

ELUSIAN FIELDS

November 2006

The Official Paradise Valley Estates Residents' Newspaper

Volume IX, Issue 11

A Slightly Unconventional Thanksgiving

It's just my nature to overdo things, especially when holidays are involved, and I lean toward quasi hysteria when the holiday involves family. I always try to outdo previous performances, my own and everyone else's. That was the case in our 1990 Thanksgiving celebration at our home in Chico.

We were just going to have family, our immediate family being relatively small, but that year was going to be special as we would all be together, including a contingent from Canada. I was determined to make it memorable.

Of course, we would have a traditional turkey with all the appropriate accoutrements, in large quantities to be sure. To add to the festivities, I visited the local costume rental store and loaded a sack with what I considered apparel relevant to the occasion.

The clan arrived and, after the usual hugs, kisses, "Oh, you look wonderful," and "My, how you have grown" greetings, I dumped my sack of Pilgrim fashions on the family room floor. My guests were undaunted, as they're used to my eccentricities. "Pick whatever appeals to you," I instructed. "Don't worry about the fit." I provided lots of safety pins to accommodate.

To encourage the others, I donned a rag of a long skirt, an oversized blouse with rolled up sleeves (to give the impression of an overworked

Pilgrim mother slaving over a hot hearth fire), and the typical bonnet tied under the chin. My husband pulled on the equivalent of seventeenth century knickers. The others good naturedly found raiment that made them appear equally ridiculous, but the high point of our little game was the look on our five year old grandson's face when he viewed himself in the mirror. He had donned a band of Indian feathers, instantly becoming Big Indian Chief.

Dinner went well following a sincere prayer of thanksgiving, then lots of laughter, and the usual overindulgence. I suggested that before we removed our costumes, we might all go out into the front yard for pictures. Jim set up the tripod and the self-timing camera, and we crowded together with great grins lighting our happy faces.

Suddenly we noticed neighbors gathering outside their doors, gaping at us. I guess we were a pretty odd sight. We just happened to be celebrating that 1990 Thanksgiving on the last weekend in AUGUST, as August was the only time we were able to gather our whole family that year to celebrate our very favorite American holiday. It was indeed one of the most memorable we've ever had.

—by Linda Faraday



An Active Couple

Jeanne and John Kersten acted decisively when they decided it was time to leave Sarasota, FL, and move closer to three of their children, who live in Silicon Valley. John discovered information about Paradise Valley Estates on the Internet. He called and found out they would be welcome. Jeanne quickly made reservations to fly to CA the next day. One visit and they made the decision to come.

Jeanne was used to being on the move as an “army brat.” She was born in MO, moved subsequently to MD, KS, HI, NJ, and NY. She had attended many schools, but the shortest stay was only a half day, when her father had received unexpected orders. She graduated from Wellesley College.

John was born and raised in a mid-sized town in Iowa, his family consisting of parents and five children. He learned to sail on Lake Michigan, which was a factor in the Kerstens’ decision to live in Sarasota, FL. After high school, he attended Notre Dame and then went to medical school at Northwestern. The U. S. Army eventually sent him to Tokyo to Sugamo Prison, where he was among doctors who took care of Tojo, “Tokyo Rose,” and the other war prisoners awaiting trial.

After Wellesley, Jeanne joined her parents in Texas and got a job. One day her mother came home and asked, “How would you like to go to Japan? General Dumas, who is stationed in Yokohama now, said to tell the Army girls that there are good jobs in Japan.” That far-off land during the post war period was appealing, so off Jeanne went to Tokyo. Her job was as an editor preparing documents for the on going war trials. While there, Jeanne and her desk mate were invited to

attend a wedding in China. As they flew over, they could see villages burning in the wake of the Communist take over. The Communists had not yet reached Peking, so they were able to get in and out of China safely.

John and Jeanne were introduced by the wife of Sugamo Prison’s commanding officer. They had nine dates before John was ordered back to the States. They corresponded by letters and eventually married. John joined his father and two brothers in his hometown, Ft. Dodge, IA, establishing the Kersten Clinic, which grew to include 20 doctors.

The Kerstens are parents of four daughters and two sons. Among their happiest family memories is a ten-week camping trip in Europe. They bought two VW vans, one with a pop-up roof, and a tent, and visited eleven countries

One son, who became a doctor practicing in Saudi Arabia, suggested his dad for medical director at an eye hospital in Riyadh. His parents jumped at the chance of living in the mid-east for a year. John had started his medical practice with Japanese interpreters and finished with Arabic interpreters.

Here at PVE John has established a Dixieland jazz band with enthusiastic members and helps as a DJ at the dances. He serves on the Health Care and Patriotic Committees, while Jeanne is a member of the Community Safety Committee.

—by Joan Teague



Every Man Needs a Teddy Bear

Several years ago, when we were still living in France, we were at a local supermarket during the Christmas holiday shopping season. At the end of one of the aisles, perched on the top shelf, was a teddy bear that really caught my fancy. I looked at the price, and it was not so fancy anymore. I thought, “Oh, well, it would have been nice but not at that price.”

