing her graduate studies and intends to stay until at least the summer, when her lease expires, although after meeting her I am confident we hope that she will decide to stay long term. In addition to art workshops, which she enjoys leading, she has a background in theater. She has just been cast in the Acrosstown Repertory's production of Little Women, which will be performed in January (look for a bus on the January calendar). Abby's eyes and smile light up when she talks about her interaction with residents and their families. If you are visiting in the health pavilion, be certain to introduce yourself to Abby.

- Karen Miller

New Energy in the Fitness Center

We are fortunate to have Stacey Hogan as our Health & Wellness Coordinator. She has fitness business knowledge, creative outreach ideas, and genuine concern for the welfare of all Oak Hammock residents.

Stacey moved to High Springs from South Florida, where she owned her own fitness business from 2014 until she had to shut it down in March of 2020 due to COVID and the doubling of the rent in her leased space. She says that she really loves the Gainesville area and considers it home now.

In March, 2023, she started working part time as a fitness class instructor and exercise equipment-use monitor at Oak Hammock. In August 2023, she became the Health & Wellness Coordinator reporting to Katherine Osman, Director of Community Services. Katherine says she loves what Stacey is doing. She sees Stacey as a self-starter with fitness expertise who has taken "ownership" of the fitness program, approaching her role with imagination, great enthusiasm and dedication. Stacey chose to work at Oak Hammock because she felt this was a perfect fit. She considers herself to be a "people person" and found Oak Hammock to be very welcoming, with everyone smiling and saying hello, which was vastly different from South Florida.

If you have not been to the fitness center lately, you should come meet Stacey Hogan and see how she and her staff can help you improve the physical quality of your life and become "younger next year" and "age backwards." Stacey can be found in the fitness center, but she is also engaged in working to help residents in Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing. She also can relate to those of us with physical limitations



Some of the Fitness Center staff from left to right: Maddy Gubbini (UF intern), Jada Gent (GETT Program intern), Sarah Abulathou (UF intern), Stacey Hogan (Health & Wellness Coordinator), Sophia Flood (Yoga instructor)

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

that may tend to impede our mobility or limit our activities. She had a serious medical challenge that required significant abdominal surgery, including 187 stitches. Recovery took her three months of diligent effort, doing a little more every day, with drive and determination. She says that “cannot” is not in her vocabulary. She believes that every resident at Oak Hammock is capable of exercising and can achieve anything to which they put their mind.

Hank and Mary Wake, 10-year residents at Oak Hammock, echo this idea: “When we considered Oak Hammock as a future home, we were happy to find a working Fitness Center. We had great intentions but sadly neither of us could be called “gym people.” However, in recent months we have been greatly encouraged by Stacey and her staff. Stacey carefully reviewed the exercises we had been doing and decided to change things up. These changes have allowed us to increase the various weights we are using while experimenting with different machines. For the first time in years, we are in the Fitness Center 5 days a week. Most importantly we consider these visits essential. The watchful eye of the staff, their humor, and their genuine concern for our welfare keep us coming back.”

- Neill Hollenshead

Employee Engagement Bake Sale

What a “sweet” Monday! Ten staff, staff family, and resident bakers provided the tasty treats while residents and staff shopped. Some purchased for gifts to the Health Pavilion or other neighbors. Others purchased for family traveling during the holidays. Some satisfied their sweet tooth. This joint effort raised \$431.00 for the employee engagement fund.

The employee engagement committee includes Human Resources and a member from each department. Their mission is to work together planning “good stuff” for Oak Hammock’s valued employees. This includes luncheons, holiday celebrations, and appreciation week events. Thanks to all for your support.

- Sandy Furches



Christmas Tree and Circus Train

Come visit our tree in the 1st floor lobby of building 1 where a very special train is running around the base. The train, a replica of the Barnum and Bailey circus train, is a loan from resident Bob Blood (in photo at left) Bob’s father worked as the Chief Superintendent for the circus “cook house” from 1925 until his death many years later. Bob followed in his father’s footsteps when he was a young man, waiting tables and performing other duties associated with the circus “cook house.” Bob’s parents met in Miami while the circus was there. From the time Bob was 3 years old until he went off to college, he and his mother met the train at its various stops.

