

Hilltop Herald



Fall Activities

BY ANA PECINA

With sweater season here and fall colors blooming, I will be adding Hot Chocolate to Friday's Coffee Klatsch in the activity room at 9:00 am starting September 29th.

There will be a trip scheduled to Carpinito's in Kent, where you can find fresh produce, pumpkins and a corn maze!

A Harvest Party is also in the works and costumes will be welcomed!

With grilling season over, we will be doing a morning with breakfast & an evening with Soup provided by Hilltop and pies brought by residents!

Our Dia De los Muertos altar will also be on display the week of October 30th.

More events are scheduled through November, Please see our new Kiosk in the lobby for more information a week prior.

Back in the days when I thought I would be a poet, I strutted about the Montclair State College campus in the tattered, black trench coat I had stolen from my father's garbage, and I wore fingerless, black, leather gloves I had bought at a martial arts store in New York City. I thought I would be a poet, as if that was a career option available to anyone who had chanced upon Robinson

I was thoughtful, introspective, and the economy of my words flowed from me like some appropriate poetical metaphor. And there the cows grazed (did you catch the pun?).

I wrote dark lines that impressed the hell out of me. I wore sunglasses.

Poetry is the language of mystics in much the same way that math is the language of the universe. And just like you can tell, if you pay attention, that most people who tell you about the universe don't speak math, also most people who write "poetry" are not all that mystical.

But I thought I knew something.

There was a woman on campus named Dzintra. She steamed and sizzled where most of us lived our lives as freezer bags. She spoke to me once. Her words drizzled on my ears in some exotic accent that could not be translated into either New Jerseyian or Southwestern Virginian (not sure, actually, that anything can be). I have no idea what she said, but I know I was arrogant enough to think I could write something that could call her attention again.

One of my poems earned me the Paramus Retired Teachers' Association award. There wasn't a Dzintra in the bunch.

I wrote about growing older. I remember one brilliant poem that began:

All too quickly I become old....

I know! Right? You're thinking "brilliant" (thank you) while I'm thinking maybe I didn't know as much as I thought I knew.

And I didn't. And I don't now. But I knew enough to switch to songwriting which is less of a grammatical headache.

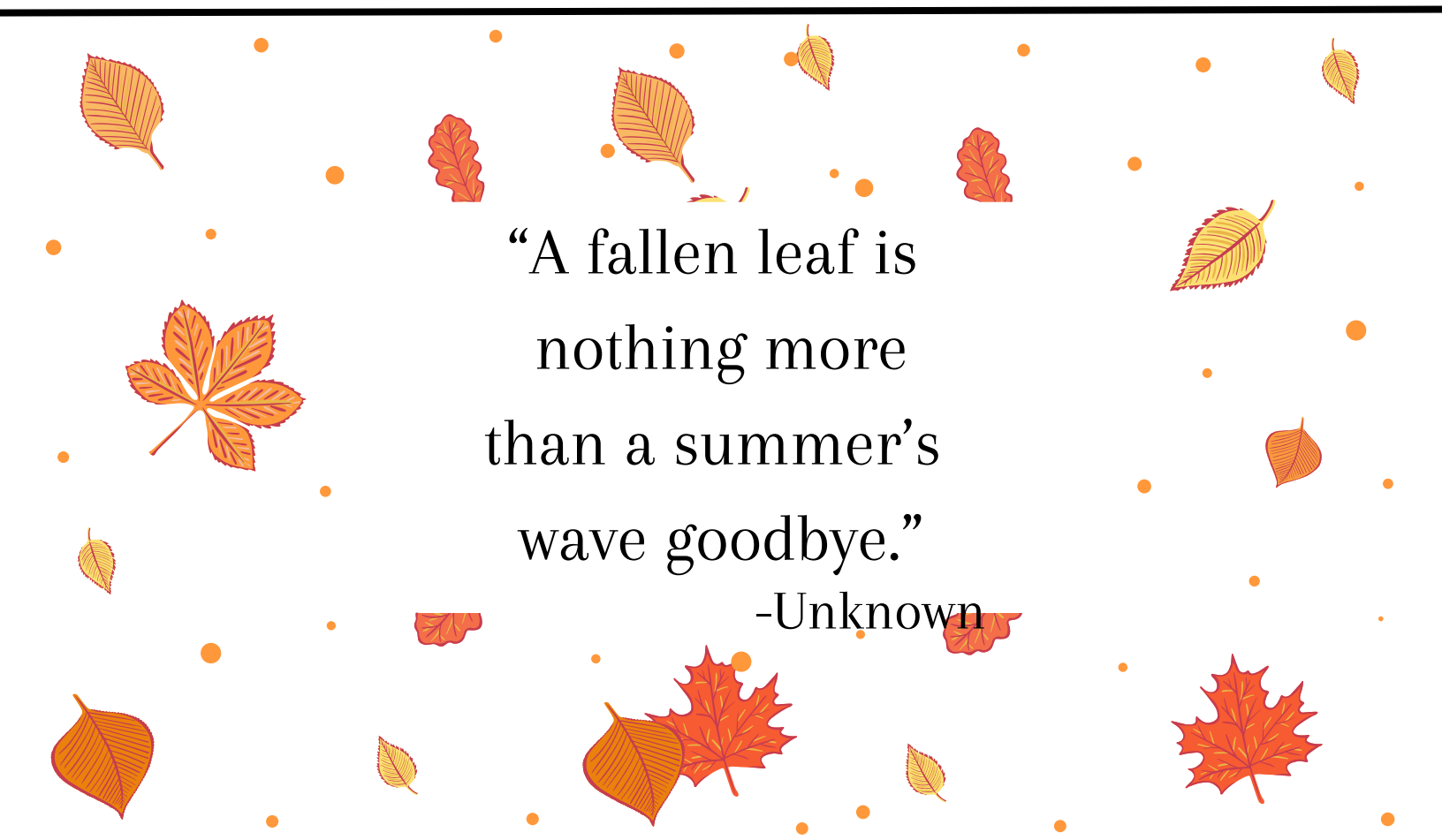
But I miss those arrogant, youthful days when knowledge had nothing to do with living or evidence. It was a belief created while looking into the mirror, an affirmation lit by candlelight or imbibed in a long drink of a German lager.