Christmas came and went, and we were again in the store, and the bear was still on the shelf. But the price had been reduced by about fifty percent. Much better, but still not that good. For the next two or three months we saw the bear was still there, and the price was being reduced little by little.

Along came April, and I was in the store with some of our neighbors. The bear was still there, and the price had been reduced even more. Suddenly, the bear looked more enticing. I thought, “Hey, I’ll pay that much for the bear.” By this time, the bear was on the floor at the end of the aisle, trying to attract a buyer—and he did. I put him in my shopping cart. He had to ride upright in the basket as he was too tall to lie down. Continuing around the store, I noted that every kid I passed looked with great envy at the bear.

At the checkout counter, the clerk was very noncommittal, as checkout clerks in France generally are. I paid for my bear, and out to the car we went. There were four of us, and it was a rather small French car, but it did have a sunroof, so we opened that and pushed the bear up through the roof of the car. He looked like some high-ranking general standing in the car reviewing his troops. Off we went down the highway to home. Joan was surprised when we came down the driveway with a bear sticking out of the sunroof of the car, but she was delighted that I finally had my bear.

And I now have him here at PVE. Oh, did I forget to describe him? He is a little over four feet tall, and his name is “Bearnard.” I have decided that if I ever need to go into assisted living arrangements, or even extended care, Bearnard will go with me, as every man needs a teddy bear.

—by Fred Montanye

A Gesture of Friendship

In 1985 my husband and I were planning a trip to China. I read an article about the pride Chinese parents take in their children. At that time, each married couple was limited to one child, so these were especially treasured. I had the bright idea of carrying a Polaroid camera and taking pictures of children and giving them to the parents as a gesture of friendship. Perhaps the article I had read suggested it to me. At any rate, I bought a Polaroid camera and many packs of film – all I had room for in my luggage. My husband always took slides and prints whenever we traveled, but my camera would be no competition for him.

The Polaroid camera was a big success. I snapped dozens of children, little china dolls with their big brown eyes and black Buster Brown haircuts – most often dressed in red, the Chinese color of good fortune. Crowds would gather with murmurs of amazement as each negative magically developed into a colorful picture. Parents would push their children toward me over and over, wanting me to take a picture of their child. In every square of every large city, I’d go through two or three packs of film.

My husband found it amusing as he watched, and then he went on to take the usual pictures of a myriad of pagodas, temples, monuments, the Great Wall, the terra-cotta warriors, and all of the wonders of this country so new to us. Every photo was duplicated by a slide shot.

At home after the trip, my husband showed his slides and pictures to our friends and family ad infinitum and often told of the crowds that would gather around me as I took Polaroids of their children and presented them to the parents as tokens of friendship. “Don’t you have any pictures of her taking those pictures?” people would ask. And my husband would reply, “I just never thought of that.” I realized, too, that I had no pictures of the children I’d taken. I’d given them all away.

So one of the cultural aspects of our trip to China went unrecorded, except to dozens of Chinese families who may still have their childrens’ faded, dusty Polaroid pictures pinned to the walls in their homes.

—by Elly Vasak

Veterans' Day, 2006

John Regan, chairperson of the Patriotic Holiday Committee at PVE, has announced plans for the annual observance of Veterans' Day on November 11, at 11 a.m. Following the traditional color guard ceremony, a residents' parade, led by an ROTC detachment and members of Fairfield High School's Scarlet Brigade, will gather at the Constitution Avenue entrance to the community. For this parade, residents representing all services are invited and encouraged to wear their uniforms.

For the first time, the parade route will proceed along the newly-paved road leading from the PVE entrance directly to the Community Center. Residents will gather in the Multi-Purpose Room for a patriotic program, featuring a video presentation, music, and a keynote address by an invited guest speaker. In previous years, the program has highlighted events of specific military actions: World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. For 2006, the Patriotic Committee hopes to have a speaker who has served in Iraq, scene of the present conflict, to describe the feelings relating to that duty.

A buffet luncheon with a patriotic theme and flavor will follow the program. All residents are cordially invited to attend this program honoring the men and women who comprise our veteran population at Paradise Valley Estates.

—by Liz Wildberger



New Air Force Memorial

Thoughts on “The Greatest Generation”

Armistice Day was proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson on November 11, 1919, a year after the end of World War I. In May 1954, by an act of congress, the name was changed to Veterans Day to honor all who served. Phyllis Miller's article captures that spirit. Ed.

It was a wonderful time. We were young and healthy, and we had a job to do, a purpose in life. We were Americans; we got things done, and boy oh boy, did the Hitler-Tojo thing need doing! So in Navy parlance, “Damn the torpedoes, full-speed ahead!” We got it done. It wasn't easy, and things looked pretty grim in 1943 and 44. But we Americans, service and civilian alike, got busy and DID it. There was nothing great about it. We had a job to do, and we did it.