Bob has had the train you see here for about 15 years. Bob’s wife, Bunny, spotted the train as they were window shopping in Orlando and insisted that Bob buy this replica of the cars that made up the circus train. The original circus train had four sections and when they were all joined together it stretched for about a mile.

I’m sure many of us can remember back when we were children and having a special trip to town to watch the train pull in or getting caught behind a lowered crossing guard as the train pulled slowly through town.

- Nancy Dickson

RINGLING
BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY

Behind the Scenes

During the week after Thanksgiving, Oak Hammock suddenly shines with sparkling lights, festive decorations, and a 12-foot Christmas tree center stage in the lower commons lobby. The truth behind the scenes is an organized and efficient system that has been in place for the last 13 years thanks to Bob and Deanne Taylor. Faithful teams of resident volunteers work under the leadership of the Taylors. Oak Hammock is transformed for the holidays with the invaluable support of housekeeping and maintenance staff.

The Taylors are passing the baton to new leadership for 2024. It is time for us to give Bob and Deanne a shout out for their 13 years of effective leadership and faithful service to our community. As Deanne placed the special bird's nest and golden eggs ornament on the front of the tree this year, she assured us they "plan to continue helping to decorate the tree for as many years as we are able." Heartfelt thanks to you, Bob and Deanne. - *Sandy Furches*

At right, Maintenance staff placing top two sections on the 12' tree after volunteers have them decorated. Below left, the Taylors beside the top of the 12" tree. Below right, Bob giving instructions to the tree decorating volunteers.



Oak Hammock's Christmas Train Tradition

These are the people who have helped Jerry Kirkpatrick set up the much-admired electric train for all of us big and small children to enjoy during the Christmas Holidays. From left to right are Ralph Smith, the train engineer, his wife Loni, the artist who painted the wonderful Winter backdrop scene, and Jerry Kirkpatrick, the main engineer and organizing master to make it all happen.

- *Margarete Ruth*



The Art League at Oak Hammock

Doodles, pen & ink, watercolors, oil, collages—all art by Mary Sue Koepfel—will be featured on the walls of the Oak Hammock art studio through December - January. Stop by to visit and enjoy the variety of Koepfel's art. Some of her amazing artwork is hanging behind the watercolorists at right.

There will be no art program this month, but we look forward to our January 23rd program with a guest speaker from the Appleton Museum. Future art classes and workshops feature a talented lineup of instructors for 2024:

- Resident Gloria Nelson will be offering Beginning Watercolor classes during the month of January.
- On February 3rd we're fortunate to have Pamela Kostmayer from Key West who will be teaching an all-day workshop in collage. This should be a fun one and she will provide all the materials to complete a painting.
- On March 2nd, Jenna Weston will be back teaching a drawing class.
- Linda McVay will be offering an acrylic workshop on April 6.



Lionel Sanchez and students at his watercolor class

For any questions regarding the upcoming workshops or classes, contact Susan Bankston.

See it soon! The current Art Gallery Show will come down on January 6. The new exhibit will showcase 9 artists who were invited to exhibit up to 10 works each.

- Nancy Dickson

If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint.” – Edward Hopper

Sounds of the Season

Celebrating 75 years, the UF School of Music shook the rafters at the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts with their presentation of *Rejoice and Be Merry: A Diamond Jubilee*. Dr. Will Kesling, Conductor (shown at right), set a tone of warmth, celebration, and joy for the festive event. Three hundred performers participated including The University Concert Choir, Gainesville Master Chorale, and the University Symphony Orchestra. They flawlessly shared a variety of seasonal selections from classics to calypso.

Highlights included a “musicological journey” through “The Twelve Days of Christmas” which began with a 6th century Gregorian chant and traveled through the 15th through 19th centuries in France, Italy, Germany, Austria, and Russia ending with a USA favorite. The evening also included world premiere of a contemporary work by students Axel Castro and David Eaton, “Winter Lights” which is a reimagining of “Carol of the Bells” and “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen.” After “Little Drummer Boy” was enhanced by the Gator Marching Band Drumline, the evening closed with the sound of peace in “Shalom.”

