



May 2008

*The Official Paradise Valley Estates Residents' Newspaper*

Volume XI, Issue 5

## Country Porches

The spring breeze mingled with the continuous warm temperature. It was May in New York State. Our clapboard house was a typical country home with two porches, front and back. The visiting

relatives, Mother's family, talked for hours on the front porch. My job was to make and serve lemonade in tall, chilled glasses. I walked to the kitchen many times to remake the lemonade, retraced my steps and listened to comments. "Just right,

soothing to our taste," remarked most of the aunts. I was asked to play the piano. Suggestions were for soft music, pretty music, something to soothe their ears. I chose lovely music that I liked to play to block out the argumentative conversations. I could hear the minutes ticking away as the heated discussions got louder. I planned to escape and read one of my books on the back porch.

The back porch was the friendliest. We kids could easily play there. This porch had two doors, one door to the kitchen and the other door to the backroom, which was our playroom in inclement weather. Mischief happened when all of us could escape our mother. The enclosed railing on the back porch kept it secluded. A rocking chair, swing and cot each had its special space. Dad would take a short nap on the soft cot after supper. Morning glories and a trumpet vine tangled their tendrils around the lattice above the porch railing. Sweet

fragrances permeated the air. Purple and double-white lilac bushes were beginning to blossom

The front porch had its demise when Mother decided to modernize the front of our house. The

porch was torn off, and a new entrance was built. We all felt sad except our mother. She was very pleased with the modern look. Where would all the aunts, uncles and cousins congregate? The back porch became the family's social visiting center.

Mother would place a small table on the back porch and feed any relatives that came to chat and eat her delicious English delicacies.

When my dad passed away in 1971, I found myself on the back porch of our upstate New York home with my mother and sister. It was the end of May. We all rested and thought about future arrangements for our mother. The same lilac bushes were blossoming; the trumpet vine climbed to the top of the trellis. I offered several suggestions to my mother, but the answer was a firm "No". She would stay in her old house.

The house was sold and my mother moved to an apartment located in the local town, but the old country house with its modern front entrance still stands proud for all to see. The back porch, though, holds all our memories intact.

—by Carol Block



# The Romance of Letters

Reva and Jean Mayers met each other on a blind date in Newport News, VA. After only a handful of follow-up dates, Jean departed for overseas duty. He and Reva, his wife of 64 years, wrote daily letters to each other. They were all written on those special APO combination blank page and envelopes that were widely used during WW II. The ones Jean sent to Reva were full of spaces where the censors had clipped out words that might have been of use to the enemy. An impressive box full of these letters was one of the prized possessions they brought with them when they moved to Paradise Valley Estates.



Reva grew up in Newport News, VA, one of five children. It was an ideal, happy childhood surrounded by family. She went all the way through her schooling there. When she graduated from high school, she worked with the government during the war by day and as “queen” of the USO dances in the evenings with the GIs.

Jean was born in New York City, but his family moved to Long Island when he was an infant. He played semi-pro baseball. He took private flying lessons and was flying by the time he was 20. The family, now including a younger sister, moved back to the city in time for Jean to attend a progressive high school in the Bronx. He went on to Brooklyn Polytechnic College, where he studied aeronautical engineering. He had set his goals for his lifetime career. He graduated as WW II started and joined the Navy. His training was in North Carolina and Pensacola, FL, where he received his wings and became an ensign. Soon after this, he was sent to Norfolk,

VA. He recalled that an old friend was stationed there, and the friend arranged the lifechanging blind date with Reva.

Overseas, he had adventures to tell Reva about in those daily letters. One that stands out was flying above the destroyer carrying Churchill and Roosevelt to an important conference at Casablanca. It was an anti-sub patrol protecting the two leaders and crew from a surprise submarine attack.

When he returned to the United States, Jean and Reva were married in the same house in Newport News in which Reva was born and grew up. Jean returned to Brooklyn Polytechnic to get an advanced degree in his field. He worked for NASA and then for Sperry Rand, who sent them to Salt Lake City for five years.

A professor Jean had had at Brooklyn Poly had moved on to Stanford University and invited Jean to teach at Stanford for one year. What they thought was to be a one year assignment turned out to last for 25 years. They went on sabbaticals during those years, a year in Annapolis and another year in Israel being memorable. Reva did volunteer work while the two children were growing up and then worked for medical doctors with her organizational skills until retirement.

This spring Jean has been invited to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Aeronautical Department at Stanford, where he was department vice-chairman until his retirement. Their grown son and daughter, who were both educated at Stanford, will accompany them.

—by Joan Teague

May 2008 Elysian Fields

# She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not

My mother was a southern lady who avoided the sun and preferred gardening in the early morning and enjoying Maryland's summer from our shady front porch. Therefore, my sister Carolyn and I were astonished when Mother agreed to come with us to a nearby field to pick daisies.



Carolyn and I had long wished to take this walk because our picture books, music books, and framed Victorian landscapes in our grandmother's house were filled with pictures of happy children weaving daisy chains, wearing wreaths of field daisies, and carrying baskets spilling over with golden-centered white daisies.