There is a good deal of satisfaction in looking back. We did something that counted. The men were shot at; many, many of them lost their lives. I remember several of them. Our lives were totally disrupted and would never be the same again. We were separated from our loved ones, some as long as three years. Those in service learned military discipline—keep your mouth shut and do as you are told, no arguments. It lasted a very long time, nearly four years for America. When it was finally over, all we wanted to do was get back to real life and forget all about what has been called “the largest single event in the history of mankind”—World War II. As Tom Brokaw said, we think, “Whatever else I did in my life, I did that. I had a part in something that was larger than our ability to understand it.”

But, “The Greatest Generation?” No. We were just ordinary Americans who lived at a time when we were called upon to do a big job, and we did it just as our forefathers did their jobs and the present and future generations will do theirs. It's the American way.

—by Phyllis Miller

Thanksgiving in Tijuana

It was Thanksgiving a few years before we moved from San Diego to PVE. Some of the family had gathered: a daughter, son-in-law and baby, two sons, one house guest.

The son-in-law, Jerry, said, "I have to run down to Tijuana to get some blood pressure pills." Medication was one-third the price in Mexico for the very same brand.

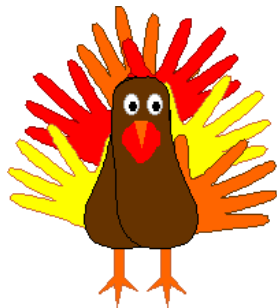
John, my husband, fearing that he might be pressed into service for the Thanksgiving feast, volunteered with alacrity, "I'll go with you."

The house guest, Tim, had never been to Mexico, so he was eager to join the party. One of the sons, Peter, also expressed interest.

The daughter, Rebecca, and I exchanged glances. "The men are going to take off and have a ball while we slave in the kitchen all day." We quickly assessed all that we had done the day before. The turkey was already in the oven, the pies baked, cranberry salad and sauce in the refrigerator. "We'll go, too" we announced to everyone's surprise. Weren't the women supposed to know that their place was in the kitchen? Of course, this meant that the baby would go along, too. The eldest son, another John, who had seen more than he ever wanted of Tijuana, volunteered to stay behind and baste the turkey occasionally.

It was obvious that no car would hold all of us, so we decided to go on the bright red, so-called Tijuana Trolley, which would take us to the border. Soon after crossing over we discovered a convenient "farmacia," so the purpose of the trip was fulfilled. We walked on into town to the busy Revolucion Ave. It wasn't a holiday in Mexico, so all the merchants were hawking their wares on the sidewalks as usual. "Senor, Senora, come right in. Best merchandise in Tijuana. Best prices. Big bargains." We noted that the same merchandise was available in every shop.

A poor gray donkey with added black stripes stood with a brightly painted cart on every street



corner. They were supposed to look like zebras. These poor animals had been a standard feature of Tijuana ever since we started going there more than forty years before. On our very first trip to this foreign city we had had our picture taken on one of the rigs. Now we decided we needed to commemorate this unusual Thanksgiving, and all clambered aboard one of the carts. The photographer informed us that it would be a while before he got the picture developed, so we went across the street to the Jai Alai Palace, outside of which was a sidewalk café. We ordered margaritas and sipped them, basking in the warm November sun.

We got our ridiculous picture and were glad to have it as a reminder of a most unusual Thanksgiving Day. At home again, we found that the turkey was roasted to perfection, and we quickly put together the rest of the meal, proving that the cook doesn't have to be chained to the kitchen on holidays.

—by Joan Teague

Flying Turkeys Down Under

Thanksgiving Days without family are too many to remember. One I distinctly remember is 1944 when I was based in Townsville, northern Australia. Tactical Army Air Corps units by this time had moved up into northwestern Dutch New Guinea, leaving behind caretaker detachments at Cairns, Cooktown, and Iron Tange on the York peninsula, north of Townsville, and in Port Moresby and Merauke in Papua, Australian New Guinea.

I volunteered to fly a load of groceries and frozen turkeys to these housekeeping troops. I was unexpected and, needless to say, welcomed at each landing.

I never tired of flying over those colorful coral reefs paralleling the York peninsula between Townsville and New Guinea.

—by Ancil Baker

Thanksgiving in North Africa, 1943

Our unit (the 37th Air Depot Group) was based in Casablanca, Morocco, and our job was to get aircraft combat ready. We either assembled aircraft that arrived by crates, or planes we unloaded from ships or that we flew off Jeep carriers at sea.



Prior to Thanksgiving Day 1943, we were lamenting the fact that we would not have any turkeys for our holiday meal. Fate then stepped in. A Navy Jeep carrier was due to arrive with a load of P-47s, and fate also arranged to have me assigned the port duty in charge of the unloading of these planes. While I was on the deck, one of our enlisted men told me that he had gone below deck into the ship's mess storage area and found that it was loaded with boxes of turkeys. As any military man would know, it would be almost impossible to sneak any of these boxes past the officer of the deck.