Sounds of the Season pre-concert began with 5 selections by the University Women’s Chorale, Dr. James D. Cain, Conductor. Two buses of Oak Hammock residents enjoyed the spectacular evening. This year’s performance and past performances are on WUFT’s YouTube channel: <https://tinyurl.com/SoundsOfTheSeason2024>.

- Sandy Furches



Caring and Sharing Learning Center

Forty-one Caring and Sharing Learning Center Eagles entertained in the Oak Room. These musical third graders first took the audience on a bear hunt and then sang holiday songs including traditional Christmas Carols, a Kwanzaa celebration song, and a Hanukkah festival song. Their rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" came to life with their enthusiasm and the front row of children demonstrating the 12 gifts. Two student narrators led the way through the program, which included a student solo and concluded with a solo by one of their teachers.

- Sandy Furches



Third Grade Joy

Residents who waited patiently for the arrival of St. Patrick's school bus with cheerful third grade singers were not disappointed! Some children were on the stairs, some in front of the trains, all sharing their seasonal joy in song. Christmas sweaters, Santa hats, elf ears, and even Rudolph were among them. Residents enjoyed from the upper commons and lower commons lobbies. Thank you, third graders, for the energetic delivery of seasonal cheer!

- Sandy Furches



Gifts of Christmas Past

Here's a memory from my childhood: Christmas had come and gone, and it was our first day back at school during my senior year. My friend Danny, who worked at our local ski shop, asked me how I liked my new skis. And this is where the story gets interesting. That first day back at school just happened to be my birthday, and I just happened NOT to receive skis for Christmas. Poor Danny was mortified that he had spilled the proverbial beans.

That evening my parents set up an elaborate scavenger hunt for me to search for my birthday present. I mean, who can wrap a pair of skis? I dutifully scoured the house for the mysterious gift, finally finding my way down into our half-finished basement where those shiny new skis were propped up behind a furnace. All my acting skills were put into play as I feigned total surprise and gratitude, and my parents never knew that their secret had been spoiled. My father passed away quite unexpectedly soon after, so we never had a chance to try out those skis together, but I was always grateful for that gift that wasn't for Christmas

- Beth Paul



What animal or bird built this nest in the Winged Elm outside a third floor window in building one?

- Jan Lowenthal

First Night of Chanukah

December 7th was the first night of Chanukah, a Jewish holiday, also called the Feast of Lights, which commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by Maccabees. The lamps lit for the rededication contained only enough oil for one night but, according to legend, the lamps miraculously remained lit for eight days, which is why, to this day, Jewish people light an eight-candle candelabra, called a menorah, each night, beginning with one candle on the first night, and ending with eight candles on the final night. Because of the importance of the oil, foods eaten on Chanukah are often fried in oil. Typical foods

of Chanukah include potato pancakes, called latkes, and jelly doughnuts, both of which were available in the dining room at Oak Hammock on the first night of Chanukah this year. Children often play a game by spinning a four-sided top called a dreidel, for which they can earn small rewards. The name of the holiday in English is spelled in various ways, such as Chanukah or Hanukkah and this can be confusing to some people. This is because the English name for the holiday is simply a transliteration of the Hebrew word

חנוכה

– Mike Plaut, content; Judy Plaut, photos



Southwest United Methodist Church Choir

“Pay attention; there is something in the air.” On a Saturday, residents were treated to an original Christmas musical, “But God Stepped in.” Performed by the choir of the Southwest United Methodist Church, our closest church neighbor, the piece was written, directed and accompanied by Sara Nussel, and performed by twelve singers, a clarinet player, and a narrator.

Soloists and ensembles sang traditional songs such as “Adeste Fideles” and “The First Noel,” as well as a catchy “Hale Hale Halelooojah” (spelling is my own, based on sound)! To quote from this song, “the paradise we share, the greening of all life is dying in our care, the covenants we made are rendered null and void.” Expressing a strong message, the cantata continued with an expression of hope and concluded with the audience standing and being invited to sing “Oh Come All Ye Faithful.”

The conductor announced that the performance would be repeated at the ten o’clock service at the church the following Sunday. Everyone was invited to attend.

