



# Eye on Evergreen

*Conversations with your friends and neighbors*

Vol. 5 No. 19 January/February 2026

## Winter at Evergreen



# SAFETY FIRST: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NOROVIRUS

Tis the season... Many states, including Wisconsin are seeing increased numbers of cold & flu. This season we are seeing quite a bit of Norovirus. We thought we'd take the time to explain this virus and give you some facts regarding it. We hope you stay happy & healthy in 2026!

## What is norovirus?

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that causes inflammation of the stomach and intestines. This is known as gastroenteritis, which leads to symptoms of norovirus.

## What are common symptoms of norovirus?

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Stomach Pain
- Fatigue and weakness

*Note:* These symptoms commonly cause dehydration. Signs of dehydration include dark urine or less urinating, dry mouth, dizziness or weakness, and headache.

## How does norovirus spread?

- Close contact with someone who has the virus
- Touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your mouth or nose
- Eating or drinking contaminated foods or beverages

## How easily does norovirus spread?

Norovirus spreads extremely easily and is very contagious. Anyone can become infected.

## How is norovirus diagnosed?

Norovirus is typically diagnosed by a healthcare provider based on symptoms. Further testing is available if deemed medically necessary.

## How long does norovirus last?

Symptoms usually last 1-3 days and typically people are still contagious for 48 hours after their symptoms end.

## How to prevent norovirus?

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water  
*Note:* Hand sanitizer by itself does not work well against norovirus, handwashing is best.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before eating
- Cook food thoroughly
- Stay away from others who are sick
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that could have been in contact with the virus

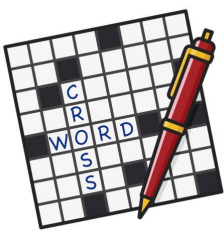


**Source:** Cleveland Clinic. "Norovirus: Symptoms, Causes & Treatment." [my.clevelandclinic.org](https://my.clevelandclinic.org)

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Have you met Courtyard resident Donna Lord? She has lived in our Courtyard since it's opening in 2017. She is from Oshkosh but lived in Southern California for 30 years. She has a brother who lives in California, three nieces and several cousins scattered throughout the country. She has a step-family as well.

She began fresh right out of high school as a legal secretary for 10 years. She then moved to California working for Rockwell in Human Resources and ended up as an Executive Recruiter where she did a lot of International hiring and relocations. Those relocations entailed finding homes and making many arrangements for families who were being hired by Rockwell.




Her favorite way to pass time is by reading and doing crossword puzzles. She also enjoys game shows and late night T.V. She prides herself on the fact that she used to plan and lead tours for the Oshkosh Seniors Center, both local & internationally, for 14 years. After her return home and quite a few years back, you may have seen her hosting “Senior Savvy”, the local T.V. show on cable access on behalf of the Seniors Center.

Currently Donna is on our Eye on Evergreen Team where she writes the “Meet Your Neighbor” & “Safety First” columns, amongst other articles as well. She belongs to the “More Than a Book Club”, attends “What’s Up? With Edie”, and is an avid member of Learning in Retirement. She enjoys many of the entertainments we offer here at Evergreen and is known for her great sense of humor. She is a joy to work with! We are lucky to have you as part of our Evergreen family Donna!

-Edie N.

### *Eye on Evergreen Committee Contact Information*

*Pat Below - belowpj@gmail.com*  
*Barbara Bowlus - bmbowlus@ualr.edu*  
*Donna Lord - dmlord9@gmail.com*  
*Vicki Moss - mossvicki6@gmail.com*  
*Alyson Hintz - alyson.zierdt@gmail.com*

**Just for Fun: Can you find the “Eye” on Evergreen?** In each issue of “Eye On Evergreen,” an eye is hidden somewhere. Can you find it?  **Happy Hunting!**

## Campus Notes

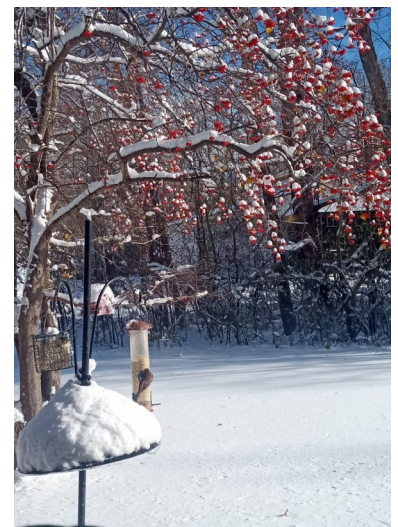
Although a heavy snowfall on December 10 blanketed the countryside, winter was coming in fits and starts, alternating between severe cold spells and periods of thawing. By Christmas time the white dome on my patio table, originally 12” high, had melted away, and the huge piles of snow around Evergreen’s parking lots were collecting dirt and collapsing. Nevertheless, thanks to our diligent ground crew, the colorful lights strung all over campus provided a festive atmosphere during the Christmas season.

