



October 2008

The Official Paradise Valley Estates Residents' Newspaper

Volume XI, Issue 10

I Approve This Message

We have barely gotten through the primary election campaigns and the rhetoric and negative ads that have reached new lows, according to the pundits and writers on political activity. How much lower can they go for the main event is a query being bantered about. On the other hand, perhaps the popular press is blowing things out of proportion, as they are prone to do. Our founding fathers set the bars very low with regard to trash talk. In colonial days, surrogates acted for the principal contestants. It was considered uncouth for a politician to campaign in person. John Adams' crowd called Jefferson mean-spirited, low lived, a coward and a libertine, among other jabs. Jefferson's camp gave as well as they got. Adams was called a fool, a criminal, a warmonger and much worse. Jefferson's hatchet man even ended up serving prison time for his slander against Adams.

Modern communications technology offers new and novel ways to undercut your opponent. "Whom do you want to answer the red phone in the White House at three o'clock in the morning?" The visual depiction of that red phone ringing causes you to break out in a cold sweat. You visualize a long-range rocket aimed at your house with an atomic warhead and a Russian general tossing down a vodka martini with a satanic sneer on his face. My first reaction is that I want someone in the White House who knows where the phone is kept, maybe someone who has schmoozed with the Russian general over cocktails. Is there a counterpart to this

scenario in our country's history? For example, did George Washington ask, "Whom do you want to rein in Paul Revere's horse when he makes his midnight ride to warn us that the British are coming?" During the Lincoln/Douglas debates, did either one of them ask, "Whom do you want responding to the telegraph machine when a message comes in at three a.m.?" Not likely in either case.

In a recent exchange, one candidate was asked how many houses he owned. He answered "four" and later amended it to seven. The other candidate latched onto this startling confession, exclaiming in TV ads that with all those houses his opponent wasn't like the rest of us. A retort ad pointed out that the other candidate was living comfortably in a plain old million-dollar mansion.

What would General Washington have said if similarly questioned when he ran for president? My conjecture, "Well, there is Mount Vernon." Martha would chime in, "George, you didn't count the fifty worker cabins. They count, too."

How about Franklin D. Roosevelt? "Well, there is the one in Hyde Park, and don't ask me any more damn fool questions." And JFK? "Jackie, how many houses do we have?" "Why, Jack, I have no idea. Ask Robert or Teddy." Would the national press pick these stories up?

I am Hal Carter, and I approve this message (with a flag in my lapel.)

—by Hal Carter



They Met on the Ski Slopes

Laverne and Wayne Elwood would never have met if it had not been for that ski club in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Each had taken a circuitous route to get there.

Laverne was born in North Dakota into a large family. The two eldest, both boys, were followed by nine girls. They had great parents and a six-bedroom house on the farm. Laverne was third from the youngest. Her mother loved entertaining, so they were surrounded by other families, including many children. The Knudtson children all pitched in and helped with whatever farm chores needed doing. Even though it was the time of the Great Depression, they always had plenty of vegetables. Times were tough in other ways. Laverne went through school and on to college at North Dakota State University, where she majored in home economics.

Wayne was born and spent the first eighteen years of his life in Iowa. He had one older sister. He remembers playing baseball on his high school team. He and friends ice skated on the nearby river during the frigid winters. His father died suddenly at the age of 49. It was up to Wayne to support the family. They moved to Los Angeles at the beginning of World War II, where Wayne worked at Douglas Aircraft, a job that lasted until the end of the war.

After Laverne graduated from college, she moved to Southern California and worked for Public Services Utility. General Electric provided a company car, which she was allowed to use for all her personal needs as well as business. The car had the G. E. logo prominently displayed on the back as well as giving a plug for cooking with electricity. She joined

a ski club and used the car to get to all their events.

Wayne had moved to Albuquerque, where he started working for Georgia Pacific's paper division. He stayed with that job until retirement. He joined the ski club and met Laverne. They were married



after a long courtship and continued skiing. They took their vacations at ski resorts and, after retirement, traveled to enticing ski locations. As they approached 90, they decided they should give it up before they had any serious accidents. Laverne had suffered a broken leg due to a maverick skier who slammed right into her, but

that was the only bad incident they suffered.

They traveled to many countries during retirement, including Norway, where both were able to find the birthplaces of their ancestors. Hospitality was extended because they belonged to the Sons and Daughters of Norway in the United States. They went through imposing mountains, but it was the wrong season for skiing. It was through the Sons of Norway that they became aware of PVE and moved here in 2002.

The Elwoods enjoy family reunions every three years with the remaining members of Laverne's family. They choose destinations all around the country. They have one daughter who lives in San Jose. She follows her athletic parents in skiing and swimming. Recently she put on a gala party in honor of her mother's 90th birthday. Both Laverne and Wayne feel that they have had active and interesting lives.

—by Joan Teague

One Therapy Fits All

You might look for this head-to-toe medical magic in the phone book under the headings Beauty Salon, Barber Shop, or even Hair Emporium, but the results are the same in all. Whether you take the treatment weekly or monthly or semi-annually, the benefits are guaranteed. You're going to feel better when you walk out than when you walked in. Happily for us, PVE boasts three such treatment centers!

Ofelia Gil, owner of the combined shops titled "Golden Years Salon," was encouraged to attend beauty school by her husband, Juan, whose hair she had been trimming for years. She has been a professional for 18 years, but she still devotes time to their three active children. Juggling her time can be difficult. "I try to take one day at a time," she writes.