– Tallulah Brown, content; Patsy Nelms, photo



Recycled Riches

Recycled Riches is still having regular sales. We thank everyone who participates by donating, working, or shopping. Please call us first when you want to donate items. If you have a special need for something, call Doris Greene and she will put you on our Wish List. When she sees something you might like, she will call you. Don’t forget that we have a whole lot of medical equipment available for loan or purchase.

When you have an item to donate, please make sure it is in good condition and, if it has a plug or needs batteries, it should work.

At our last meeting, we voted to fund the new name tags for all our residents. We hope you will enjoy having name tags that you can read.

Our next meeting is Monday, January 29, at 11 a.m., in the Acorn Room. We do not meet in December. I hope to see you there. Everyone is welcome.

– Valerie Griffith



School of Music Ambassadors Perform Carols

The UF School of Music Ambassadors are a select group of students who have demonstrated outstanding academic success and student leadership. Often, they are not only music majors, but also major in other areas, such as pre-med. You can learn more about them at: <https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/music/ambassadors/welcome/>. On Saturday, December 16, Santa Walter Wynn introduced Alex Kaufman, saxophone; Benjamin Vantoorernburg, piano; Kevin Donnelly, oboe; and James Crossman, piano. They performed several holiday favorites using very creative arrangements. They took requests and if they had not heard of a requested song, they found it on their smartphones and sight read not only accurately but often with improvisation added to give even more color to the experience. It was refreshing to have such wonderful talent and creativity to enhance this festive time.

- Mike Plaut, content; Walter Wynn, photo



A Singles Forum

A new interest group, The Singles Forum, met for the first time on December 12. Fifty people showed up for the evening meeting, answering the first question: Is there an interest and a need for such a group? Yes! The second question, what are the interests and priorities of the diverse group, some long experienced at being on their own, some single due to the loss of a spouse or partner, will be answered by the time of the next meeting. Those attending filled out a brief questionnaire ranking their concerns and interests.

June Girard, in the shock of the loss of her beloved Jerry after more than 70 years of marriage and facing a mountain of challenges that confront the newly widowed, decided to organize the forum. Her rationale: If I'm overwhelmed, others here are too. Let's get together and help each other, problem solve, maybe even have some fun.

The areas of interest explored, beyond the central one of just getting to know each other and socializing, include a contact list for singles, an improved buddy system, access to the health care system, an updated Good To Go booklet, transportation and ride sharing, and more. Personal safety while living alone was a big concern: our pendant system seems inadequate to assuage our fears of dealing with health and safety emergencies while living alone. Stuff happens!

The Singles Forum will meet again in the new year to share ideas, streamline goals, form networks and friendships. Stay tuned for updates.

- Kate Wilkinson, content; Patsy Nelms, photo

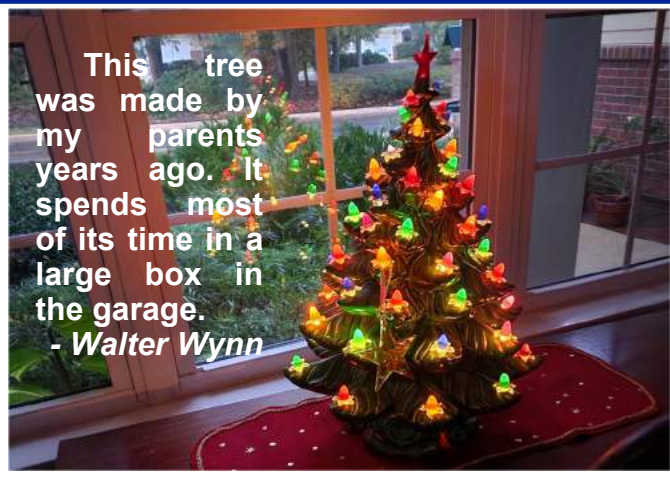


Above left: Linda Kallman, Mrs. Claus, Gloria Nelson, Santa, Rhonda Smith;
Above right: the decorated tree won by Donna Johnson and donated to the Oak Hammock Health Pavilion;
At left: Rita Fabal and Santa

Festival of Trees

Eleven Oak Hammock residents started off the 2023 holiday season at the Festival of Trees on November 30, helping to raise funds for Altrusa House and Camp Crystal. While enjoying appetizers, desserts, wine, and craft cocktails, they won numerous door prizes and one of the four amazing trees from the raffle. Donna Johnson won the Blue and Gold tree and donated it to Oak Hammock. The tree will reside in the Health Pavilion.