Once Mother committed to the trip, she planned it in minute detail. She prepared a thermos of lemonade and made sandwiches that would not spoil in the heat. She put a tablecloth and napkins in a picnic basket. When we arrived at the field, Mother spread the tablecloth in the shade of an old apple tree, sat down, and dismissed us with a gentle wave. "Now don't get dirty. Pick long stems, and after a while, we'll have lunch," she said.

Carolyn and I began to gather armloads of daisies. We had fantasies of filling our house with the beautiful blossoms to surprise Dad when he came home from work. We would weave crowns and wear daisy chains and dance just like the children did in our books. When we were called to lunch, both of us were sweaty, hot and thirsty. When we had eaten, Mother sighed, "Oh, you girls are just dripping with perspiration. Why don't you lie down here on this nice cloth and rest for a bit before we start that long walk home?" It sounded like a wonderful idea to Carolyn and me. We stretched out to "rest", and almost immediately Carolyn was asleep. I lay on my side, watching daisies bend and bow in

the soft summer breeze. I didn't want to go to sleep and waste this lovely time with Mother. I pretended to sleep and then actually drifted off.

"Come on, lazybones." I awoke to Mother's soft southern accent. "Time to go home." Carolyn and I came out of sleep reluctantly, but we got to our feet and checked our daisies. They appeared to be wilting, but revivable.

When my father got home from work, he was greeted by bowls of daisies on the dinner table, on the porch, in the living room, and even a small bouquet in the bathroom. Carolyn and I had braided daisies into wreaths for all of us. When we encircled Dad's neck with one of our garlands, he looked like a cheerful Greek goat man, and Mother simply looked as always — serene, beautiful and inscrutable.

"Hey," said my father. "What a great surprise." He took one of the daisies from a bowl on the kitchen table. "Remember this?" he asked. "She loves me, she loves me not," he chanted, removing petals one by one. I wished he would stop. I was afraid his plucking would end on "She loves me not."

—by Liz Wildberger

## The Month of May

The month of May brings Mother's Day,  
The day on which we honor pay  
The dearest lady in the world,  
The sweetest one, who gave us life,  
Our father's wife, our mother.

We miss her every single day,  
In every big or little way.  
Though she's been gone for many a day,  
She meant so much to us, we say,  
A sunshine's ray, our mother.

—by Ellie Vasak

# Encore! Encore!

Over the years, PVE residents have been the happy beneficiaries of a variety of musical presentations and other cultural diversions by several of our community's gifted relatives.

Jeremy Weinglass, Lucille Thyrring's talented and devoted grandson, was first on the entertainment scene. Jeremy arrived at PVE toting his own keyboard, in time to entertain the early move-ins at their first Christmas in 1997. He has entertained here every year since then. His performance record, which started at age 12, includes accompanist for musical theater performances, pianist at Nordstrom's, jazz tour in Europe, and three stints with USO tours in Europe and Central America.

Mike Sullivan, son of residents Bea and 'Sully' Sullivan, has become a familiar figure, having delighted us on numerous occasions with his guitar in the Club. Bea describes his repertoire as "songs of our memory and a few other pieces that resonate to the sound of cocktails." Raised in Hawaii, now a teacher in Lafayette, Mike features Hawaiian melodies and favorite tunes appropriate for St. Patrick's Day. It's not surprising that his pre-high school daughter is looking forward to a stage career of song and drama.

Singer Rachel DeShon's resume, submitted by her Aunt Janice and Uncle Al Abrams, includes winner of a pre-teen singing contest in Seattle at age 12, cum laude graduation from Western Illinois University, winner of Marvin Hamlisch's Search for a Star competition with the Seattle Symphony, roles in *The Mikado*, *Footloose*, *Magic Flute*, and *Nunsense II*. Not surprisingly, Rachel wowed her PVE audience when she sang here last May. Her career goal is to perform in opera and musical theater.

James Werrick, Winky Werrick's son, is a professional musician who has charmed us on a few occasions with his first class piano music during the dinner hour. A versatile musician, James also plays the guitar and has written, produced, or performed on eight gold records! He is currently busy per-

forming, writing music, and producing "cool jazz." Winkie wishes he'd get married!