"I enjoy doing hair. I think of it as an art, and every day at PVE is a new challenge and adventure," says Ofelia, "like who is going to forget an appointment or who needs to be called and reminded. It's fun to listen to different stories and to hear customers say how relaxing it can be as they fall asleep under the dryer and bang their heads. The sad part is getting close to a client and developing a relationship and then not seeing that person anymore."

Ofelia's partners in therapy include hair cutter, Blanca, also Drew, who comes every other week for those who need or just enjoy the luxury of having their feet pampered, ankles massaged, or toenails painted.

Tammy Martin operates the salon at Quail Creek. She writes, "I have always wanted to do hair, so I quit my county job after 20 years and went back to school to get my license. I love what I do. Every day I am at Quail Creek is like a day in a

history class. Every client has a story: how she met her husband, how he met his wife. Faces light up in the telling. The 'boys' have some good stories, too, about how they flew bombers and about their post-war jobs."



In answer to a question about her personal life, Tammy writes, "I take care of my mom and daughter. I have a pink Harley Davidson that I love to ride, and boy, do I ride." Of Ofelia she writes, "My boss is great, always there for me when I have problems."

Wanice

Betton, aka Master Sergeant Betton, USAF, retired, lights up the hair salon at Laurel Creek with her enthusiasm and compassion. In her own words, "The relationship I have with my clients and those who aren't my clients is one of mutual respect. Since I'm part of the retired military, I can identify and share experiences...There have been many sad and happy times, but that's life... I try to spread a little cheer to everyone who comes into the health center, and I believe I get the same back...I try my best to keep the residents' hair, nails, and feet looking good!"

Wanice spends her private time off her feet, "exercising, reading, watching tennis, golf, and a good movie."

It's my personal guess that if you just need a hug or a sympathetic nod between appointments, you will find one bestowed generously and sincerely at one of PVE's salons. Those ladies care about us.

—by Linda Faraday

Dining Services



I was slightly at a loss for what to include in this month's column, as we were gone for half of it. Part of the time, we were on a cruise to Alaska. Dining on the ship was much as it is here at PVE. We had open, anytime seating, either

at a two-top, six-top, or eight-top. This allowed us to meet people from all over, which we did. Each table also had a candle and fresh flowers. The wait staff was young people such as ours, but from Southeast Asia, Australia, Russia, and Eastern Europe. The menu had five courses with two or three selections for each course. Even with that, we still missed our dining at PVE.

This is the month that the committee, through secret ballot, selected new members for the committee, based on their written requests to become members. They are Pat Wolffe, Isabel Redfield, and Phyllis Miller. I want to thank personally our three departing members, Doneyn Johnson, Marianne Walleen, and Jan Holderness for the wonderful job they have done in contributing to many of the successes of the committee.

This being the end of the Dining Committee year with new committee membership, it might be nice to note our resident approval rating of food and service here at PVE. Over the past twelve months, there were 2099 signed cards commenting on food, with a 92.1% approval rating. For service, we received 2174 signed cards, with 94.7% of everyone happy with service.

There were 171 signed cards for this past month, with 90.9% happy with the food and 94.7% happy with the service. Our servers for the month are Maria Alejandres, first place, and tied for second place, Lance Apelado and Robin Winston.

With the end of September here, the Friday morning continental breakfast ended on the 26th of the month in the Pavilion. I'm sure everyone enjoyed the good fruit, pastries, juice and camaraderie we all experienced this year, and we will look forward to enjoying it once again when spring ap-

proaches next year.

With fall approaching, we are getting into more parties and special dinners. Certainly, this next month we will again have a great time with goofy masks and costumes for Halloween. Then it's on to "Turkey Day" and, before we know it, the winter holiday season will be upon us. We all look forward to all of it with enthusiasm.

Everyone has welcomed Dwayne back from his unfortunate accident of cutting the tendon in a little finger that required extensive surgery to fix. This was a sad incident to happen to someone who depends upon the use of his hands so much in his work.

Be sure to submit your signed comment cards, as you can see that they do count. *Bon appétit!*

—by Fred Montanye,
Chair, Dining Services Committee

Kindness

Recently, I read several touching stories of kindness among strangers while traveling here and abroad. These stories brought back a fond memory of what happened many years ago while we were living in San Jose, California.

My husband, Ted, and I decided to have dinner at a quaint place in town. As we entered the restaurant, he noticed one of his students having dinner with his family. After a few words of greeting, we were seated at a nearby table. Later, when we went to pay our bill, the cashier said someone had already paid for our dinner.

It was such a surprise to learn the family we had met earlier had quietly paid our bill and had already departed. What a pleasant surprise! Their kind gesture gave us a warm feeling, knowing that parents do appreciate their children's teacher.

—by Grace Miyagishima

Vallejo, a Reluctant Californian



From the time before and after California became a state in 1850, there are tales of a splendid Spaniard, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. This is a story from that time, taken from memoirs of his son, Platon, a physician, who lived in the city named for his father until 1923.

Vallejo quickly rose in the Spanish military in Monterey and in 1835 was made *Comandante* of a large area surrounding what is now Sonoma. His order was to build a community around the mission in Sonoma, which had been secularized. He avoided battle with the Suisunes, led by Solano, their leader, and persuaded him to join forces with him. But from the north came more Indians, who poached Vallejo's cattle and stole his horses. A patrol of Spanish soldiers, along with help from Chief Solano and his Indian fighters, was sent to beat back the Indians from the north.

