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Digital copies of *Soleil Living* are now available on the Soleil website.

Go to: Resident Resources > Soleil Living Magazine



CONTACT US TODAY
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CONTACTS

Clubhouse Office

678-493-5710

Onsite Monday-Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Heritage Property After Hours Customer Care

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Follow the prompts for Emergency Service, which is #9

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Emergency Alerts

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Falling snow leaves a light dusting at the trail entrance on Balsam Drive on a wintry morning in Soleil Laurel Canyon. Photo by resident Chastaine Kendrick.



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Meet Jennifer Lorenz

New Administration Assistant

Jennifer is excited to join the team at Soleil. She previously worked in Customer Service for a pest and animal control company. After nearly five years of working from home, she is looking forward to more face-to-face interaction. Jennifer is the mother to three “wonderful” sons aged 27, 23 and 19 years old. She lives in Holly Springs and has been in Cherokee County for over 25 years. She is looking forward to getting to know all Soleil residents.



▲ Jennifer Lorenz (Photo by Dick Slaats)

Welcome to Soleil!

Please join us in welcoming the following Soleil residents:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Debra & Charles Blair	633 Hemlock Trail
Kim & Mark Davenport	601 Laurel Crossing
Mary & Daniel Dobson	230 Misty View Drive
Christine & Randy Kingsley	422 Laurel Spring Court
Susan & Paul May	209 Big Cedar Run
Melissa Sager	310 Laurel Lookout Hills



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Soleil Laurel Canyon Clubs & Activities

Find information and who-to-contact
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ARTS & CRAFTS

Artists Guild
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Lady Bug Quilters
Open Art Group & Studio*
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ATHLETIC

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Laurel Canyon Men's Golf Association
Pickleball Club
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COOKING

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Connections Cooking Club
Soleil Cooking Club
Dinner Club
Four Seasons Culinary Club
Les Marmitons
Soleil Wine Club
Winers & Diners Ladies Cooking Club

GAMES

Couples Bridge*
Ladies Speedy Bridge Group
Mah Jongg
Men's Bridge Group
Rummikub Club
Tuesday Dominoes Group*
Tuesday Night Hand & Foot Card Group

SPIRITUAL

Coed Bible Study Group*
Men's Christian Fellowship
Shalom Club of Soleil
Women's Christian Faith Group*

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

Silver Sounds Chorale
Soleil Residents Theater
Soleil Singers

SPECIAL INTEREST

Book Clubs
Garden Club
Genealogy Club
Health & Wellness
Men's Breakfast Group*
Photography Club
Railroaders
Rock Hounds
Singles Group*
Stock Investors Discussion Group
Writers Group*

**For information on these activities, contact Judy Fauver in the Soleil office.*

Greenhouse Upgrade Celebration

March 1

By Dee Proctor

The Soleil Greenhouse now features durable cedar garden benches built to last 25 years, replacing the cracked plastic ones used for over a decade. “Benches” in greenhouse-speak are shelves for plants, not places to sit.

On March 1, the Garden Club held a cheerful ribbon-cutting to unveil the benches. The celebration also recognized one year of wildlife-proof fencing and a reworked irrigation system—welcome improvements to gardeners.

With over 50 years of greenhouse expertise, longtime residents Ellen and Ullman guided the bench project. Ullman designed the benches and oversaw their installation. The Garretts have been active members of the Soleil Garden Club since 2010. We’re grateful for their passion and dedication to our Garden Club’s high standards.

Anyone with an interest in growing things is welcome to join the Garden Club’s monthly educational meetings, field trips, socials and hands-on classes throughout the year.

THE
Garden Club
of Soleil



◀ Robyn de la Houssaye, Dee Proctor and Ellen Garrett (L-R) enjoy a little bubbly while preparing for the ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil new greenhouse benches. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

▶ Garden Club president Carolyn Calloway, Ullman Garrett and Dee Proctor (L-R) anticipate the cutting of the big white ribbon across the entrance to the greenhouse. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



◀ The new cedar greenhouse benches were built by 2 Handy Guys from Cherokee County. In greenhouses, “benches” are shelves for plants, not places to sit. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

▶ Ullman Garrett (with scissors) cuts the ribbon in celebration of the new greenhouse benches as (L-R) Ed Kuester, Leslie Barnes and Carolyn Calloway look on. (Photo by Joe Nicholson).



