

First Date Memories



February is the month of cupids and hearts, so residents were given the opportunity to share their first date memories. Some could not remember that long ago! Others couldn't agree with their spouse on the details of their first date! Enjoy the 5 winning entries. *-Sandy Furches*

Sarah was tall, willowy, and blond. I was 14 and all nerves—nerves on the phone, nerves at her house, nerves in the back seat as Dad drove us out to Geauga Lake Amusement Park. What does a nervous, gangly kid do to soothe his nerves? I ate. First a hot dog. Then rides on the Ferris wheel and the Pendulum. Then cotton candy and a coke and another hot dog, after which the roller coaster seemed like a good idea until we dismounted. I realized I was going to lose my cookies. I did so, over behind a building. Sarah wasn't impressed. She didn't kiss me goodnight; and it was a while before I chanced a second date with anybody. **-Bob Palmer**

We were both in our 50's. Peter was recently widowed, and I had been divorced for many years. Peter knocked on my door at precisely 6 p.m., after a friend had set us up. I opened my door, and we were both totally blown away just looking into each other's eyes. I invited Peter into my tiny apartment for a drink before we went out to dinner. I intended to pay for myself, but something told me NOT to do that when the bill came. Peter paid for both our meals and would have been shocked if I had put money out for my dinner!! We married three months later and handled all nine children in our blended family. How's that for finding true love on a first date?? Thank you, Lord. *-Bev Knight Cone*



My first date with Patti was to a show (movie) in Gulfport, MS. My mother's friend suggested the date and my mother, who usually didn't approve of my dates, couldn't say no to her friend. Patti was a cute chick with curly red hair. She broke another date to go with me. We had a good time, and I liked being with her. She called me several days later to confess that she'd already seen that show but wanted to go out with me! She could fool you! *-Lonnie Thompson*

My first date was in the sixth grade to the Saturday afternoon movie in Tallahassee. They charged me full price because I was tall but only charged him half price. **-Patsy Flanagan Nelms**

Karen and I met on a blind date as high school seniors. We were in the back seat, and she was ignoring me. Someone explained a "Chinese fire drill." At the next red light, I opened the door and dragged her out and around the car, getting back in before the light turned green. She noticed me then! I was pleasantly surprised when she agreed to go out with me the following weekend. I showed up and met Karen's parents—with 2 stitches in my fat lip from a swim meet fight the previous day! Her parents were not too impressed, but Karen agreed to kiss me good night at the end of the evening. You can see why I did not want to lose her! *-Doug Merrey*



Welcome Karin Nelson

Karin moved here from nearby Winter Haven, but there is a long list of U.S. states where she previously lived. She spent her formative years in MI, CT, and IL. She attended the University of Colorado in Boulder where she earned a BA in mathematics and stayed to earn an MA in political science. She continued to move around (WI, PA, and back to WI) because of her involvement in her family's business, the manufacturing of airplane parts.

Karin and her former husband moved to Winter Haven where he worked for his father's business, and that is where they raised their son and daughter. Karin worked for H & R Block. Eventually she and three of her fellow employees opened their own tax and accounting business in Winter Haven where she worked until her move to Oak Hammock.

Karin's son lives and works in Gainesville and introduced her to Oak Hammock. Her daughter resides in Sarasota. She has three grandchildren; one is a student at UF and one is a student at FSU.

She is pictured with her collection of sculpted wooden sea birds. Karin also has displays of seashells and coastal watercolor art. She seems to have settled into her new apartment in The Grove (Building 1) and is happy to have made the move. We are happy to have her here.

-Beth Paul



Welcome John & Ruth Hicks

After each of their first marriages ended, neither one of this engaging couple planned to remarry. It was destiny! Having met in the dining hall at the Presbyterian church's Cedarkirk Camp on Florida's Alafia River, they were married on the grounds there 31 years ago.

John was a camp director for the Presbyterian Church serving in IA, WA, FL and GA for 35 years. John's gift was development. He consulted with camps needing revitalization. He was nationally known for his truthful and fruitful assessments. Of 165 Presbyterian camps across the U.S., John consulted with 65 of them on everything from buildings to staff. After retirement, John and Ruth worked part time for 7 years with the Presbyterian Board of Pensions providing 2-day pre-retirement workshops to church employees teaching financial, social, and spiritual readiness for retirement.

Ruth is a retired Presbyterian minister. Ordained at age 36, she has celebrated 34 years in ministry that began in Sarasota and continues beyond retirement. She has held a variety of ministry positions from greater Atlanta, the largest presbytery with 120 churches, to the fifth smallest presbytery in Boise with 15 churches where she served as clerk. She most enjoyed interim positions, relocating every 3-4 years. Ruth and John understand "long hours and spontaneous interruptions" yet experienced joy in their ministries. They are still connected with their 150-year-old church in downtown Boise.

John and Ruth enjoy 4 children, 6 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren. We thank their daughter-in-law, UF Bob Graham Center for Public Service Associate Director, who encouraged their move to Oak Hammock.