There was a fierce battle with casualties on both sides. Accompanying the Spaniards were "camp followers," among them a soldier's wife who had just had a baby. She was told her husband had died in the battle, and in her deep grief, she threw her newborn baby into the adjoining stream.

At the same time, Russians from Ft. Ross were taking a trip into the beautiful land surrounding their station. Princess Helene, the very beautiful niece of the Czar, had recently arrived and wanted to see the forests and hills. Their small Russian group suddenly found themselves surrounded by a ring of warriors, led by Solano and Vallejo's brother, Salvador. Solano was ready for a fight; he wanted to kill the men but save the woman. Salvador persuaded him to wait for directions from Vallejo, and they sent off a trooper to notify him.

The trooper rode pell-mell, and in fording a stream on the way, he saw a small white bundle floating on the water. As he passed, he saw a small

leg, drew a tiny body from the water and closed his uniform around it. When he reached Vallejo's home, he found it dark and in mourning. Maria Benicia, Vallejo's wife, had just had a stillborn baby. The soldier took the rescued baby to her, and she received it and put it to her breast. Platon recorded that the child was raised in the Vallejo family and treated like his brother.

When Vallejo heard the trooper's report, he threw on his uniform, jumped on his horse and rode to his soldiers. There he met with the Russians, stopped all threats from his men and kissed the hand of the beautiful princess. It is said that Vallejo's wife, Benicia, never was pleased with this part of the story.

When California became a state, Vallejo was one of the first state senators. One of his tasks was to name counties. He named Mt. St. Helena, and also the city of St. Helena, Yolo County, Solano County, and many more towns and cities in the new state. His son, Platon, heard this tale from family members and recorded it as family history. Is it truth or embroidered family recollections?

—by Sarita Smedberg

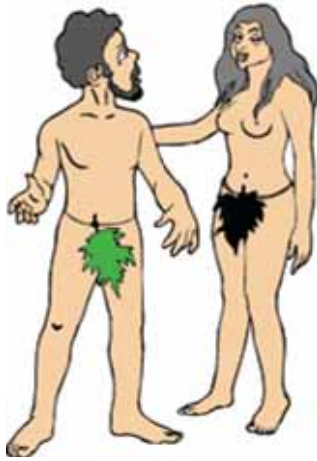
Elysian Fields Staff Change

With considerable regret, Elly Vasak has asked to be relieved of her duties as poetry editor. Elly has served with great distinction for five years under the current editorship. The good news is that Elly will continue to contribute poems to EF from time to time. Also, I am pleased to announce that Marty Wildberger, a frequent contributor, has agreed to be our new poetry editor. Marty asks that submitted poems not exceed 45 lines.

—Editor

On Fig Leaves

Artists unashamedly depicted the naked human form from classical Greek times to the Renaissance. Subsequently, Christian moralists increasingly called for cover-ups. Adam and Eve were often shown wearing fig leaves, following the Biblical description. Many leafless paintings and some sculptures had fig leaves added. A hundred years or so later, restorers began letting the figures expose their anatomy to the public once again.



The biggest artistic cover-up of all time occurred around 1860, when the Grand Duke of Tuscany gave Queen Victoria a replica of Michelangelo's statue of David. The work is huge, nearly 20 feet high, and this gross display of male nudity was too much for the sovereign head of the mighty British Empire. She commissioned the casting of a giant fig leaf, some two feet across, which could be attached to the statue to spare the blushes of female visitors to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

I first saw the statue in the late 1930s. By then, the fig leaf no longer covered up critical parts of the statue but was hung on the back of the plinth. In general, the 20th century saw the fig leaf lose its moral status and become the subject of jokes.

I came across an example of this a few years ago when I visited a bar in Jack London Square. Arlene and I were sitting at the counter sipping our drinks when a bell rang loudly. All eyes turned to the lady who now entered, looking embarrassed. The landlord then explained to us that in the Ladies' Room there was a statue of a male nude, wearing a hinged fig leaf. When a visitor couldn't restrain her curiosity and raised the leaf, a bell rang in the bar. Before we left, the landlord insisted on taking us into the Ladies' Room to see his impish statue. It was quite a well-made bronze figure about 16 inches high. The hinged fig leaf worked very smoothly.

I had an uncomfortable encounter with the foliage of a fig tree that grew in my backyard in Woodside,

CA. The tree had grown too big, and late one summer I decided to do some severe pruning. Having chopped off several branches, I started to haul them to my dump. I was wearing bathing shorts and sandals, and the foliage brushed against my bare flesh. Suddenly, the back of my legs began to itch with an excruciating intensity – the worst I had ever experienced. I dropped everything and ran to the pool, where I flopped about rubbing my legs frantically. Fortunately, the itch diminished fairly quickly.

After this experience, I started to wonder whether my reaction to fig tree sap was common and, in particular, whether Adam and Eve might have been as exquisitely sensitive as I was. If so, they would have torn off those fig leaves in no time. That wouldn't have altered the creation of mankind. It might, however, have got the process going a bit sooner!

—by Eric Daniel

Bocce Ball Concludes Successful Season

Twenty teams and over 80 residents competed on a weekly basis beginning April 7 on the PVE court behind the DeLong Pavilion. It was a friendly competition but spectators could hear groans and cheers depending on how close the red (or green) ball landed by the pallino. John Kroyer, bocce ball organizer, congratulates all participants and lauds the efforts of the late Gloria Heuer and Marie Klaver for score keeping and Fred Schaffer for game scheduling. The final game of the season was held on September 26. Top five teams (at EF press time) based on number of wins were:

First place (tie): M. Ablan, V. Stockel, P. Miller, C. Gilbert (team 1), 17 wins

First place (tie): G. Heuer, E. Heuer, J. Martin, L. Bedinger (team 12), 17 wins

First place (tie): A. Kocher, I. Redfield, W. MacQuarrie, Clara MacQuarrie (team 2), 17 wins.

