



Briar

Patch

Briar Patch Homeowners' Association, Inc. Website: briarpatchnpr.com

6525 Thicket Trail, New Port Richey, FL 34653



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August 21 "NATIONAL" HOLIDAY
Senior Citizens Day

On August 19, 1998, President Richard Nixon signed a proclamation declaring August 21 as *National Senior Day*. What is the age of a senior? The answer varies. There is no clearly defined age when you become a senior citizen.

Some people might consider themselves seniors when they retire from the workplace or sign up for Social Security and others aren't ready to call themselves a senior citizen. But those years can offer benefits. There are discounts and promotions that may be offered at local stores and restaurants (*refer to the March Newsletter for suggestions*). At age 50 you can become a member of AARP. At age 62 you qualify for Medicare. At age 65 you qualify for Social Security. Age is only a number anyway. A big age number only reflects that you are truly rich in experiences and in knowledge.

Throughout history, older people were pioneers of science, medicine, psychology, civil rights, engineering, and so much more. As technologies advance, these are the people who have experienced each step of the change. Senior citizens know what life was without the advancements that exist today. Seniors are a wonderful source of inspiration. Their wealth of knowledge, skill and experience offer a great deal to the next generation. Senior citizens deserve respect and dignity for their valuable contributions and this special day provides an opportunity to show our appreciation. In your life, your years are not counted but what is counted is the life that you have added to your years.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8/3 Aphrodite Gianoutsos

8/7 Marie Lawrence

8/14 Agim Bjra

REMINDER: If you haven't already, please email your birth date to me (cla@frontier.com) to be included in the newsletter.



MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Sandy Sgroe and John Portelli



On July 5, 1940, Sandy Maiorana was born in Brooklyn, New York. She had an older brother and sister; the family lived in Rosedale (near Queens) where the houses were only \$14,000 at that time!

Sandy was ambitious at an early age! When she was 15 (before graduating from Bushwick High School in 1957) she worked for a dentist; she learned quickly. Although she didn't work on patients' teeth, she handled everything else in the office including making fillings with mercury and silver, sterilizing instruments, handling the cash, doing the accounting, scheduling appointments, and also was the receptionist.

Sandy met Alfred (Sonny) Sgroe when she was 15, they got engaged two years later, and they married when she was 20, Alfred was 25.

In 1958, after classes to learn typing and stenography, Sandy was hired at Reynolds & Company on Broadway, near the Staten Island Ferry. As secretary to the Assistant Director of the Research Department, Sandy learned a great deal about stocks and bonds. She retired on December 30, 1962 and their daughter (Deanna Marie) was born on January 23, 1963. Seventeen months later their son (Robert Joseph) was born on July 6, 1964.

Alfred was a Construction Foreman at Hallen Construction Company and repaired water, gas, and electric lines. When their daughter was 9 and their son 8 and attending Catholic school, Sandy took a part-time job at a nearby McDonalds within walking distance from Rosedale. She could work from morning to lunchtime, and be home when the children came home from school. Within six months she was promoted to Assistant Manager as she had learned all the machines inside and out as well as everything involved in running the restaurant! Being efficient, she was determined that each and every day the restaurant would be running perfectly; not only because she was conscientious, but also aware that a company observer could drop in at any time to check things out. Sandy noticed one well-dressed gentleman who came in each and every morning, perhaps he was the observer. She worked three different shifts: from 4am until 1pm, 1pm to 11pm, and 4pm to 1am plus all holidays There was not much time in the day left for family. So after seven years she left McDonalds.

Wanting to contribute to their income, Sandy applied at J. C. Penney Company in near-by Green Acres Mall. While at the interview, that same well-dressed gentleman (the General Manager) she had seen at McDonalds each morning stepped in and interrupted the interview. He said, "I know this woman, she's good and I know just where to place her! Hire her immediately!" He knew Sandy's work ethic and understood her position at McDonalds required her to be certified to handle money (a definite requirement to work with diamonds and cash). Her position was salesperson at the fine jewelry counter. Not only was Sandy a good sales person, she evolved to assume the responsibilities of purchaser and later Assistant Manager. After 10 years, she retired in 1990.