-Sandy Furches



Lynn Corcoran

Oak Hammock newcomer Lynn Corcoran was born and raised in San Francisco and earned a BA degree in American and European history at UC Berkeley. She had a career producing and directing documentaries for PBS, HBO, and educational distributors. She lived in Philadelphia, New York, and Buffalo before moving to Bradenton, FL, initially as a snowbird, and became a full-time resident in 2011. But hurricanes were never much fun. After deciding to relocate to a senior community in Florida, she found that Oak Hammock "checked all the boxes," and she looked forward to living near a large university again. When she asked at Oak Hammock, "What do residents do when a hurricane is approaching?" and heard the answer, "We stay here," that sealed the deal. A lifelong fan of the great outdoors, Lynn is happy to be living near the area's many parks, forests, and preserves. "The natural environment here is a new world to me—it's not California and it's not South Florida—and I'm eager to explore it." Welcome, Lynn!

-Barbara Dockery, content; file photo





Ice Cream Always Says It Best!

Remembrances and happy memories are best celebrated with ice cream—especially at Oak Hammock. Katherine Osman and Kathy Subak, two long time Oak Hammock staff, were recognized by the Active Lifestyle Committee and other residents for their many years of dedicated service. Add two delicious cakes, gifts, and hugs. It's our way to say "Thank you! We'll miss you both."

*-Barbara Dockery, content;
Sandy Furches, photos*



Below: Residents and team members gathered recently at a special ice cream social hosted by Oak Hammock to share fun stories from the many past achievements of retiring team members Katherine Osman and Kathy Subak. We wish them well in their future endeavors!

-Anne Garlington



David “Dave” Perez

Bob Stott, Vice President of Integrated Operations & Chief Innovation Officer, recently announced David Perez as new Security Manager—a timely addition as Oak Hammock prepares for an expansion of Independent Living apartments, increased construction activity, and new residents.

Mr. Perez, a graduate of Empire State College and retired NYPD Captain, brings 26½ years of law enforcement experience. His career began as a Bronx patrol officer in 1990, with promotions to Sergeant of an anti-crime unit, Lieutenant, and Captain. He recently relocated to Ocala on a friend’s recommendation, and spends his spare time boxing, motorcycling, and reading. His mother’s career was with the NY Attorney General’s Office, and she resides in NY. His late father was with the Post Office.

In his first days at Oak Hammock, Mr. Perez absorbed much of the community’s culture and is eager to connect with residents, employees, and guests. Guided by the NYPD motto, “Courtesy, Professionalism, and Respect,” he aims to enhance security. He will work all shifts as needed to understand the community, so feel free to introduce yourself when you see him.

-Karen Miller, content; Sandy Furches, photo



Mimi Charles

On December 30, 2024, Mimi Charles started at Oak Hammock in Plant Operations as our primary point of contact for assistance with plant operations issues. In addition to handling requests from residents and staff, Mimi is responsible for organizing and processing the paperwork necessary for maintenance and housekeeping to operate smoothly.

Mimi came to Oak Hammock from CVS/Aetna and has a BA in Health Care Administration from FIU, after having started at Santa Fe. Her MBA is from Southern New Hampshire University, and I would not be surprised if she finds an opportunity to continue her education by making good use of our employee scholarship fund.

Mimi, one of nine children, came to the United States from Haiti when she was three years old. Her family settled in Miami and ultimately consisted of four girls and five boys. Her mother still has four children at home. In addition to Mimi’s four-year-old son who is cared for in part by one of her sisters, Mimi’s time is taken up with a weekend job at Shands. Between her son, family, work, and a commitment to education, she has not had much leisure time; but when she does, she enjoys reading.

Mimi is happy that she made the move to Oak Hammock. She is enjoying the residents, her co-workers, and the job itself. If you need assistance with services provided by plant operations, please contact Mimi.

-Karen Miller, content; Sandy Furches, photo



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF ALACHUA COUNTY

The election is over. How do we make progress on social issues?
A path toward depolarization.



On January 14 more than 30 people came to hear Prof. Angela Bradbery from the UF School of Journalism discuss *The Election Is Over - How Do We Make Progress on Social Issues?* She gave several examples of people with differing values coming together to achieve a common goal. She suggested we find shared values, reach out to others, see the complexities in people, and practice active listening when talking to others. She also mentioned the organization Braver Angels, a national group formed to bridge the divide among Americans.

-Mary White, League of Women Voters, content;
John Furches, photo

Icon Update

Our plan to finalize the Icon transition focuses on populating critical features, securing ownership of updates, and conducting a thorough pilot test. Key milestones include posting menus daily on Icon, verifying the calendar's accuracy and venue listings, ensuring both resident and staff directories are complete and easy to update, and assigning a clear "manager" of Icon content for Oak Hammock.

We won't flip a switch and abandon Touchtown and INFOH overnight. Icon will roll out gradually, with most popular features becoming available through existing portals. You might be asked to click a new button when you seek today's menu on an existing portal. It will connect you with Icon's menu information. Over time, we will introduce the most popular features of Icon this way. Then we will incorporate Icon's additional capabilities as they become available, ensuring a smoother, gradual transition for everyone.

The Resident Icon Steering Committee will coordinate the pilot test and training before launching Icon to the broader community. By phasing in Icon's features, we can reduce disruption, deliver consistent updates, and empower residents to explore the new platform comfortably. Remember, residents and staff are human, so we'll inevitably run into some hiccups along the way—but we'll tackle them together.