Fourth place : H. Carter, B. DeLong, A. Gonnella, J. Lindeman, L. Hillier, (team 5), 16 wins

Fifth place: S. Sullivan, V. Tracy, P. Schmal, J. O'Toole, S. Myers (team 15), 14 wins

The Meaning of 09/11

“Turn on your TV; a plane just hit one of the twin towers in New York,” said a colleague as he stormed through the door from a neighboring office on a beautiful, bright Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001. I was working as Executive Vice President of the 60-Plus Association, a conservative, non-profit seniors’ organization in Arlington, Virginia, where we followed the tragedy on TV through a second plane striking the other twin tower. But where it really hit home, as we were watching the carnage, was the loud boom outside our office building when the third plane struck the Pentagon less than a mile away. A staffer who was coming to work called in panic, and I told her to turn around and go home.

We shut down the office and evacuated the building that initiated a five hour ordeal of walking ten miles to my condominium, Watergate at Landmark, in Alexandria, Virginia. It was absolutely eerie. Part of my trek was across Columbia Pike, bypassing the smoldering Pentagon, through the Army and Navy Country Club grounds, and finally on to Interstate 395 that the police had closed, amidst the cacophony of police and fire sirens. Along the way, I stopped for a drink of water. People were in shock, but even so you could sense the camaraderie and the patriotism of the populace.

For the next three months, the damage to the Pentagon was a stark reminder of the dastardly terrorist attack; fires continued to burn for several days, but the accelerated repairs of the building were also evident. As was true throughout America, flags, large and small, were in abundance. We hung a large garrison flag from our ninth story window, for example.

However, the poignant moment of the tragedy for me was when I attended a wedding on December 15, 2001, in Canadensis, Pennsylvania, a little community in the Poconos, 90 miles from New York City. The guest house where I stayed had a reservation book with some two dozen names for reservations during the Christmas holidays in the Poconos for people who would never show up because they

were killed by the terrorists in the Twin Towers attacks.



It’s shocking to me how soon so many Americans have forgotten about 09/11. We at PVE can each remember 09/11 vividly, as we remember other salient events, Pearl Harbor, VE and VJ days, the Kennedy and M.L. King assassinations, the Cold War and its ending. We are grateful to the Almighty that we haven’t had another attack, but it could happen again. Let’s not forget 09/11.

—by Henry “Hank” Hough

An Autumn Tapestry

Up the path the elms come marching
With their branches stiffly arching,
Bared by autumn’s jealous parching
All the green that summer wrought.

Some yet spark with borrowed splendor
Lent by winter’s deadly vendor,
Who will usuriously render
Glory, all too dearly bought.

Now the grass to brown is turning,
And the heaped up leaves are burning,
While the migrant birds are spurning
All this beauty come to naught.

Overhead their flocks are flying
From the landscape that is dying,
From the ruined scene now lying
Where perfection, once they sought.

Watch the scarlet ivy fading.
Watch the cold gray clouds parading.
Watch the shallow winds, all aiding
In the winter’s fell onslaught.

—by Marty Wildberger

Painting the Nude, Part 2

I read with good humor Eric Daniel's article in the August issue of *Elysian Fields*, "Painting the Nude."

My first experience in life painting class came in the Philadelphia Museum School of Art. I had mastered certain techniques and was now eligible to join the life class in oil painting.

I'm certain that everyone who walks into such a situation for the first time feels quite humble.

What the average person doesn't realize, painting from a model is a new form of art. When one overcomes the idea of an unclothed figure, the subject becomes an object, much like any other object. The challenge comes in capturing skin tones, the colors in shadows, and curving lines. Our models were male or female, young, and not-so-young.

I agree with Eric's friend, Fred. There is nothing so chaste as "young, thin females with pretty faces." I found out when I joined a group of artists in Berkeley who used local models. During the 60s, modeling meant money for food, and models were too thin to be considered good subjects.

Through a friend's influence, three artists and I obtained an unoccupied classroom at St. Mary's College and used it for our studio. Soon, we had requests for life drawing two evenings a week. We invited a few artists to join us in order to pay our models' fees. Fannie, who weighed about 200 pounds, became our favorite model. She knew the profession and had modeled for more than 15 years.

Then, disaster struck. The priest who had sanctioned our presence on campus was tragically killed in a car accident. The priest who took his place came to see us one morning. "We can no longer lease the classroom to you," he told us. "While I have no problem with the arrangement, it has been brought to my attention that underclassmen have been found peeking under your blinds in the evening. We can't have that."

—by Margaret Gruber



Growing to Share

You will get a host of different answers when you ask PVE gardeners why they garden. Some will say they like the fresh air or the feel of the sun or the breezes stirring (or the simple pleasure of dirt under their fingernails.) Some enjoy watching the animal life. There are birds breaking into song, seeking bugs and seeds, or defending their territory. There are lizards doing "push-ups" to warn other males and attract lady lizards. Even earthworms are worth noticing. Their presence means that the compost (so painfully spread last spring) is doing its job of attracting more worms to loosen our heavy soil.

