

Volume 22, Issue 1

January 2025

A New Year, A New You



New Year's resolutions seem impossible to keep. It's like asking for world peace and not being civil to your neighbor. Simple things can bring more enjoyment to you and others. Smile, share, and celebrate the gift of this new year. Set realistic goals and timetables. No one's keeping score. It's your year, so give it a try – your way.

-Barbara Dockery, content; Barbara Dockery, Sandy Furches, and Mary Ann Parsons, photos

Bonnie & Fred Edie

New Philadelphia, Ohio, natives, Bonnie and Fred met through his uncle and her older sister who were dating. At age 17, Bonnie returned from her senior trip and married 19-year-old Fred that Sunday after dating 3 years.

Fred's BA is from Ohio University in Chemical Engineering. A job with NASA at a nuclear test reactor in Sandusky, OH, enabled him to complete his master's in engineering science. He was offered the identical fellowship from UF and Purdue. Bonnie encouraged their move south, and he earned his PhD at UF in Chemical Engineering. Fred's career with Amoco began in oil and gas research. He handled everything from marketing to planning and negotiating before retiring 25 years later at age 57.

Bonnie grew up with a strong work ethic and the influence of both grandmothers' farms. She enjoys the outdoors, nature, walking, garden-



ing, and bridge. Fred is quiet, enjoys alone time but also enjoys people. Reading, walking 3 miles each morning, and golfing are his interests. Together they enjoy Gator sports and frequent cruises, naming favorites as the Amazon; Iceland, Greenland and the British Isles; and the eastern coast of South America. Their only son, Rich, is in Jacksonville and is a PhD mathematician.

After living in several states, they wanted to retire in a college town. Gainesville won since Fred no longer had to attend classes! They built two homes in Gainesville and downsized 3 times before settling in with us at Oak Hammock. Welcome the Edies!

-Sandy Furches

Pam Jones-Morton and Barb Siebert

Pam and Barb appreciate their warm welcome to Oak Hammock. From Baltimore, MD, and Milan, OH, respectively, they have been friends and partners for 37 years, complementing each other's talents and earning numerous awards.

Pam's most cherished honor is the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission Award for saving 2 lives during a vehicle fire. The Governor of Ohio honored Barb for revolutionizing state government efficiency with her electronic purchasing program and training.

Barb's degree is in psychology and social work with a master's in public administration. Going above and



Barb and Pam

beyond requirements advanced her career. Barb excelled in mental health therapy, social work, Medicaid oversight, and information systems management.

Pam, with a PhD in education and human behavior, began as a physical education teacher and was the first female athletic director at The Escola American Rio de Janeiro. She also taught in Japan, Germany, and England. Pam was an assistant professor at WVU but moved over to the private sector to join Honda of America Manufacturing. During her 13 years with Honda, she worked on or developed programs focused on team development, culture and language, company culture, and many more. Pam also earned Honda a soft side patent for development of The Expatriate Associate Selection Process.

Retiring in 2004, Pam became a UF Advanced Florida Natu-

ralist. She was a volunteer naturalist for the Florida Park Service for 19 years, educating the public on butterflies, birds, dolphins, manatees, shells, beach life, and gopher turtles. Barb, retired since 2002, enjoys reading, computers, painting houses, and is a builder who keeps her nail gun handy. Both enjoy electric assist trikes for outdoor adventures. They've traveled internationally, often independently to "off-the-beaten-path" locations, and anticipate a month in Scotland soon.

Discovering Oak Hammock while on vacation in Gainesville, they joined the community November 26 after 20 years in the Ft. Myers/Estero area. Their Danish-inspired apartment features Pam's award-winning photography and pour paintings. They are eager to share their adventures. Welcome, Pam and Barb!

-Sandy Furches

Betsy Styron and Bob Fulton

Betsy and Bob moved to Oak Hammock from Gainesville in late 2024 and quickly settled into their new home. Their 15-year-old dog, Allison "Ally", warmly greeted me. They are lifelong cat and dog lovers, with Rottweilers "Rotties" being a favorite breed.

