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The Official Paradise Valley Estates Residents' Newspaper

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## Trout Fishing in America

A pleasant and courteous lady usher led me to my seat at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theater recently for a program by the Air Force Band of the Golden West. The event had been announced as a salute to the families and children of Air Force personnel of Travis Air Force Base. We were given a warm welcome by the commanding officer of the 60th Air Mobility Wing at Travis, the home organization for the band, and then introduced to Major Michael Mench, commander and director of the band.

This program of special selections was conceived and developed by Major Mench, who told us that he had wanted to do a "salute" program for some time. We heard six great interpretations of musical compositions arranged for the band, and the audience showed its appreciation enthusiastically. Featured was a young Airman First Class with a clear soprano voice. The musical numbers were light hearted, cheery and skillfully presented.

The second part of the program was tailored for the young audience members. Two performers, Idlet and Grimwood, with guitars and other stringed instruments, introduced themselves. They were a duo known as "Trout Fishing in America," and they explained that their repertoire included country, western, and blue grass music. After a short period of humorous bantering, the duo played 11 numbers, with titles like "Are We There Yet?" and "Always Chew Your Food," and the Band of the Golden West accompanied many of the songs. The soprano solo-

ist joined the "Trout", and one selection featured a tuba solo.

After the program, I had the opportunity to talk to the soprano, Airman First Class Pamela Kelley. When I asked her about the coordination between the band and "Trout," she explained that in 2007 Major Mench had heard the Trout perform and decided they were just what he wanted to include in his unique "salute" program for Travis AFB families. When a date for the show was decided, Major Mench asked the Trout to send the music for the numbers they planned to perform. The

music arrived at Travis one week before the scheduled performance. Major Mench distributed the music to skilled arrangers in the area who scored the music for individual instruments in the Band of the Golden West. This task was finished one day before the performance, which gave the band only one day to practice! Meanwhile, "Trout Fishing in America" was continuing its grueling schedule of concerts and arrived at Travis on the morning of the program.

The combined group had time for only one rehearsal, but it all worked. Thanks to the skill and effort of the band director, the members of the band, and the lively Trout, an unforgettable "salute" program thrilled the audience. Major Mench's vision of a concert that would honor Travis Air Force Base personnel and their families had become a brilliant reality.

—by Cletus Nelson



# A Military Life

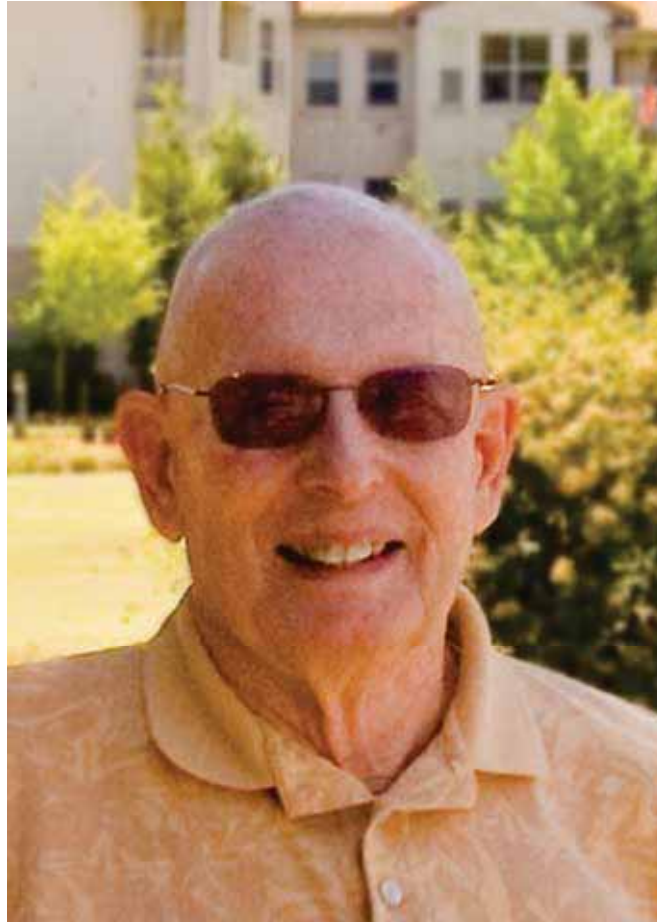
It seems almost inevitable that Allan Downey would choose a military life. When he was a child growing up in Richmond, CA, he and his friends would play soldier on the hills overlooking the bay. They also took advantage of their proximity to the water and spent hours in it.

Allan attended school in Richmond until high school. When he was thirteen, a defining event occurred that would color his later years. He got polio. That summer he attended a Boy Scout camp, along with 218 other campers. Of that number, 199 came down with the disease. They attributed the outbreak to polluted water in the pond in which they swam. It was long before vaccines or other means of prevention were available, and treatment was sketchy. So many patients at once taxed the facilities of the local hospital, and they moved the boys out as soon as possible. Allan had a baby sister who was six-months-old at the time, and his poor mother was hard pressed to take care of both of them. He walked to physical therapy, which was close to the school, and after a period seemed to recover completely.

Allan's father, who worked for the railroads, got a promotion, which necessitated a move to Needles, CA, just as Allan was entering high school. The school was deficient in some areas. However, he had valuable experience working in a diesel shop for the railroad during his vacation times.

After high school graduation, he went on to University of California at Berkeley, deciding on transportation as his major. He took R.O.T.C. classes, which led him to the military. While at Berkeley, he became the manager of the marching band. His

time coincided with the time Bob Briggs was there. Upon graduation, he and Jeanne, whom he had met there, got married. Before they formally met, he had spotted her sitting next to a window in the library in Point Richmond. He turned to his friends and said, "That is the girl I am going to marry."