But the most important reason all of us have for gardening is growing something to share. Most of you have enjoyed the fresh flowers at the front desk. These are often from our residents' gardens. Flowers for the church service, for public places in Laurel Creek and Quail Creek, are also often from the residents' gardens. Some of you may have enjoyed the "garden fresh" vegetables from the basket on the front desk. (You had to be quick about this because these were scooped up so quickly!) One of the gardeners keeps a list of people to whom he takes vegetables "So no one is forgotten." Many of us take vegetables to our neighbors, but one gardener took veggies to all the residents on his street.

There are lots of reasons to garden, but all of us agree that the most important reason for growing things is having something to share. Knowing that we can bring smiles to our friends and neighbors brings smiles to our faces and keeps us digging and pruning and watering and picking.

—by Anne Funkhouser



Driver's Tests



If you are a California resident, the DMV will send you a notice of expiration of your license two months in advance of your birthday. If you are a new resident to the state, you must call for an appointment. In either case, you must have an appoint-

ment. You can get a license even if you are over 70, or over 80, or 90, or even 100. You must pass the eye test, the driver's test, and pay \$28.

Drivers' tests are a popular item here at PVE, but they no longer apply to the functions of the library. There are no sample tests in the library any longer. If you are going to visit the DMV to renew your license, please call me at 427-1574. I will lend you a packet of a handbook and several old but corrected tests that former residents have donated. This packet is for your study and is nearly guaranteed for success.

Nearly everyone has passed the driver's test after studying our tests. We have had only two failures in five years, and one thought she was a princess and thereby exempt from all laws.

When you get your packet from Bev, you may notice that some of the old tests are several years old. No matter, they are still applicable. The only changes are mentioned in the booklet and recently are only about the cell phone handling in your car. Feel free to keep your packet for as long as you like. However, I would like to have the packet back along with your own test.

When I took my test this year, you can bet I studied. My reputation was on the line. The young man who gave me his chair when I thought the test would take a long time was behind me in the line to get our tests checked. He was a very charming 19-year-old and was now taking the test over because he had missed 8 out of 16 questions. I asked him if he had cracked the book, and he said no. I am fearful of drivers like him who are out there driving and who do not know the rules. He was puzzled over some of the questions and thought them tricky. He worried over the one about going through a puddle. Granted, we don't have many puddles here in our area, but it is certainly necessary to know how

to handle the situation should it occur. The same idea goes for the light rail, which we have only in Sacramento and San Jose, as far as I know.

So keep studying, and take your test with ease.

—by Bev Clemson

First Love

On the hottest nights of summer,
You can make your heart beat fast
By the thought that autumn's coming.
Soon the summer will be past.

The wind comes 'round the corners
As you lie in bed at night.
It croons you lovely lullabies
And whistles with delight.

For the autumn's like a sweetheart
You see just once a year.,
But you're happy when you're with him,
And you love to have him near.

And when you think of autumn
You forget about the rest,
For the autumn was your first love,
And you'll always love him best.

—by Elly Vasak

Move-ins Since the Last Issue

Maj. Kermit Anderson, USA(Ret)
and Jean

From Novato, CA
To 5815 Constitution Avenue

“If Elected, I Will.....”

Election for members of the Resident Council is coming up, and I'd like to offer a good, solid platform for candidates. Any candidate adopting the following platform, or a similar one, would certainly receive my vote.



- Get rid of the library. Replace it with something useful, like—say, a sports bar.
- Don't allow golfers into the Club. Who wants to sit and listen to them go on and on about *pars* and *birdies* and goodness knows whatever else they've been up to out there on that golf course. Let 'em meet in the new sports bar.
- Open the main dining room for full course breakfasts every day. We shouldn't have to spend our retirement years plopping frozen waffles into a toaster and calling it breakfast. And the Club should be open, too, for those of us who enjoy a Bloody Mary before breakfast.
- Make the county, or whoever, cut down the trees along that creek. Get rid of dangerous and noisy wildlife; open up vistas to the beautiful brown hills.
- Revise the dress code for women to require dresses in public areas, like it was in the 30's and 40's, no pants or slacks or whatever.
- Require the maintenance department to make an appointment before mowing a resident's lawn. How many times have you been awakened at 11:30 a.m. by the roar of a lawn mower in your yard?
- Build a convenience store for PVE. Why should we have to run down to Raley's every time we need a tube of toothpaste or a six-pack of Schweppes? Where to place the building? Let Ron Ridley figure it out. That's his job.

I've thought of a few other changes we need, but I can't remember them right now. But I present the above seven items as a stable, achievable program. How to pay for it? Like the federal and state governments—borrow. Let future PVE residents pick up the tab.

I'd really like to hear your opinions about the

platform, but unfortunately, I'm leaving immediately for a two-month vacation.

—by Ted Terrill

Clerisy

Those fortunate enough to have had a teacher who infallibly greeted students returning to school each autumn with the same question, “What did you read this summer?” will feel the nostalgia at Clerisy's session on October 16.

That's because an “adult” version of that question will serve as the format, “adult” in the sense that the discussion will not be limited to summer reading but expanded to include any written work. It can be fiction, nonfiction, biography, poetry, plays, or even something in the process of being read. Those who wish, will have an opportunity to “tell” (if not “show”) about it. The work needn't be best ever read, nor a favorite, just something that interests the “discussion leader of the moment.” Also, unlike school, there will be no pressure to participate. The idea is to share a pleasant evening.

However, an important byproduct of the brief discussions will be to provide everyone with a better idea regarding what participants enjoy reading and discussing, so all interests can be accommodated. Clerisy regulars have learned over the years the pleasures of reading things which they would probably never pick up in a library or bookstore.