Inasmuch as the "statute of limitations" has now run out, I confess that I thought it would be a great idea if we placed two boxes of turkeys in the cockpit area of each plane that we lifted over the side.

We had a wonderful turkey dinner that November 1943, and we will always be eternally grateful for the flimsy lock placed on the door of the Navy's wire meshed storage area.

—by Dick Betchley

My Thanks

I would like to extend my deep appreciation to the residents and staff of PVE for all of your kind cards, condolences, and help at the loss of my husband, John.

Nell Wash

Memorable Thanksgivings

Some Thanksgivings are more memorable than others. In my case, in 1942 and 1943, it was observed in an entirely new way. These were my first Thanksgivings as a POW in WWII. It was not a public display; each man gave thanks in his own very private, personal way. Most of us were very thankful that we were still alive. Because a buddy had spotted the Japanese guard in time, we had narrowly escaped being caught and beaten for picking up fruit that was rotting on the ground. We were not allowed to pick it when it was ripe to use to supplement our meager rations of rice and vegetable tops. We were grateful that this time we did not get diarrhea, because we did not have time to properly clean the fruit before we gulped it down.

In 1944, we were again thankful that, somehow, we had survived a 92-day nightmare on our trip from the Philippine Islands to Japan in one of the "Hell Ships", that we were able to witness the daily flights of US bombers over Japan, that we had survived the bombs that landed near our camp, in the secure knowledge that we were winning the war, thankful for the consolation and comfort we received from our buddies when we despaired.

Finally, I was thankful for the 1945 Thanksgiving family gathering at the home of my sister in Custer, South Dakota, reunited with my brother, who had been captured with me in the Philippines, but had, shortly after our capture, been shipped to another camp, and his fate was unknown to me until after the war. He too had survived a horror of three years as a slave laborer in Japan. I was thankful that another brother had survived the landing on Iwo Jima and was one of the three men in his company that was not a casualty when the island was finally declared secure, that a fourth brother was also reported safe aboard his ship in the China Sea, that soon all of them would be back in the United States.

No Thanksgiving, before or since, has ever been observed with as much heartfelt thankfulness on the part of my entire extended family.

—by Ray Heimbuch

Heart Connections across the Sea

Many residents were curious when they observed some fancy decorations being put up at the the De-Long Pavilion by Peg Cutshall and Airo Gonnella. Following is a heart-warming story that tells the answer:

My surrogate daughter, Yuki Nagato, from Tokyo, first came to visit our family when she was 12 years old. She crept into our hearts so much she has returned, a welcome visitor, year after year for the past 25 years or so! These visits always came at Christmastime so that our kids would say, "It wouldn't be Christmas without Yuki!"

Lil and I had the honor of helping Yuki select a college to attend here in the Bay Area, and we stood up as her parents when she graduated from Notre Dame College, in Belmont, California. She received her B.S. in Business Administration and now runs a firm in Tokyo called the Arthur and Lilly Consulting Co.

After her father died, she confided in me, "I'd like to walk down the aisle with you, Dad" But I wasn't expecting a call in August from her saying, "We're coming in September for that walk and to hold a wedding party." As many of you know, Lil and I have both been troubled with recent medical problems, and I confided in Peg Cutshall my dilemma. She suggested holding the rehearsal and party in the DeLong Pavilion and offered to do the decorating with Airo Gonnella helping. That solved my problem in a minute! They did a wonderful job, aided by Peg's bountiful garden, and the site never looked better.

Everyone pitched in. My daughter, Lisa, brought in a lovely wedding cake, and PVE set the tables for 25 guests. I had to do double duty as both the father of the bride and the minister, but I arranged that by getting permission and blessing from Lil's brother, a retired Congregational minister, who was unable to be present. The happy couple left for a honeymoon in Yosemite and then returned home to Tokyo for the actual wedding on Oct. 8th.

Guess what! They'll be here at Christmastime, and maybe you'll get a chance to meet them.

—by Arthur Balensiefer

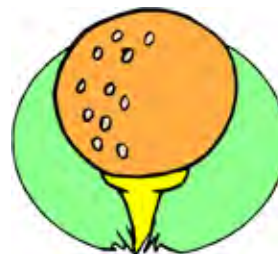
PVE Golf News

Six groups participated in the October 4th golf tournament. The weather remained good for the entire time; there was no rain until we all returned home.

The winning teams were:

- 3rd place with 78: Jim Graham, Wayne Elwood, and Bettyann Fritz.
- 2nd place with 75: Jack Biederman, Don Herrington, Pat Maguire, and Don Sanders.
- 1st place with 74: Walt McDaniel, Earl Graham, Glenn Dow, and Virginia Tracy.