The couple met in Gainesville after establishing their careers—Bob as an ER physician and Betsy in special education. Betsy, born in Baltimore, earned her bachelor's degree from UF and specialized in Myers-Briggs testing, serving on MBTI and CAPT boards, which included extensive travel nationwide and beyond.

Bob, born in Baton Rouge, attended various schools in LA, NY, OH, CT, and TX. While attending the University of Houston, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served as a helicopter pilot. After his service, he earned a medical degree from Columbia University. Bob has two children: a patent attorney son in Los Angeles and a daughter in Gainesville.

Both are passionate art collectors, with pieces by Margaret R. Tolbert, a former Gainesville neighbor, who is known internationally. A painting by a Cuban artist dominates an entire wall in their home. Their outdoor interests include walking Ally and watching basketball, football, and golf. Bob has enjoyed exploring several of Florida's natural springs.

The "street" is lucky to have Betsy and Bob in their neighborhood.

-Mary Brenner



Susan and Will Shafer were the first of 4 couples who met and married at Oak Hammock. They are inspiring nonagenarian gym rats who find satisfaction and valued help in our Fitness Center.

Susan makes a habit of an early morning exercise schedule three times a week. "I feel much better and my walking and standing continue to improve. It sets the tone for my day." She

values the help and encouragement of staff. "It works for me. I plan to keep on keeping on."

Will adds, "Exercise is essential for aging gracefully. We are beating the average age odds by about 5 years longer in Independent Living." Will also practically points out that residents have paid for it, why not use it? The fitness center is open 24/7 and with everything under one roof, it's easy to get there. "Listen to your body and do what you



can with what you have. Being in good physical shape has aided my recovery from serious surgery and living with osteoarthritis. It is not too late to do something," advises Will. He has enjoyed the fitness center 6 days per week since 2006. "Workouts invigorate me. When you feel better and living is more enjoyable, why not?"

-Sandy Furches



Remember to register your pet!

Pick up a form at the concierge desk or email Katherine at kosman@oakhammock.org for a digital form.

Seems Like Only Yesterday

Kathy Subak sighs, slowly calculating—"it was eight and a half years ago that I began working at Oak Hammock as a part time receptionist, quickly matching faces and name badges to my memory." Having been an administrator at Saint Francis Catholic High School, Kathy's ability to work with people was natural. An undergrad degree in Business Administration and Management from Marywood College in Scranton preceded a master's degree in recreation from "that other school" north of Gainesville. Creativity is Kathy's middle name. The word "NO" is absent from her vocabulary. She always finds time, always new ideas! And after Oak Hammock? "I'm looking forward to some free "me" time, doing counted cross stitch, reading, enjoying nature." Kathy, it seems like only yesterday that you began putting up elevator announcements (while most of us were still sleeping) to help make our days special. Good luck and happiness always.

-Barbara Dockery, content; Sandy Furches, photos









Katherine Osman

Katherine began her Oak Hammock career in the small marketing office on 34th Street over 20 years ago. She has been an integral part of our existence since then and was even our daily lifeline during Covid when she turned on her home computer and broadcasted Oak Hammock news. Katherine, with her beautiful dimples, made us smile as we got to know her and her two dogs during those isolated times.

Although born in Michigan, Katherine grew up in Toronto only to return to Michigan in her senior year of high school. It should come as no surprise that multi-talented Katherine has a few degrees—Industrial Psychology as well as Economics from Michigan State University, and an MBA from Central Michigan University. Her extremely interesting life included a semester of college abroad in Sweden and living in Mexico for three years with her husband and two young children.

What's next on Katherine's list? As most of you know, she owns the DIY arts and craft store Pinspiration. She will continue to manage that, but she has some interesting new business plans which involve a mobile photography lab with a 3-D alternative to regular photos.