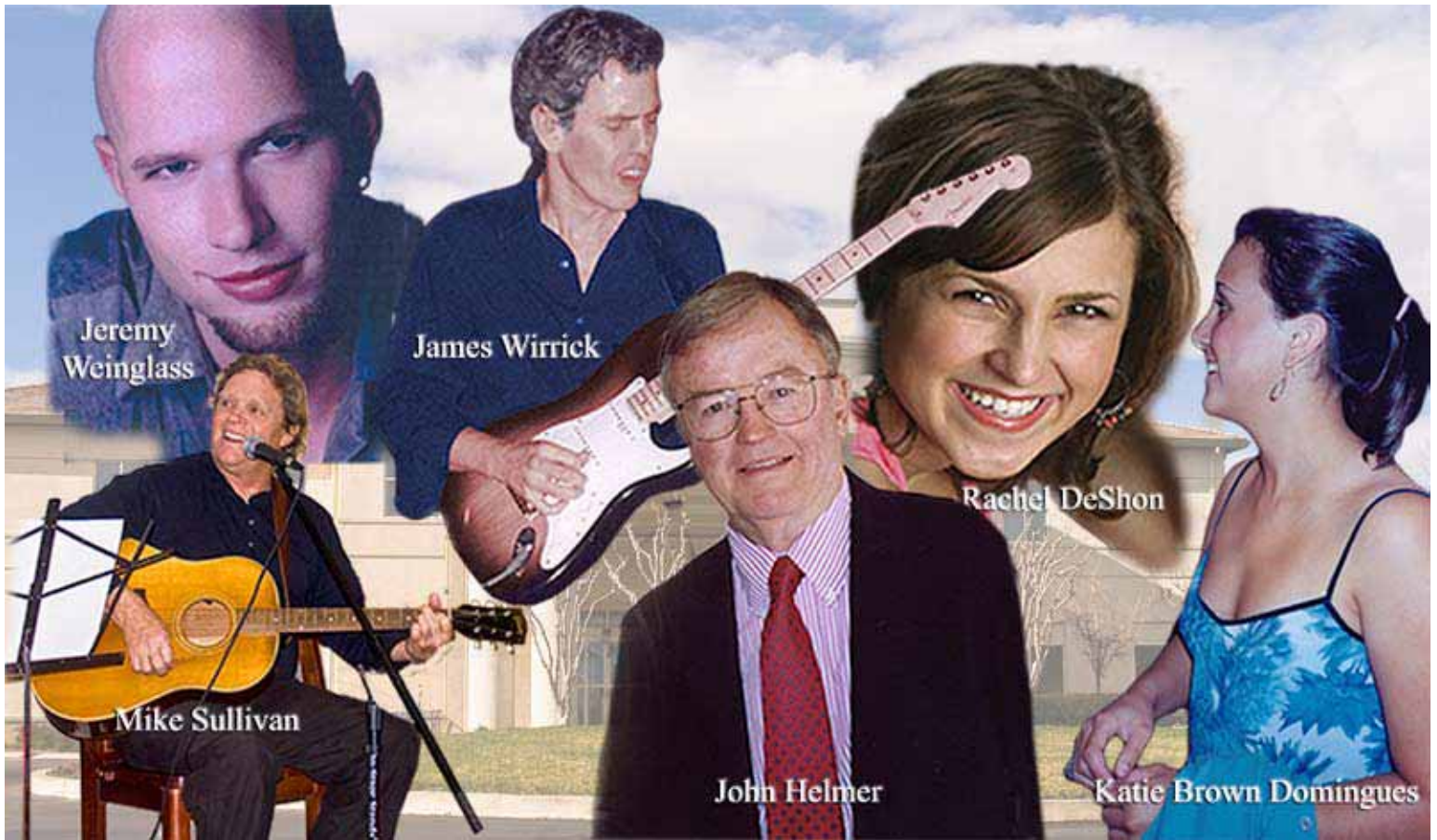
Katie Brown Domingues, having just returned from her stint as a Fulbright Scholar in Moscow, was introduced as guest speaker by her grandmother, Betty St George. As a high school senior, Katie had been one of 200 Bundestag Congressional students sent to Germany, spent her junior semester at Cal in Moscow and graduated Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude from UC Berkeley with majors in Russian and Slavic cultures. The PVE audience was entranced by her report on her Fulbright experience. Katie is now with the State Department in Washington.

John C. Helmer, son of the late Hilda Helmer Gonnella, is a graduate of Santa Clara University and an owner of Coldwell Securities, Inc. With his tuba as part of a trio, John was delighted to help round out the entertainment the night of PVE's tenth anniversary entertainment. He claims to be a musical purist, preferring traditional jazz style, i.e. West Coast Revival, for which San Francisco is ground zero. He was happy for the opportunity to round up his buddies for the gig, and PVE was delighted to have him.

PVE thanks all these talented artists and hopes more will be forthcoming. They are truly appreciated!

—by Linda Faraday





## Now Hear This!

The Navy planning group is planning a celebration of the U.S. Navy's 214<sup>th</sup> birthday to be held Sunday, October 26, 2008, in the form of a "Dining Out." All interested persons who have a Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard affiliation are invited to participate.

A cocktail hour will precede dinner. Wine will be served. The uniform of the evening will be evening dress blues, black tie, or business suit for the men and evening dress blues, cocktail, or formal attire for ladies. The expected cost is about \$25.00 per person plus a meal ticket.

Look for a box at the Reception Desk in which to place an indication of interest. This is a chance not only to have a festive celebration but also to honor the long history of our gallant Navy.

—by Bev Sardone

## The Community Garden News

The replacement garden gazebo is about finished according to George Yeoman. We have a shady spot for contemplating nature and gazing at the 160 or more inscribed (personalized) bricks making up the patio for the gazebo. You are encouraged to visit and consider ordering your own personalized brick (still only \$35) for yourself or as a gift. Call Jan Holderness or Pat Child.

The first three yards of compost dumped at the garden went quickly, so two more yards were delivered. Our foothill soil needs continuous nurturing to produce those colorful roses and vegetables. Plots still available, and this is a good time to plant.

—by Hal Carter

# Close To Rich and Famous

During one part of my life, I was very close to the rich and famous. Not a single bit of this rubbed off on me, but it was a very interesting part of my life. When I was 18, I worked across the street from Warner Bros. Studio at a service station that provided parking for the stars and would-be stars and starlets. Olive Boulevard ran between the studio and our station and was eight lanes wide with a signal more than a block away. Traffic proved too difficult for the average driver to navigate. As a result, a great many of our customers used our valet service. They would drive up to the front of our station, slide over to the right seat, and we would jump in and work our way across the busy street and let them off in front of the studio. We became well acquainted and on a first name basis with many of the stars, directors, and producers.