Everyone is always invited to Clerisy meetings, which are scheduled the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the “Round Room.” Attendees are welcome to participate actively or passively by simply listening.

—by Gaylon Caldwell



Close to Home

The recent fire in Butte County, CA, was of special interest to us because we have two children with homes in the town of Paradise. Our daughter's house was near the center of town and not in special danger. However, our son's home sits on the brink of a huge canyon overlooking the vast Sierra countryside in an easterly direction, with the west fork of the Feather River running down the long twisting bottom of the canyon.

As long as the fire remained on the far, or east, side of the river, the family felt safe, but they knew that if the fire ever jumped across the river and started up that steep hillside, there would be no stopping it from running rampant right into the town itself.

It was because of this danger to the town that the different fire departments stationed a "pumper" at each rim home with three firemen per truck. For several days, there were three on duty 24/7. Our son's ample deck was used as a headquarters and surveillance point. The firemen had an unobstructed view that was badly needed to monitor the fire's progress.

Fortunately for all concerned, the wind decreased and shifted to the north, driving the fiery monster south and away from populated areas. Had it jumped the river, those brave men were prepared, with 1600 firefighters and some 60 special trucks and aerial tankers ready. They had also taken the precaution to spray all of the homes on the rim with a thick, white, oozy fire retardant.

After two weeks of fighting the fires surrounding the area, all the residents of Paradise could finally take a deep sigh of relief. Nature brought welcome coolness and dying winds. My son and his family were allowed to move back into their home and start the messy job of cleaning up. The retardant had stripped the new paint from their house, and their landscaping had suffered badly, but as we know, with most heartache, there is a positive outcome. So it was with my son and his family. They had developed a new and deep respect for these brave firefighters, and they also had cemented new and lasting friendships with their neighbors and fellow residents of their small town in the Sierra foothills.

—by Norman Bills

Nancy Demosthenes was part of a beginners' memoir writing group during the three months prior to her death from cancer. She told me: "I may not make every class, but there are lots of things I need to write and leave for my children." Here is her final submission, written from Laurel Creek in late June, 2007. It is a courageous self-assessment, and may give some of us the courage we need to face our day-to-day problems.

—Liz Wildberger, Associate Editor, Elysian Fields

Today

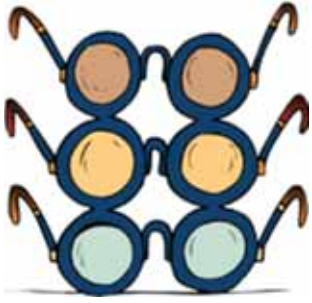
Today I will delete from my journal two days: yesterday and tomorrow. Yesterday was to learn, and tomorrow will be the consequence of what I can do today. Today I will face life with the conviction that this day will not ever return. Today is the last opportunity I have to live intensely, as no one can assure me that I will see tomorrow's sunrise. Today I will be brave enough not to let any opportunity pass me by, my only alternative is to succeed. Today I will invest my most valuable resource, my time, in the most transcendental work, my life. I will spend each minute passionately, to make of today a different and unique day in my life.

Today I will defy every obstacle that appears in my way, trusting I will succeed. Today I will resist pessimism and will conquer the world with a smile, with the positive attitude of expecting always the best. Today I will make of every ordinary task a sublime expression.

Today I will have my feet on the ground understanding reality and look to the stars to invent my future. Today I will be happy and will leave my footprints and my presence in the hearts of those I am in contact with. Today I invite you to begin a new season where we can dream that everything we undertake is possible and that we can fulfill it with joy and dignity.

—by Nancy Demosthenes

Vision Loss



According to the Society for the Blind, by age 65 one in 30 seniors experiences severe vision loss, and by age 85 almost one in five seniors is visually impaired.

These statistics have such a profound significance for PVE that, as we look ahead to 2009, we

hope to have a working arrangement with the Society for the Blind in place. These services will provide rehabilitation for our residents who need these services and skills for their continued independence. This would include acquisition of core blindness skills.

The leading causes of blindness in the United States are glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy. Together these three diseases account for nearly half of all people who become blind.

What causes vision loss in glaucoma is not elevated pressure in the eye. True, high ocular pressure is an important risk factor, the only one that is treatable. It is also true that lowering pressure can slow vision loss from glaucoma. Unfortunately though, vision loss can continue even when ocular pressure is kept in check, and lowering pressure cannot restore vision that has already been lost.

To understand why requires us to examine the anatomy of the eye. The retina of the eye is a transparent sheet of nerve cells called neurons that transform light signals into electrical impulses that travel along the optic nerve to the brain. Though we do not know why, the retinal ganglion cells and their fibers in the optic nerve are especially vulnerable to injury due to pressure. This vulnerability increases as we age. In fact, age is the greatest risk factor for glaucoma. As the population ages, there is an increase in the number of cases that involve injury to these neuronal structures even without high ocular pressure, and where the injury continues even when the pressure is lowered by drugs or surgery. Thus what blinds in glaucoma is damage to the retinal ganglion neurons and their fibers in the optic nerve. Because these structures are part of the central nervous sys-

tem just like the brain and spinal cord, their ability to heal is extremely limited.

Because of this, many researchers think of glaucoma as an age related disease of the brain, like Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease. Researchers hope that by studying other neurodegenerative diseases like these we can identify common causes that will help develop new treatments that directly target those aspects of glaucoma that are truly blinding.

It is our mission to reach all residents at PVE with programs and services to meet the needs of our community.