Soon after the wedding, Allan was off to Korea for 17 months. Jeanne was able to go with him to his next assignment in Panama. They were the parents of six children, five boys and one girl. All but one son and the one daughter have followed careers in the military. As the children were growing up, Allan and Jeanne made an effort to be present at every one of their sporting events, even when two were scheduled in different parts of town at the same hour.

Allan retired as a Lt. Col. after 28 years of active service, 18 of which were spent overseas, sometimes with the family. He had an active

second career in hazardous waste management. He advised Saudi Arabia with its national guard.

His health was gradually going downhill, which prompted the move to Paradise Valley Estates. He is a victim of post-polio syndrome, after so many years of being free of any trace of the disease. He has not let that slow him down much in assuming leadership roles here. He has headed the important Safety Committee for five years, serves on the Bereavement Committee, and helps out in conducting the chorus during special holiday events and during the interdenominational worship services.

—by Joan Teague

# Are We Havin' Any Fun ?

For an answer to that, just ask the residents who have taken PVE field trips, which is exactly what I did. I started my research with questions for Lise Hansen, who has been running the show for eight years, her only hiatus being when she was replaced briefly by Jennifer Conley.

Lise truly enjoys acting as hostess, counting heads to make sure no one is stranded, dispensing tickets, serving bottled water. Occasionally, she has to cancel trips that have fewer than ten subscribers, but she has never had to cancel a trip scheduled for a shopping mall, a casino, or a horse race! Her own preferences are for the arts, especially music, but she adds, "I just like 'em all."

How do participants feel about field trips? Well, I asked a few.

Janet and Jim Moor, frequent trippers, opted for a Suisun Slough kayak adventure. Janet writes, "It was fun ...gliding by the wild grass on the banks with about a dozen other kayakers from our fitness training class. Getting in and out of the kayak was a challenge, but I'm glad we succeeded."

"Doc," Doug Woodward, responded at length about one very special trip. "While I have enjoyed many of the PVE trips, my favorite must have been the ride on the Niles Canyon Railway, because I am a train buff. I had never been on that train or in that piece of geography before, and I had good company."

"Doc" describes a colorful lunch with fellow adventurer Marge Crawford at a Vietnamese restaurant in Niles. "...We opted for the Mutt sandwich that really had no dog meat in it." He writes details of artifacts and a model railroad at the train station, followed by the 70 minute, round trip to Sunol. "We had a steam engine on one end pulling us uphill, and a diesel switcher on the other end taking us back downhill...chose to ride in the open gondolas and saw lots of wild flowers in bloom...through a lovely, forested, uninhabited canyon cut by Alameda Creek."

Pat and Dan Childs appreciate having someone else do the driving. They consider the Filoli trip one of the best.

Lee and Fred Schaffer are frequent but selec-

tive "trippers." They single out Music Circus in Sacramento among their favorites.

One noteworthy trip was sponsored by PVE's Fitness Department with Fitness Manager Jan Olson in charge. The goal was to walk the National Forest at Muir Woods. Because of the large number of subscribers, a luxury bus had been hired, but mechanical problems rendered it inoperable, and it was replaced by a school bus! Road work created delays, so that box lunches had to be eaten en route. Improperly sealed boxes resulted in loose apples bouncing in the aisles. Overheating required manipulation of stuck windows. Passengers became excessively thirsty, requiring immediate water distribution.

Jan writes, "We made it to Muir Woods but had to shorten our stay because the school bus had to get back! Yet, the splendor of those woods made the trip a unique experience for our residents, especially for me!"

A PVE field trip can be a memorable adventure. Try it. You'll like it!

—by Linda Faraday



# Into Thinner Air



As I struggle to follow Harlan Suits, I try to remember why I had agreed to accompany him on this climb to the top of PVE's neighboring hill. Maybe it

was vanity, maybe machismo ("I can keep up with this youngster. After all, I back-packed from Yosemite's floor to the top of Yosemite Falls just a while back—maybe 1970. No problem.") but now here I am, breathing heavily as I slosh uphill through knee-high weeds, much like wading upstream in three feet of water, but Harlan doesn't share my difficulty. He bounds up the hill like a rabbit chasing a mate. And I'm finding that Harlan is someone who likes to discuss and analyze things (continuously) while exercising. I, on the other hand, am someone who assigns his mouth exclusively to gulping oxygen to propel him up the hill. My friend covers many, many subjects—traffic on I-80, Fairfield weather, who sang "You're the Tops" in what movie, diagnosis of wind power, necessity of gripping tennis rackets firmly, joy of sleeping late, and the process of copying LP's onto segmented DVD tracks—whatever *that* means. But it's a monologue. I have no oxygen to respond.

After several thousand hard fought steps, Harlan proposes a short rest. I consider this an outstanding idea, so we stand in the weeds a few minutes while I observe three wild turkeys that are attacking the hill on our flank, and my leader expounds on the view. Then, we're off again and finally reach a plateau where the weeds thin out and the climb is shallower, but it's only a brief respite. Then,

This has to be the best part, while I stand and recuperate and absorb the view. (I don't sit on the large rock because under that rock is surely a vicious, unfriendly species of wildlife waiting to try a sample of me.) I gaze down on sizable acreage, south over Fairfield to the hills and Mt. Diablo, north to Lagoon Valley and parts of Vacaville. And it's spring. The hillside oaks are leafing out; the hills themselves are a vivid green, sprinkled with patches of yellow and white wild flowers. The three turkeys march steadily up the hill in military fashion and

disappear over the top, down toward Lagoon Valley. (How can they plow through that grass? Why the cross-country trek?)