When I first started working there as a young boy directly from a Canadian farm, my first job was to deliver a car owned by Olivia deHavilland to set number seven. I was given strict instructions only to enter the set when the red light was off and then to stand discreetly inside the door and watch. They were shooting a huge feast scene in the picture *Robin Hood* at the time, with Errol Flynn and Olivia deHavilland as the stars. I had never heard of either of them and was quite shy, especially when this young beautiful lady motioned for me to come over and sit with her at the long table. This was Olivia herself. She was very friendly and asked many questions both about me and the farm I came from. I was completely smitten.

During the next two years, I was privileged to meet many of the stars and was on a first name basis with many of them. Here are a few that come readily to mind: Louella Parsons, gossip columnist. Elizabeth Taylor, Doris Day, Bette Davis, Ann Sheridan, Bob Hope, Dennis O'Keefe, John Garfield, Marie Wilson, Bobby Waterfield and his famous wife Jane

Russell and, last but not least, Bing Crosby, a real gentleman. My favorites were Bette Davis and Bing Crosby. Ann Sheridan and Bob Hope were difficult to tolerate, such tightwads.

So as you can see, I was very close to the rich and famous; but for some strange reason, I was never asked to be a movie star. Can you imagine that?  
—by Norman Bills



## The Card

It was 1931, and I was six-years-old. I wanted to buy a Mother's Day card for my mother, but I didn't have a nickel. My dad had lost his job and couldn't find another one. He said it was the depression. My mom, a registered nurse, found work in a restaurant for \$12 a week. The great news was that we got to eat dinner there free and take leftover food home with us.

Just before Mother's Day, I spied a swell card in a store window, entitled "My Modern Mother." I copied the verse down and used crayons and glue to make another card. I also made an envelope. When I gave it to my mom, it made her cry.

Many years later, my mom was 91 and bedridden. When I entered the house, she said, "Go to my desk, bring me 'the card' and read it to me." I started, "My Modern Mother." This time, I was the one with tears in my eyes.

—by Jack Sorrelle

# Distress Signal, S.O.S., May Day!

To me she was so pretty with dark wavy hair, an attractive face, full of energy, a fine young lady in her early twenties who was the only teacher for our one-room rural school in Lincoln County. She taught 23 students and all eight grades of grammar school, and I had a crush on her. (Call it puppy love.).

Her name was Miss Leona Moss. During each five-day week, she boarded at the nearby family home of Rude and Anna Voss, and she was a welcome member of our community.

Winter had applied its usual discomforting weather, and now springtime was with us. Bright, sunny Kansas days brought a different activity to our school, and Miss Moss needed a long sturdy pole for this new activity. Two older boys, Walter Krebs and Fred Huhl, went across the country road to Bullfoot Creek (normally a disapproved act) and cut a long straight pole from one of the trees. Miss Moss found some wild flowers along our school yard fence, which she fastened to the narrow end of the pole. The boys tied three skeins of shiny colored ribbon that Miss Moss gave them around the wild flowers. They dug a narrow hole in the grass and firmly anchored the pole upright in the hole with the ribbons dangling high in the air.

We learned that we would be doing a march and dance around this pole as we celebrated spring and May 1<sup>st</sup> became May Day, all in accord with an age-old idea and custom. Miss Moss chose three older girls to hold the ends of the three ribbons of red, blue and yellow. She showed them how to dance

around the maypole in opposing ways and entwine the ribbons as they marched. They were then to lead other students in an intricate maneuver. I tried to follow the girls and the others in that entwining

march, but I just couldn't seem to get the hang of it, and the girls soon asked me to step aside.

The girls chose three teams of seven students each, leaving Wilbur Klien-schmidt and me standing to one side. I was more than a bit upset and distressed at not being chosen. Wilbur just stood there and whimpered. I loudly let the world know that I was more than very distressed. I didn't need a radio or S.O.S. sig-

nals. I just cut loose vocally and really sent out my May Day signals right then and there.

Miss Moss quickly showed her command of school discipline, and like a coxswain in a lifeboat, she calmed and quieted the whole group. She had two of the girls expand their teams to eight students, and that rescued Wilbur and me. We began our march around the maypole and experienced the youthful freedom of a dance outside on a grassy field. We sang songs while marching and created a pretty color pattern of red, blue and yellow ribbons. Perhaps, Miss Moss could feel that she had rescued us from our classroom duties as she helped us have a good May Day.

—by Cletus Nelson



# Dining Services Report



I have been asked by residents whether the higher food costs due to more transportation costs that seem to be affecting prices in the supermarkets are going to affect the quality of our

meals here at PVE. I discussed this with David, and he indicated that there has been no consideration of changing the quality and/or quantity of food served here, so we can all rest assured we will continue to eat well with as much variety and attention to detail as we have experienced in the past.

I hope everyone is enjoying the Friday morning breakfast served in the DeLong Pavilion. In the past, it has been very popular and has become very crowded at times. There always seems to be plenty of food for all, so be courteous so everyone can enjoy the friendship and camaraderie that the occasion offers.