-Bill Zegel



Miami Dinner

On a cool January night, 30 Oak Hammock residents, all formerly from Miami, gathered in Duckworth Gardens to reminisce about what took us to the city. Rhonda and Don Smith, Connie Brill, Jeani Valter, Barbara Wasserman, and Mary Brenner worked on decorations, reception, menu, memorabilia, table assignments, and organization. OH dining services provided 3 outdoor heaters. Rhonda Smith reflects, "It was a clear night, beautiful ambience, and Courtney worked the bar to provide delicious margaritas, Mojitos, and other tropical drinks as requested." Barbara's table assignments and questions took each guest mentally to Key Biscayne, Coconut Grove, and other well-known Miami neighborhoods. Don Smith compiled what became a popular video of current and former Miami to jog memories. Each learned more about common experiences, and some met Miami folks for the first time.

*-Mary Brenner, content;
Rhonda Smith, photos*



Sara the Serial Dabbler

Sara Ogg's current exhibit in the Art Studio is a delightful multimedia fine art and folk-art journey. Her artistic energy and ingenuity inspire her to transform the mundane into an amazing creation! Her work includes whimsically painted wooden fish, serene watercolors, textured acrylic paintings, colorful pottery, and inspirational needle felting.

If you missed Sara's opening reception this month, stop by the Art Studio on the lower level. Her display will be there through the end of February. Sara says, "I'm inspired by everything: nature and the world around me, people, old photos, and memories. I always want to put my own spin on things in a way that will make people smile. For me, art should be enjoyable." Sara, thank you for sharing your talent! We look forward to your next exhibit.

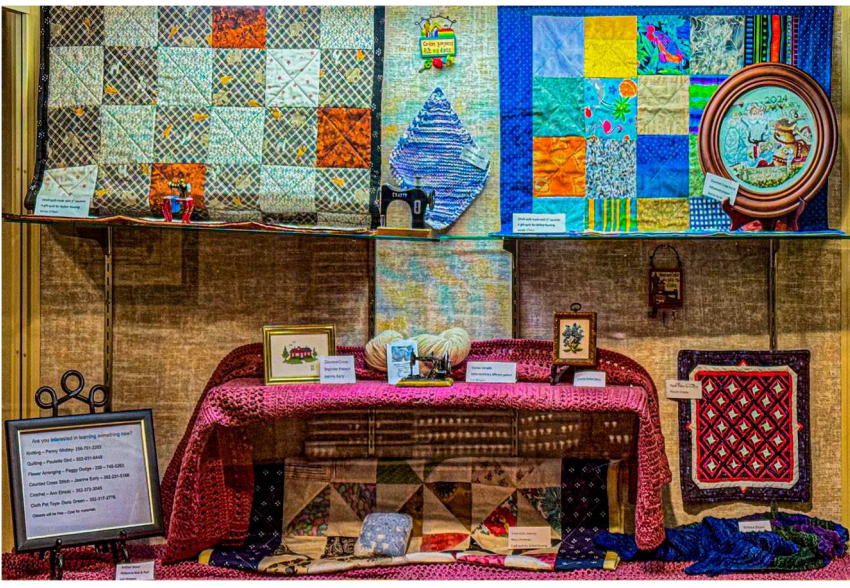
-Anne Barron, content; Sandy Furches, photos



Busy Hands Are Happy Hands!

Author Louisa May Alcott believed "keeping hands busy is a good, old-fashioned way to keep hearts sweet and heads sane." Oak Hammock's needler group leads the way to learning and sharing their many craft projects and talents. Visit their new display case exhibit (lower level, near pool table) for a listing of "learning something new," including instructors' contact numbers. Remember, the needle arts room is open for everyone. It's well stocked with miscellaneous sewing/craft materials. And it's the perfect place to replace a lost button!

-Barbara Dockery, content; John Furches, photo



Angels of Oak Hammock

My sister-in-law tells me there are angels amongst us and I know she is right. I live at Oak Hammock and there have been more angels than I can count watching over me these past couple of months. They have offered me hugs, comfort, support, and love as well as flowers, cards, candy, dining companions, meals, and rides. They have helped me with the Celebration of Life service, the reception, the cake decorations, and the family supper. My angels have been very, very busy. I hope you all know how much I appreciate your being there for me, especially during this time of grief and sadness. I know that I am not walking this path alone. I will continue to accept your comfort and strength until I have regained my own once again. Thank you all for being there for me.

-Heather Gilkey

Angels Among Us



A Gift from the UF School of Music

During the school year, Oak Hammock provides transportation to quality music by guest artists, UF music faculty, and UF student ensembles. These performances are available on campus at the UF School of Music or University Auditorium. It is always an enjoyable evening after dinner at no charge. The first performer this season was Svetozar Ivanov, Guest Artist on the piano. The ten audio vignettes inspired by poetry demonstrated his creativity in combining music with other art forms. He is Professor of Piano at USF, Artistic Director of the Steinway Piano Series in FL, and performs internationally. Keep an eye on the transportation book, sign up, and treat yourself to quality performances by other musicians during the school year!

-Sandy Furches

Renovation Update

At right, Kevin Ahmadi, Oak Hammock CEO, introduced consultants and facilitated a comprehensive growth and renovation update for a capacity crowd in the Oak Room on January 28.

-Sandy Furches

Larry Lowenthal Continues His Career

Many Oak Hammock residents continue to be employed long after retirement age. One of these industrious workers is Larry Lowenthal, who has expertise in real estate transactions and continues to be employed throughout the country. Zoom capabilities are a huge asset since he can complete assignments without having to travel long distances.