Quilters Make Seniors' Days Brighter

By Sharon Monaco

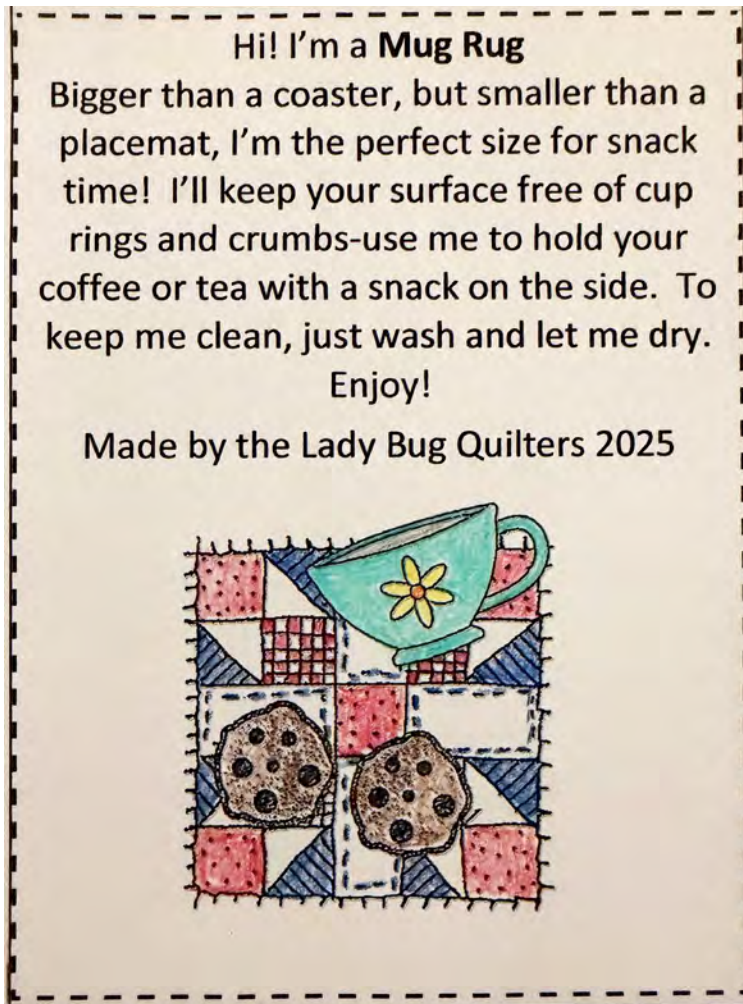
Soleil's energetic and generous Lady Bug Quilters dedicate their efforts to helping local charitable organizations. One ongoing project is using small pieces of fabric to construct mug rugs, each of which is unique, colorful and useful.

What is a Mug Rug? See image below.

At a February event in the Cherokee Senior Center, 131 mug rugs—made by Lady Bug Quilters—were given to 'Meals on Wheels' clients.

Since 2020, the Lady Bugs have produced and delivered 595 mug rugs to 'Meals on Wheels.' Our goal is to make the seniors' days a little brighter.

Anyone interested in quilting and the fiber arts is welcome to join us in the Arts & Crafts room on Mondays and Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information, contact Sharon Monaco, President (sharonmonaco@gmail.com) or Cynthia Rubant, Vice President/Secretary (quiltsrubant@comcast.net).



▲ What is a Mug Rug? (Photo by Jeanne Bayer)



▲ Marjorie Heywood (right) presents 131 mug rugs to Brittany Kaiser, director of Meals on Wheels. (Photo by Jo Esman)



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Optimist Club's Middle School Speech Contest

By Lenora McCrea

Optimist Clubs throughout the United States have been sponsoring Oratorical Contests for students since 1928. The contest is their longest-running program and gives them the opportunity to fulfill their motto of "Bringing out the Best in Kids."

This contest is designed for youth to:

- gain experience in public speaking.
- perfect self-expression.
- gain self-assurance.
- improve communication skills.
- compete for scholarships.

The Laurel Canyon Optimist Club held its contest, chaired by Lenora McCrea, at Teasley Middle School in February, where judges listened to four students—two girls and two boys—speak on the topic, "The Moment I Realized I Belonged – My Definition of Community."

Students were coached by Jaimee Hood, ESOL teacher and Speech & Debate Advisor, during their



homeroom elective speech class. Speeches were timed and required the student to speak between four and five minutes, while being judged on theme, content, logic, delivery and presentation.

Each participant received a framed certificate and three received a medal.

- Ewan Duncan – Gold
- Isabella Granados Paniagua – Silver
- Leila Napoles – Bronze

Ewan and Isabella advanced to the Zone Oratorical Contest held in Canton in March. Winners of that contest moved on to the area, district and international level contests.

Three community members served as judges:

- Amy Myers, Secretary of the Hickory Flat

Optimist Club and past Lt. Governor for the GATEway District

- Kathy Strom, Operations Director of the Cherokee County Educational Foundation
- Jeannie Doherty, a retired French teacher and Coordinator of the Foreign Language Dept. in a New York School District

Laurel Canyon Club members who assisted were:

- Mary & Tony DeLuca
- Valerie & Ed Hill
- Cindy & Don Schmitt
- Jennifer Baker
- Debbie Carlson Everett

Optimist Club meetings include lunch and are the second Monday of the month at Sidelines Grille.

If you are interested in attending, learning more about the club's projects or volunteering your time, contact Tony DeLuca, president (tonydeluca@me.com or 571-283-1858) or Ed Hill, past president (evhilljr@yahoo.com or 770-880-6462). Visitors and new members are always welcome!