There is a situation that has arisen lately. That is, switching tables by the resident after he/she has been seated. When a diner is seated at a table, a wait person has been assigned to serve that table. If the resident decides to move somewhere else, two things may happen. First, they may end up sitting at a table where no wait person has been assigned. Therefore, the diner will either not get served, or service will be greatly delayed, as no one has been assigned to that table. Second, if the resident decides to go sit at another table with other people, the assigned wait person has no meal ticket for that person. This may all sound very confusing. It is! And it creates confusion for the wait staff assignments.

However, if the resident insists upon moving to another table, please notify one of the floor supervisors so adjustments can be made in the wait person assignments.

Another new addition to the dining room is the

installation of a hand sanitizer on the comment card table in the corridor.

We had 202 signed cards this month with a 94.6% approval rating for the food and a 98.5% approval for service. The award wait persons for the month are Amber Mondino, Melanie Pashenee, and Rosario Arceo from the Club. Please remember to congratulate them for their outstanding service in providing us with what remains the best place to eat in the area.

That's it for this month. Don't forget to sign your comment cards so they get counted. *Bon appétit!*

—by Fred Montanye, Dining Services Chair

## Move-ins Since the Last Issue

Col. H.A. "Spike" Flertzheim,  
USA (Ret) and Betty  
3209 Estates Drive  
Ignacio, CA

Cdr. Donald Reh, USN (Ret) and  
Kathryn  
5201 Freedom Court  
Aiea, HI

Cdr. William Davis, USN (Ret)  
and Dorothy  
2312 Estates Drive  
S. Lake Tahoe, CA

## Red and White Carnations



Mother's Day always was observed by our family in the Canal Zone with everyone receiving a red or white carnation; you received a red one signifying that your mother was living or a white one

if you had lost your mother. I had the good fortune of having my grandmother and namesake until she was 96 and my own mother till she was almost 98.

All the appropriate flowers were put in a vase on the dining room table. Our family grew from my maternal grandparents and parents; siblings became adults and had children and their children produced offspring.

In later years, many of us lived in California. Often, we would have a family gathering at our home in Sonoma, usually with a BBQ, eating out on our patio after a swim in the pool. I would provide the appropriate number of red and white flowers. Often they would be red or white roses from my garden.

The dessert would be angel food cake with fresh local strawberries. Some berries were left whole, others were sliced and sprinkled with sugar, others not; whipped cream and vanilla ice cream were also set out so each individual could assemble his/her own creation.

As my generation grew older, we took the easy way out so the mothers did not have to cook and said the menu would be Kentucky Fried Chicken with all the trimmings and strawberry shortcake.

—by Isabella Lively

## Exercise as A Fountain of Youth

Perhaps you already know that taking a daily brisk walk can help keep you in shape, not to mention stave off heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. New scientific evidence suggests that exercise is helpful because it keeps you younger on a cellular level. The basis for this is found in little structures in some of our cells, or more specifically, the protective caps on the tips of our chromosomes called telomeres. Telomeres shorten as we age.

A recent study has confirmed that in those individuals who exercise, the telomeres are longer than in those who did not exercise. According to one of the researchers in this study, insofar as telomeres are a marker for aging, then exercise may well influence the aging process.

Physical activity also increases blood flow, which also helps rid the body of metabolic wastes. Exercise also releases endorphins, which helps us to combat stress.

Lifestyle decisions affect longevity, so why not decide today to try or recommit to a regular exercise program? Here at Paradise Valley Estates we have classes for all levels of fitness from the frail who are recovering from a recent surgery to those who are elite in their fitness activities.

I am available to consult with you to develop a program just for you. It's never too late to begin!

—by Jan Olson, Your Fitness Manager



# Memorial Day at PVE

Every year, we at PVE join the nation with Memorial Day ceremonies, presentations, tributes, and events that have become traditional for us. We pay tribute to those military persons who died in defense of our country, as well as honoring fallen friends and family. That tradition will continue this year on Monday, May 26, with our celebration starting at 11:00 at the DeLong Pavilion, followed by our special Memorial Day buffet lunch. It will include the activities that we count on for this special day—the pledge, national anthem, a reading of the Gettysburg Address, an honoring of those who served, a talk by Ron Ridley, the hymns of the military services, patriotic music, the List of Remembrances, wreath ceremony, the canon, and closing prayer.

Before and after the ceremonies, residents may pay tribute to their special individuals by placing remembrance cards on PVE's unique Wall of Remembrance. It will be on display at the Pavilion before and after the program. Then, it will be relocated to the atrium, where it will remain on display for a few days. The PVE Memorial Book, with pictures and profiles of those residents who have died since last May, will be on display. Details of these and other items related to our celebration will be published in the Friday Flash.

Memorial Day, more than any other traditional event, reminds us of the greatness of America and what a tremendous service has been and is being done by our military people. They afford the assurance that our country will remain free for its citizens to continue their way of life.

Memorial Day events tend to produce considerable emotion. For those of us who served in the military and stand when our service hymn is played, and we look around the room, and maybe have a lump in our throat, and see others who are standing, it produces a feeling of a united effort, and it makes us proud to have been a part of it. .