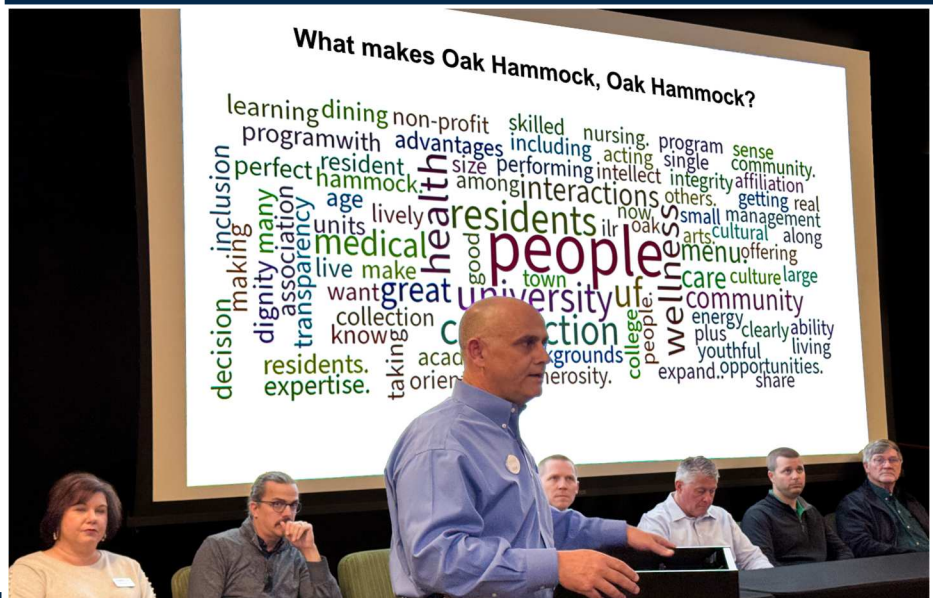
“Since 2005, I have been retained by attorneys across the U.S. as an expert witness for more than 65 lawsuits over troubled and failed real estate transactions involving brokers, and for real estate commission disputes. I analyze the transactions, write opinions, and testify at depositions and trials,” he explains.

Larry says he rarely meets with clients but conducts most of his business via emails and phone calls. In addition, most of the cases settle before trial. As an independent contractor who works on demand, as needed, he can work 30 hours one month and zero hours the next. He explains that the work is “often intense, but satisfying and good exercise for my aging brain.”

His most fulfilling case involved a single mother who needed his expertise “to justify and validate an underlying commission claim” against a law firm. Larry was a witness on the stand for about four hours, and the jury awarded his client close to \$2 million.

Larry earned a degree in Economics from the University of Chicago and is a licensed realtor. He retains his license as a real estate broker to keep current with the law.

-Beth Paul, content; Jan Lowenthal, photo



Excellence at the UF School of Music

On January 31, Oak Hammock residents enjoyed refreshments and a program on the State of the UF School of Music. Emeritus Professors, including OH favorites Gary Langford and Don McGlothlin (former Dean of the School) were with us in the Oak Room.

Director of the School, Dr. Kevin Orr, reported that the long-awaited building project was funded and a request for quotes is ongoing. This includes an acoustic renovation of the current building with a major addition of space for a recording studio suite, specially constructed teaching studios with double walls and high ceilings encasing sound, and seminar rooms. This will enable increased variety of ensembles, more programs in the already varied curricula, use of AI, and a search for teachers of composing and clarinet. Potential donors are invited to CADENZA, an elegant musical event at the UF School of Music Building on March 1, 2025.

A magnificent musical experience was provided by a group of superbly talented UF professors who performed in a wide variety of musical genres, from opera to jazz, with piano, guitar, trumpet, and more. We also heard a spirited talk on the intricacies of balancing discipline with passion in performing and conducting; and another on a famous composer who designed works for the specific acoustics of British churches and cathedrals.

The UF School of Music deserves a Grade of A+! Thank you, Mike Plaut, for your behind-the-scenes efforts to bring this program to us.

-Jan Havre, content; Julie Esbjorn, photo



ALC Needs a Few Good People

The Active Lifestyle Committee (ALC) of the OH Residents' Council is seeking individuals to join our committee. We organize various experiences, both educational and recreational, aimed at fostering social interaction and community engagement. These events provide residents with opportunities to meet new people and explore current or new interests. Through initiatives like Recycled Riches, Travel Talks, Restaurant Ramblers, and Event and Party Planning, the ALC fosters a vibrant and interconnected community. We want you to take part. Be proactive, not reactive! Come join us and lend a voice to planning activities that you would like to see at OH.

In addition to recruiting new people and ideas, we will be sending out a short survey by e-mail asking residents what they would like to see for future activities. Send us your feedback. Check out our display case by the multipurpose room on the lower level for past and future plans. Check back often as we will update it as new events are arranged.

-Mary Christman, content; Sandy Furches, photo





ALAOH members Gloria Nelson, Nancy Wood, Ann Beshore, and Rubye Sullivan completed the art display case outside the art studio. Theme is "Birds in Art" with a Claude Monet quote, "I would like to paint the way a bird sings." Residents lent their beautiful, crafted items for the case. Katherine Osman made the carved trees and attractive signage.

*—Gloria Nelson, content;
Peg Owens, photos*



An Artful Journey

The Art League at Oak Hammock recently traveled to the Melrose Bay Gallery in Hawthorne for a Sumi-e painting demo by artist Jeffrey Ketts. Under Jeffrey's guidance, the group gave it a try as well. The great trip was polished off with a visit to Brown's Farm.