▲ Participants in LCOC's Oratorical Contest display their certificates. (L-R): Jaimee Hood, ESOL Teacher and Speech & Debate Advisor, with contest participants Ewan Duncan, Leila Napoles, Royce Garcia and Isabella Granados Paniagua. Lenora McCrea, LCOC's Contest Chairperson is on the right. (Photo by Valerie Hill)



▲ First place winner Ewan Duncan (center) and second place winner Isabella Granados Paniagua (right) display their certificates and medallions with Jaimee Hoo (left), ESOL Teacher and Speech & Debate Advisor. (Photo by Valerie Hill)



▲ LCOC Past President Ed Hill presents a check to administrators of Hasty Elementary. Funds will be used to purchase books for classroom libraries. (L-R): Kelli Nastasi, Hasty Elementary Assistant Principal; Ed Hill, LCOC Past President; Dr. Maria Regan-Rosario, Principal; and Janet Marotte, Assistant Principal. (Photo by Valerie Hill)



▲ Optimist Club Past President Ed Hill presents a check to Goshen Valley Boys Ranch Executive Director Stacy Cooper. Funds will be used to help renovate the first home built on the ranch. (Photo by Valerie Hill)



▲ Optimist Club President Tony DeLuca (left) greets Zack Blend, CEO of Goshen Valley Boys Ranch. At a recent LCOC meeting, Blend spoke about the ranch's history and the growth over the past 30 years, bringing stability and opportunity to boys and young men in foster care. (Photo by Lenora McCrea)

TAKE3 | January 31

Photos by Tommy Jacobs



▲ The three ladies of TAKE3 blend classical music with a variety of popular musical forms and genres.



▲ A large Soleil audience shows appreciation for TAKE3's creative musical mashups, including one that featured Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and another that combined Bach and "Amazing Grace."

Rian Davis & the Chairmen of Swing February 7



▲ Rian Davis and his quartet of musicians keep the dance floor full of neighbors enjoying the band's interpretations of songs from the Great American Songbook and more. (Photo by Jackie Schierer)

Karaoke | February 21



▲ Rick Clevenger amuses the audience with “Please Don’t Bury Me” by the late great singer/songwriter John Prine. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Craig Stichtenoth and Jill Snipes perform the late 60s FM radio classic “White Bird” with Sue Polmanski portraying the white bird in a golden cage and playing air violin and air guitar on the instrumental breaks. (Photo by Bev Stichtenoth)



▲ Tom Snipes has a simple request... love me “Like My Dog,” recorded by Country singer Billy Carrington and later covered by Jimmy Buffet. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Barbara Chenette and Joe Di Bernardo entertain with their duet of this musical question... “Could I Have this Dance?” recorded first by Anne Murray and heard in the soundtrack to the movie “Urban Cowboy.” (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Brenda Smith delights the crowd with her interpretation of the Burt Bacharach/Hal David song “The Look of Love,” originally heard in the movie “Casino Royale.” (Photo by Bev Stichtenoth)

▶ Sallie Swartz honors the memory of her late daughter—lost to cancer last year—with her emotional miming performance to John Denver’s “Sunshine on My Shoulder.” (Photo by Bev Stichtenoth)



◀ Betty Minnick sings the emotional hit song “Angel,” written and recorded by Canadian singer/songwriter Sarah McLachlin. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



Old Soulz Band | February 27

Photos by Tommy Jacobs



▲ Bill & Lois Healey with Bob & Jane Matthews are but two of the many couples filling the dance floor as the Old Soulz Band plays tunes throughout the evening.



▲ Soleil's line dancers love to strut their moves. (L-R:) Lynn Joren, Ann Marie Folk, Roz Gladstone, Laura Gourley, Liz Halsey, Susie Becker.

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Laurel Lake's Facelift

More than Surface-Deep

By Martha Crockett

Whether you're a fisherman, a trail-walker or just want to enjoy sunset or a musical concert in a beautiful setting, Laurel Lake now offers a new and unique experience.

The process began in 2025 when the Fishing Club submitted a proposal to the Board to fund an environmental study of Laurel Lake. AquaDoc—experts in lake management—found that Laurel Lake's ecosystem was out of balance.

Since Soleil owns approximately 2/3 of the lake, the Board voted to fund several projects to improve the health, beauty and accessibility of this neglected amenity. Healthy lakes and ponds are not only beautiful, they provide a habitat for a variety of plants and animals.

LANDSCAPING

The projects began with necessary repairs to the wall on the east side of the Amphitheater stairs. Rainwater sluicing down the hill was threatening the stability of that wall and was eroding sections of the trail around the lake. Culverts reaching from the Racquet Club courts to the lake greatly improved the drainage issues.

Barb Baker worked with Hemlock Landscaping to improve the appearance of the area. Deteriorating foliage around the dock was removed and replaced with smaller, deer resistant plants that add color and enhance the natural setting.