Here's hoping we don't lose touch with this special friend who has been such an important part of our lives at Oak Hammock. She has always been willing to share her enormous talents to enhance our lives, and she will be greatly missed.

-Beth Paul, content; Sandy Furches, photos (Note from Katherine: photos added under extreme duress.)









The Oak Leaf

Chrissy Smoak

Chrissy Smoak began her 18-year career at Oak Hammock as a part-time receptionist while a full-time manager at Albertsons. Though unfamiliar with CCRCs, her friendly, outgoing nature quickly made her a favorite among residents and a valuable team member. In 2007, she transitioned to full-time and in 2015,

joined the health pavilion (HP), gaining insight into another side of Oak Ham-

mock by working in medical records.

In 2021, Chrissy became HP Life Enrichment Manager, where her optimism and creativity shone during Covid. She introduced engaging activities like Wacky Wednesdays and Feel-Good Fridays, lifting residents' spirits during lockdowns. Staff paraded through the halls as residents sat in their doorways behind masks to enjoy. She also helped reunite families through plexiglass visits and found joy in small but meaningful gestures, like taking a resident to Steak 'n Shake for her birthday.

Chrissy eventually became HP Department Manager, embracing challenges with determination. Her efforts were recognized when the administrator told her she had found her niche. Now stepping into her new role as Oak Hammock Associate Director of Wellness and Life Enrichment, Chrissy looks forward to plan-



ning events, enhancing resident engagement, and fostering collaboration across departments and with community partners. She aims to bridge the gap between independent living and the health pavilion while maintaining her close connections with HP residents and staff.

Though change can be scary. Chrissy is grateful for the support expressed by the Oak Hammock community and is excited to make a difference in her new role. -Nancy Dickson, content; file photo



Assisted Living friends took a road trip to St. Augustine and enjoyed Columbia Restaurant for lunch. -Betty Kramer





Caring and Sharing Learning School children gave us music and joy!

-Sandy Furches

Double Reed Mouthpiece

(inserts into the

long tube called

the "bocal")

What's a Bassoon?

That is what UF music professor Shannon Lowe wondered when she was handed a large beat-up instrument case by her middle school music teacher who had no idea how to teach her to play it. But she did not want to play a more "ordinary" instrument like clarinet or flute, so she was offered the bassoon as an alternative.

Professor Lowe now has her doctorate in music from the State University of New York at Stony Brook after earning bachelor's and master's degrees from UF. She clearly loves music and teaching and has performed with many orchestras in the region.

Many of us spent a delightful hour with her in the Oak Room one evening in mid-December as Walter Wynn, who has known her since her adolescence, interviewed her about her professional development and about the bassoon itself, which she played for her audience, also discussing its construction, tuning, and making of the complex double reeds. She demonstrated the great range of the bassoon by playing the first few notes of Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring" and Tchaikovsky's "6th Symphony." She took many questions from the audience as well. Her bassoon even has a name, Johann!

Dr. Lowe's willingness to take time to share her experiences and enthusiasm with us is yet another example of how fortunate we are to have such a close relationship with the UF School of Music.

-Mike Plaut



Klezmer Katz Hanukkah Concert

The "Katz" gave enthusiastic OH residents an elegant song and instrumental presentation of festive, classical Jewish music and culture, plus some oldies! It was a fun beginning to the celebration of Hanukkah, which started December 25.

-Anne Barron, content; Bob Virnstein, photo

Christmas Eve Buffet

Consistent with Oak Hammock's longstanding tradition, the major holiday meal was offered on December 24. The variety of food was extensive, from soup to desserts (no nuts). Many residents and quite a few guests partook of the delightful assortment; the guests included numerous children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. As diners consumed their selected fare, there were lots of smiles and contented murmurs. What a nice way to approach the end of 2024!