As the days grew shorter and darker, residents and staff at Evergreen kept busy inside, decorating the halls, attending concerts in the Worship & Performing Arts Center and partaking in festive dinners. Staff members and a group of dedicated volunteers had crafted dozens of elaborate snowflakes which, hanging from the ceiling, created a magic atmosphere in the Behnke Center. Many thanks to all who contributed to a spirit of caring and sharing.

Yet amid all the festive activities, we also experienced the loss of two treasured members of our community: Carol Niendorf and David Cameron, both champions of the outdoors. For years Dave rode his bike all over the “universe”, and when balancing his two-wheeler was not safe anymore, he changed over to a three-wheeler and kept riding, no matter the weather. We will miss his resilient personality Carol’s involvement with the environment was of a different nature. As a member of the Wild Ones, an organization focused on saving prairie land, she and her husband Bob had restored a three-acre prairie at their home, and when they moved to Evergreen, they saw new opportunities to pursue this interest. Carol soon discovered the unkempt hill near the creek, composed of discarded building material, and with the help of her husband and a group of friends went to work to convert the wasteland into a thriving prairie garden for native pollinators. The continuous chore of maintaining this sanctuary over the last few years was a labor of love and dedication. I hope with all my heart that additional members of the Evergreen Community will become active in this project to honor Carol Niendorf’s vision and devotion.

Meanwhile as we moved deeper into winter, our area is in the grip of an arctic spell with icy roads and historically low temperatures. However, while the cold here was mitigated by sunny days, the rest of the country did not fare so well. Traveling from Texas northeast to New York and New England, a gigantic weather system dumped masses of snow and ice on the land, bringing down power lines and trees. Here at Evergreen we count our blessings and are thankful to be part of a caring community.

-Barbara B.



## What Are You Reading?

Village resident Sharon Schatz's outside book club just finished *The Rent Collector*, Wright, Camron. Shadow Mountain, 2012, Salt Lake City. Sharon's preferred reading genre is mystery, so she said she wouldn't have chosen this book on her own.



The story is set in Stung Meanchey, the largest municipal waste dump in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The geography was new to Sharon. She and husband Herm have traveled worldwide but not to Cambodia.

At the time covered by the book between one and two thousand people lived in this dump, earning a meagre living by scavenging items from the dump, recycling and selling them. The health risks were enormous, and this dump closed in 2009. The book is a fictionalized story about a real family who was featured in a documentary, "River of Victory", made by the author's son Trevor Wright. The book's proceeds went to help the real family move out of the dump.

The mother of the family, Sang Ly, is desperate for a better life for her family including her son who is sick. She finds a discarded children's book at the dump and offers it to the grumpy rent collector in exchange for reading lessons – opening worlds for her and her family and redemption for the rent collector, a university graduate whose life derailed through alcohol.

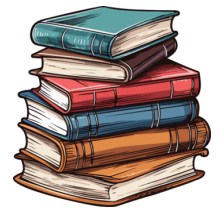
As Sharon read the book, she couldn't believe how people lived. She felt extremely privileged, protected and fortunate, which was also her takeaway from the book. She recommends it.

\* \* \* \* \*



Charles Sazama, a Village resident and member of the Library committee, found *My Brother's Killer*, D.M. Devine. Arcturus Publishing Ltd., 2016, London. while restocking returned books in the Neta Library. He was attracted but perplexed by a note on the cover that the book had been "judged Best Detective Novel by Agatha Christie", who died in 1976. The incongruity was resolved with the information that Arcturus has developed a "Crime Classics" series to republish worthy out-of-print titles such as this one. *My Brother's Killer* was originally published in 1961 by William Collins Sons and Company's "Crime Club" imprint, Glasgow.

The story begins when a solicitor (U.K. lawyers who don't practice in court) calls his brother and asks him to come to his office – a routine communication between them. When the brother arrives, he finds the solicitor brother dead on his office floor. Timelines become critical as the grieving brother gets involved in solving the murder.



Charles said the author wrote good character descriptions and a surprise ending. He finds the use of language by authors from the U.K. (Devine is a Scot) to always be enjoyable – although he did discover one double negative in the book.