The trip down is memorable; we spend a good portion of the morning trudging down a gully so overgrown that the bottom is totally invisible. The only way to determine if the next step will take me down four inches or four feet is to observe how much of Harlan remains visible after he takes the step. Slipping and sliding downward, I grasp sturdy stalks and twist my legs into previously unexplored positions and finally reach good ground and the concrete walk by PVE's fence. Now, this evening I have therapy—hot shower, leg massage, doses of Pinot Grigio, and my wife Dottie's words of encouragement— "I told you not to go."

—by Ted Terrill



## Pledge to the Flag

"I pledge allegiance," we would say  
At the start of each school day.  
All through the first eight grades of school,  
It was our first unspoken rule.

Later, some went off to war, and then  
Some stayed home and waited for them.  
All these years we've all been true  
To our country's flag, "Red, White and Blue."

—by Elly Vasak

# Mighty Oak, Acorn, Seedling, Mighty Oak



Walking along the tree line bordering Laurel Creek over the past years has illustrated the dynamics of the mighty oak trees. Plant scientists believe there are at least 300 species of oaks in the temperate regions of the northern hemisphere; 19 of these species are found in California. In our immediate area we find several species

along the local creek.

The genus of the oak tree is *Quercus*. This is a Latin name derived from two ancient Celtic words: *quer*, meaning fine, and *cuez*, meaning tree. The species is usually descriptive of some feature of the plant. The oaks which are endemic to our region are the valley oak, *Quercus lobata*, named for its blunt deep lobed leaves; the black oak, *Quercus kelloggii*, named after Dr. Albert Kellogg, who described the dark gray black bark; and coastal live oak, *Quercus agrifolia*, an evergreen tree with dark green leaves with spiny margins. Numerous other species are present in the surrounding region. One other oak, *Quercus suber*, the cork oak, has been planted along Constitution Avenue from the creek bridge through the 5000 area. This tree is native to southern Europe and is used to produce corks for wine bottles.

The acorns from the valley oak will sprout immediately upon falling. First, the pointed end splits and a light colored sprout appears. This sprout will always orient downward, as it forms the root. When it has penetrated the soil, the second sprout appears, this being the aerial portion of the seedling. This is a critical time for the seedling as it is subjected to physical damage, grazing by deer and other animals, and competition for water, light and nutrients.

Some oaks take two seasons to form an acorn, and others form acorns yearly. Depending on the availability of water and nutrients, the acorn crop varies. The 2007 crop was exceptionally heavy, and

the area was covered with seedlings. Of these, only a very small percentage will become a mighty oak and start the life cycle again.

We have a wonderful area to view these magnificent plants and to see the cycle of mighty tree, to acorn, to seedling, to mighty tree.

A suggested book about this subject is *Oaks of California* by Bruce Pavlik, published by Cachuma Press and the California Oak Foundation.

—by John Ousley

## Celebrating our Benevolence Fund's First Year Success!

What a year it has been for the Benevolence Fund! Over half a dozen residents have already established \$500,000 in benevolence trusts. At a luncheon on May 28, the “charter” donors and friends gathered to celebrate the program’s initial success.

In this program, residents can establish a charitable trust that will give them an immediate income tax deduction and lifetime income. After they pass on, their benevolence trust goes to support PVE’s Benevolence Fund, a fund designed to serve the needs of residents who may run out of funds or otherwise need to leave our community.

The program has worked well. Reflecting on his experience, one donor said, “It’s a great way to make an investment in our community and get an excellent rate of return at the same time.” Everyone was pleased with the program’s results and is excited about what can be accomplished as more residents participate.

If you’d like to learn more about how you might participate in the benevolence trust program, please contact Marketing Director, Sharon Dominik.

# A Trip to Europe

Recently, my neighbor, Len Bedinger, and I took an Elderhostel trip to Europe. Starting with a three-day stay in Paris in a lovely



hotel near the Eiffel Tower, we had guided tours to the usual sites and one to the Bon Marché. It was the first department store in the world, even before Harrods in London. In their café, we had a tasting of wines, cheeses, and breads. Mmm! Five of us decided we couldn't leave Paris without going to the top of the Eiffel Tower. We went in the evening for shorter lines. After 45 minutes in line, we got to the ticket window and were told we were in the "stairs only" line. Undaunted, we went to another line, and another 45 minutes got us tickets to the top. The lights of Paris spread out below were a spectacular sight.

A guided coach trip through the Burgundy countryside brought us to Basel, Switzerland. Following a tour there, we boarded our luxury barge to cruise down the Rhine River. Len and I travel as singles, and to see both sides of the river, we were glad to see our rooms were on opposite sides of the boat. As it turned out, there was a lovely sun deck with a nice shaded area, and when moving, we spent most of our time there. Our ports of call included Colmar, Strasburg, Heidelberg, Worms, through the Loreley passage to St. Goar, and back to Mainz for the end of the trip.

One of the most interesting stops was for a tour of the Rheinfels Castle in St. Goar. Our guide was a tall man playing on what appeared to be a bagpipe. He said it originated in Turkey and made its way to Germany long before the British Isles and Scotland. At one point, he said he would lead some of us through a tunnel that had been part of the castle's defense system. He warned that people who had claustrophobia probably shouldn't go. I'm always up for adventure, so I went. Len came, too. We started going up a narrow corkscrew tunnel. Soon, it became totally dark, and you could only find your way by feeling both walls with your hands and moving each foot slowly, searching for a safe step. Every so often, there was a big step, which the person in

front would warn you about. As we crept along the rocky passage, I kept saying to myself, "Don't even think about spiders." At the top, we looked out over the Rhine, then descended another spiral passage to join our group, enroute to the barge.