*—Marion Siegel, content; Susan Bankston,
Claire Germain, & Marion Siegel, photos*



Fred Moyer Returns... to a Standing Ovation

It's believed that Fred Moyer was welcomed as the first professional entertainment in Oak Hammock's early years, as described in the very first issue of *The Oak Leaf*. He appeared with the Boston Symphony at age fourteen and Carnegie Hall at age twenty-five. Moyer established a career of over forty years as a full-time concert pianist, performing as a soloist with orchestras the world over. His magnificent piano artistry is interlaced with interesting comments. Being an avid computer programmer, he often incorporates technology into his concerts—such as the MoyerCam—that enables audiences to view the pianist's hands. Moyer explains, "When I add the Bösendorfer 290 SE Recording Piano, it provides the perfect opportunity for me to play an arrangement the way that I want to hear it! Today I will play Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 30, a forty-five-minute-long piece." As the final note sounded, a standing ovation occurred, and shouts of bravo filled the air. The encore was his soft jazz rendition of "For All We Know". He graciously answered questions, munched cookies, and mingled with his admirers. Hopefully, Oak Hammock remains on his itinerary every year.

-Barbara Dockery, content;
file photos

Note from Katherine: Yes, it's true—Fred was the very first performer I booked in 2004 (thank you, Dave Grundy!), and we had to rent a piano to host him! It feels both fitting and bittersweet that he also played during my final weekend, making him the last performer I booked during my tenure. Fred is as kind as he is talented—and he is incredibly talented. Just one more thing I'll miss!



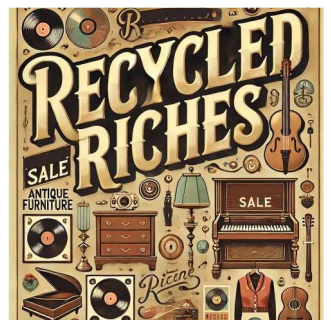
Recycled Riches

Recycled Riches is happy to announce income totaling \$29,503.21 and grants given to benefit Oak Hammock totaling \$26,320.00 in 2024. Our total income 2006-2024 is \$400,049.04.

After our first Recycled Riches Sale in 2006, it was decided to continue sales if we had enough volunteers. Currently, more volunteers are needed to keep our apartment sales going. We have gone from 2 large sales a year in the Oak Room to multiple apartment sales that are a challenge to all our volunteers. Sales were previously discontinued in the villas and the Health Pavilion for the lack of volunteers. We are grateful for our volunteers with Special Treasures Sales, Vintage Cabinets and Jewelry sales, E-bay, Wish List, Medical Sales, and the Christmas in July Sale. We are happy to share information on items we can use for Recycled Riches and what items can be used in other areas of Oak Hammock such as the library, business offices, needlers, maintenance, etc. We also have current lists of other charities in Gainesville.

If you would like to have your name added to our list of Recycled Riches Volunteers to receive our notices about when and where we need help, please contact Valerie Griffith, valrx1@gmail.com or Judy Plaut for Special Treasures, or Peg Owens for The Woodland (Building 2) sales. For more information, join us at our next meeting on Monday, February 24, at 11 a.m. in the Acorn Room. Everyone is welcome.

-Valerie Griffith, Chairman, Recycled Riches



Flatwood Fire and Nature Festival

In the UF/IFAS Austin Cary Forest near Gainesville airport, ten Oak Hammock residents enjoyed perfect weather on February 1 for a unique festival. The Flatwood Fire and Nature Festival is a mix of real time education about controlled burns and their ecological benefits while food trucks, live music, and conservation groups with displays add to the outdoor experience. Many passionate firefighters talked freely with us, answering a plethora of questions.

When Jim and Madelyn Fischer relocated from Orlando to Oak Hammock, Jim shared his hope that Oak Hammock residents would participate in this festival held every other year. Though Jim is now sorely missed by Madelyn and all of us, his influence has taken hold, and our Active Lifestyle Committee planned this adventure. Thank you, Mary Christman, and all who participated. Talking with a young event worker as we took a survey before leaving the festival, she radioed others sharing her excitement that “Mr. Fischer’s influence is still being felt.” As Anthony drove our bus out of the area, we waved at Madelyn and others who had driven themselves, arriving in time for one of the later burn demonstrations. Honor Jim and plan to participate in 2027.

-Sandy Furches



Bee Buddies

Oak Hammock’s Bee Buddies had a very successful Fall Honey Sale. We sold 90 pounds to residents and could have sold at least another 50 pounds had our honeybees worked a little harder. We sold 48 little jars to Marketing and 10 pounds to Dining Services along with a frame of honey for the Thanksgiving Buffet. We appreciate everyone’s patronage. We will be donating \$600 from our sales to the Benevolent Fund as we have done in the past. We hope to have more honey to sell again this fall and look forward to your continued support. Residents interested in beekeeping and becoming a Bee Buddy are welcome. We successfully concluded our mentoring program at Grow Hub and have now welcomed an employee from Oak Hammock as our new mentee.

-Bee Buddies:

Jane Brockmann, Master Beekeeper Ray Goldwire, Richard Jones, Janice Malkoff, Apprentice Bob Palmer, Bob Shaw, and Randy Terry

American Flags at Oak Hammock

The American flag posted at Oak Hammock’s entry became very faded. Fortunately, the gatehouse had a flag surplus. Both the security gate flag and the Oak Hammock main entrance flag were replaced. And just in time for the demanding flag protocol during January—the funeral of one U.S. president and the inauguration of another! The security gate follows the U.S. Flag Code providing guidelines for correct display of the American flag. Security officer, Joshua, gave the retired flags to the Alachua County Fire Department for proper disposal.