—by Jan Olson, Fitness Manager

The Operatic Farmer

Before my parents had a summer cottage in New Buffalo, Michigan, our family used to spend our vacations in northern Wisconsin or southwestern Michigan. One of the places where we vacationed was Union Pier in Michigan. There was a fairly large Bohemian population in the late 1920s and early 1930s. As a bachelor, my father had spent some of his vacation time there and stayed at Mr. Uher's farm. Mr. Uher had rooms to rent, and his wife cooked a Bohemian cuisine. Another friend of my father's from his bachelor days was Mr. Stopka, who also stayed at the Uher's farm.

Mr. Stopka visualized himself as an opera star, even though he only sang minor roles on the operatic scene. One day when our family was at the Uher's, my father said; "Come outside, you've got to see and hear this." There was Mr. Stopka out in a field driving a tractor and vigorously singing operatic arias. To top this off, he was dressed in his tuxedo. We all had a good laugh.

My mother never really liked Mr. Stopka, partly because he was very egotistical. Whenever he visited us for dinner in the Chicago area, my mother would always say, "Watch the silverware." He had that kind of reputation.

—by Otto Vasak

Treadmill to Oblivion

Early in the days when PVE was new, I found a perfectly fine day to take a walk with my little dog, Tiger Woods. With his leash and my scooper bags in hand, we covered the usual route and assorted pit stops. As we reached the Recreation Center, I looked through the window and saw that the exercise room was unoccupied. The temptation was too much.

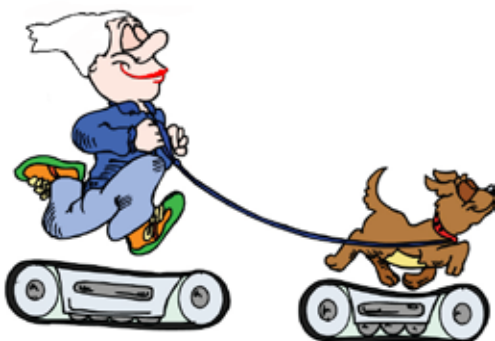
We entered the building with Tiger still on his leash, and he was happy to sit beside me as I did my usual 30 bench presses. Then, I moved on to the stationary bicycle. I should say WE, as Tiger jumped onto my lap, which was fun because it made me work harder. Next, I graduated to the treadmill. Tiger W. was bored by the whole operation by now and sprawled out on the floor, eyes shut and probably just content not to be tied up outside by himself.

As I was jogging along at my normal pace of an 18 minute mile, my dog suddenly jumped on the revolving belt of the machine. This caused us both to get caught, and I fell down. Tiger started barking, and I panicked, starting to scream for help. Rescue came from a gentleman playing pool in the adjoining room. "How do you turn off the machine?" he asked.

"Pull the plug," I yelled to him. I am sure this man is still wondering about the hysterical woman and her dog.

My shirt had been pulled over my head, and my jogging pants had been sucked into the revolving belt of the machine. They were ripped and covered with grease. I remember that he pointed out to me that I should not try to use the machines unattended. This is advice well-taken, and as a result of this traumatic event, Tiger Woods has never again shown any interest in entering the Recreation Center.

—by Jan Holderness



A Startling Scene

The 58th Bomb Wing of the Twentieth Air Force and each of its four bomb groups had forward area bases in the vicinity of



the city of Chentu in western China. Missions were flown by our B-29 superfortress flight crews from all four bases for maximum strength, but some special missions were flown by a single group.

Late in 1944, one such single mission was scheduled for our 40th Bomb Group, with an early morning takeoff from our China Base A-1. The planes flew from our main base in India during the previous day and now my maintenance men were working all night with the crew chiefs preparing for takeoff the next morning. During the evening, Major Bob Haley in Operations phoned that our sister 468th Group at Base A-7 would also be doing a single group mission but with takeoff by midnight.

About eleven o'clock, my phone jangled, and Haley almost barked in my ear, "Look out to those hills, NOW!" I called to my clerk, Corporal Liscet, and we raced outside. In the southeast darkness, we saw a round bundle of flames outlining a B-29 engine on fire moving over the hills. Suddenly, as one wing dropped downward to the ground, that blaze burst into a large flaming mass, engulfing the now upper wing of the B-29, which swung up into a vertical attitude, making an arc across the sky and lighting the whole burning plane as it cartwheeled over the hills and into the ground.

Liscet and I just stood in awe at what we had witnessed. Slowly, I went inside and picked up my phone to hear Haley's strident voice, "Did you see that?" and "Those poor guys!" then "This is terrible!"

I hung up my phone and went out to be with a gathering group of my men. In silence, we shared the emotion of what we had seen. I am certain that those who were there that night carry that memory indelibly etched in our minds and still cringe at the stark reality of it.

—by Cletus Nelson

Golf

New resident, Jan Hewitt, was introduced and welcomed into the PVE Golf Club.

The Text Book Special Tournament almost failed the first test on September 3. By pure luck, Walt was checking our starting time on Labor Day and found that we did not have a starting time. The next day, the pro shop could not explain the situation but did give a time on September 10. All players were notified of the change. Three hours later, the pro shop called to inform Walt that we could have times on the 3rd again. PVE golfers, being avid players, soon responded and 20 met the time, even though they had dazed looks.

For the first time, play was conducted from the gold tees for those over 85. Those under age could appeal; a couple of appeals were granted. Being seniors, all agreed that playing from the gold (senior tees) was more fun. Future games will be planned accordingly.

An ode to the golf ball was read by Walt at the Moaners' and Groaners' meeting. All agreed how true it was.

