

By JoAnne Ferguson

## Beginning a new year . . .

It's October, and autumn has arrived. No more sweltering, humid days and nights. Fall always brings a welcome change. The temperature becomes cooler. Leaves on some of our trees change by turning into vibrant colors and falling to the ground.

Losing their leaves helps trees get ready for winter so they can conserve their energy and need for water. In fact, a protective layer of cells grows over the area where the leaf dropped. Now the trees can rest all winter. Once spring arrives, they will be busy producing leaves, and some will have flowers, thus giving the trees new life. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus said the only constant is change. Mother Nature reminds us that we are similar to trees in that our bodies, minds and surroundings are always making changes. Change is a part of life.

When I think about the time many of us have spent during the last seven months being isolated, worrying, maybe feeling lonely and perhaps some even fearful, I think of a tree during the wintertime of its life. We have been resting and protecting ourselves by staying home. We don't really understand everything about this virus and seem to be learning new things about it all the time. It is scary if you have risk factors, and many of us in Women's Club do, so many of us have stayed home except for grocery and pharmacy trips, walking in the neighborhood, and maybe getting takeout. Some of us may not even have left our homes.

I feel as if we are beginning to reach the springtime of our lives now with this coronavirus. We may have to take steps backwards if the virus begins to spread again. In the meantime, we are starting to break out and blossom. You can see people venturing out to the beach, and maybe some of us are going to restaurants and shopping. Life is slowly returning to what was normal for us, and the Pine Knoll Shores Women's Club is also coming back to life.

We understand if you feel the need to continue staying home and not attending meetings. You need to take care of yourself. For those of you who feel you are ready to venture out, we are going to start Women's Club this month. We will be meeting at McNeill Park on October 23, beginning at 10 a.m. Please wear your mask, and bring a chair. We will not be serving any refreshments. The officers for the 2020-21 year will be installed during this meeting. Even though it will be different, we will still have fun. We are looking forward to seeing you!

If you are not a member of the Pine Knoll Shores Women's Club, but are interested in joining, please come. We welcome any woman to join us who lives or works in Pine Knoll Shores or any woman living or working on Bogue Banks or any surrounding community who is not served by another women's club. We look forward to seeing you.

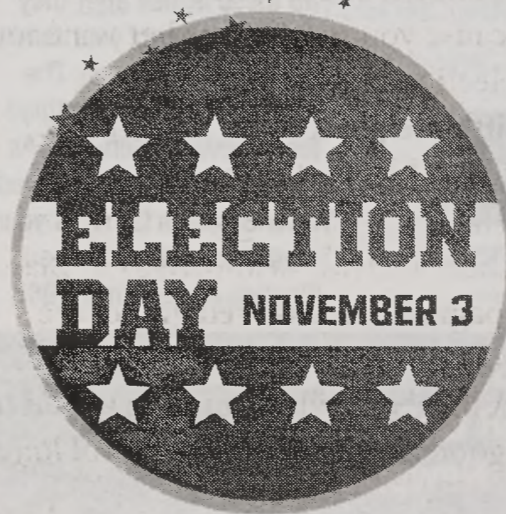
—Information about the life cycle of trees is adapted from a posting dated November 8, 2017, on EarthSky.org by Deanna Connors, PhD, MS. Her expertise is in Toxicology and Environmental Studies.

## Halloween Safety

(Continued from page 3)

Pine Knoll Shores police officers will be out patrolling on Halloween, keeping an extra eye out for our children. If you see them and wave, they may stop and give you a treat. Sorry, adults, this is for children only. No matter what this year's Halloween may look like because of COVID-19, we want everyone to have a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treating experience.

## Remember to Vote!



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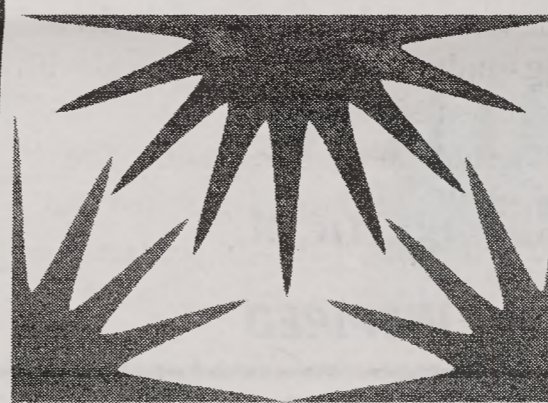
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