-Barbara Dockery, content;
John Furches, photo

Pat Liston – A Full Life

Pat, a “gym rat,” loves swimming. When she and husband Jack Liston were exploring retirement options, the indoor pool at OH made the decision easy! Pat has been swimming here daily since 2004 and starts at 4 a.m.!

She studied Graphic Arts at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington. She and Jack lived and worked in several U.S. cities and Saipan in the Mariana Islands. Jack was with the CIA; Pat was a valuable sidekick with her illustrating talents. The first of their 4 children, Casey, was born in Saipan and now lives in Costa Rica. Georgia served as a Commander in the U.S. Army. Tragically, she passed away in a skiing accident. Youngest daughter, Renee, is a retired MD in Gainesville. Benjamin, a musician, is a retired Michigan attorney. Pat and Jack loved biking. Pat continued her biking after Jack passed, met another biker, married Art Gove, and they enjoyed OH together.

For 10 years, Pat did rain gauge reading for OH. Her early morning schedule made her the perfect person to record daily readings and send them to Colorado. She started playing the piano at age 6 then took up clarinet for many years, only recently retiring from the OH Chamber Players. Tuesdays Pat is in the needle arts room sewing. She generously repairs and alters clothing for OH residents, asking only that they donate to the OH Scholarship Fund. Is there time for anything else? Yes, she loves reading and had a book by her side during our visit. What an inspiration Pat continues to be in her 10th decade!

-Mary Brenner



State and Local FLiCRA News

The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation recently released a proposal for substantial changes to the law regulating continuing care retirement communities. FLiCRA's Tallahassee staff will send FLiCRA members periodic newsletters to inform us about the provisions and progress of this law revision. The 2025 regular legislative session begins Tuesday, March 4.

Here at Oak Hammock, our FLiCRA chapter's annual meeting is on Tuesday, February 25, at 10:00 a.m. Our speaker, Neill Hollenshead, will give a program about the history of Oak Hammock's founding and early development. This program follows the excellent series Neill wrote for *The Oak Leaf* on this topic. Everyone is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

-Tom Gire

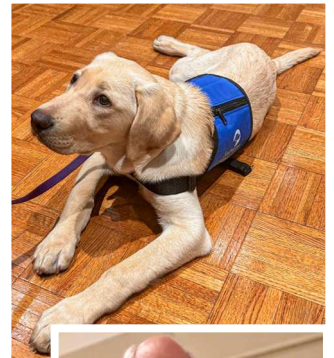
dogsinc

If you missed this year's visit from “Southeast Guide Dogs,” you missed a treat, but don't feel bad! They have changed their name to “dogsinc.” As Jim Ebling, the speaker, told us, they were advised that major donors are attracted by a more inclusive name representing a larger segment of our population than one that, for example, limits its vision to the Southeast. So, in the future, look for “dogsinc!”

Jim brought his dog, Dimitri, a beautiful Golden Retriever who failed his test. Jim explained that Dimitri had to investigate everything; if a lurking coconut was on the side of the path, Dimitri made sure he went over and inspected it! While this exemplary caution is very reassuring, it would not be up to standards for a companion dog assisting a person with blindness. In addition to blindness, persons served by these dogs have other disabilities and many are veterans. All dogsinc dogs are trained and provided at no cost to the recipient!

April 5, 2025, dogsinc is planning a big FREE event for a fun afternoon with these extraordinary dogs. The event will be at Swamp Head Brewery, 3650 S.W. 42nd Avenue in Gainesville. We're invited to come and try out their “Puppy Kissing Booth” among other delights!

-Tallulah Brown, content; Anne Barron, photos



The Dining Corner

Chris Rocks tells me that our culinary staff are planning several events to coincide with some of our national holidays and national food events.

***National Chili Day**, Feb 27, the award winning “Rolls-Royce Chili” will be a chef’s special. This was a winning soup from the Souper Fun Sunday event.

***Mardi Gras**, March 4, will bring us jambalaya with okra and crawfish rolls served as chef’s specials March 3-5.

***National Baked Scallop Day** is March 12. A scallop chef’s special will be available March 10-12.

***Pi Day** (3.14) is March 14 with assorted pies to highlight the day for us nerds. This will only be available to science majors!

***National Corndog Day**, March 15, corndogs will be offered in Treats and Treasures only. Healthy eaters, isn’t corn a vegetable?

***National Artichoke Heart Day** is March 16. Culinary Services will offer a lemon artichoke pasta chef’s special for that day.

Sheldon Clarke, Health Pavilion Culinary Services Manager, would love to do special events in Assisted Living like we enjoy in Independent Living. Lack of staff and facilities have prevented this so far. Sheldon and Rose Crowder are working on it. Hopefully, they will be able to have at least some of these events in Assisted Living.

Other interesting and positive changes are coming in the next few weeks!

-Steve Gird

Your Help is Needed

Background: The bleak, dreary courtyard seen from the Fitness Center, Assisted Living, and Skilled Nursing will soon be converted into a tranquil but vibrant garden for all Oak Hammock residents and guests to enjoy. The new door providing access from Independent Living has been installed but is not yet fully operational. The ground is being cleared.