—by Glenn Dow



Mark Your PVE Calendar

"More Great Songs From Broadway Flops" on Monday, November 6, at 7:30 p.m., in the Multi-Purpose Room.

"Unfortunately for Broadway, but fortunately for us, there is no shortage in the number of big musical flops. Even the best composers and lyricists had shows that somehow went awry, and we'll be offering songs by Broadway greats Jerry Herman, Charles Strouse, Kander & Ebb, Alan Jay Lerner, Irving Berlin and Leonard Bernstein", says NBTE Director, Sam Schieber.

The North Bay Theater Ensemble will present this concert with a chorus of 50 singers, and their own wonderful soloists will be featured.

Later on, you won't want to miss The Horn Man, Bill Nemoyten. On Friday, November 17 at 7:30 p.m., in the Multi-Purpose Room, you can see and hear a variety of horns in all shapes and sizes.

—by Lise Hansen

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

Intriguing new studies say the same preventive measures that help your heart could also help prevent dementia. Over the last three years, the single most significant trend in research is the evidence that risk factors for heart disease track with those for Alzheimer's disease. This idea has become known as the vascular hypothesis.

Research has shown that the plaques and tangles that characterize the brains of Alzheimer's patients were three times more common in the brains of people with heart disease. Other studies showed a correlation between hypertension (high blood pressure) at the age of 70 and a tendency to develop Alzheimer's disease 15 years later.

Changing your lifestyle isn't foolproof protection against Alzheimer's disease, but the same measures that help the heart appear to help the brain.

Here are some of the steps you can take to improve your odds of staying sharp well into old age:

Keep your blood pressure in the normal range 120/80

Eat a heart healthy diet including fish and foods rich in vitamin E

Control cholesterol levels

Exercise regularly

Things to avoid:

Smoking

Foods high in saturated fats and trans fats

Excess weight

Overeating

A sedentary lifestyle

Where does one begin?

A phone call to your fitness manager to re-view your health and activity history and prepare a customized fitness program just for you would be a good start. Regular physical exercise not only burns calories and strengthens your cardiovascular system but can also raise your HDL "good" cholesterol levels.

You can get this heart benefit from brisk walking, an aerobics class, or other aerobic exercise. Our class offerings include traditional water aerobics and very specialized classes, including Tai Chi, Chi Gong, and guided meditation for stress relief. Why wait; it's never too late!

—by Jan Olsen, Fitness Director



New members of Resident Council

At the recent election, three new members of the Resident Council were elected. They are (left to right): Dick Brown, Dinny Fisher, and Ray Heimbuch,

My Mother's Dog Sandy

We named him Sandy because of his coloring. He was a big beautiful German Shepherd just the color of the sand along the dry creek bed that bordered the northern acres of our farmland in north-eastern Colorado.

He was Mother's dog. He somehow knew that was his duty in life. Wherever she went he was always at her side. In the garden when she was picking vegetables, in the henhouse when she gathered eggs, in the pasture when she went out to look at the new calves, he was always there. Of course, Dad would not allow Sandy or any pets in the house, so Sandy would park himself at the kitchen door when Mother was inside. When a thunderstorm came, Sandy, like most dogs, was afraid. We boys would sneak Sandy in the back door and hide him under the basement stairway.



One day, Mother was in the pasture, Sandy at her side. He began pushing and pushing against her leg. She looked down to admonish him, and there was a rattler, poised to strike. Mother was very hard of hearing, so she had not heard the snake, but she was nimble and moved away quickly. Sandy killed the snake, but not before the snake got him in the neck. Sandy lay around for two days, eating nothing but drinking lots of water. We kids were heartsick. We were sure he would die, but Dad assured us that he'd be OK, and he soon was, and back at his place at the back door.

The driveway up the hill to our house was clearly visible from where he lay most of the day. Whenever a car left the road and started up the hill, Sandy would open his eyes. When it stopped, his head would come up, and he'd get up. If the car door opened, he took a few steps toward the car. If the driver put one foot on the ground, Sandy started toward him, showing a few teeth. Wisely, the man would get back in the car and drive away.

Elysian Fields November 2006

If any of us would speak, Sandy would go back and lie down. This was a great way to get rid of all sorts of pesky traveling salesmen, hopeful hunters, IRS people, and so on. Since Mother often could not hear the cars, Sandy was essentially taking care of her when we were all in the fields.

One morning Sandy was gone. We soon found him caught in a wolf trap some neighbor had set. It was winter, and his hind foot had frozen off so for many years he was our three-legged guard dog, continuing to take care of Mother. He was still there when I left for the service in WWII. When I returned, Mother and Dad had moved to town, and Sandy had died.

—by Lyle Miller (as told to Pat Miller)



Irrigation pipes for new landscape planting are being installed in front of Building 2000.

Employee Appreciation Fund Drive

Contributions may be placed in the Resident Council box in the mail room or lock box at the reception desk. Make checks payable to RCOF and note Employee Appreciation Fund.