Notable is the fact that Joe Nicholson—member of the Georgia Native Plant Society for 20 years and author of features on Soleil's native trees in *Soleil Living* magazine—flagged unique native plants around Laurel Lake that should not be touched.

Soleil resident Robin Wilson is working on 3-D printed signs for the trail that will identify various trees and other plants.

Continued on page 19



▲ Gary Versept creates one of the new fish habitats in Laurel Lake. These three cages have been weighted with stones then placed underneath the dock. Small fish can swim inside to get away from larger fish. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)



▲ John Mosier and Ray Brooks place dead tree limbs to make a new natural habitat in the center of Laurel Lake. Small floating markers are tied to each bundle so people who fish can see where the sunken bundles of trees are located to avoid casting lures in that area. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)



▲ Thousands of Shiner and Bream fingerlings find their new home in Laurel Lake. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)



▲ Jay Martindell, John Amones and Greg von Seeger unload leftover Christmas trees donated by the Home Depot in Canton. Fishing Club members tied three 7+ ft Christmas trees together and sank the bundles to the bottom with two large bricks in each. There are five separate bundles placed strategically around the lake. Small fish can hide in the branches of the trees to escape large fish. (Photo by Fred Weems)

► The fish food dispenser takes quarters only and will dispense a handful of fish food for feeding the fish. Standing on the dock is an excellent spot to feed the fish. Watch them jump when the food pellets hit the water. For those who have experienced this with their grandchildren, it's a sight to behold. The grandchildren get as excited as the fish. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)



▲ Two automatic feeders are located along the eastern bank of Laurel Lake (behind the Racquet Club), about 100' apart. The feeders are solar powered and have been programmed to scatter food at 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. for those who want to see them in action. Once the fish become active with warmer water temperatures, the spectacle will be fun to watch because the fish hit the surface like crazy. Contrary to popular belief, fish are extremely smart and will come to know the feeding times. The motor inside the machine shoots fish food pellets into the lake in a half circle all at once—it's done in two seconds—bringing the fish scurrying to the surface. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)

ACCESSIBILITY

Until now, the only way to reach the shores of Laurel Lake was either to walk one of the trails leading to it, to climb down the stairs alongside the amphitheater or to play golf. Now the lake is accessible by a golf cart path leading through the Racquet Club. This path also serves as a much easier and shorter walking trail.

- The trail along the lake was improved with new gravel.
- The new golf cart path along the lake has a turnaround/parking area on either end.
- The benches formerly in the Racquet Club have been repurposed and strategically placed to allow gazing over the shimmering water,

catching a glimpse of birds drawn to the lake and Soleil's spectacular sunsets.

- Three new platforms were constructed for observation and to add easier fishing positions along the eastern banks of the lake.

Continued on page 18



▲ Three newly constructed fishing platforms have been put in place along the eastern shoreline for easier fishing. These platforms are also convenient places to get an unobstructed view of the lake. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)



▲ Signs on both ends of the newly graveled trail denote where golf carts must stop. Turnarounds are provided on both ends. (Photo by Greg von Seeger)

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Though the Fishing Club instigated the improvements and have provided manpower along the way, they praise the support, encouragement and monetary assistance of the HOA Board along with their Landscaping and Maintenance and Repair Committees in this beautification project.

From the beginning, the Fishing Club's goal has been to help the lake and increase the health and viability of its ecosystem.

Working with the HOA which funded this as a community improvement project, the Fishing Club either oversaw or carried out the following aspects of the project:

- installation of new fish habitats around the lake's bottom to protect small fish from being preyed upon by bigger fish.
- adding thousands of Shiner and Bream fingerlings to the fish population to create a better balance of fish species.
- installing two automatic fish feeders on the eastern shoreline to provide a more nutritious and balanced diet for the small fish. (See caption on page 17 to better understand how these work.
- installing a coin-operated fish food dispenser for residents to feed the fish. Hint: grandkids love this activity. Take quarters when you go.
- creating pea gravel spawning areas along the eastern shoreline to provide a suitable environment for females to give birth to their young and thus help grow the fish population.

Weather permitting, all the improvements should be complete by the time you read this issue of *Soleil Living*. Then Laurel Lake will be an amenity which the entire community can enjoy and share with family and friends.