Good News: Dr. Gail Hansen, a UF IFAS professional landscape architect, and her students have an exciting design which will guide this transformation. The design has been approved, and an initial \$125,000 of capital budget funds will pay for infrastructure costs including concrete pathways, irrigation, and lighting.

Bad News: We must await an additional estimated \$75,000 of future capital budget monies or seek funding from generous donors. We are entering the perfect time of year to plant trees, bushes, ground covers, and flowers but do not have the funds.

Great Opportunity: One generous donor is needed to give approximately \$75,000 for project completion. This can also be several donors who will fund portions of the costs for plants, a pavilion, trees, furniture, shade, and other enhancements. The Special Enhancement Projects Review Team is currently obtaining quotes. Further details will be provided when exact costs are determined to fund a portion of the next phase.

Please contact Andrew Davey, Oak Hammock CFO, if you will donate to convert this courtyard into an exciting, multi-use gathering space for all residents and guests of “One Oak Hammock.” -Jan Lowenthal

ReRun Sneakers Update

ReRun Sneakers is a nonprofit shoe organization established in 2012 to collect gently used sneakers from the community for people without shoes in underprivileged areas. Bill and Deborah Rossi’s grandchildren, Alexandra, Nicholas, and Isabella, are the local organizers. In January, the Rossis’ grandchildren and seven friends tied shoelaces together in pairs and filled 20 boxes with 897 pairs of shoes for shipment to Cuba, Honduras, and Nigeria.

Thank you, Oak Hammock! We donated 50 of those pairs bringing our total donation to 157 pairs of sneakers to date. Please continue to leave your gently used sneakers in the grey bin at the fitness center. You

can follow ReRun on Instagram at RerunSneakers.

-Deborah Rossi, content; Stephanie Rossi, photos



Art League News

The Art League at Oak Hammock (ALAOH) is very active. Watch for notifications on the art studio door, in emails, and on elevator signs for upcoming opportunities to enhance your creative knowledge of watercolor, acrylics, Japanese brush painting, encaustics, and more. Thanks to our director, Susan Bankston, for arranging classes.

Jane Polkowski Levy organizes Open Art Studio sessions on the 1st and 2nd Tuesdays monthly in the multipurpose room at 6 p.m. OH residents are volunteer models for OH and community artists who participate in this golden opportunity to hone their drawing and painting skills. Volunteer to be a model.

In March, Larry Lowenthal will be our studio featured artist. Larry says, "It is artistic photography! The beauty, the patterns, and the moods of certain subjects are there for some, but they are overlooked by others. I see these qualities differently. I capture them as a painter might but in a different way."

Thirteen of our ALAOH members enjoyed Pinsi-piration, a creative activity studio on Newberry Square. They created a painting in a fun and relaxed place! Jenna Weston will teach drawing in our studio March 15. Sign up!

ALAOH art programs, at 4 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday monthly, recently featured Dulce Roman from the Harn Museum of Art. Her fantastic presentation on "Silver Linings" leads to a field trip for a private docent tour of this exhibit at the Harn.



The Oak Hammock art gallery continues to display Michael Levy's "Nonagenarian" photos. This is an awesome show of our own "ninety-somethings" at their finest, captured by our outstanding resident photographer. Jane Levy assisted Michael in the setting up of each subject. Thanks to both! The future of the art gallery awaits word on upcoming changes to the Gallery halls. Meanwhile, the mini gallery, curated by Midge Smith, continues a show devoted to widowhood!

"Art lives through the imagination of the people who are seeing it. Without that contact, there is no art." -Keith Haring

-Marion Siegel

Cursive Reader

More than 200 years of U.S. documents are handwritten—the vast majority in cursive—and that's where you come in! "Reading cursive is a superpower," says Suzanne Issacs, a community manager with the National Archives Catalog in Washington, D.C. She coordinates more than 5,000 citizen archivists helping read and transcribe over 300 million digitized objects in the National Archives Catalog.

Remember struggling at school with those curly penmanship letters on special 3-lined paper, and then learning to read the words? Typewriters led the way to mass communication, followed by email and texting. In all but about 14 states, Common Core teaching standards eliminated teaching cursive in schools.

Volunteers are needed to save our American history—from Revolutionary War pension records to immigration documents and the 1950 Census. Can't read cursive? There's a need for you too! Everyone is welcome. Sign up to volunteer: www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist/missions. You can make a red, white, and blue difference by saving our American history.

-Barbara Dockery



The Benevolent Fund

January Benevolent Fund
Total: \$1,650.00

In Honor of: Pat Liston
In Memory of: Katherine & John Lowe, Carol Wershoven

Oak Hammock by the Numbers

February 1, 2025

IL	Total	Occupied/ Reserved/ Sold	Available for Sale
Houses	57	56	1
Apartments	212	207	5

Health Pavilion	Total	Assigned/Occupied	Available
Assisted Living Units	52	51	1
Memory Units	12	12	0
Skilled Nursing Units	73	71	2

-Andrew Davey and Nadia Luna



Mimi Ryan Golf Tournament

Mimi Ryan's annual golf tournament at UF brought former students from across the U.S. Our Oak Hammock resident Mimi had a successful 25-year career as Lady Gator Golf Coach. She led her teams to two NCAA titles in 1985 and 1986, earning the title of SEC coach of the year both years. Mimi was national coach of the year in 1986.