New York Fly-By

Every take-off is optional. Every landing is mandatory.



Fresh out of flying training, and a shave-tail second lieutenant assigned to the 13th Attack Squadron, Barksdale Field, Shreveport, Louisiana, I got to participate in a flight over New York City that included every squadron in the Army Air Corps. I don't know whether the Navy and the Marine Corps were in the column. I can't even remember the occasion for the celebration.

On 6 May, 1938, my squadron of brand new Northrup A-17As flew up to our staging base, Allentown, Pennsylvania, and pitched tents on the fairground.

My flying school classmate, Ed Chickering,

was a Lehigh graduate and got us acquainted with everyone in town. What a friendly and outgoing group of people they were! I think the Pennsylvania Polka may have been invented there. On the 17th, we took off at 0725 and flew to Camden, New Jersey, where we rendezvoused with the 8th and the 90th Squadrons and the 3rd Attack Group, Headquarters A-17As, and proceeded to Kingston, New York, where we loitered for about half an hour and found ourselves in the middle of an elongated formation of every available aircraft in the US Army Air Corps.

Down the Hudson River we flew and then east to Montauk Point and the east tip of Long Island. From there we flew down the entire length of Long Island with airplanes as far ahead and as far behind me as I could see. At the Statue of Liberty we turned north and flew up the middle of Manhattan Island. Every squadron peeled off then and flew back to its staging base.

—by Ancil Baker

Progress!



The flagpoles are up!



Assisted living building adds its fireproofing!

Dining at PVE

The October meeting of the committee started with the new committee members helping us dive into the approaching holiday season. We know they are anxious to contribute to the continuing quality of service and food that we have in our dining room. I think we are still the envy of many other retirement communities.



How fast it seems that we are approaching the holiday season again. It seems like we just started the new year, but here we are again, so we can expect to see more buffet dinners in the next two months. We will have buffets on Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve. Christmas Day will be a special menu served from 1:00 until 4:00. New Year's Day meals will be at the regularly scheduled times.

The Thanksgiving buffet sign-up starts on Friday, November 3. Be sure to sign up early for your desired time and table size so that you will not be disappointed. You can always adjust down in numbers and table size without causing problems in the dining room. However, trying to up-size, the closer we get to Thanksgiving, the more difficult it is for the staff to accommodate all residents and guests in the dining room.

There were 174 signed comment cards for the month with a 99% approval for the service and 94.5% for the food. Again, we continue to excel. The award servers for the month are Gary Antunano and Michael Johnson. As always, congratulations to these fine young people!

We also hope everyone will be excited about the new menu debuting sometime early in November. We were privileged to have some input into designing the new menu, but we know that once again our chef will be doing a superb job in providing us with exciting new dishes as well as some of our favorite "oldies."

Several people have asked who supplies our ice cream, as they particularly like the spumoni and are very disappointed when the kitchen runs out. All of our ice cream is supplied by Crystal Dairy in

Sacramento. David says the kitchen can occasionally run out, as there is limited storage space in the freezer, so we hope that those who need their spumoni fix can be patient until the next delivery arrives. It seems that it is not available at Baskin & Robbins.

Everyone should be happy that the first meeting of all concerned on the refurbishing of the dining room was held on October 31. There will be subsequent meetings in which, hopefully, a new design will be worked out, and we will have a new look in the not too distant future.

Again, we are at the point where we hope everyone will soon be sliding into the holiday spirit. Don't forget to sign your comment cards and *Bon Appetit!*

—by Fred Montanye

Organization

I looked in my closet and what was there?
More pairs of shoes than I'll ever wear!
I looked at the hangers and what did I see?
More blouses to wear, than even for me!

The slacks were all crowded, so forlorn,
The skirts were drooping, they're seldom worn!

I had more clothes than I realized.
I said to myself, "GET ORGANIZED!"

I started by making three piles right away,
To keep, to discard, and to give away.
It wasn't easy; I did shed a tear.
Some of those things were old and dear.
But I said a "goodbye" to some things I once prized,
And now I am happily ORGANIZED!

—by Elly Vasak

Clerisy

Every school child knows of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but what was learned in class is seriously deficient in excitement. Historian Stephen E. Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*, Clerisy's selection for discussion on November 16, corrects that lack in a brilliant retelling of America's greatest adventure story.

Thomas Jefferson's vision of a Corps of Discovery finding a "Northwest Passage" within the Louisiana Purchase led him to select Merriwether Lewis, his young secretary, for whom he had great respect and affection, to lead it. Lewis (a born naturalist who also acted as surveyor), chose William Clark (explorer, map maker, and diarist) as co-director. Incredibly, they found an accomplished diplomat in Sacagawea, a teen-age mother, who served as guide and linguist.