In the 70's, Sandy and Alfred were very active in the Scouts organization for twelve years – Alfred with the boys (Cubs through Seniors) and Sandy with the girls (Brownies through Seniors). One young man in Alfred's group earned the distinguished Eagle Scout Award!

On November 10, 1990, their son got married and on December 9th the same year their daughter got married. Since their children were grown and gone they considered moving. Every four months they traveled from the east coast to the west coast of Florida looking for the perfect HOA villa. They heard about building going on in an HOA community in New Port Richey. Of all the villas in the area, Briar Patch was the only one with a garage! Perfect! They met with Ryan Builders, purchased property in October 1990, and moved into their new home in March of 1991.

Sandy and Alfred were active in all the "animal" clubs in NPR – Elks, Moose, and Eagles. They loved to dance, spend time with friends, and went on 41 Caribbean Cruises. After a brief illness Alfred died on December 31, 2014. In March 2016 one of Sandy's good friends invited her to a St. Patrick's Day party with the intention of introducing her to John Portelli; they have been together ever since 2017. For the past 10 years, Sandy has provided the service of Usher at every Saturday 4pm mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace.

MESSAGES FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Cement Pond

In June I met up with the project manager from 5 Star Pools. As we fell into conversation, I quickly realized that he knew the entire history of our pool.

This was an anthropological dig. As they peeled off layer after layer there were no secrets. The now softened layer on the top was from the last resurfacing; the one under it was fiberglass. Underneath the remaining strands of fiberglass was the original concrete. Yes, indeed we do have a cement pond! At that point more discoveries were made. When it was originally installed less steel rods were used than current coding regulations today. He just shook his head about the fiberglass. Obviously, that was an idea that didn't work out on top of the original. Definitely not what is recommended today. But I bet it seemed like a good idea at the time.

The project manager further explained that every resurfacing leaves its mark. This one should last a good 10-15 years, as long as we maintain the pool. By that I mean basically regularly scheduled check-ups and maintaining the water ph balances. Daily attention is the key. Between our volunteers and the pool company that goal will be achieved. Hopefully work will be completed soon and we will be able to enjoy our **new** pool.

Thank you to all those who have volunteered and those who continue to do so.

Jillian LaVelle
Director at Large



Opening-of-the-Pool Party

It's in the works! More details to follow.

Our Clubhouse is a great place for participation in any number of things such as games, crafts, and social gatherings. **BUT we need volunteers** to spearhead these activities! Please help get this going so we can all enjoy some time together.

Contact me to discuss how you can help:

donnamarie13us@yahoo.com

Ahh, the dawg days of summer. Although this summer is one of the hottest in decades, our lawns have never looked better. To keep them looking plush and green, the irrigation will be turned on and off as needed depending on rainfall.

We appreciate that most of our homeowners and visitors have been staying off the grass with their vehicles. That helps the irrigation from breaking down; but most importantly, keeps the lawns from turning brown and dying.

The mailbox replacement committee has finished their research with the Post Office and other contractors into replacing our broken down and aging mailboxes. A formal report will be presented within the next few HOA meetings.

If a homeowner wishes to change any landscaping or erect any structure, please remember to first fill out a work request found on our website or call me directly. It is very important we all take responsibility to keep our community one of the best-kept and most desirable communities in Pasco County.

Fred Ausflug
Director of Grounds & Landscape

Things to do in NPR

Backyard Bazaar

Every First Saturday • 6pm to 10pm

The Backyard Bazaar is a monthly, evening, outdoor market. It's located on Nebraska Avenue (*between Grand Blvd and Adams Street*) behind the Ordinance One Bar. Completely reimaged from last year. This newly designed market is bigger to entertain more foot traffic to the Downtown New Port Richey area. The Downtown Makers Market will feature a rotating cast of artisanal artists and makers selling handmade goods, jewelry, art, woodwork, gifts and so much more.

Calvary Church ~ 6825 Trouble Creek

Farmers Market • 3rd Third Saturdays • 9am to 1pm

Unique crafts, baked goods, plants, vegetables gifts, and more!