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Soleil Loves to Dance

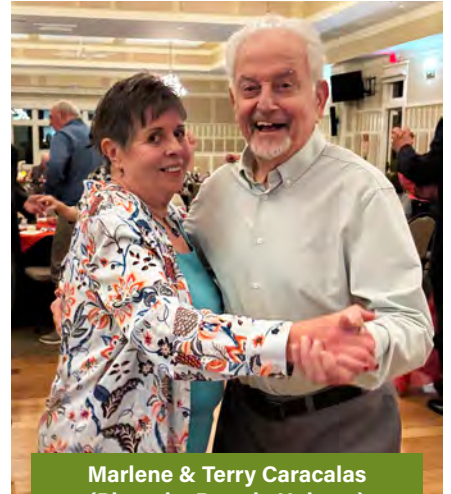
Rian Davis & the Chairmen of Swing Concert • February 7



Penny & Leo Shannon
(Photo by Sue Polmanski)



Hildegard Husar & Bill Healey
(Photo by Sue Polmanski)



Marlene & Terry Caracalas
(Photo by Brenda Holmes)



Kathy & Jim Anderson
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Shirlee & Ron Fender
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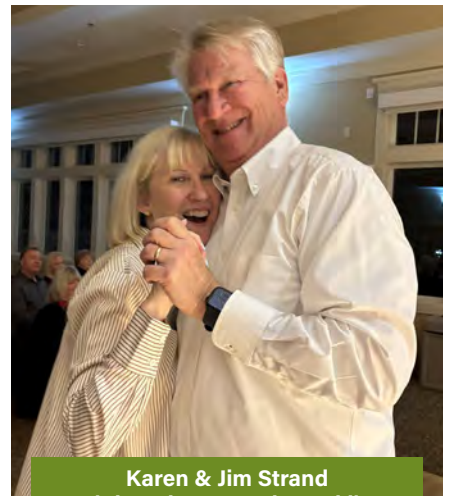
Donna & David Coppage
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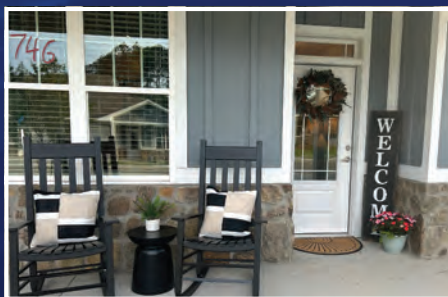
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The Rocks Beneath Our Feet | February 24



▲ Retired geologist Craig Stichtenoth leads a discussion about geology in our part of North Georgia. His presentation, titled “The Murphy Marble Belt: The Rocks Beneath Our Feet,” highlighted aspects of the complex geology found around Canton. Participants had the opportunity to view a series of geological maps and photographs and to examine rock samples from Laurel Canyon and elsewhere in Cherokee and other nearby Georgia counties. (Photo by Joe Nicholson)



▲ Soleil neighbors examine a marble wall and its associated minerals during the Soleil Rock Hounds' visit inside the Imerys Mine near Tate, Georgia in December 2023. This mine and others lie along the Murphy Marble Belt. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

▲ Soleil Rock Hounds founder Wayne Dodd describes some of the rock samples on display, including marble and quartz collected during the group's tour of a marble mine near Tate, Georgia. The samples include staurolite crystals representative of those collected by a group of Soleil residents near Ball Ground, talc that is comparable to what was once mined at nearby Polecat Mountain and garnet schist found in Soleil. The audience includes (L-R): Doug Ellsworth, Lisa Fletcher, Hodge Jenkins, Sue Dodd, Jane & Bob Matthews. (Photo by Joe Nicholson)

Paint & Sip | February 26



▲ Beth Casotti begins to fill in the body of her bluebird. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Chris Digby (right) helps Ginny Pallo complete her bluebird's beak. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Micki Farley (left) smiles as she sips and paints. Further down the painting line are (front to back) Myra Hadley, Eunice Hall, instructor Brenda Tustian, Beth Casotti and Chris Digby. (Photo by Martha Crockett)



▲ Instructor Brenda Tustian (left) helps Ellen Garrett with her shading. Seeing several canvases lined up, it's interesting to note the different interpretations of the same bluebird. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



▲ Ellen Garrett and Vicky Wesley (foreground) concentrate on creating a masterful bluebird they'll remember for a long time. In the background (L-R): Micki Farley, instructor Brenda Tustian, Myra Hadley and Ginny Pallo. (Photo by Martha Crockett)



▲ The ladies show off their completed art. (L-R) standing: art instructor Brenda Tustian, Chris Digby, Eunice Hall, Ellen Garrett, Vicky Wesley, Ginny Pallo, Micki Farley, Myra Hadley. Kneeling: Beth Casotti, Dee Proctor. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

Pet Portraits – Fall 2025



Judith Carter with Lucy.
(Photo by Chastaine Kendrick)



Jill & Tom Snipes with Linus.
(Photo by Penny James)



Kathy von Dohen & Richard Lampman with Zoey.
(Photo by Chastaine Kendrick)



Christina & John Quinn with Pete.
(Photo by Chastaine Kendrick)



Jim & Sherry Remillard with Koda.
(Photo by Bev Stichtenoth)



Priscilla & Max Omega with Niko.
(Photo by Penny James)



Bernie Rosner with Kapok.
(Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)



Donna Hagy with Pumpkin.
(Photo by Penny James)



Judi & David Hazen with Bernie.
(Photo by Penny James)

Pet Portraits – Fall 2025



*Judy & Don Cheney with Ruby.
(Photo by Penny James)*



*Debbie & James Abbott with Ginger.
(Photo by Penny James)*



*Barbara & Leo Dwyer with Oliver.
(Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)*