—by Ted Terrill

# PVE Golf News

The weatherman tried to pull an April fool joke on the PVE Fools Folly golf tournament held on April 2. Forecasts constantly warned of rain, but sunshine was the order of the day. 19 players proved they were not fooled and enjoyed the day, some more than others, but that is another story.

The Player of the Month Award has become very competitive. The PVE youngsters thrive on doing their best with another great accounting of superb play. Nominees were: Winky Werrick for her par 3 play or in the category of "SOB," Dinny Fisher for her all around good play, and Pat Maguire for her putting skills. The winner, Winky Werrick, was presented with the Player of the Month certificate.

We received another nominee but could not decide what was outstanding about the situation. It seems that Duncan Kelly forgot that his walking cart had a brake and, while fishing for Bill Stoneberg's ball on the 15th hole, the cart, bag, clubs and all rolled into the lake. Some thought it was an easy way to wash his clubs. All was recovered after a muddy effort. Duncan was presented an achievement award called "Old Man of the Sea" or "The biggest catch of the day."

The Tail End Charlie Award went to the team of Dom Battistella, Anita Parker, and Bob McCoy. Each received a bottle of Beefeaters (small) to help drown their sorrows.

The winners were:

3rd place (75) Harry Parker—Winky Werrick--  
Glen Grewe—Glenn Dow

2nd place (74) Duncan Kelly—Dinny Fisher—  
Larry Clayton--Bill Stoneberg

1st place (69) Walt McDaniel—Pat Maguire—  
Jack Biederman--Don Herington

All golfers are notified that the next tournament will be held on May 7, called Tip Toe Through the Tulips.

—by Walt McDaniel



## Liz Wildberger Selected

Jack Lindeman, president of the Past President Club, announced Liz Wildberger as the first recipient of the Outstanding Resident of the Year award. Many residents sent enthusiastic nominating letters for Liz, citing her wide range of volunteer activities at PVE. A partial listing includes:

- Outstanding service as Associate Editor of the Elysian Fields
- Instructor of memoir writing classes
- Piano and keyboard player for church services and other activities
- Originator of the Valiant
- “Voice” for Solano Winds concerts and member of Board of Directors
- Originator of the Campus of Learning Program

This is a very deserving honor for Liz, who has contributed much to making PVE a better place to live.

—by Bill Johnson

## How do you handle stress?

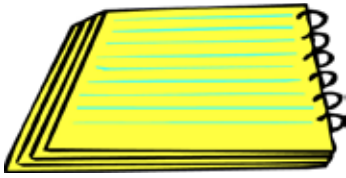
How do people handle stress? I have often wondered how I would have reacted had I been in my parents shoes during world war two. They had five sons in service during WW II. Four were overseas during the actual fighting.

Two of us were captured at the fall of the Philippines. For just over a year, all my parents knew was that we were missing. The first good news they received was that my brother was alive and a prisoner in Japan. About a month later, they were notified that I, too, was a prisoner in the Philippines. They had no clue as to how or why we were now in different countries thousands of miles apart. The third son, a marine, made the initial landing on Iwo Jima. He stayed on Iwo Jima until it was secured, one of three men in his company who was not a casualty, and one of the five men that remained of the original company. The other brother was on the USS Estes, flagship of the Seventh Fleet, patrolling off the coast of China. Weeks would go by before they would hear that they were still okay, but, of course, they could not tell them where they were or what had happened.

I asked my mother how she managed to cope. Her reply was typical of my mother; she said she would worry about each one in turn, thinking only of one at a time. She would worry about George or me, who were missing, then worry about Erwin or Floyd, both of whom, she knew, had been alive on the date of her last letter. When she felt overwhelmed and unable to cope, she would take refuge in prayer. Both of my parents were devout believers in a merciful God and prayed daily for our safe return. I cannot argue with this; God did bring us safely home.

—by Ray Heimbuch

# Clerisy



As the Nazi blitzkrieg hurtled toward their city in June 1940, Parisians poured out in torrents, clogging every highway and byway.

Among them was Irene Nemirovsky, a very successful writer. As she fled she planned a “suite” of five parts depicting how war brings out the best and worst in humanity. Before dying at the age of 39 in Auschwitz, she completed an outline of the entire project and wrote the first and most of the second novella as well. The manuscripts, in miniscule letters resembling code, were unwittingly preserved by her two daughters, who escaped the slaughter. They were not read for 60 years, then published as *Suite Francaise* and became a best seller.

The author paints a gripping portrait of the refugees, a cross-section from the great city, who are thrown together helter-skelter, competing for food, petrol, lodging, and assistance from suspicious villagers, to whom they appear like invading hordes. She shows how the nation was not united in facing the common danger but, instead, clung to divisive concepts of the importance of caste and wealth. Hence, all of them became as “fish caught in a net, watching the shadow of the fisherman moving back and forth above them”—how it feels to be defeated.

Then comes the occupation. Nemirovsky superbly describes life in the villages where the war seems to be between Great Britain and Germany. Fraternization seems normal when so many French men are POWs, especially when handsome German are everywhere, some even billeted in private homes. Nevertheless, isn't any hostile occupation bound to breed fierce feelings of humiliation and resentment?

This lost masterpiece will be discussed at Clerisy on May 15 at 7:30, in the Round Room. Everyone is invited to attend. The discussion leader will be Liz Wildberger.