-Bill Castine, content; Sandy Furches, photos









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The Benevolent Fund Total For December is: \$67,395.00

In Honor of: Pat Liston
In Memory of: Joe Bradham,
Joe Gilkey, Charles Sommerfield,
Carol Wershoven



The Oak Leaf Archives







Holiday Decorations

When decorating for the holidays, each year we try to change things up a bit. One year you'll admire something in the Fireplace Room, but it's gone the next. Later, it might be found in the library, with an entirely different look. Sometimes though, we'll hit upon a perfect spot, and it will remain that way for years. That's the fun of decorating.

Ever wonder where we get those beautiful decorations? Most of the time the answer is "from you." Sometimes they are found in the Recycled Riches drop off areas of both buildings. Other times they are contributed when Ann Andel puts out a call for holiday Items. Still other times, they are donated when residents downsize. We pull out what we can use and need, knowing that the items will eventually find their way back to a Recycled Riches sale or to our employees at a giveaway.

You can be assured that whatever journey your beloved item takes, it will be put to good use. Another bonus is that it just might bring you joy when you unexpectedly see it being used for all to enjoy.

-Peg Owens, content; John Furches, photo



The Dining Corner

Let's talk about nuts: Not the kind that drive you crazy, but the kind that can make you healthier. If there truly is a super food, this must be the star of the

show. Eating nuts has been linked to (not proven to prevent or cure) a long list of

health benefits including lower risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cognitive decline, and

some cancers.

Walnuts have been linked to lower levels of inflammatory markers linked to heart disease, thus may have some heart protecting ability.

Peanuts are not actually nuts but are legumes containing a nutrient trifecta of protein (25%), fat, and fiber that help control hunger. One ounce daily has been linked to a reduced risk of chronic diseases, low-

er blood lipids, and better weight management.

Almonds are about 20% protein. They contain a powerful mix of antioxidants linked with lower risks

of cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Eating almonds is linked to improved blood cholesterol levels, cardiovascular

health, weight maintenance, and blood glucose control for people

with type 2 diabetes.

Pistachios contain all nine essential amino acids. Eating pistachios has been linked with healthier blood glucose and cholesterol levels.

It is hard for me to imagine a healthier snack. If anyone would like a copy of the source article for this information, contact Steve Gird or Ted Wasserman.

-Steve Gird



I enjoyed my first Christmas at Oak Hammock. Keep being nice to each other!

-Buddy the Elf, content; Barbara Dockery, photo



Residents of SW 50th Boulevard are enjoying the new community paver walkway to the pond and commons, thanks to Erich Rossi and our landscape crew. It is a much safer route than the street!

-Nancy Perry, content; Phil Morrison, photo

A New Year – A New You!

Benjamin Franklin's proclamation "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" bode well for him. He planned his routine around waking up at five a.m. and asking himself, "What good shall I do today?" Worked for him. But what if you're not the wake-up-early-and-shine-before-the-sun-does kind of person? Two yoga options—chair yoga and slow vinyasa yoga—might be just what your doctor keeps telling you to do! Oak Hammock is fortunate to have two instructors, Sophia Flood and Hasha Venn.

Both have taken the 200-hour teacher training class through Yoga Alliance at Yoga Pod. Each continues to advance her personal training and mentoring. Sophia hopes to incorporate yoga into her future career as a Pediatric Physical Therapist; Hasha pursues teaching at several local yoga venues. They are eager to adapt the Oak Hammock classes to the physical abilities of the class participants. Together they echo the benefits of yoga: the constant reminder to relax the breath, allowing yourself to be "in the present moment"something much needed in this fast-paced society. Why not treat your body to a yoga class held on Tuesday and Friday afternoons? No special equipment is needed.