- Rhonda Smith



This tree was made by my parents years ago. It spends most of its time in a large box in the garage.
- Walter Wynn



Our talented bartender, Sarah, and the specialty drink of the week. Delicious!
- Bev Cone



Even the Grinch doesn't dampen the holiday spirit at Oak Hammock floor parties!
- Sandy Furches

By the Numbers December 1 Independent Living

	Total	Sold	Available
Houses	57	57	0
Apartments	212	211	1

Health Pavilion

	Total	Occupied	Available
Assisted	51	50	1
Memory	12	10	2
Skilled	73	65	7

- Andrew Davey and Ashley Davis-Meacham



FLiCRA News

FLiCRA is always working on our behalf. We hope that those who have not joined will rethink their reasons for not being a member and join us.

Our local chapter is having their annual meeting on February 27. We will also be electing 3 new members to the board. Watch for more news on the annual meeting.
- Mary Sanford

Handbell Concert

First Presbyterian Church brought their Carol Ringers and Jubilate Ringers to Oak Hammock for a wonderful concert on a recent Wednesday evening. Their tables of bells from tiny to quite large spanned the width of the Oak Room. From "Carol of the Bells" to "Good Christian Men, Rejoice," rich tones and joyful music were played by festively dressed bellringers.

The full audience had their turn with a sing along and some tried their hand at jingle bells and Tone Chimes. The evening included a demonstration of how handbells work. Many thanks to these dedicated musicians and their leaders, Mitch Rorick, Andrew Netardus, and Rebecca Ruescher.
- Sandy Furches



Klezmer Katz

As Hanukkah draws to a close, the Gainesville Klezmer Katz band entertained an appreciative Oak Hammock audience with an hour-long concert of upbeat music on Thursday night, December 14. “Klezmer” is a Yiddish word for the Eastern European dance and folk music played by Jews worldwide at weddings and many other celebrations.

Nine very talented musicians, including Oak Hammock’s own Keith Berg on drums and percussion, opened the concert with three Hanukkah favorites, “Hanukkah Miracle,” “I Had a Little Dreidel,” and “O Hanukkah.” The band then progressed to music of other genres—even two Latin beat numbers. The common theme of the evening was “infectious” music, and many in the audience were clapping hands, nodding heads, and tapping feet. At the urging of the band’s announcer, Gail Robinson and Dusty Davies led several others to the dance floor for a stirring hora (ring dance). The band concluded the concert with a rousing rendition of “Hava Nagila” (“Let Us Rejoice”), very appropriate for this time of year.

The Klezmer Katz has graced us with their performances several times in the past. We certainly hope they will return.

- Ron Hoopes, content; Patsy Nelms, photo



Oak Hammock Oaks

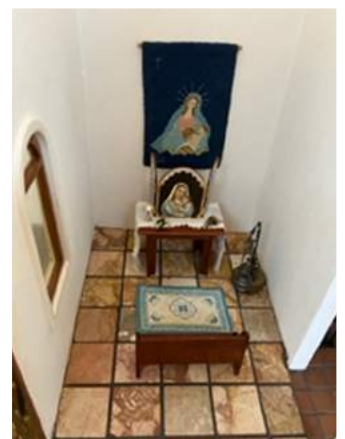
In the woods behind the beehives. They are very close to the “trail” cut for the city to occasionally spray for mosquitos. Rough trail but walkable with care.

- Karen Arola



Ann Meyers’s Open House

Most little girls dream of having a doll house. Ann Meyers built her own—an 18th Century Spanish Town House. It’s built around a courtyard, typical of Seville, Spain architecture. “I started it in 1984 and worked on it for twenty-five years, with time-off gaps for Hurricane Hugo and putting it in storage.” Being a metalsmith, artist, and world traveler all contributed to Ann’s ability and keen eye, to a duplicate detail in miniature form. Creating the 4600 clay tiles for the roof necessitated making them in three batches for firing. The house envisions the normal activities and possessions of the people living there. Ann’s doll house is big. When closed, it measures three feet wide x two feet deep and is two stories high. Opened, *the house becomes huge*—spreading to five feet wide by two feet deep! This beautiful creation is the dream house of “adult” little girls. Thank you, Ann, for the invitation to come to play.