His takeaway from the book was "the pure enjoyment of reading" and he recommends it to others.

-Alyson H.

## Who Knew: There was a lot of Remodeling Being Done on the Campus

Written by Juliette Sterkens and Edited by Vicki Moss

In this issue I will be featuring the extensive remodeling done by Juliette Sterkens and Max Maxfield for their condo in the 1010 Building.

When we first saw the condo that was soon to open in the 1010 building, we knew immediately we would accept it. It had terrific views of Sawyer Creek and the woods, a cathedral ceiling in the living room, and skylights. We previously built two homes in Oshkosh, designed around “Open Concept” spaces, and had become accustomed to high, skylighted ceilings and large windows. It didn’t take long for us to want to start our “encore life” at Evergreen, and we began thinking about how we could make the condo our home.

So...what started as “let’s splash on a little paint” spiraled into a massive project. We decided we wanted the glass wall between the sun and living rooms removed, and upgrade the 2nd bedroom to a study with built-in cabinets and desks and access via sliding doors from the living room. We decided to open up and modernize the kitchen with many pull-out drawers, an induction cook top and space for a larger refrigerator and built-in ovens. That last idea necessitated moving the front door further into the hallway.

The jack-and-jill bathrooms were also extensively remodeled to include a wheelchair-accessible shower, built-in linen closets, and floor heat. The washer and dryer were moved into the bathroom area. To maximize the enjoyment of the creek and woods views, we added triple-pane patio doors to the master bedroom, a large patio, and edging around the garden.

We love it here at Evergreen, and living in an open, modern condo contributes to that enjoyment. We’ve also found that the study can serve as a guest room, in a pinch, and that we can manage large inside gatherings. We enjoy seeing the seasons change, people enjoying the outdoors, and the surprising animal wildlife. Some of our favorite sightings have been a red fox, waddling possums, and a momma raccoon with several babies in tow. Plus, a bonus, there is plenty of opportunity to do wildlife photography for Max and plant Dutch spring-flowering bulbs in the garden and woods to remind me of my home country.



Video: <https://www.evergreenoshkosh.com/independent-living/evergreen-village/>

## Karen and Phil LaBorde's Renovation

In the fall of 2021, Karen and Phil moved into one of the homes at Evergreen. The initial plan was to move into the Village but there was a long wait. They were happy with the location and southern exposure, but they were not happy with the small living area, lack of outdoor seating space and a very small garden area. They approached the administration about a screened in sun room, and started the process of exploring the possibilities. They found out that for not much more money they could put on a Four season room and use it all year round.

The end result was a great room, doubling the size of their living room with many large windows and a patio door that leads out to a new concrete patio. Karen is quite happy with the ability to garden and relax outside! She said, “we did it because the living and entertaining space was too small. We can now have the whole family over as well as many friends.” They have had several parties since the work was completed and can easily entertain 20 plus people.

They are thrilled with all of the changes to their home, inside and out. However, in hindsight, they would have made the patio and flower garden bigger. The new space allows them to entertain comfortably, as well as giving “us enough room to have alone time from each other!”



-Vicki M.



### A VIEW FROM THE VILLAGE



Mary Weddig and Joan Cason



Sandi Challoner

On Monday January 19<sup>th</sup>, twenty plus Villagers braved the Arctic cold, 2 degree weather to have lunch at the Pizza Ranch in Oshkosh. Mondays are Senior Days where seniors get a discount for the pizza buffet. The buffet is quite large with salads and potatoes of several types, many kinds of pizza and their excellent fried chicken (a favorite of mine). There are also pizza desserts (sweets in a pizza format) and soft serve ice cream. Beverages include two types of tea, coffee, and an assortment of soft drinks.

Our seniors had a private room which bolstered socialization as well as dining. This was especially nice because the restaurant was filled with parents and young children and did get quite loud at times. There were several of our newest Villagers there which was nice to see. This was a very nice experience on a cold and windy day and a good time was had by all. Thanks to building 1010, Barbara Urbrock (Sunshine chair), and her team.

-Vicki M.

## Valentine's Day Toast: Stephen and Alyson Hintz

Courtyard residents Stephen and Alyson (formerly Zierdt) Hintz lived the Evergreen tagline “Possibilities Await” when they married in the Arline L. Sitter Worship and Performing Arts Center on September 20, 2025. Neither expected to find love again after losing their respective spouses while living at Evergreen, to which both couples moved in 2021.

Alyson's late husband Bill passed away in Creekview in early 2022, and Steve's wife Anne died in early 2024, each after long bouts of health challenges.