So, these days I don't attempt to write poetry because I suspect I still haven't learned much. I'm still just guessing. And even if by some odd chance I actually *did* know something, why in the world would anyone believe me?

But, I do miss those days, that attitude. Glad I had a chance to know me. Glad I moved on.

Dzintra? Oh, right, I never got her attention again, but I kept the memory.

Life is like that sometimes.

A decorative background for the quote section, featuring various autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow, scattered across a white background with small orange dots.

“A fallen leaf is
nothing more
than a summer’s
wave goodbye.”

-Unknown

Thank you to all who were able to participate in the State of Hilltop Meeting that occurred on August 8th. The meeting started with residents sharing their expectations for the afternoon; their concerns and/or what they hoped would be shared. Thornton responded by addressing immediate concerns which included plans to update internet connections and building updates (including the status of the bee removal and the completion of the back and side door repairs.) Discussion also occurred regarding resident privacy, safety and possible response to health emergencies including end of life events. Residents were reminded to update their contact info so that staff can respond appropriately in the event of emergency. The weekend relief manager is a resource available when other staff are not on site. His name and phone # are also posted at the front desk. Karen concluded the meeting by providing an update on resident engagement efforts. While Hilltop staff are focused on business operations, and informing and connecting residents with community resources, she acknowledged the impact of the pandemic on our mental/emotional health and the importance of supporting resident efforts to re-engage with others at Hilltop. She celebrated the shift and success in allowing things to happen organically as residents naturally gathered with others based on mutual interests. Of note she recognized the Café volunteers, “bagel brunch,” the “wise women group,” “coffee klatch,” scrabble and bingo groups, and Warren’s book club. Karen and Ana remain committed to supporting activities based on the expressed interests and needs of the residents, and will involve outside speakers when indicated.

Examples of recent events include: “Camp Give Back,” Verizon, Affordable Connectivity Program (internet service), and the Senior Bullying seminar. Look for coming information regarding the “Life Planning Resource Event,” to be held on Wednesday, October 25th. Please connect directly with Ana or Karen if you would like to support these events or initiate something new! Hilltop Management will continue to focus on communication and sharing information via the posted Hilltop calendars, flyers and our newsletter. “Resident connect”, using both text and voice mail options, is a means for communicating events and will be an important resource used for more urgent issues.