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- Barbara Dockery

Cade Museum

About a dozen Oak Hammock residents accepted an invitation from the Cade Museum to enjoy the museum and be among the guests for a video shoot to be used in a future fund-raising campaign. We spent about an hour and a half viewing exhibits featuring the invention of Gatorade, Tom Petty, Leonardo da Vinci, and other scientific achievements. We were also treated to demonstrations of various unusual marvels. Time well spent for the curious among us.

- Bill Castine



New and Beautiful!

Our gorgeous new beauty shop and art in the HP.
- Barbara Dockery



Thank you!



Thanks to Catherine Morsink and her "pushers," folks from the Health Pavilion got to enjoy the David Attenborough nature series.
- Barbara Dockery

HOORAY!

The Grille will reopen starting at lunch on Wednesday, January 3, 2024!

Carols, Hymns, and Holiday Music

Question: What famous composer was terrified of Christmas? Answer: Noel Coward! And so began Gary Langford's fascinating program on the history of the world's most beloved carols. Gary, among many things, is a Professor Emeritus at UF, and in addition to a unique brand of humor, he has encyclopedic knowledge of all things musical.

Carols, he explained are the nearest thing we have to the folk songs of long ago through which common people communicated. Only members of the clergy were allowed to sing liturgical hymns.

For a mesmerizing hour, Gary presented examples of well-known Christmas music, illustrated by videos made by singing groups from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to Pentatonix and others in between.

All of the back stories were fascinating and too numerous to mention here. One of my favorites was "Silent Night, Holy Night," begun in 1847 as a poem written by a Christian poet, eventually set to music by a Jewish composer and in 1906 was the world's first radio broadcast. We're all looking forward to next year's special Christmas treat provided by this most entertaining gentleman!

- Jan Havre



Colorful Carolers

On National Go Caroling Day, December 20, Frosty the Snowman and Mrs. Claus, with the assistance of a special elf, led members of the Oak Hammock Singers in two groups through the Health Pavilion. Singing door to door, they delivered Christmas cheer. Jingle bell necklaces and Santa hats framed bright smiles. Cheerful voices mingled in the halls with looks of delight and applause. Spirits were warmed. Joy was abundant. "We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

- Sandy Furches



A Biltmore Estate Visit with Doris

The Travel Club’s presentation “Christmas at the Biltmore Estate” by Doris Greene entertained a large crowd in the Oak Room. The excellent photography and narrative created a perfect setting for everyone’s enjoyment of the beautiful Biltmore Estate—a spectacular Asheville, NC, attraction.

- Barbara Dockery



Holiday Music from The Bookends

Among all the other wonderful holiday musical offerings, the Bookends’ Christmas concert offered an eclectic mix of old, familiar carols, newer holiday songs, and an amazing performance from Kristen Drew of “O Holy Night.” “Santa Baby” and “The Marvelous Toy” brought smiles to our faces, familiar songs encouraged us to sing along, and the evening ended quietly with the beautiful refrain of “Silent Night” echoing through the room. We look forward to more music from the Bookends in the coming year.

- Nancy Dickson, content;
Patsy Nelms, photo



New Year’s Eve Dinner and Dancing with DJ Bobby Laredo

Sunday, December 31 on Sandwich Island Time
Dress your Decade!

(‘50s, ‘60s, ‘70s and beyond! RSVP at the Hostess Stand)

Around the World in 20 Years: The Soaring 20s!

Watch for details on how you can get involved with the exciting things we have planned for our 20th anniversary year in 2024.



The Benevolent Fund

The Benevolent fund received contributions of \$266 in memory of Susan Young, Susan Robell, Henry Pennypacker, Don Collier, and Anne Eiler.

- Johnathon Mann



Singers in the Spring!

The Singers are excited to be learning new songs in preparation for their annual Spring Concert. If you enjoy music and singing, there’s always a chair reserved for YOU—in the Oak Room—every Monday 3:30 – 5:00 p.m., starting Monday, January 15, 2024. Come join the fun of singing together.