This story is far greater than a single person, of course, but the author focuses on the young Lewis who, among his other duties, was obliged to become the temperance officer for the expedition in order to even get his boat in the water. The abundant research of Ambrose begins with the journals of William Clark, which certainly are one of the treasures of American history, but goes far beyond them and includes twenty summers spent retracing the steps of the Corps of Discovery. His skill with detail and atmosphere dusts off this icon and puts him back on the trail west.

Dinny Fisher will lead the third Thursday discussion at 7:30 in the Round Room. Everyone interested is cordially invited to participate or listen.

—by Gaylon Caldwell



More Q & A from Your Library

Q. Do you ever have really new books?

A. Yes, sometimes. We just got two books on travel in Oregon and Washington that are brand new, which are great if you are traveling that way. Some people buy books or are given them and they read them and then give them to us right away.

Q. Do you still want more contributions to the library? You seem to have it pretty well filled.

A. Yes, we would like to have fresh books. We change books once in a while, and the paperbacks are always good to have renewed.

Q. What do you do with the rubber bands?

A. We take them to Fairfield to the *Daily Republic* newspaper. They are very happy to have them.

Q. What are you going to do with the extra aviation books?

A. We will take them to the Mitchell Library at Travis Air Force Base. They can use books like that, as they have a low budget.

Q. How many books have you distributed to other libraries?

A. I wish I had counted the bags we have given to Fairfield and Vacaville Friends of the Library. It must be around 100 by now, maybe more.

Q. What books can you recommend to read?

A. We do not recommend books as a general rule. Everyone has different tastes. Talk to the librarians individually though; they are always reading something they can tell you about.

Q. What are those books on genealogy in the computer room? May we take those out?

A. You certainly may look at those books, but please do not take them out of the library. They are the private property of the genealogy group people and are used for reference.

—by Bev Clemson

Putting Tournament a Huge Success

The putting tournament held on September 26th was organized by Leonard "Fletch" Fletcher, with lots of help from Duncan Kelly, Glen Grewe, and Betty Tylutki. Refreshments were served, and the participants enjoyed an all around good time.

The winning teams were:

- 1st place: Bob McCoy and Fran Britt
- 2nd place: Pete Palmos and Betty Hillier
- Tied for 3rd place: Hal Carter & Doug Woodward; Mary Anne Ablan & Lois Bartley.

So many PVE residents participated that it was decided that this tournament will become an annual event. Sign up next year and join in the fun. Putterers are furnished.

—by Glenn Dow



What's Coming Up

- *"Greater Tuna"* produced by Solano Repertory Company at the Benicia Old Town Theater
- *Ikea – Sacramento*
- *Autumn Afternoon Tea* at PVE
- *North Bay Theater Ensemble Chorus* at PVE
- *Treasure Island Culinary School and Shopping on 4th Street, Berkeley*
- *Holiday Shopping in:*
Walnut Creek
The New Westfield San Francisco
Roseville Galleria
- *The Horn Man* at PVE
- *"Little Foxes" – American Conservatory Theater* at Geary Theater, San Francisco

—by Lise Hansen



Turkey Trot

Turkeys pass at dawn
 One by one in slow parade
 Preening tom, plump hen
 Walk, pause, peck, pause, walk again
 Oblivious to our stares.

—by Wanda Godsey

The Tanka is a Japanese poem form, a five line poem of 31 syllables with a line pattern of 5-7-5-7-7 that is used to examine an image and respond on a personal, emotional level.

The History of Paradise Valley Estates, which was written by Major General John Collens, was published in the first four issues of the ELYSIAN FIELDS in 1999. The complete history is now on our PVE Web site. You can find it by typing in the PVE Web address: <http://www.pvestates.com> and then select "About Us" and finally click on "History of PVE." However, there is an easier way to access our history by going to the following link which is a direct connection: http://www.pvestates.com/05_01_02history.html.

You're HOW Old?

All of us know the year we were born. We were told this, and we have birth certificates and other records stating this, but are they always correct?

My wife, Rosellen, is a prime example. She has used the date of October 31, 1925 all of her life. She has a birth certificate



stating this. When I married her, she told me her age and birth date, and I had no reason to doubt it.

I began doing genealogical research, and in 1991 we were in Lewiston, Idaho, where she was born, getting a copy of her parents' marriage certificate. We went to the church where her parents had been married, and we were able to get a copy. As Rosellen had no baptismal certificate, we asked for this, too. On reading this document, we were amazed to discover that, according to this document, she had been baptized a full year before she was born, in 1924!

When we returned home, we checked with Rosellen's mother and got the following story: Rosellen's father had died in 1940 of a coronary at the age of 42, leaving Rosellen's mother with two children. He had had a hard time finding work during the Great Depression, even though he was a lawyer, and their financial situation was not good at the time of his death.

Rosellen's birth certificate had been lost when the courthouse in Lewiston burned about 1930, destroying all records. She was eligible for Social Security benefits as an orphaned minor but needed a birth certificate. Her mother had to get a "reconstructed" birth certificate by getting statements from persons who knew Rosellen, certifying the date and location of her birth. Her mother told Rosellen's two brothers and a friend that she had been born in 1925, thus getting an extra year of

Social Security benefits.