We anticipate having quarterly meetings to discuss the State of Hilltop. Thank you again for joining the meeting! - Deb Gumbardo and Karen Carlos

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Flowers From Our Garden
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One summer day in 1979, not long after I had moved into a new apartment complex in Oklahoma City, where I had lived all my life, I was in my bedroom at the back of my two-bedroom apartment when I began to feel rather warm. Investigation, I went to the living room, where the heat became even more intense. Stepping over to the door, I put my hand on the door and could definitely feel fairly intense heat. At this point, I was growing rather apprehensive. Then, through the curtains on the front windows, I could see huge flames. I pulled back the curtain and saw the building across the parking lot, perhaps fifty to a hundred feet from my door, was on fire. Flames were shooting up about fifty or more feet above the roof, which was engulfed in flame.

I dared not open the door, as I was already well aware of what was going on out there. There were neighbors in the parking lot, watching the blaze. I don't know how they could stand the heat. The fire department hadn't yet arrived, so this had apparently just begun minutes ago. I stood watching from my windows for a minute or two, before returning to my relatively cooler bedroom. Aside from this discovery, I remember that someone later informed me that the fire began when the resident of the second floor apartment where it had originated had been stupidly working on a motorcycle engine on his living room carpet. He had been cleaning parts in an open container of gasoline. I have no trouble imagining that he might have been smoking a cigarette as he work.

Fortunately, the fire department did arrive soon and extinguish the blaze before it had a chance to spread to any adjacent buildings... like mine. I don't recall hearing of any injuries or deaths. of the several memories I have of living in the complex, for about a year, this one is perhaps the most vivid.

- Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside Hilltop or within 25 feet of an entry. This includes the balconies, the hallways, the apartments, the garden. Also, it does not matter that marijuana has been legalized in WA. It is still a material violation of your lease if you smoke inside Hilltop. We continue to get complaints about second hand smoke. In a few cases, those complaints come from neighbors who have respiratory issues. Thank you to the smokers who follow this rule. For those of you smoking inside, please be courteous to your neighbors' health and follow this rule.



- Hilltop's wireless network is almost functional again. In case you're wondering, we finally traced the problem to a time and certificate issue on one of the Cisco routers. We may find other problems once that router is replaced, but, for now, that seems to be the main problem.



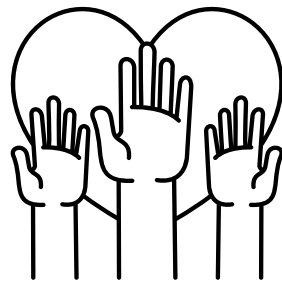
- Please do not leave food out in the garden areas. You may think you're only feeding a cute bunny, but you're also making the rats quite happy and encouraging them to live here. We continue to try and manage the rats who like our gardens.



"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." - Coretta Scott King

VOLUNTEERS

A big Thank you to all the kitchen and garden volunteers for donating your valuable time and service! Your support at Hilltop allows us to continue to fulfill our mission and serve our community every day!



FALL WORD SEARCH

Find and circle all of the Autumn words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a secret message - an Albert Camus quotation.

L O N G E R N I G H T S N A A U C N
 T O R U E S T U N Y R O K C I H R I
 M S O A Y Q E N I S I A O T R W O K
 R C Y H N E U V S T E R F H E O P P
 C E A A C G K I A S N O A A B R S M
 K N D N D S E R N E D S R N M C O U
 S C Y L N R G L U O L P M K E E C P
 Q R A K E I E R E T X G I S V R T S
 U Y D T M A N T S A E F N G O A O E
 A D Y D S I V G R T V S G I N C B P
 S N R N G Y W E H O E E N V W S E T
 H I E L P P A E S P H A S I V O R E
 B W T Y L L I H C T E S P N R F L M
 F T S E V R A H Y E L O I G C R E B
 A A U H A L L O W E E N E F I O S E
 A F L S E V A E L W O L L E Y S L R
 L O B L W E C H E S T N U T S T R D