We had a grueling 26-hour trip home, but our stay in Europe was wonderful.

—by Pat Benacquista

## Golf News



The PVE Golf Club participated in the "Golden Tee Classic," held on June 4 at the Rancho Solano Golf course. The club welcomed an old resident but new golfer, Marjory Harlan, to our group. A total of 19 players staggered through the day and suggested the game be changed to the "Hillbilly Climbers." Rancho is much different from Paradise Valley with lots of hills to climb and big greens to navigate, but the scenery was beautiful. In fact, no Tail End Charlie award was named because most tails were dragging by the time they finished the round and the award applied to all. A vote was taken regarding a return visit to Rancho Solano and indicated a return once every ten years.

The golf angel, Dinny Fisher, again provided golf balls to each player. Team captains, who are supposed to nominate a player of the month, were suspected of being too tired to make one more decision, so that program will continue next month.

Winners were:

3rd place: (79) Jack Biederman—Bob McCoy—Anita Parker

2nd place: (78) Duncan Kelly—Clarke Reynolds—Dinny Fisher—John Gearhart

1st place: AW, NOT AGAIN (76) Walt McDaniel—Larry Clayton—Glenn Dow—Marjory Harlan.

—by Walt McDaniel

# Sea Shell Memories



I am holding a cowrie shell in my hand. It is smooth like glass as I rub my fingers all over it. The colors are brown and orange, and there are small openings at either end of the oblong shape. On

the under side there are notches like teeth, which probably strain the food the animal gets.

I go back in time to San Felipe on the Sea of Cortez after going through Calexico and Mexicali. While Mexicali has a rose to distinguish it, Calexico doesn't have much going for the California side of the border. As we travel down the Baja California peninsula, we notice that the landscape looks like an artist's rendition of a moonscape. There are miles and miles of black volcanic rock without a hint of vegetation. San Felipe is on the western edge of the Sea of Cortez, its colors in stark contrast to the barren rock we have been driving through. The water is a shimmering blue green and the sky a dome of deep blue.

We find a camping ground and pitch our tent and watch the sun set over the moonscape. In the morning, the sun will rise over the water, unlike in San Diego which we are used to. There is an extremely high tide, and the tide table tells us that it will be at its lowest about daybreak, so we take advantage of that information by getting up early and walking about a mile from the high tide line on the flat, damp sand. It is dotted with empty cowrie shells, which the boys admire and pick up. They will add to their collections of shells with splendor. Suddenly, the tide turns, and we are wading in ankle deep water. The rise is rapid, and soon we are in up to our waists and then floating shoreward. We all enjoy swimming, and we feel no danger. The boys hang on to their new-found treasures.

When noon approaches, we go to a sort of makeshift restaurant right at the edge of the shoreline, which the tide has now reached. It is small and has six mismatched kitchen tables and chairs. We spot steamed clams on the short menu

and order those. In time, a barefooted man with trousers rolled up to his knees comes out of the kitchen and walks across the dining room, bucket in hand, in order to go outside. About twenty minutes later, he comes back in clutching a dripping bucket, which he takes straight to the kitchen. A long time elapses before the same man, now clad as the waiter, comes back in and serves our steamed clams, which are delicious – and oh, so fresh.

All this memory, prompted by the cowrie shell, comes rushing into my mind at about the same rate as the rising water we had been in that memorable morning.

—by Joan Teague

## A Red, White and Blue Old-Fashioned 4th

Please plan to join us for a grand celebration of our country's Independence Day on Friday, July 4, 2008. A parade featuring your neighbors, and maybe you, will form at 10:00 a.m. at upper Constitution and Victory and begin at 11:00. Watch the parade as it proceeds to the Community Center past the judge's stand. Then, join the PVE jazz band, the PVE chorus and your patriotic holiday committee in the Multi-Purpose Room for a traditional ceremony, which includes music, a Jack Albrecht visual presentation and various comments and readings. Lunch will follow at 12:00. See You There!!

—by Lew Martin



## A Most Unusual Wine



Recently, I was privileged to share a most unique wine from one of the excellent wine cellars maintained by Ernie Haas here at PVE. It was a Mission 1773 Angelica Antigua from Royal Host Cellars in Lodi. One of the unusual things about this wine was that Ernie

said it was the last ever of its kind. It was made with Mission grapes, of which there are no longer any vineyards anywhere that grow them. It was 35-years-old and, although it had never been entered into any wine competition, I felt it would certainly would have been a heavy contender had it been.

The Mission grape arrived in California in 1773 with the Mission Fathers, who delighted in the wine made from it. Ernie said that he hoped they didn't produce a dry sacramental wine, as it would have been very astringent. But as a sweet wine, it was exceptional. The label suggested that it should be sipped with reverence and contemplation, which is what I did. One of the things most unusual about the Mission grape, and probably helped lead to its disappearance, is that it required the most care in cultivation, was the most susceptible to plant loss and diseases, grew the smallest quantity of fruit, and produced the lowest yield. This, I am sure, is the reason that it was outstanding, as some other wines from around the world with low yield are. But alas, this probably did lead to its demise. We felt we were most fortunate to be honored with sharing the last known Angelica Antigua available. It displayed the most delicate bouquet, flavor, texture and aromatic substance. As we sipped it, it certainly lifted our cheese course to the level of haute cuisine.