Alyson first met Steve and Anne in 2002 when they hosted a fundraiser at their home on Washington Ave. for Ambassador Tom Barrett, then running for governor. She recalls being somewhat in awe of them, knowing they were prominent members of the community, and that Steve was then the Mayor of Oshkosh. During the intervening years, as both were active in the community, their paths crossed casually.

Steve is a retired Professor of Political Science and Public Administration from UW-Oshkosh, where he initiated the Masters of Public Administration program, and worked as a municipal consultant before and after retirement from UWO. Alyson retired from being a litigation attorney in 2007.

After their spouses died, Steve noticed Alyson in the halls. He thought she was attractive and was positively impressed by her Evergreen involvement, like Residents' Council, Eye on Evergreen team and Evergreen Foundation Board. It seemed to mesh with his life of public and community service.

They engaged in small incidental conversations at first. From those encounters, they learned they had a lot in common and that conversation flowed easily. He then invited her to dinner – and she said yes. Their first date was at T.J.'s Harbor.

The couple found that their overlapping common ground, starting with active involvement serving the community, extended to music, daily breakfast cereals, travel experiences, culture, politics, senses of humor, spirituality and more. Besides their similarities, Steve says Alyson brought new dimensions to his life. He joined the Evergreen Singers as part of wooing her – and learned he loved it. Alyson can say the same – Steve's love of opera caused her to expand her musical horizons beyond her existing love for classical music. Steve is an avid sports fan, especially for his *alma mater's* team the Oregon Ducks and the Packers. Alyson enjoys watching games with him but has streaming options for her PBS mystery fix if needed.

As time passed, they discovered that much to the surprise of each, they had fallen in love. The next step was the subject of much thought and discussion – commitment ceremony? Marriage? The couple decided to go all in. Alyson moved into Steve's apartment – identical to hers but one floor up and on the courtyard side rather than Davis Child Care.



Wedding Day

Photo Credit: Michael Cooney

*Continued on next page...*



The post-marriage paperwork has been significant and is still in progress. Social Security change to Alyson's new last name was fast. Annoyingly, Medicare has still not caught up as this is written. Estate planning documents are also in progress – but Steve and Alyson strongly believe all the work is worth it to them.

Shared family has been an important element, too. Alyson, while never blessed with children of her own, has three stepchildren, four step-grands and one step great-grand. Steve has two sons, whose combined children range from 6 to 24. Most live outside Oshkosh except for Steve's younger son Gordon, well known in Oshkosh as our County Executive and longtime representative in the State Assembly. Almost everyone met, along with assorted siblings, nieces and nephews, at the time of the wedding, and happily positive vibes abounded.

The September wedding was officiated by Pastor Steve Wood in the Sitter Worship and Performing Arts Center with a reception in the Isom Fireside Lounge. The couples' main challenge was trimming their guest list to accommodate space constraints for both events. The solution: invite all to the wedding, with a second reception the following Monday for overflow Evergreen friends. The Life Enrichment team and especially the always creative Ellen Peters created outstanding décor for the reception and even a "bouquet" gloriously spilling down the front of the bride's walker. The couple felt the celebration was truly a joyful start to their life together.



-Alyson Z.

## Holiday Giving

Evergreen residents and staff came together in a big way this holiday season! Through generous donations of more than \$2,000 in cash, gift cards, we were able to support two families through *Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family* and three families at Read Elementary, our *Adopt-a-School partner*.

In addition, we contributed a monetary donation, along with mittens, gloves, and several gift cards to the *Oshkosh Kids Foundation*.

**THANKS TO YOU**—many children in the Oshkosh Community will enjoy a brighter, warmer, and joyful Christmas.



we do good things.

*together!*

## COLLECTIONS & TREASURES

Village resident Bob Brandenstein is a frog fan. It started when he was a kid and his family had a cottage. Frogs were everywhere then and easily caught. He found them to be good companions and far lower maintenance pets than dogs with daily walking needs.

After he and Connie were married, Bob had pet frogs for about ten years. They were mostly varieties of tree frogs, whose meal of choice is live crickets. Bob's affinity for the frogs was not shared by Connie. Their worst offense was that every time she spoke to someone on the phone, the frogs began a loud chorus, obliterating her conversations. In another problematic incident, Connie

had picked up an order of crickets from the local pet store. The store packed them in a paper bag with an unfortunate tear in the bottom. While Connie drove, the crickets punched through the hole and escaped all over her and the car. To Connie's immense credit, all arrived home safely, albeit with horror show memories from the experience.