- Barbara Dockery



Paper “Ornaments”

They tell Oak Hammock Santas the items that will put smiles on the faces of many Idylwild Elementary students, plus students and young adults in the GROW HUB Exceptional and Vo-tech programs. Happy shopping, Oak Hammock elves!

- Barbara Dockery



Oak Hammock is going a little more digital. Please check the monitor in the lobby for information on new residents move ins and other events!



Oak Hammock Drummer Boy

The "Little Drummer Boy" recently was brought to life by our own Oak Hammock drummer boy, Keith Berg. The multitasking Keith slipped away from his usual drum box during the weekly Health Pavilion sing along and returned in character with his snare drum as the drummer boy while residents sang about him. Great job, Keith, with the special surprise.

- Sandy Furches

UF Brass Band Holiday Concert

Thirty talented students in festive attire recently performed in the historic UF Auditorium. Great music began with "A Christmas Fanfare" and concluded with "A Glenn Miller Christmas." A Christmas carol sing-along concluded the joyful evening for seven Oak Hammock residents. For upcoming events, subscribe to the UF School of Music *Happenings* e-newsletter by emailing



music.happenings@arts.ufl.edu.

- Sandy Furches

Dan Flok x 2

On November 28 and again on December 19, guitarist and singer Dan Flok entertained with Christmas and year 'round favorites. A number of Oak Hammock residents were inspired to take to the dance floor!

- Bill Castine, Sandy Furches



Megan Sabella Music Academy Recital

On December 3, students performed on the violin or piano or sang in the Oak Room for an enthusiastic audience. The students all receive in-home lessons from Megan Sabella.

- Patsy Nelms



UF Flute Ensemble

Fifteen talented students from schools across the UF campus shared a "fabulous" flute concert for an appreciative audience on a recent Monday evening. Another perk of living at Oak Hammock is an after-dinner ride to campus for special treats like this.

- Sandy Furches





Editor: Patsy Nelms
Proofreader: Bill Castine

Oak Leaf Committee
 Tallulah Brown, Bill Castine,
 Nancy Dickson, Barbara Dockery,
 Sandy Furches, Jan Havre, Beth Paul

Additional Contributors (This Issue)
 Karen Arola, Tallulah Brown, Bev Cone,
 Andrew Davey, Ashley Davis-Meacham,
 Valerie Griffith, Neill Hollenshead, Ron Hoopes,
 Donna Johnson, Jan Lowenthal, Jonathon Mann,
 Karen Miller, Mike Plaut, Margarete Ruth,
 Mary Sanford, Rhonda Smith, Kate Wilkinson

Photographers
 George Arola, Karen Arola, Bill Castine,
 Bev Cone, Rose Crowder, Nancy Dickson,
 Barbara Dockery, Sandy Furches,
 Neill Hollenshead, Jan Lowenthal,
 Donna Johnson, Janice Malkoff, Patsy Nelms,
 Judy Plaut, Margarete Ruth, Rhonda Smith,
 Walter Wynn, Bill Zegel

Additional Proofreaders
 Beth Paul, Martha Rader

Graphics
 Katherine Osman, Layout

Events
 Kathy Subak

Chamber Players Holiday Concert

Oak Hammock's own Chamber Players filled the Oak Room with their music for the season. An appreciative audience of Independent Living and Health Pavilion residents enjoyed Conductor R. Gary Langford's humor and charm. Familiar selections from The Nutcracker, a traditional Jewish Hanukkah Medley, and seasonal carols were among the offerings. All learned that Jingle Bells was originally a Thanksgiving song! Who knew?! Keith Berg even shared his bells to create the atmosphere for Jingle Bells and Rudolph.

Do you play an instrument? Did you know you too can be part of the Oak Hammock Chamber Players? Start the new year in 2024 by bringing your instrument to the Acorn Room at 1 pm on Thursdays. For more information, contact Michael Plaut smplaut@gmail.com.

- Sandy Furches



2024 Residents' Council

President: Donna Johnson

Vice President: Nancy Dickson **Secretary:** Mike Plaut

Assisted Living Representative: Fred Harden

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

The Council meets at 10:00 a.m. 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.