The wine had been produced by my host's wine-maker. Because of its low yield, it was produced in a very limited quantity. Even the label was unique in that it was printed on cork wallpaper. Ernie said they had to order an extra supply of it from Spain when the wine was ready to bottle.

—by Fred Montanye

## Catch a Falling Star

As a youth, I had a few interesting experiences with the heavens. The most spectacular sighting was of a falling star. I was walking along the beach one evening in July at dusk and a bright light over the water caught my eye. It appeared as a small brilliant light with the intensity of a large flashbulb going off, but it was a constant light.



It seemed quite close, and I was afraid it might hurtle toward me and hit me. But I saw that it was floating very slowly down through the sky, and its brilliance soon lit up the area around me. There was no noise and the object did not move rapidly, as one might expect. Just as it got to what seemed to be a few feet from the water, it suddenly went out, throwing everything into darkness again. I did not see a splash or a ripple on the bay after that, so I assumed it had burned out before hitting the water. For me, this was an incredible personal experience, and I have never heard of anyone seeing such a spectacular astronomical fireworks show.

—by Raymon E. Lawton

## Curse You Jack Dalton

“The Not Quite Ready Players” present their melodrama on Saturday, July 12, at 3 pm. We guarantee to make you laugh!

—by Jan Holderness



# Second Language Confusion

I believe it was Winston Churchill who described the Anglo/American alliance as “two nations separated by the same language.” How right he was!

I vividly remember my first foray into the California grocery store. As someone who had worked for years in the catering industry— correction: hotel and food service management field – I considered myself quite knowledgeable about food. It was a humbling experience to wander up and down the various aisles vainly searching for non-existent items, or stand at the meat counter looking at strange cuts of meat with incomprehensible names that meant nothing to me whatsoever. “Don’t panic,” I say to myself; “it’s beef. The sign says so, and just because it’s cut differently, why do you have to have beef? You can roast a half shoulder of lamb, except that there’s nothing in sight remotely resembling such a thing. Oh, well. Ah, at last something I can recognize. Mince is mince, even though they’re calling it ground beef.”

Success! Now for the vegetables. This is easy, after all. I’ll make ratatouille. Get an aubergine (Oh, it’s called eggplant, very English.) and where are the confettes? No, these are zucchini, and swedes are rutabagas, interesting. And biscuits are called cookies here, and scones are called biscuits, and jam is called jelly, and jelly is called jello. A medium egg is small, a large egg is standard, and milk comes in cartons not bottles, and food comes in cans, not tins, and there’s something called shortening that looks like cooking fat, and these golden raisins must be sultanas—and I don’t know what I’m doing, so it’s obviously time to give it a rest. At least they call tea tea and water water, and just remember to look to the left and not to the right as you cross the street, as cars come from a different direction. Oh, yes, and remember bonnets are hoods, boots are trunks, petrol is gas, and mufflers aren’t long scarves—they’re exhausts.

Yes, this is America.

—by Pat Williams

# Clerisy



Thought about visiting Camelot this summer?

Well, hey! The beguiling legend of King Arthur, his beautiful queen, and the 150 questing Knights of the Round Table are reborn in Clerisy’s summer reading.

The beloved classic, *The Once and Future King*, by T.H.White, will serve for both the July and August discussions. One book, consisting of four separate novellas, traces Britain’s most famous (real or imagined) monarch from a wide-eyed boy under the tutelage of the magician, Merlin, through his tumultuous reign, sorrows, and joys until the aged, tragic figure bids adieu to his fabled sword *Excalibur*.

These brief novels (*The Sword in the Stone*, *The Queen of Air and Darkness*, *The Ill-Made Knight*, and *A Candle in the Wind*) probe the course of a medieval culture, mired in upheaval and turmoil, becoming “Merrie England” under Good King Arthur. The interplay of the forces of light and darkness in the shaping of the fabled society is so deftly told that magic easily becomes a real force in everyday life. The author’s sly, subtle humor softens the tragedy of the truly heroic characters, who have been brilliantly and lovingly drawn.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend these “Third Thursday” meetings, which begin at 7:30 in the “Round Room.” Those who recall only parts of the magnificent Arthurian legend, or simply want to relive it, are especially urged to attend. Eric Daniel will lead the discussion of the first two novellas on July 17.

—by Gaylon Caldwell

# The Secret Language of Health Insurance

Is your desk six inches deep in Explanation of Benefits statements? If so, here is a user friendly guide to the secret language of health insurance.

**Co-Pay:** This deceptively simple term relates to the amount of money that you, the sick person, must pony up before the physician's receptionist acknowledges your appointment. The amount varies significantly among insurance companies and may increase with the depth of the physician's expertise or specialty. Example: The co-pay for a surgeon performing open heart surgery may precipitate a coronary "event" at the office reception desk.

**Provider:** This term sounds warmly paternal. In reality, the sinister "provider" is the mega-health insurance corporation to which one is under contract, either through a retirement package or, God forbid, one that we have selected ourselves after watching afternoon talk shows and being wooed into calling the 800 number flashing on the screen. But that is the worst case scenario. Most of us have the safety net of a government health insurance plan, called Medicare.