-Maryalice Nelson, content; Delphine Lampert, photo

Street Party

The 2025 Street Party season opened on Saturday, January 11, in the Outback with Sharon and Ed Harmon hosting. Temperature at 4 p.m. was a cold and sunless 51 degrees. Sharon Harmon draped all cold aluminum chairs with blankets from her house and 31 guests filled plates (most wore gloves) with hot cinnamon buns, hot artichoke and crab dip, hot meatballs, and warm-from-the-oven cookies.

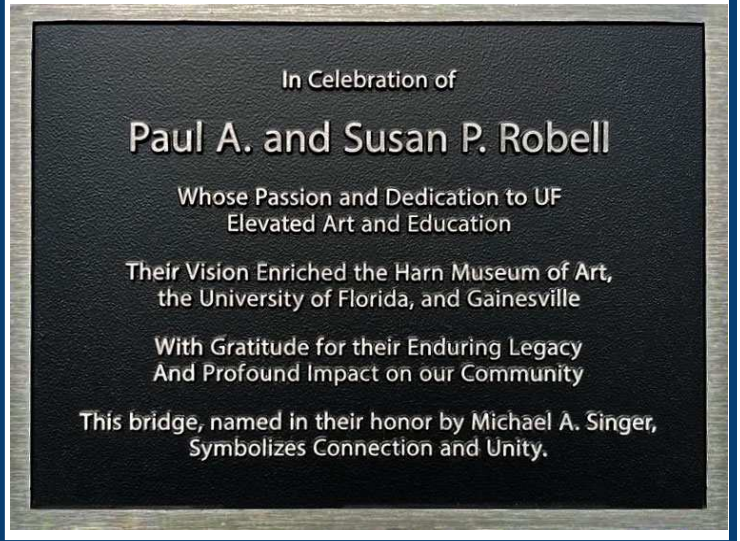
-Jacki Challoner



Honored

Congratulations to Paul and Susan Robell for the naming of the bridge to the garden in the Harn recognizing their significant contributions..

-Sandy Furches, content; Paul Robell, photo



Editor
Sandy Furches
oakleaf@furches.xyz

Proofreaders

Marion Bowen, Bill Castine, Patsy Nelms, Beth Paul

Oak Leaf Committee

Anne Barron, Mary Brenner, Tallulah Brown,
 Bill Castine, Nancy Dickson,
 Barbara Dockery, Jan Havre, Patsy Nelms, Beth Paul

Additional Contributors (This Issue)

Jane Brockmann, Jacki Challoner, Mary Christman,
 Bev Cone, Andrew Davey, John Furches,
 Anne Garlington, Heather Gilkey, Steve Gird,
 Tom Gire, Ray Goldwire, Valerie Griffith,
 Neill Hollenshead, Richard Jones, Jan Lowenthal,
 Nadia Luna, Janice Malkoff, Jonathon Mann,
 Doug Merrey, Karen Miller, Gloria Nelson,
 Maryalice Nelson, Katherine Osman, Bob Palmer,
 Paul Robell, Deborah Rossi, Bob Shaw,
 Marion Siegel, Randy Terry, Lonnie Thompson,
 Mary White, Bill Zegel

Photographers

Karen Arola, Susan Bankston, Anne Barron,
 Jacki Challoner, Julie Esbjorn, John & Sandy Furches,
 Anne Garlington, Claire Germain, Neill Hollenshead,
 Delphine Lampert, Jan Lowenthal, Peg Owens,
 Beth Paul, Paul Robell, Stephanie Rossi,
 Marion Siegel, Rhonda Smith

Graphics

John Furches, Photo Editor
 Katherine Osman, Layout

Events

Kathy Subak

Happy 70th Anniversary Lonnie & Patti Thompson! Lonnie shared his secret for 70 years of marriage. "Patti is a real sweet person, and you want her to be the parent of your children. We stuck with each other and without realizing it, all of a sudden it has been 70 years."
 -Sandy Furches, content; file photo



2025 Residents' Council & Committees

President: Donna Johnson johnsodc01@gmail.com
Vice President: Mike Plaut smplaut@gmail.com
Secretary: Doug Merrey dougmerrey@gmail.com

Committee	Meeting Time	Chair/Subcommittee Chair	E-Mail
Active Lifestyle	1st Mon 11:00 a.m.	Mary Christman	mcxman0913@gmail.com
Buildings & Infrastructure	3rd Wed 1:30 p.m.	Lynn Nelson	Lnelson944@gmail.com
Charitable Giving	1st Tue 3:00 p.m.	Leslie Bram	Ldbram0709@gmail.com
Finance & Stewardship	3rd Thu 1:30 p.m.	Pat Kelley	pkelley@khsatty.com
Food & Nutrition Services	1st Fri 10:00 a.m.	Steve Gird	stevegird097@gmail.com
Growth & Renovation	2nd Wed 3:15 p.m.	Neill Hollenshead	neill.hollenshead@gmail.com
Health & Wellbeing	3rd Tue 3:30 p.m.	Fred Harden Maurice Levy*	gatorfred552@icloud.com mauricedlevy@hotmail.com
Landscape & Grounds	2nd Thu 10:00 a.m.	Bob Virstein	seagrass3@gmail.com
Technology & Communication Services	3rd Fri 10:00 a.m.	Bill Zegel	wzege@gmail.com

* Non Residents' Council member Subcommittee Chair