*Marlene & Terry Caracalas with Peta.
(Photo by Penny James)*



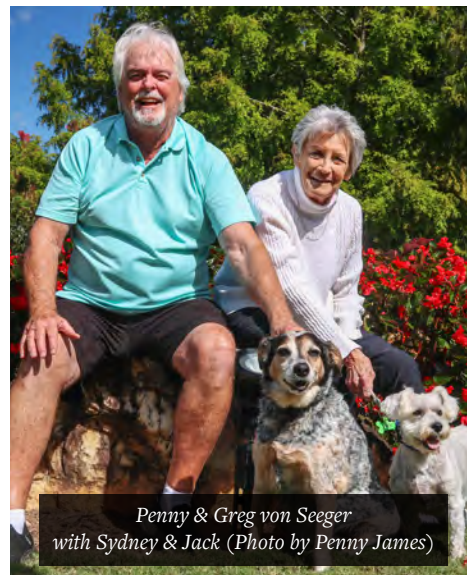
*Teresa & Doug McCurry with Sadie & Sydney.
(Photo by Penny James)*



*Kathy & Jim Anderson with son Brian and Chewy.
(Photo by Penny James)*



*Mary Beth & Dennis Burnette with Checkers.
(Photo by Penny James)*



*Penny & Greg von Seeger with Sydney & Jack
(Photo by Penny James)*



▲ Soleil soup gourmands line up to taste as many as possible. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

No Soup Nazi Here | February 21



▲ Nelle Mason enjoys her soup.
(Photo by Sallie Swartz)



▲ Kristina Croteau collects her crockpot that once was filled with her creamy parmesan, tomato & spinach soup.
(Photo by Sallie Swartz)



▲ Jon and Robyn de la Houssaye offer proof that people liked their gumbo.
(Photo by Sallie Swartz)



▲ Mike Kennedy retrieves the crockpot that once was full of vegetable beef soup prepared by Sherrie Smith. (Photo by Sallie Swartz)



▲ Bev Stichtenoth serves herself some of Linda Boisvert's Pasta Fagioli Soup.
(Photo by Sallie Swartz)



▲ Ann Brandt seems excited to have found a soup she would like to try.
(Photo by Sallie Swartz)

Winter in Soleil

BY RICKY WAYNE

In the Winter when there is snow or ice and the hill is not passable. We feel like the Donner party!

Old Man Winter tells the golfers to "Kiss My Ice."

It's possible for us to offset the winter cold with some warm memories.

On cold winter nights I often spend a little time with my friend Jack Daniels.

Winter is when we get really frustrated because we can't get the fireplace to light.

Walking to the clubhouse in February feels like you have walked all the way to Publix.

In winter we take our weighted blanket out of the closet and start using it again.

How is it that in winter the wind can blow up your pants?

The biggest lie told in Soleil in winter months is probably, "Next year we're going somewhere warmer."

Under the Rainbow

BY RICHARD CORCORAN

even now
when I know full well
that I, for one, am on or near
my last lap.

trying to better understand myself and everything else
inside and outside, up and down and all around,
trying to make myself and everything else better,
wondering, wandering, writing,
winding my way to nowhere in particular.

been taking it all in stride on this ride, this journey to
whatever lies in wait,
up our yellow brick road
somewhere up the hill ahead.

a place where white clouds float slowly by in a clear blue sky,
a place where fragrant flowers blossom with a silent sigh,
a place where busy hummingbirds and robins fly close by
somewhere...
under a rainbow.

Celebrating Valentine's Day Italian Style



By Tim Carrera

On February 10, Connections Cooking Club members enjoyed a delightful and romantic evening in the Soleil Ballroom. The event kicked off with a signature drink of Aperol Spritz and an appetizer of Caprese Tortellini Skewers. Menu items included Classic Minestrone Soup, Italian Salad, Spaghetti with either Bolognese or Pesto Sauce, and Bread and Olive Oil Dip. For dessert, a Limoncello Tiramisu with a pillowy lemon whipped mascarpone cream completed the festive affair.



▲ Carol and Hodge Jenkins create Caprese Tortellini Skewers, an appetizer with cheese tortellini, bite-sized mozzarella balls, grape tomatoes, basil leaves and drizzled with balsamic glaze. (Photo by Janice Brandt)



▲ Hosts Janice and Paul Brandt serve the hearty Classic Minestrone Soup. The recipe—prepared a day in advance by Kathy Nelson and Tom Cousens—allows the flavors to “marry” resulting in a balanced melding of flavors. (Photo by Tim Carrera)



▲ Bernie Rosner and Jackie Schierer make “tossing jokes” while making the Italian Salad. (Photo by Janice Brandt)

Irish Comfort Food | March 4

Photos by Craig Stichtenoth



▲ Under the watchful eye of Jim Harvey (right), Steve Janes stirs the mixture of ingredients for Shepherd's Pie, the main course for the Irish dinner prepared by members of the Four Seasons Culinary Club.