**Medicare** is a government funded acronym for a method that physicians use in obtaining payment for medical treatment. The amount that this agency will pay is a non-negotiable figure, and it is never enough. It is imperative for the patient to inquire whether a physician will accept, however grudgingly, the amount that Medicare is willing to pay. The patient then faces the uncertainty of what might actually happen when he or she is anesthetized. It is probably safe to say that the surly attitude of the attending physician will carry over into a churlish approach to the task at hand. Thus, it is necessary for the patient to be sure that a second method of payment is available to pick up what Medicare will not cover. This is known as a supplemental health insurance plan.

**Supplemental Health Insurance** falls into two categories: the HMO and the PPO. Choosing an HMO is a complicated process and is not recommended for anyone with a limited attention span. The PPO, on the other hand, permits patients to select their physician, and once that has been done, any resulting problems can be expected to be met with a

shrug and a "Well, it was your choice." disclaimer. The first time a medical receptionist asked if I had a PPO, I thought I had accidentally stumbled into the offices of a pediatrician or a urologist.

**Third person collection:** This involves signing a document that authorizes just about any scam artist out there to attempt to collect payments on your behalf. It is unwise to pursue this plan unless one's professional life included time spent at the FBI or the CIA.

At the lowest level of the health insurance hierarchy rests a plan known as Medi-Cal. This plan is easy to understand because it has no benefits. It exists for the purpose of identifying those persons who have exhausted all savings and have suffered all manner of humiliating financial reverses. Those finding themselves in this position are advised to consider alternatives, such as setting out adrift on an iceberg or settling on top of a hot rock in the Gobi Desert.

*A votre santé!* Loosely translated, "To your good health!"

—by Liz Wildberger



# More Secrets of your Library



I got so many good vibes from my last piece on “Secrets” that I thought I would write a few more. It seems that many people, especially new people to PVE, don’t know the inner workings of the library.

1. Normally we don’t buy any books; they are all donated by you good folk. If there are books lacking that you would like to see, please let us know because we do have some funds to purchase them. We have only purchased one book in our ten years of existence. That book was *John Adams*. We needn’t have done so because we received several copies later.

2. We do not subscribe to magazines either; we get them from you good folk, the same as the books. We sometimes get so many we give them away. Also, we give them away when they get a little old and we obtain newer issues. We give them to David Grant Hospital or to Kaiser Hospital or some place where there is a need.

3. We are collecting rubber bands to give to the *Daily Republic*, our little local Fairfield paper. They are very grateful to receive them because the news distributors have to buy them, and this saves them a little money.

4. We are now saving plastic covers from the papers or other things, which we give to Raleys to recycle.

5. For those of you who like to read biography but don’t like to have those weighty volumes to lift, we have a special collection of biography on the back of the right hand open stack which are all paperbacks and easy to take to bed or the airplane or whatever.

6. We do have the *Encyclopedia Britannica* on the left side of the open stack. Our *Worldbook* encyclopedias are now at Quail Creek. You may use them over there, if you like.

7. Our Reader’s Digest Condensed Books are now at Quail Creek also. Again, you may go over there and read them.

—by Bev Clemson

# Garden Sad and Happy News

The sad news is that Jan Holderness is stepping down from her role as “keeper of the garden.” After ten years as originator, designer, organizer, and major force in keeping the garden going, she has decided she has too many irons in the fire and must let one go. She will continue to tend her roses, help others with garden chores, and take an interest in what the rest of us do but won’t be the “go to” person for everything about the garden. She will be sorely missed.

Jan gave a presentation to the Landscape Committee, including color photos of the garden from its beginning, the formal inauguration with everyone in white (Remember the McBeaths’ white coveralls!) and a blessing by the local priest, himself a devoted gardener. The reason for the presentation was to give a brief review of the garden and request that the committee accept a nominal, oversight responsibility for the garden.

Two members of the Landscape Committee (Jim Lynch, a former gardener, and Anne Funkhouser) have agreed to act as liaisons for the garden. Basically, nothing has changed. We will continue to grow whatever we wish, as much as we can fit into our plots, share our flowers and produce, get help from friends and neighbors when we need it, and abide by the unspoken rules of common sense and courtesy with regard to other gardeners. In other words, we will continue to enjoy the garden as we always have, but we will miss Jan as our leader.

—by Anne Funkhouser



# Dining Services



This month we celebrate and congratulate the Flower Committee on their second anniversary of providing beautiful flowers on all of our dining tables. The 50-plus ladies devote their time and effort to prepare and

arrange about 90 vases each week for the formal and informal dining rooms, the café and the Quail Creek dining rooms. They devote two to three hours to the preparation of this beautiful addition to our dining experience. During June, there was a special luncheon prepared by David, Dwayne and the kitchen staff to commemorate the work and devotion of these “Belles of the Garden.”

I hope everyone is looking forward to the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration and BBQ. It has always been great in the past, and I’m sure it will be again this year.

It is the time of year again when we will be losing some of our servers to school vacations, preparation for going on to higher education, or to other jobs. Please thank the servers that you know are leaving and wish them well in their new endeavors.

When the idea of the new menu format came into being, the committee worked on selecting a name for this new menu concept. With about 25 names that members came up with, the one selected was “Menu on the Move.” We feel that this name helps convey the spirit of the concept.

The Dining Services Committee is accepting applications for three to four new members to serve for a three year term. As this is a committee that attempts to have all members involved in our activities, please read the “Procedures and Notes for the PVE Dining Services Committee Operations.” A copy is available on the comment card table. The committee has its regularly scheduled meeting in the afternoon, on the second Wednesday of each month. Your request for consideration for membership should list your qualifications and reasons for wanting to serve on the committee. Please submit your request to the committee secretary, Otto Vasak (4013), not later than August 9 for review at the August committee meeting. Selection of members

is then done by secret ballot and selected members are confirmed at the September committee meeting. New members will then be notified to attend their first meeting in October.