Dented Keg Ale Works ~ 5500 Main Street

Every Wednesday @ 7:30pm – TRIVIA

Every Thursday @ 7:30pm – BINGO

LIFESTYLE CHANGES FOR SENIORS



Health & Wellness

How you feel today and how you feel in the years to come are not the same thing. You can shape the coming

years with a positive attitude and your lifestyle. Being physically active on a regular basis, eating a healthy diet, and maintaining a normal body weight help to manage the big chronic diseases and can add a number of healthy years to your life.

Get your blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol numbers checked, and make keeping them under control a top priority.

When we think of cognitive decline, we tend to think of it as an inevitable result of aging. But if we think of it that way, we fail to see how much impact our choices today can have on our brains tomorrow.

One thing to help prevent dementia is to be in bed by 9pm. Sounds early, but the earlier you get to sleep the more *slow wave sleep* (SWS) you'll get. It supercharges our brain health clearing away toxins and waste build up and strengthens memories. SWS also abides by nature's circadian clock which can peter out around midnight. So go to bed early to maximize your time there. In our 20s we needed about eight hours of sleep every night. When we are more mature, we need about an hour less. You'll know if you're clocking enough sleep if you're alert during the day.

Monitor your blood pressure. A lower BP lowers cognitive impairment and dementia risk. Also strive for 20 minutes of exercise a day. This will lead to greater fitness and help you avoid injuries.

One of the biggest choices we make several times a day is the *choice* of what we eat. So what's the best diet for seniors to keep our brains and body healthy? Here are six easy steps to keep us in mind ~

1 PROTEIN Our bodies need 25 to 30 grams of protein at each meal – generally 25 grams for women and 30 grams for men. This keeps the process of protein biosynthesis (the elements or compounds to form more complex compounds) cranking along. **TOP PICKS:** fish, shellfish, poultry, lean meat, grains and legumes that supply complete proteins, and protein shakes.



2 FIBER Aim for at least 5 grams of fiber at each meal. **TOP FOODS:** Whole wheat pasta, tortillas and crackers; oats, brown rice, quinoa, barley, beans, lentils, potatoes (with skin on), brussel sprouts, peas, broccoli, and corn. Also tree fruits and berries.

3 HEALTHY FATS There are three types of healthy fats that you should be enjoying more of. *Omega-3 fatty acids* – These have been shown to promote muscle preservation. *Fruit and Nut Oils* – Extra virgin olive oil may reduce dementia risk by flushing out the proteins that gum up communication channels between brain cells. *Dairy Fats* – Full fat dairy has been linked to reduced risk of obesity partly because satisfying creamy fats reduces the desire to snack later on.

4 DAIRY delivers a protein punch; it's particularly high in essential muscle-building compounds called leucine. But dairy also delivers other nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, and vitamin D – all nutrients that our bodies have difficulty absorbing from food as we age. **TOP FOODS:** Milk, yogurt, cheese Vitamin D, and cottage cheese.

5 PRODUCE Each day should include at least one helping (small side salad or ½ cup serving) of cooked green vegetables to ensure you get a source of the B Vitamin folate. Folate also plays a crucial role in battling dementia, hearing loss, and depression. **TOP FOODS:** All dark colored vegetables (spinach, lettuce, kale) cruciferous vegetables (broccoli cauliflower, brussel sprouts, cabbage, watercress), red and orange vegetables (carrots, squash, red peppers, tomatoes), berries, tree fruits (apples, pears, cherries), and citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit, lemons and limes).



6 DON'T DRINK YOUR CALORIES (or chemicals) Avoid soda, sweetened iced tea, specialty coffee drinks, sports drinks, smoothies and shakes (which can be loaded with sugar). Also avoid diet sodas which have been linked to higher risk of heart disease, dementia and stroke. They may also hurt your microbiome which provides a defense against infection and helps absorb nutrients.

Of course check with your doctor before making any changes in your current lifestyle.

If the mountain seems too big today; then climb a hill instead. If the morning brings you problems, don't let it settle in your head. If the day ahead weighs heavy and your plans feel like a curse; there's no shame in rearranging, don't make yourself feel worse. A day is not a lifetime; a rest is not defeat. Don't think of it as failure, just a quiet, kind retreat. It's ok to take a moment from an anxious, troubling mind. The world will not stop turning while you get realigned. The mountain will still be there when you want to try again. You can climb it in your own time; just relax, unwind 'til then.