◀ Sporting a shamrock on his club shirt, co-host Dennis Manning readies a portion of the center counter for more meal preparation, while other members attend to their tasks in the kitchen.



▲ Jay Barber works on the mashed potatoes, another key ingredient in the traditional Shepherd's Pie.



▲ Co-host Ron Goodwin (right) oversees the efforts of Charlie Monaco (left) and Jim Loadwick, as they prepare servings of the signature side dish, maple-roasted brussels sprouts.



▲ Dinner is served—traditional shepherd's pie accompanied by brussels sprouts and made-from-scratch soda-bread biscuits with raisins. Dessert follows—Irish Apple Cake with an Irish Cream Jello shot.

Last Minute Dinner Proves Delicious

February 24

Photos by Craig Stichtenoth



▲ Appetizer crew assembles Bruschetta. (L-R): Bill Barbin, Stan Carder, Steve Jackson (co-host), HP Pelzel (team leader next to Bill). When the guest chef backed out two weeks before the February dinner, Neil DuBry threw his spatula into the ring and served as Guest Chef for a menu featuring Apricot Braised Pork Loin. Other highlights were a Bruschetta appetizer, Spinach & Strawberry Salad, Curried Fruit Medley, Green Beans Almondine, Baked Potato Wedges and Chocolate Crème Brûlée.

▲ The salad squad is ready to serve. (L-R): Rob Kraus, John Szwest.



**The Soleil Cooking Club has openings.
Contact Bob Abroms - bob.abroms@gmail.com
All recipes are on the Soleil Cooking Club website.**



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That's Amore | February 17

Photos by Bev Stichtenoth



▲ The hostess team for February's Italian-themed dinner pause in the kitchen. (L-R) Susan Hawkins, Brenda Dempsey, Linda Selfridge, Lynn Joren. The menu included lasagna, a wedge salad and Italian cream cake for dessert.



▲ The Winers & Diners Club has a tradition of serving appetizers in the relaxed surroundings of the clubhouse library.



▲ Pat Stephen (left) and Brenda Minor prepare the Italian roasted shrimp appetizer. Other appetizers were parmesan puff pastry pinwheels and melon skewers.



▲ Louie Eichman (left) and Chris Digby are ready to serve the evening's signature drink—an Italian Aperol Spritz.



▲ The Valentine-themed tables—featuring red napkins folded into the shape of a heart by Rose Russo—await the diners.

CDC's Guidelines for Senior Activity

Older adults should aim for a combination of aerobic, muscle-strengthening and balance activities each week to maintain health, prevent chronic disease and reduce fall risk.

- **Aerobic Activity:** Adults 65+ should aim for 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week (e.g., brisk walking, swimming, cycling, dancing) or 1.25 hours of vigorous-intensity activity (e.g., jogging or running), or an equivalent mix of both. This can be broken into 10-15-minute sessions throughout the week.
- **Muscle-Strengthening:** Engage in strength exercises at least two days per week, targeting all major muscle groups including legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms. Examples include resistance bands, bodyweight exercises, wall push-ups or light weights.



▲ Robin McClelland takes Gina's advice to heart with regular bike rides around Soleil. (Photo by Craig Stichtenoth)

- **Balance & Flexibility:** Activities that improve balance and flexibility are crucial, especially for those at risk of falls. Examples include standing on one leg, heel-to-toe walking, tai chi, yoga or gentle stretching. These exercises help maintain mobility and confidence in daily activities.

Regular exercise in older adults can:

- Improve sleep quality and mental health
- Reduce blood pressure and risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and dementia
- Strengthen bones and muscles, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and falls
- Enhance flexibility, coordination and overall functional independence

Information provided from the CDC website: cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics

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Soleil's Bowling League

By Bob Abrams



▲ Frank Schmidt, Bob Vetter, Carl Wellborn, Mike Gecan and Jerry Gladstone (L-R) prepare to hit the lanes at Cherokee Lanes in Canton with other Soleil bowlers. Soleil's Bowling League began in 2015, spearheaded by Roz & Jerry Gladstone. League games are every Wednesday 1-3:30 p.m. from Labor Day to the first week in May. (No bowling during Cherokee County School breaks) Soleil's Bowling League fills all 22 lanes which translates to 88 regulars with 15 or more subs. Bowlers' averages range from 85 to 200+. Calculated handicaps help even out team scoring. Each August, Roz & Jerry hold a meeting in the Ballroom for Soleil Residents interested in joining. (Photo by Bob Abrams)

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Meet Tom Cobb

Soleil's Racquet Club Director

By Lou Knight

The most common attraction to 55+ active adult communities is the built-in social connection, a sense of belonging and active lifestyle amenities. A racquet club is a major draw, along with fitness centers, pools, trails, golf and hobby studios, all of which make it easy to stay physically and mentally engaged.