ACORN
 APPLE
 BIRD MIGRATION
 BLOWING LEAVES
 BLUSTERY DAY
 CANNING
 CHESTNUTS
 CHILLY
 COLD
 CROPS

EQUINOX
 FALL
 FARMING
 FEAST
 FROST
 HALLOWEEN
 HARVEST
 HAYSTACK
 HICKORY NUTS
 LONGER NIGHTS

NOVEMBER
 OCTOBER
 ORANGE LEAVES
 PIE
 PUMPKIN
 RAKE
 RED LEAVES
 SCARECROW
 SCHOOL
 SEASON

SEPTEMBER
 SHORTER DAYS
 SQUASH
 SWEET POTATOES
 THANKSGIVING
 TURKEY
 WINDY
 YELLOW LEAVES

UPDATE

Effective September 30th, Hilltop House will discontinue the services of EBizCharge, the company that processes our auto-payments. We understand this service was valuable to a number of residents and their families; however, the efficiency offered by EBizCharge was well below Hilltop's expectations. We will continue offering the option of paying rent online, just not drawing funds automatically from bank accounts.

As we review our billing processes, we are beginning to move forward with our hope of making Hilltop a little greener. Over the next few months, we will confirm all our residents' email accounts. As emails are updated, we will begin sending statements to you. By January we plan on eliminating the posting of paper statements on everyone's door.

Our plan is to email residents an invoice detailing the balance of their monthly charges on the first of each month. On that invoice, there will be a link that you may select for making a payment. You do not have to use the link, as there will always be the option to pay at the counter via check, money order or cash, but it will be available to all.

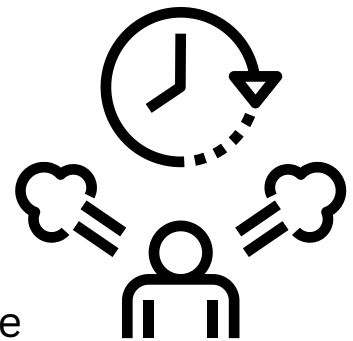
This new way of billing is an automated process that reduces the use of paper and the time spent by staff posting a statement on 124 doors. We will still give everyone the option to request a printed statement at the front counter but hope that eventually, everyone will see how much better a paper-free desk can be.

So ya just ever wonder about things? I do. I wonder when they print “grown by small farmers,” on the bag of Equal Trade coffee beans if they really are small people who farm, you know, sort of like Oompa Loompas- maybe not that small, maybe just really smaller than average people.



What calculations do they use to come up with average? Have ya ever wondered what an average person really is? Which quantities do they add up, and what do they divide the sum by to come up with average? Who decides these things? Is it scientist? Is it Neil deGrasse Tyson? Does anyone know where the middle part, deGrasee, come from? It’s not an “average” name, is it? Do you think he made it up?

Have you ever had someone who is really old and slow, be impatient with you? Do you ever feel like asking them, “ Hey, what’s up with that? Where’s the cosmic balance in that? I mean, shouldn’t someone who is slow also be patient, and someone who is quick should be impatient? Maybe my sense of balance is off.



Speaking of balance, have you ever seen a video of a mountain goat climbing up an almost vertical rock wall? Do ya ever wonder if they get butterflies in their stomachs even though they know they do have great balance? What if they’re not self-aware and don’t realize they have great balance? Do you think if they ever stopped to think about it, they might lose their confidence and slip?

Getting back to coffee, which is often grown in the mountains, I believe many of the Peruvian people are quite small, and some of them are coffee farmers. That would explain the printing on the Equal Trade coffee bean bag about “grown by small farmers.”

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New Residents:

- Maureen O’Brien 610-12
- Wilson Troung 706

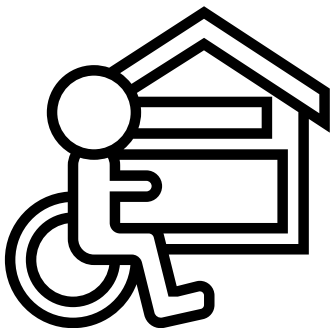


Move Outs:

- Rick Coffmen - 706
- Verbena Perez - 304
- Sharon Hunley - 400
- Charles Reid - 401
- Shirley Posteher - 1003
- Mary Lewis - 1111

Gone but never forgotten:

Daniel Mcleod and Marjorie Kirk



Hilltop House is a nonprofit corporation which owns a 124-unit apartment building. It is an equal opportunity facility that provides housing to low-income individuals 62 years of age and older through the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s 202 Program. Residency is open to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, handicap status, religion, familial status, political persuasion, sex, or sexual preference.