The committee received 218 signed comment cards for this month. The approval rating for the food was 95.4% and for service 97.7%. This, once again, shows what outstanding food and service we enjoy here at PVE. The award winning servers for the month are Cedric Boggs, Conlan Shione, and Michael Fernandez. Congratulate them when you see them. Don’t forget to sign your comment cards so they get counted. Bon Appetit!

—by Fred Montanye,  
Dining Services Committee Chair

## The Beach in Summer

The laughing sea  
Grins at the sky  
Like a good-natured monster,  
And the sky gleams back,  
Smiling to see this giant child at play.

The sea leaps after a low flying gull,  
Falls back, and bounces on the beach.  
The waves race across the sands  
Crisscross and tumble one another  
In a sportive struggle,  
Like a pack of bear cubs playing.

The patriarchal sky  
Beams beneficently  
As it sends a little breeze  
To brush and smooth the waves  
Displaced in the water’s war games.

The wide horizon draws a cleaving circle,  
And all is light,  
Which seems to come from some unknown source,  
Since, like twin mirrors,  
Sea and sky  
Each reflects the other’s blue still bluer,  
Except where silver clouds appear as silver foam.

—by A. M. Wildberger

# Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a serious condition in which the bones become porous, leading to the weakening of the skeletal system and increased occurrences of fracture.

The onset of osteoporosis is characterized by a sustained loss in calcium, a process that occurs at a rate of four to five percent per year during the post menopausal years. Women are four times more likely to get the disease than men.

There are several risk factors for the condition, including a family history of the disease and a sedentary lifestyle. Evidence shows that women of northern European origin and women with small frames are at an increased risk of osteoporosis.

The performance of weight bearing exercise and weight lifting can be a crucial factor in avoiding osteoporosis. Even after a diagnosis of osteoporosis, these exercises can be beneficial. Weight bearing exercise, such as dancing, brisk walking, yoga and strength training, promote mechanical stress in the skeletal system, contributing to the placement of calcium within the bones.

Here at Paradise Valley Estates we have fitness classes which aid in the prevention and slowing the process of osteoporosis. These include circuit training, ballroom dancing, Yoga and aerobics. If you have a low bone mass or have a diagnosis of osteoporosis, it may be wise to consider participation in these classes. If you need additional guidance, please don't hesitate to contact me for more information. I have a handout of exercises which aid in the strengthening of the skeletal system and in the prevention and slowing of the disease process.

—by Jan Olson, Your Fitness Manager



# Just Plain Lucky

The first draft call for WWII, as many remember, was in 1940, and I wasn't old enough to register. The second draft call was in 1942, and I registered. To promote this second draft on St. Patrick's Day, 1942, President Roosevelt pulled draft numbers out of a "fishbowl" in Washington.

I was a senior at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, at the time, and to my great surprise, President Roosevelt pulled my number as number one in the state of Nebraska. It was the only pool I ever won in my life, and it had to be the draft pool. This goes to show you how lucky I am.

I decided to take matters into my own hands and applied for the V5 Navy Air Corps training program. I passed all the tests and waited for an acceptance. With graduation day approaching, I was a little anxious. Then, again to my surprise, on the very day of graduation, I received my draft notice.

I went back to my hometown of Hastings, NE, and to my great joy, there was a letter of acceptance from the Navy. I rushed down to my draft board and showed them the letter. To my great disbelief, they said, "Look at the date on the Navy letter and the date on your draft letter. The date on the draft letter precedes the date on the Navy letter, and you are in the draft. We have a quota to make."

So, I reluctantly went to my draft destination, completed basic training, and then went to Infantry Officers School at Ft. Benning, GA. I often wondered how different life would have been as a Navy pilot.

—by Clarke Reynolds



# Camping Surprises



The weather report read: “sunny to partly cloudy, showers later in week”. We were going camping, our destination Sequoia National Park. Marc and I sang Disney songs as we rolled

down the highway. Henry drove the car, and two-year-old baby Carl slept.

Four hungry campers arrived at noon, stopping at the office to secure a campsite. I pulled out our lunch from the super-duper bear proof container, and we ate our peanut butter sandwiches and apples and drank juice. My boys let me know that I had forgotten chocolate cookies.

Our campsite was a bit lumpy in many spots. Henry secured a level spot to place the ground cloth, and then he unfolded the tent. After the tent was placed properly, Marc pounded the stakes into the ground, and Dad and Marc put the tent up and secured the rope to the stakes. A playpen was brought for Carl to sleep in. I had purchased a camp cot for my bed, but Henry and Marc would sleep in their sleeping bags. We checked our food supplies and discovered we needed more food! Marc, Carl and I walked to the store.

A roar resonated through the tall trees, and within seconds the Hells Angels appeared. They stopped at the store office, revving up the motorcycles. Marc’s eyes were large saucers. This was a new experience for him. He watched the Angels purchase groceries and lots of beer. Out the door they went and mounted their motorcycles and roared off in a cloud of dust. I hoped their campsite was not near us. Marc told Henry all about the scene.