—by Gaylon Caldwell

# How Right You Are

In 1963, our family was transferred from New Jersey to Fort Madison, Iowa, a small town of 15,000. It seemed like a good place for our three teenagers and a toddler. Across the street from us was a family with a couple of teens. The father was the newly hired treasurer of Schaeffer Pen Co., which was headquartered in Ft. Madison. The mother, Sue, was nice but pretty impressed with her husband's new position.

When my mother came to visit me from Omaha, Nebraska, Sue invited us to tea. She kept talking about how little Ft. Madison had to offer in the way of museums, educational opportunities, etc, always harking back to the fact that there was so little culture available. My mother, who didn't agree with her but hadn't said so, finally spoke up and said, “Why, do you know, I always thought that you brought your culture with you.”

“That's a good one,” said Sue, laughing. We all laughed, but I was so proud of my mother for getting the last word in so gracefully without offending her hostess.

—by Elly Vasak

# May Day

The term we call “May Day” began with French pilots in WWI who were able to shout to another plane at close range “m'aidez” which means “help me” and is pronounced “May Day.”

The term was picked up by the Brits and Americans, and is now the universal call for help.

—by Bev Worden



# “It Might Come in Handy”



So keep it! And that is how some of my accumulation of “stuff” has grown. Of course, that’s not the only way it has grown. There are the things just “too good” to be thrown away, things I love even though they are out-grown, worn-out or hopelessly

out of style and last but not least they were such a bargain. Mainly, this is about clothing. I still have a “boy-friend jacket” that must measure a yard across the shoulders, a silk dress I found for 12 dollars at Loehman’s in the eighties, a threadbare white flannel jacket that still looks good — if you aren’t too close, a pair of hideous, striped pants as well as some of the new tight pants I’ve worn once, and then all those nice shirts that have to be ironed. Why did I buy them? Shoes are a hopeless subject. Goodwill is the solution to these problems.

On the other hand, I’ve kept some stuff that I should have. There’s the children’s book *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper, it turns out it is a first edition and worth a bit. I kept it because the kids loved it so. There’s a maroon lucite table radio that still worked when I put it away, some hobnail glass dishes that are back in style, an old chrome toaster, and three boxes of stuff I’ve never unpacked from our move twelve years ago. All are heirlooms, if the kids don’t toss them.

Some things are hard to part with I find. I have a drawer full of cards the kids have given me for birthdays and Mother’s Day — Someday I just might go through them? Other types of written material I was able to toss: a boxful of letters Charlie and I had written during World War II, they really said nothing except how we wished the war would

end. There was nothing else we could say; current events were forbidden. I did save half a dozen random letters, which I tied with pink ribbon. Then, there was the five year diary I kept in high school. Oh man, I wouldn’t want anyone to read that, I was so naive and downright dumb, maybe innocent would be a kinder word. It too went into the trash, but I saved my scrapbooks from school and the WAVES; they are fun.

At heart I’m really a keeper or saver, but there comes a time and I can be ruthless!

—by Phyllis Miller

## Two’s Company

My fiancée and I had been discussing pending plans for our wedding. When I returned home after a long afternoon of nuptial negotiations, my mother noted that I did not seem to be particularly happy.

“Sit down,” she said. This was not an invitation but a maternal command.

She went on. “There are only two important people in a wedding. They are the bride and her mother. The groom is necessary, but he is not important. Now, go back and do what you are told.”

I did, and after that things went smoothly.

—by Boyd Matthias



# It's Not Easy Being Green (with Envy)



Envy, so we're told, is one of the seven deadly sins, and it's the one that gives me personally the most trouble. My dictionary defines envy as a "feeling of discontent and ill will because of another's

advantages, possessions, etc.," but my envy is of a far more insidious kind – Oprah is welcome to her millions, Prince Charles is welcome to his monarchy, and any aspiring president is welcome to the headaches that come with the problems of political life, but there are two categories which raise the most uncharitable feelings of malevolence in my normally charitable nature: First, those who actually enjoy physical exercise! They bounce around in the fitness classes here, full of verve and vitality, ready and capable to master any new challenge that the instructor provides. They ride their bicycles, play tennis, bocce ball and golf, in between walking the dog three times a day. They can show you how to use all the equipment in the exercise room and will jump on and demonstrate without being asked. Taekwando, line dancing, swimming, ballroom dancing — if it involves movement, you will find the participant. There is no way I want to do 90% of those activities, although several people have commented on how fast I walk. What I don't tell them is that the faster I walk, the sooner I'm back home ready to collapse in the nearest armchair with a good book.

Second, I also envy those who have an inherent bent for organization. Their files (and they have dozens of them) are all color coded, as well as labeled. Their shoes are stacked in see-through plastic boxes; spices are arranged alphabetically or in specially designed holders. They keep Christmas card lists, laundry lists and shopping lists. They never forget about birthdays or food at the back of the freezer or when their library books are due, though how they ever find time to read with all that

filing, sorting and boxing is a mystery to me. Some of them even find time to write books on how to get organized, although truth be told – and I do speak from years of personal experience – they're of little use to those they're written for. Yes, we do buy them. When we finally decide we really should take time to get into the program, we can't remember where we've put the book. By the time we've found it, we no longer have time to read it.