After Bob broke a leg and of necessity left Connie with all the frog care, the couple agreed to shift from live to ceramic frogs. Anywhere they went they sought out museum gift shops, thrift shops and other venues where they might find additions to their collection, gathering a collection of 200+ items. When they had their home, the frogs were displayed singly “everywhere”. Many came out at Christmas time on their tree and enhancing Bob and Connie's Christmas decor. “You could never tell when you might find one”, Bob said. Larger frogs became part of their outdoor landscape.

The frogs are made of varied materials including jade, onyx, clay, glass, cloisonne tagua nut, wicker and pottery. They represent hope, peace, friendship, curiosity, love, royalty, whimsy, wealth and some are local sacred symbols.

Connie and Bob are Oshkosh natives. He went to Lourdes and she to Oshkosh High. Bob's 1965 Mustang convertible, and Connie's desire to have a ride in it, played a role in their meeting. Bob was a truck driver and long-term employee at Noffke Lumber. He has fond memories of owner Hank Noffke, whose widow Marion lives now on Manor North. Hank was a collector and restorer of classic cars like his 1936 Packard and would come to Noffke's with his newest acquisitions and give Bob, also an auto aficionado, a ride. Connie was an RN, working at Mercy Hospital on Hazel St. and Franciscan Courts retirement home. Her late mother lived at ShareHaven, which was their introduction to Evergreen. The quality care they felt she had received played a role in their decision to move here. Thanks to Bob and Connie for sharing their collection – a sure harbinger of spring!

-Alyson H.



**Do you have a collection you'd like to share for others to see?  
Please let us know!**

**For more details contact:  
Vicki Tessmer at 237-2120**

## Home Cookin' at Evergreen!

Back in the 1970's, I had a passion for cross country skiing. Each February, my girlfriends from various areas across Wisconsin would gather together for a long weekend at Mt. Telemark in Cable, WI.

Our coolers always included three staples—

1. bottles of Lambrusco wine
2. chocolate cake with fluffy, fattening frosting and
3. this **Taco Dip!**

We enjoyed skiing all day long—then returned at dark to enjoy our “stash” of treats while we watched the Winter Olympics. We called this our “Eating Olympics.”

About a year ago, I served this dip to a small group of friends, among them Betty Paterson. Betty requested it and I promised to give her the recipe. I just never could quite remember to write up the recipe for her. So here it is, Betty!

Betty as well as Helen McDermott, and Dorothy Tedlie served as my tasting team. All gave the dip a “thumbs up!”

The **Pat's Chef Salt** recipe originates from the Grey Fox Restaurant which also operated during the 70s. I worked there as a waitress while attending graduate school at UW–Oshkosh.

I almost lost my fingers obtaining this recipe. The Executive Chef never liked anyone watching his preparations too closely. Always interested in learning new techniques, my fingers came within striking distance and the knife came down—too close for comfort!!

This salt is a very mild all-purpose seasoning. Chef used on his prime rib and almost all types of meat or fish.

Enjoy!

-Pat B.



Betty Paterson, Dorothy Tedlie, and Helen McDermott

*Recipe on next page...*



## Home Cookin' at Evergreen! Cont.

### Taco Dip

#### Ingredients:

- 1 lb (85% lean) ground chuck
- 1/2 tsp **Pat's Chef's Salt** (to taste)
- 1 cup (scant) diced sweet onion
- 1 cup (scant) diced green pepper
- 4 oz can mild green chilies
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 8 oz can tomato sauce
- 8 oz Velveeta cheese
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper (optional, to taste)



#### Directions:

Over medium heat, brown ground chuck in a medium skillet until almost done. Sprinkle with Pat's Chef Salt. Add onion and green pepper and continue sautéing until softened. Add Worcestershire sauce and tomato sauce.

Cut Velveeta into 1-inch chunks. Add to meat mixture and blend until completely melted. If desired, add cayenne pepper. Adjust seasoning to taste.

Transfer to a small crockpot or chafing dish to keep warm. Serve with tortilla chips.

**Note:** I prefer Tostitos bite-size chips.

**Servings:** 6-8

### Pat's Chef Salt

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup salt
- 1 tbsp sweet Hungarian paprika
- 2 tsp ground white pepper
- 1 tsp celery salt
- 1 tsp garlic salt

#### Directions:

Place salt, paprika, white pepper, celery salt, and garlic salt in a glass jar. Cover tightly and shake until thoroughly combined. Transfer to a shaker for immediate use or store in a tightly covered container for later use.