After hiking on short distance trails, we ate a dinner of hot dogs in buns and pork and beans cooked on our trusty campfire. Cold apples and S’Mores were our dessert. Our dinner conversation continued to describe the motorcyclists, wearing leather, chaps, belt buckles, and boots adorned with silver. We felt a few drops of rain. We continued to toast marshmallows over the campfire oblivious to the occasional pitter patter of rain. The forest had a musty odor from the fumes of the cycles, but

the fire in the regulation pit kept us cozy. We all crawled into our sleeping bags and went to sleep. We were awakened by the sound of raindrops on the tent roof. Suddenly, a roar broke all of the peaceful quietness of the campground. Our entire family sat up, jolted by the roar of the Hells Angels revving up their engines and taking off for a new location. When rain started to come down from the clouds steadily, we decided to pack up and go home.

Stopping for breakfast was a delight, as Marc retold the story of seeing the Hells Angels to all of the early risers at the restaurant. He was still bug-eyed. Henry and I decided that our next camping trip would be in the small trailer sitting in our driveway in La Habra, CA.

—by Carol Block

## PVE Staff Car Wash Great Success

PVE staff braved 100 degree temperatures and washed over 80 resident cars and golf carts. They collected \$2120 in donations for the American Cancer Society’s “Relay for Life.” A hearty three cheers.



# Living History?

My two Jack Russell terriers and I have found a great friend in Debbie Magno, who is in charge of the Laurel Creek food service. When I was asked by her lovely daughter, Adrianna, to come to her Vacaville High School's social studies class as "living history" to talk about "how things were in my day," I paused thinking, "Me? Living history? Already?"

Of course, I said "yes" but with some misgivings. How could I connect with these bright, modern, high school Juniors? Their teacher, Mrs. Ranch, prepared and sent me a list of questions they might ask, such as, "Who was president when you were in high school, and what was your family's impression of him?" Another was, "What were the national and international events especially important to your generation?" Hmmm--would they care?

Mrs. Ranch also asked if I would bring along any mementos, such as yearbooks, clippings, or pictures. Then, I really panicked. I could think of none. However, after rummaging around in some yet unpacked boxes in the garage, I came upon one labeled, "Ancient Stuff." In it was my 1945 high school yearbook, newspaper clippings I had saved, and even some old "Junior Scholastic" periodicals. Remember them? That's how they kept us students current in world news back then. So, I made a scrapbook of the clippings, which consisted of articles on re-electing F.D. Roosevelt, pros and cons of entering the war against Germany, early war planes, and civilian wartime jobs and training. I sat on a high stool in front of the class and passed all these newly organized artifacts around. We all laughed a lot and discussed some of the teacher's questions. To make it more personal, I told about my hometown of Painted Post, New York, being "blacked out" at night and that I, as a senior Girl Scout, was sent out wearing a messenger arm band to take messages from one spotter to another. (What? No cell phones?!) Then the important questions came, "How did you wear your hair? How many boyfriends did you have? Where did you hang out with your friends?" It was great fun.

At the end of the class, I asked them to answer just one question for me: "What do you think is the greatest problem your generation faces in the coming years?" The answers were all very honest and personal and without exception about the economy and making a living. Interesting, don't you think?

## REMEMBERING . . .

### **James Williams**

Loving Husband and Father  
Arrived: January 17, 2003  
Departed: May 26, 2008

### **Lois Petrick**

Loving Wife and Mother  
Arrived: June 30, 1999  
Departed: June 10, 2008

### **Lt.Cdr. William "Bill" Weber, USN(Ret.)**

Loving Husband and Father  
Arrived: March 10, 1998  
Departed: June 9, 2008

### **Lt. Col. William Rexford, USAF(Ret.)**

Loving Husband and Father  
Arrived: October 27, 2002  
Departed: June 4, 2008

### **Laura Ingalls**

Loving Aunt and Friend  
Arrived: December 31, 1999  
Departed: June 2, 2008

### **Leonard "Fletch" Fletcher**

Loving Husband and Father  
Arrived: June 23, 1999  
Departed: June 19, 2008



I want to tell you, friends, that these are great young folks. Our future will be in good hands. As always, I learned way more than I taught. If you, too, are asked to speak as "living history," say yes! You'll not only enjoy it but will get that "ancient stuff" organized, too.

—by Mary Lou Wheat

# Presidential Memories

“He says “*rad-e-o.*” That’s dumb. Besides, he’s not as good looking as Herbert Hoover.” Thus, I expressed my first political opinion. Al Smith, the Democratic candidate, had a strong New York accent, but his pronunciation of “radio” was just too much for me.

Franklin D. Roosevelt also talked funny – “Care-RIB be an” instead of “Cara be an”- for instance. But he gave everyone hope that he could do something about the Great Depression, and he did.

I liked Ike and was a precinct captain for him, in spite of having a child in a stroller. I got the vote out for him and received a thank-you note for my efforts.

JFK was of my generation, and I liked him. I still remember learning of his assassination. I was substitute teaching a second grade class when the principal came in and told me.

Ronald Reagan was just a little older than I. He was a special favorite because I had known him to a slight degree and thought him “real cute.” He had been a customer of my folks’ restaurant in Des Moines, and I had waited on him and his dates. The night before leaving for Hollywood he had dinner there, and we all wished him good luck in Hollywood. We called him “Dutch,” as that was his radio sportscaster name.

Now in 2008, another election year, I wonder-  
*Who is next?*

—by Phyllis Miller

## Instructions for Submitting Articles to *Elysian Fields*

The *Elysian Fields* staff invites contributions from all PVE residents. Articles of varying length between 150-500 words should be legible, typed if possible, original and signed. Submissions by e-mail or CD are welcome but not required. Direct submissions to one of the subject matter editors or the editor no later than the 12th of the month prior to the issue.

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- (2) Life at PVE (human interest stories, organized activities and campus events)  
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- (3) Memories (of past events and significant happenings)  
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- (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.”