Panther Patch closed due to yellow jacket invasion



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Our family spent Labor Day week in the north woods of Michigan. The Staneks have roots in a small town, Vulcan, near Iron Mountain. We also have our favorite watering hole, The Bunker, in Niagara, Wis.

As the petunias quietly faded away, we introduced some fall mums to the Peck Panther Patch prior to our Labor Day trip. I would suggest you visit the garden, but just not yet. Unfortunately, the garden is temporarily closed. Some of the school children stumbled across a family of yellow jackets who decided to make the garden their home, and a few were stung. Luckily, none of the children suffered any bad side effects.

But when my husband decided to water the garden, which was much needed, he was stung several times. As he walked the block home, his bites quickly turned into hives.

After sitting on the porch for a few minutes, his lips started to swell, he couldn't talk and had trouble swallowing. I immediately called 911 and he spent the evening in the hospital. He never had an allergic reaction before, but now he will carry an epi pen with him. I would also like to thank the paramedics from CFD ambulance 78.

So, if you happen to come across a nest of yellow jackets, cover your face and walk away slowly. Fast movement can attract more yellow jackets, causing more stings.

These three events are outside Archer Heights and West Elsdon, but may be of interest:

• There will be a paper shredding and prescription drop-off event at Byrne Elementary School, 5329 S. Oak Park, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 25. This useful public service is provided by 23rd Ward Ald. Silvana Tabares, in cooperation with the Cook County Sheriff's Office and the Chicago Lawn (8th) District Police. If you participate, please remain in your vehicle. Masked volunteers will walk up to you andaccept your donation.

• A "Get Behind the Vest" pancake breakfast is set for 8 to 11 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 3 at St. Daniel the Prophet Church, 54th and Natoma. The cost is $5 per person, and there will be drive-through service. The event is sponsored by Ald. Tabares, St. Daniel the Prophet Parish and the Garfield Ridge Neighborhood Watch. Proceeds will benefit the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation and its ongoing drive to purchase protective vests for police officers in the city. For details, call Tabares' office at (773) 582-4444.

• The Garfield Ridge Chamber of Commerce's weekly farmers market continues to the end of this month in the parking lot of Mayfield Banquets, 6072 S. Archer. Stop by from 3 to 7 p.m. each Wednesday for farm-fresh fruit and vegetables, honey from local apiaries, grass-fed meat and poultry from a free-range farm in Michigan, freshly baked fruit pies from the Fasano Pie Company, and much more.

I wish a very happy anniversary to my dearest friends, Pat and Russ Charleston. I was a bridesmaid at their wedding many years ago. Pat has her roots in Archer Heights, but resides in Garfield Ridge.

Happy birthday wishes go to two of my favorite St. Turibius divas: Sandy Vrkljan and Mary Rose McNamee.