Her baptismal certificate is correct in listing her christening as taking place in 1924. But all of the other records of Rosellen's life show her year of birth as 1925. Now, it is too complicated to get the record corrected.

One evening recently, Rosellen and I were at dinner at The Oaks. She sits at a table with Katy Allred, and once a week Katy's daughter comes to join us for dinner. We were discussing Katy's age because of her upcoming birthday, and I was told by her daughter that she will be 87 next week. Katy's husband was born in 1921, and she decided early on that she would declare *her* birth year as 1929, so that she would be considered much younger than her husband. When Katy was actually 65 years old, she wanted to obtain her Social Security benefits, but all of her documents showed her being only 55 years old!

Finally, she produced a birth certificate showing that she had actually been born in 1919 and indeed qualified for her Social Security monthly payments. Katy was an artist and very good-looking and wanted to appear younger, especially to her husband.

—by Ray Lawton

Move-ins During October

Jane Cypra
to 5612 Military Court
from Vacaville, CA

Where is Tanglewood?

“The air smells different when you reach Massachusetts; the red color on the barns is a real red, and there’s just something so real and unique about Massachusetts.” Thus, Leonard Bernstein quoted his mentor and teacher, Serge Koussevitzky, at the famous Tanglewood School.

I had almost forgotten about Koussevitzky and how thrilled I was to witness his performance as the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the mid-1940s, until I was watching the “Life of Bernstein” on a PBS program recently. I was a college student at Boston University, and it was my first attendance at a concert of a major symphonic orchestra. I had limited funds for cultural events, but this concert was made possible by a gift from my dorm “mother.”

That evening was the beginning of my development of a real love for classical, symphonic music. Much later, in 1996, I was driving across Massachusetts to New York State en route to Virginia, after the death of my last living relative in Massachusetts, my Aunt Isabel.

I had a semi-planned route, but as I drove along the country roads, I saw a sign reading: “20 miles to Tanglewood.” I decided to take a spur-of-the-moment side trip there. After following the posted signs and driving around for what seemed like an endless time, I finally had to give up. I was never able to locate Tanglewood.

I knew that Tanglewood was a safe haven for musicians to study and compose, but I didn’t know it was so carefully hidden away from casual motorists and tourists.

—by Isabella Lively



REMEMBERING . . .

Mrs. Marguerite Staub
Loving Wife and Mother
Arrived: July 7, 1998
Departed: September 22, 2006

Cdr. Earl Miller, USN (Ret)
Loving Husband
Arrived: October 9, 1998
Departed: October 9, 2006

Col. E.H. Wolff, USAF (Ret)
Loving Husband and Father
Arrived: June 30, 2001
Departed: October 12, 2006

George R. Simpson
Loving Husband and Father
Arrived: December 18, 2000
Departed: October 13, 2006

Mrs. Helen Slate
Loving Wife and Mother
Arrived: December 31, 2001
Departed: October 17, 2006



Recollections

They say you shouldn't live in the past. Well, who are "they" anyway?

We love remembering snow-covered mountains of Alaska, the aromatic lure of a Danish cheese shop, countless waterfalls of Norway, fireworks at midnight in Copenhagen's Tivoli, the haunting sounds of a campground at night in Oregon.

There was the time when we were still folk dancing in Marin, and we put on a Swedish smorgasbord for 30 dancers – pickled herring, potato salad, marinated cucumbers, herring and beet salad, molded salmon salad, fruit salad. I baked coffee bread from my Swedish grandmother's recipe and made her meatballs. And when it was over, there was enough food left that we invited 30 more people the next night!

In Tiburon one day, Al was out in the back of the house playing with our German Shepherd, Katcha. Suddenly, Katcha dropped the ball and rushed top speed into the house. I had fallen off my chair at the other end of the house, broken my glasses, and cut my face badly.

Also, we remember the Christmas after Pearl Harbor. We spent the holiday in our two-door Chevy coupe with a small decorated tree, Christmas packages, and our dog, Muchacho, a tri-color English Australian Shepherd.

And I'll never forget Al's dear face in the Portland Union Railroad Station coming home to the family after 39 months of war in the Pacific!

We love our past.....

—by Althea Lubersky

Instructions for Submitting Articles to *Elysian Fields*

The *Elysian Fields* staff invites contributions from all PVE residents. Articles should be legible, typed if possible, original, signed, and not exceed 500 words. Submissions by e-mail, on floppy disks, or CDs are welcome but not required. Submissions should be directed to one of the subject matter editors or the editor no later than the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

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To get the *Elysian Fields* in color on the Internet, go to the PVE Website: <http://www.pves-tates.com> and Select "Lifestyles" from the options at the top.

Go to the bottom of the page and click. If you want to see back issues, click on "Archives."