People like Martha Stewart have a lot to answer for. They foster guilt by implication. I still haven't written my 2007 Christmas cards. I just have to remember where I've put them, which reminds me, I have an appointment tomorrow with my tax adviser. I'd better stop writing this and start to look for some of the paperwork. Now, where did I put the form she sent reminding me of what to bring with me? Maybe it's in the...no, I think I put it . . . It has to be here somewhere . . . .

—by Pat Williams

## King Toad

I received my wings after completing jet pilot training, and the only thing I hadn't been qualified in was helicopters, so I applied for and entered helicopter pilot training at Stead AFB in Reno, NV. Wilma's mom came to visit and help us settle in. Learning to hover a helicopter was contrary to everything I had learned in flying a fixed wing, and it was giving me fits. Every day when I got home, she would meet me at the door and ask, "Who goes there, the Toady Prince (meaning I had a bad day and it showed in my attitude) or a Princely Toad (meaning I had a good day)?" This went on for several weeks and became a family joke. When I graduated, she said that I was now King Toad and this became my nickname and has been by my e-mail address, iamkingtoad, ever since.

—by Larry Butera

May 2008 Elysian Fields

# Me and the Doctor

Eubie Blake once said, “If I’d known I was gonna live this long, I’d have taken better care of myself.” And that’s how I feel about my annual visit to my doctor.

Actually, it’s supposed to be every six months, but I dislike going to the doctor. I hate it. To stretch the time between doctor’s visits, I call just before my six-month due date, and the nice computer-driven electronic lady says the soonest available appointment is in six months. Therefore, through no fault of mine, I visit my doctor only once a year.

Driving to the doctor’s office, I’m concerned. Statistically I’m dead already – alcohol, cigarettes, ice cream sundaes, so I try to remove my mind from the wretched outcome which will probably result from the examination. I load loud, fast music into the tape deck and turn it to intolerable volume in an attempt to drown out thoughts of impending disaster. The appointment lady told me, as usual, to get to the doctor’s office at least fifteen minutes before the appointment. And I do, but this requirement puzzles me since the doctor doesn’t appear until an hour-and-a-half after my arrival.

The doctor’s receptionist smiles radiantly, “Well, Mr. Terrill, you’re back for your regular check up? It’s good to see you.” Who is she to be so disgustingly cheerful? She’s probably relieved to see I still exist in life form.

The lack of noise in the waiting room would delight a librarian. The other waiting patients are like me – facing the trauma of an examination by a professional who, at any time, could stumble on some malfunctioning body machinery that indicates an unhealthy, incurable, painful, fatal, and expensive disease.

I begin my long wait for the doctor. Finally, the nurse calls my name. I approach her, and she looks me over as if sizing me up for a coffin. She leads me down many hallways, ending in a closet with a

chair, exam table, and sink and then tells me to take off my clothes and put on a piece of paper that’s hanging on a hook. The room doesn’t rate high on my comfort level. A person could get frostbite. But I remove my clothing and step into the paper robe.

Fortunately, people who furnish exam rooms provide devices to keep your mind off of impending doom. The wall has a large poster declaring: *We have a very active new Asian flu strain this season. Have you had your flu shot yet?* And another one, *Every Year 500,000 Americans become sick with salmonella. Be sure your meat and eggs are well cooked.*

I sit down in the world’s hardest chair and solemnly promise Him I will get a flu shot and never eat another piece of meat or an egg unless they are on the verge of becoming ashes, if only He will get me out of this exam with no discoveries indicating major body irregularities. Then the doctor comes in, (looking extremely grim, I think.)

He says, “Well, Mr. Terrill, how have you been lately?”

—by Ted Terrill



## REMEMBERING . . .

### **Elsie Tommaney**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: September 27, 1999  
Departed: March 26, 2008

### **Barbara Richardson**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: December 8, 1998  
Departed: March 26, 2008

### **Jean Myers**

Loving Wife  
Arrived: September 15, 2000  
Departed: April 2, 2008

### **Rosemary Bollard**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: June 2, 1999  
Departed: April 5, 2008

### **Joyce Werner**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: November 16, 1998  
Departed: April 4, 2008

### **Maj. Charles LaMond, USA(Ret)**

Loving Husband & Father  
Arrived: November 15, 1997  
Departed: April 11, 2008

### **Penelope "Pen" Henry**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: December 5, 1997  
Departed: April 21, 2008



## ELYSIAN FIELDS STAFF ORGANIZATION

Editor	Hal Carter
Associate Editor	Liz Wildberger
Copy Editor(s)	Madelynn Wolfe and Ceil Bellinger
Make-up, Layout, Publishing	Marj Parker, Joe Sanner and Ray Heimbuch
Photography	Dick Betchley
Technical Advisor	Marty Wildberger

### Editorial Assistants/Writers

- (1) Biographies of PVE residents  
Joan Teague
- (2) Life at PVE (human interest stories,  
organized activities and campus events)  
Bill and Constance  
Gum
- (3) Memories (of past events and significant  
happenings)  
Liz Wildberger,  
Miz Lively and  
Freddi Miller
- (4) Feature Writer  
Linda Faraday
- (5) Fitness feature writer  
Jan Olson
- (6) Poems  
Elly Vasak

To get the *Elysian Fields* in color on the Internet, go to the PVE Website: <http://www.pvestates.com>. 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."