Soleil is fortunate to have a beautiful Racquet Club complex and a professional Racquet Club Director, Tom Cobb. Tom has been here for nineteen years, making him Soleil's longest-tenured employee. Considering his resume, Soleil is lucky to have him.

Tom received a tennis scholarship to the University of West Georgia, was named MVP and won several conference titles. Eventually, he became the Pro at Peachtree City Tennis Center, a complex of twenty-five courts. During that time, Tom continued to compete and was ranked as high as number two in the country in men's tennis doubles after winning two national titles.

In 2002, he won the Men's 40 Grass Court National Title, and in 2003, he won the Men's Clay Court National Title. More recently, he's taken home several silver and gold medals from large pickleball tournaments.

Soleil has benefited from Tom's experience and knowledge. He recognizes the significance of the Racquet Club and takes his responsibilities seriously. At the top of his list is keeping the courts in tip-top condition, safe and playable. This includes six clay tennis courts, one hard tennis court, six permanent pickleball courts and two temporary courts. That's a lot of real estate to maintain, especially the clay courts, with each one having its own personality.

But it's not all about the courts. It's about the people. Creating an atmosphere where players have fun is very important to Tom.

"Any sport should be approachable, not intimidating," Tom said. "We have players of all skill levels in both tennis and pickleball."

So it's important to have a program that fits the different needs of current and future players. Having social round-robins, cookouts and free monthly clinics is a great way to promote both sports, and Tom also offers private pickleball and tennis lessons.

"During my time at Soleil," Tom said, "I've gotten to know so many wonderful people, who have helped me build a successful program. One of my greatest pleasures is to watch a player fall in love with tennis or pickleball and then continue to improve their game. I'm blessed to be here."

In nineteen years, Tom has seen a lot of change, some good, some bad. A year after he was hired, the construction industry collapsed, and Soleil's original developers went bankrupt. Everything stopped.

This news was devastating for many people, and the future was uncertain. Despite that, a group of Soleil residents approached Tom with a proposition. They wanted to keep their tennis director, so Tom



▲ In 2024, Reinhardt University's Head Tennis Coach Jennifer Pourchier receives a check from Soleil Racquet Club Director Tom Cobb. (Photo by Dick Slaats)



▲ In October 2024, Racquet Club Director Tom Cobb poses in front of the banners displayed along the Walk of Fame at the courts. (Photo by Rob Kraus)

continued working without pay until they figured things out.

One of the good changes at the racquet center was brought in by Tom himself. He worked for two years to get the facility approved by ALTA (Atlanta Lawn Tennis Association), the largest organized tennis league in the country. ALTA was reluctant to bring the competition this far north of Atlanta, thinking opponents wouldn't want to drive the distance. When they saw the facilities, however, they changed their tune. Competitive matches began in 2009.

Both men and women have won many senior and division titles, and their success is proudly displayed on banners along the Walk of Fame at the courts.

This Spring, six ALTA teams (four women's and two men's) are playing out of Soleil, and two USTA teams will compete against other racquet clubs.

Another change occurred as pickleball became increasingly popular, but introducing the game in Soleil was a bit complicated. The courts were striped for tennis only, and Tom had never played the game, let alone taught it. But he was up to the challenge. Soon he was certified to teach and started holding free clinics. Residents quickly fell in love with the sport. Due to demand, open pickleball is now available every day except Sunday, welcoming players of all levels.

Tom's easy-going nature and friendliness put people at ease, which is why the racquet community appreciates him so much. In 2024, a sign was unveiled at the entrance to the tennis center, recognizing Tom's years of service, dedication to Soleil and building the Racquet Club program.

"It was a special night for everybody," Tom said. "Especially me. Many players attended, and several who'd moved out of Soleil came back to take part in the occasion."

Tom was born and raised in Rome, Georgia, but now lives in Canton. When he is away from Soleil, he enjoys spending time with his family, boating and riding jet skis at their home on Lake Blue Ridge.



▲ In November 2024, Racquet Club Director Tom Cobb (white hat) presents a check for over \$1700 from the Soleil Racquet Club to representatives of Northside Hospital Breast Cancer Unit as tennis players, pickleballers and a flock of plastic pink flamingos look on. (Photo by Cat Nelson)



▲ This Spring, six ALTA teams (four women's and two men's) are playing out of Soleil, and two USTA teams will compete against other racquet clubs.



▲ Racquet Club Director Tom Cobb shares a moment with Ora and Jerome Poole at their farewell matches in August 2023. (Photo by Dick Slaats)



▲ In April 2023, Tom Cobb (left) and Reinhardt's Coach Jennifer (Tom's left) pose with Reinhardt players and Soleil Tennis players as they get ready to start the round robin play. (Photo by Dick Slaats)



▲ In September 2024, Soleil's Tennis Director Tom Cobb shows off the Wilson T3000 steel racquet he used during the Wimbledon Round Robin. (L-R): Merilee Heath, John Jenkins, Tom Cobb, Marge Nettuno. (Photo by Dick Slaats)

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