-Barbara Dockery, content: file photos





Holiday Adventures

Some residents enjoyed Oak Hammock over the holidays with friends and family while others found their adventures on the road. Neill and Carol Hollenshead experienced a "vigorous" small group Road Scholar birding trip to Costa Rica with an "excellent" guide and the opportunity to enjoy unique bird species and tropical plants. Pat Collier's adventure was closer to home. At age 89, Pat accompanied her daughter, Cindy, and son-in-law, Scott, with Scott's dad to Canyons Zip Lining & Adventure Park in Ocala. Pat went zip lining for

the first time and highly recommends it! "The harness was safe, the gorge lovely, and I didn't fear the step off or the swinging bridge. If I didn't have a heart attack there, I never will!" reflects Pat with enthusiasm and a smile.

> -Sandy Furches, content; Neill Hollenshead, Cindy Rawson, and file photos





New Year's Eve Dinner Dance

Along the lines of Jimmy Buffet's "It's Five O'clock Somewhere," Oak Hammockers found that "It's Midnight Somewhere" when they wanted to celebrate New Year's Eve before midnight local time. The "bewitching hour" occurred in the Sandwich Islands at 9:00 p.m. EST and in Rio de Janeiro at 10:00 p.m. EST, so we celebrated twice!

The chosen path leading to the main event was a delicious, filling buffet (thanks to the dining staff including Chris Rocks, Rose Crowder, and numerous servers), festive décor and party favors (thanks to Katherine Osman), "oldies" music for listening and dancing (thanks to deejay Bobby Laredo), and busy bartending (thanks to Adam Barrett). What a superb introduction to a happy, healthy 2025!

-Bill Castine, content;

Bill Castine and Katherine Osman, photos





Natural History Society Plans for 2025

The New Year brings a new logo for the Natural History Society (NHS), created by John Furches. Eye-catching, don't you think? You'll see it on future NHS flyers and announcements.

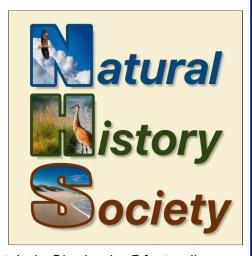
By now you've seen the flyers for January's Natural History Society program and trip to Silver Springs. A capacity group is hoping for good weather for a day at the park.

In February, there's a program on the Ocklawaha River and the Rodman Dam. That will be followed by boat trips on the Ocklawaha. Specific details about the trips will be in the Transportation book soon.

Later in 2025 are programs on bird research, freshwater turtles, dragonflies, and invertebrate fossils. Trips planned include the Prairie Creek bird banding station and the invertebrate paleontology lab at UF. These are currently tentative, so be sure to check the NHS display case.

The display case is updated monthly with program and trip information. It is located between the Business Center and the Multi-Purpose Room on

the Lower Level, near the mailboxes. If you have questions, please contact Judy Gire jmgire@fastmail.com
or Pat Harden jmgire@fastmail.com
-Judy Gire, content; John Furches, logo



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Oak Hammock Ball Drop

Precisely at 10:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve, the therapy ball that has been dropped from The Grove (Building 1) 4th floor atrium for 18 years by Bob Taylor made its way to the first floor. It bounced in front of awaiting spectators who sang "Auld Lang Syne" and then wisely retreated to be snoozing by the time the folks at Times Square rang in the new year at midnight. Wisdom comes with seniority!

-Sandy Furches



Employee Scholarship Fund Quarterly Financial Report

As of December 31, 2024

Balance September 30, 2024	\$176,504.59
Donations received in October	860.00
Scholarships awarded in October	(650.00)
Balance October 31	176,714.59
Donations received in November	14,073.75
Scholarships awarded in November	0.00
Balance November 30	190,788.34
Donations received in December	7,280.00
Scholarships awarded in December	(4,335.38)

Balance December 31, 2024 \$193,732.96

Memorial Donations

Bill Earley, Joe Gilkey, Richard Pettway, Bob Porter, Joni Simon, Sandra Smith, Brenda Thomas