The Neat-O award went to Anita Parker, who always looks sharp. Keeping with the theme, it was noted that Glenn Dow was observed roaming around the course in areas that no man had ever been. He was awarded a survival handbook that outlined how to avoid alligators and other places not considered safe. Before play, the formula KYHD was given, with a note that a test would be given. Winky Wirrick was the winner, stating it meant, "Keep your head down." She was awarded a book of golf jokes.

Tourney winners:

3rd place: Anita Parker-Warren MacQuarrie-Bob McCoy- Dom Battistella

2nd place: Betty Tylutki-Don Reh-Jack Biederman-Duncan Kelly

1st place: Jan Hewitt-Winky Wirrick-Don Herington-Walt McDaniel

The October date is firm on October 1, 2008.

—by Walt McDaniel, Golf Reporter



Celebrities I Came Close To

During the political campaigns, there has been heated discussion over what constitutes "celebrity." I can't claim to have known or even met any famous celebrities. However, I was only a few feet away from a couple of them

Myrna Loy, the sophisticated partner of William Powell in the "Thin Man" movies, was traveling in the Canadian Rockies at the same time my husband and I were. I suppose she was with her *real* husband in the parking lot of the luxury hotel at Banff, although it was hard to imagine that Nora could be married to anyone except Nick. They were in a convertible with the top down. Myrna Loy didn't have a speck of makeup on. Her face had a thousand freckles, at least. Her hair was windblown. She didn't look a bit glamorous, although I felt sure she could outwit any criminal who came along.

And then, there was Katherine Hepburn. My husband John and I were visiting my college roommate and her husband in Westbrook, CT. We had spent the day sightseeing, and in the late afternoon we stopped at a fresh produce stand to get supplies for dinner. Brownie and I went in to select vegetables while the two Johns opted to stay in the car. When we got inside, Brownie, our hostess, poked me and subtly directed my gaze to the fruit section. She said in a low voice, "Katherine Hepburn. Pretend you don't know who she is. She detests being approached."

I thought my John would like to see the movie star and went out to the car to tell them. John hurried back inside with me, although the other John had seen Hepburn enough times that it was not a novelty for him, and he stayed in the car. John had not heeded my warning about not approaching the star. She turned a withering stare at him that said, "Don't even think about speaking to me!" John retreated. Brownie had finished the shopping, and the three of us returned to the car. And that's as close as I ever got to celebrities.

—by Joan Teague

Taking the Fish Census

The fish census was being taken in August, 2008, and I had signed up to help. However, something seemed “fishy” about the whole plan. First, it was being taken at St. Vincent, the largest island of the country of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which is located in the Caribbean. Secondly, it was to be conducted underwater.

Sponsored by the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF), there was to be a two-week survey of the health of the St. Vincent reefs, including fish counts by two teams of twenty scuba divers each. The activities were led by Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach, world renowned fish identification authorities, who head up the REEF organization.

How does one count fish? The short answer is: with great difficulty. We were all seasoned divers, with experience in identifying various fish species. Nonetheless, we were all issued waterproof fish ID books and clipboards with waterproof paper. The counting was simplified, with categories of single, 2-10, 11-100 and over 100. That made it a bit easier. Still, we all took copious notes. We divers were divided into three equal groups led by Paul, Ned, or Bill Tewes, the dive operator and resident fish expert.

St. Vincent is noted for its healthy reefs and wide varieties of fish life, and it didn't disappoint us. Overall, our group identified over 100 species, but the frosting on the cake was seeing rare and unusual species. The smallest was a peppermint goby, striped in bright colors, that was less than an inch long. Yes, we all carried magnifying glasses on our dives. The most unusual treasure was a small octopus, about the diameter of my fist, that had yet to be given an official name. He was a NIB (not in the book) and made his hiding place inside small shells, which he carried with him. He blushed a deep magenta when I took his picture.

Another treat was the pipehorse, a fish that looks like a straightened out seahorse but acts like a pipefish. Other special sightings were a short nosed bat fish, that walks along the bottom on his pectoral fins, and flying gurnards, who skimmed along the bottom. Among other less common varieties, there were cowfish, seahorses, juvenile jackknives, spotted drums, and a variety of eels. Everywhere one looked there were schools of hundreds of brown or

REMEMBERING . . .

Maj. John Vernon, USAF (Ret)
Loving Son and Devoted Friend
Arrived: November 15, 1997
Departed: September 13, 2008



blue chromis and scores of damsels, surgeons, and butterflies. Most of the dives were shallow at 30-40 feet, so our bottom times were in the one hour range, and my deepest dive was only 79 feet on a small wall. Super and relaxing diving!

We all stayed at the Mariner's Hotel on the outskirts of Kingstown, the capitol. The group's routine was: breakfast, two dives each morning, a late lunch and then informal discussion classes on fish identification and behavior, followed by cocktails and a leisurely dinner.

Would I do it again? In a heartbeat!

—by Spike Flertzheim



Tennis Time Flash

Starting in October, open tennis will start at 9 a.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays. All other personal games will be scheduled at their own times.

Famous quote: "Who's Up?"

—by Millie Healy



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. Poems should not exceed 45 lines, including blank lines between stanzas. Submissions by e-mail or CDs are welcome but not required. Submissions should be directed to one of the subject matter editors or the editor no later than the 12th of the month prior to the issue

ELYSIAN FIELDS STAFF ORGANIZATION

Editor	Hal Carter
Associate Editor	Liz Wildberger
Copy Editor(s)	Madelynne 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
Marty Wildberger

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."