



FALL NEWSLETTER, 2021 BY KAREN SHUGHART

## Happy September

This is the first newsletter I've written in about a year. The pandemic plus several family situations that I had to deal with kept me from writing as much as I'd planned. I hope you had a good, safe and healthy year.

While summer is always a wonderful season here on the lake, the switch was flipped a short time ago, the weather has changed, and we are experiencing the beginnings of what I hope will be a fine autumn. Farm markets are filled with a bounty of local, seasonal produce: luscious apples, root vegetables, squashes and hearty greens. Mums with their rich fall colors add warmth and texture to the season, and most days the sun burns bright and warm in an azure sky.

I look forward to this season with its colorful leaves, mild daytime temperatures and cool nights. The air smells of earthy decay, lawns freshly mown and the fresh brininess of the lake.

We've been seeing Monarch butterflies everywhere here in the village, a good sign as they travel from Canada to Mexico this time of year. What a miracle that they make this challenging trip.

We're also seeing more bald eagles flying over the lake now; in fact, one dropped a huge fish in our yard one afternoon. I'm guessing it was even too big for her. At night we hear the eerie cry of a screech owl while it's hunting prey. A barn cat has taken shelter on a wicker chair on our front porch in the evenings, we find her curled up fast asleep when we awaken early in the morning.



As most of you know, ***Murder in the Cemetery***, the second in the series of Edmund DeCleryk mysteries, was published almost two years ago by Cozy Cat Press. Because of Covid, there was no celebratory launch party, and book talks and signings were cancelled. This summer sales picked up as gift shops, bookstores and historical societies opened their doors to patrons.

I've completed the full first draft of book three in the series, ***Murder at Freedom Hill***, with not only a murder, but also a diabolical terrorist plot. I won't tell you more about it, you'll have to guess when you read the book. Now comes the hard work as I delete overused words and rewrite sentences, remove paragraphs extraneous to the plot, discover inconsistencies and polish, polish, polish. I'm coming down the home stretch, I think, and at will soon be at the point where I'll be able to send the copy to my Beta readers.

My hope this autumn and for the coming year is for a more balanced world and a year of peace. Be well, my friends.

*Karen*