Honor Donations

Pat Liston, Anne Margoluis, Katherine Osman, Kathy Subak

-Meghan Lloyd

Tesla Light and Music Show

The clock struck 9:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve and four resident Teslas performed their light and music show, with an encore, in front of the Commons lobby. Thank you to Michael Levy, Nelson Logan, Phil Parsons, and Pat Toskes for their energy, enthusiasm, and spirit! Check out the video by Dick Martin and Frank Townsend if you missed it! https://youtu.be/T50JS argo
-Sandy Furches





Art League January News

The 2025 Senior Seniors (Nonagenarians) Exhibit includes photographic portraits by Michael Levy of many Oak Hammock nonagenarian residents. The show will be up for 3 months. You may also view it here: https://youtu.be/6MQrfqBl3J4 The January 5 opening reception was quite a success.

The art league has an unusually full agenda in January complete with art classes, workshops, field trips, opening reception, and presentations! Those yet to come are:

- January 17, 22, and 24 Watercolor Classes with Gloria Nelson, for those with some experience
- January 25 Acrylic Workshop with Frank Barone, all levels
- January 27 Field trip to Melrose Bay
- January 28 Harn Museum presentation of new exhibit, "Silver Linings"

-Nancy Dickson, content; John Furches, photos



By the Numbers January 1 Independent Living

	Total	Sold	Available
Houses	57	56	1
Apartments	212	206	6

Health Pavilion

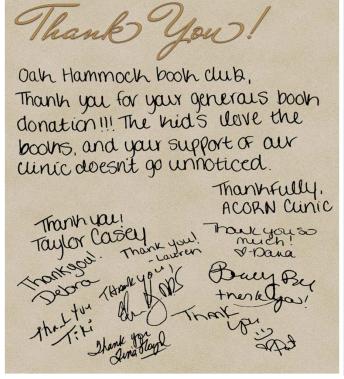
	Total	Occupied	Available
Assisted	52	52	0
Memory	12	12	0
Skilled	73	69	4

-Andrew Davey and Nadia Luna









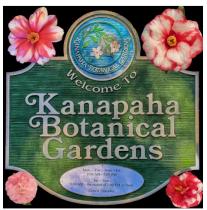


Violet Kolbek turned 102 and celebrated with friends including Kane Smoak. -Chrissy Smoak

Kanapaha Botanical Gardens

Mary Christman, 2025 Chair of our Active Lifestyle Committee, led us to the natural beauty of Kanapaha Botanical Gardens just 3 miles from Oak Hammock. On a crisp and sunny January afternoon we scattered to enjoy the 1½ miles of paved walkways through nature's beauty. As a bonus, we observed the judging of amazing camellia blossoms thanks to the American Camellia Society. Kanapaha's gardens encompass 68 acres adjacent to the 250-acre Lake Kanapaha. A peaceful retreat!

-Sandy Furches, content; John Furches, photos





Strength in Numbers

The Florida Life Care Residents Association was established in 1989 to serve as the advocate for residents on state public policy issues. FLiCRA now has over 12,000 members statewide. Our spokespersons in Tallahassee must compete for legislators' attention with well-funded lobbyists representing corporate interests. But FLiCRA is heard because it speaks for a large, well-educated, and politically aware constituency.

Here in Gainesville, the Oak Hammock FLiCRA chapter has had programs with our district's state legislators each of the last three years. These occasions enable them to see a CCRC firsthand. They are more prepared and receptive when our FLiC-RA spokespersons contact them on issues that matter to us.

Mark your calendars for our chapter's annual meeting on

February 25 at 10:00 a.m. Our speaker will be Neill Hollenshead, author of the excellent 20th Anniversary Oak Leaf series on the history of Oak Hammock.

-Tom Gire



A resident-led association to ensure quality of life in retirement communities





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Events

Kathy Subak



Welcome Back!

Before our extremely hot summer, 10 turtles lived at our OH pond. They disappeared for 5-6 months, then some returned two months ago. They liked to sun on many rocks but with the drought, they now share this one rock they can still climb.

-Jack Spencer

2025 Residents' Council & Committees

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