



Honoring our Heroes - Memorial Day Ceremony

By Ralph Healey

Friday May 23rd, the Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) hosted our annual Memorial Day Ceremony in honor of all those who have served, are serving, and those have given it all to serve our beautiful nation. CNVH Administrator Dorin Vaipan was our master of ceremonies. The local Kearney Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 759 and American Legion (AL) Post 52 Color Guard conducting the Posting of the Colors along with a 21-gun salute at the end of the ceremony.

Retired Air Force Weapons Maintenance Specialist Nita Deyo (photo below left) presented the keynote speech focusing on the history of women in the service of our nation. With Nita having served as a Nuclear Bomb loader at a Strategic Air Com-



mand base in the early 1980's she was uniquely qualified to share this perspective with the audience.

This year's ceremony truly brought out everyone at CNVH. The weather taking a turn for the worse did not dampen people's spirits this year as the ceremony still had a packed house of members, staff, family and local volunteers.

Memorial Day holds a special place in the hearts of Americans everywhere as we take the time to remember that freedom does not come free.

It is important that we remember the sacrifice of those who are no longer with us. We thank those who have given their lives for the liberty and freedoms we enjoy today. We shall remember.

See page 4 for the Remembrance Ceremony



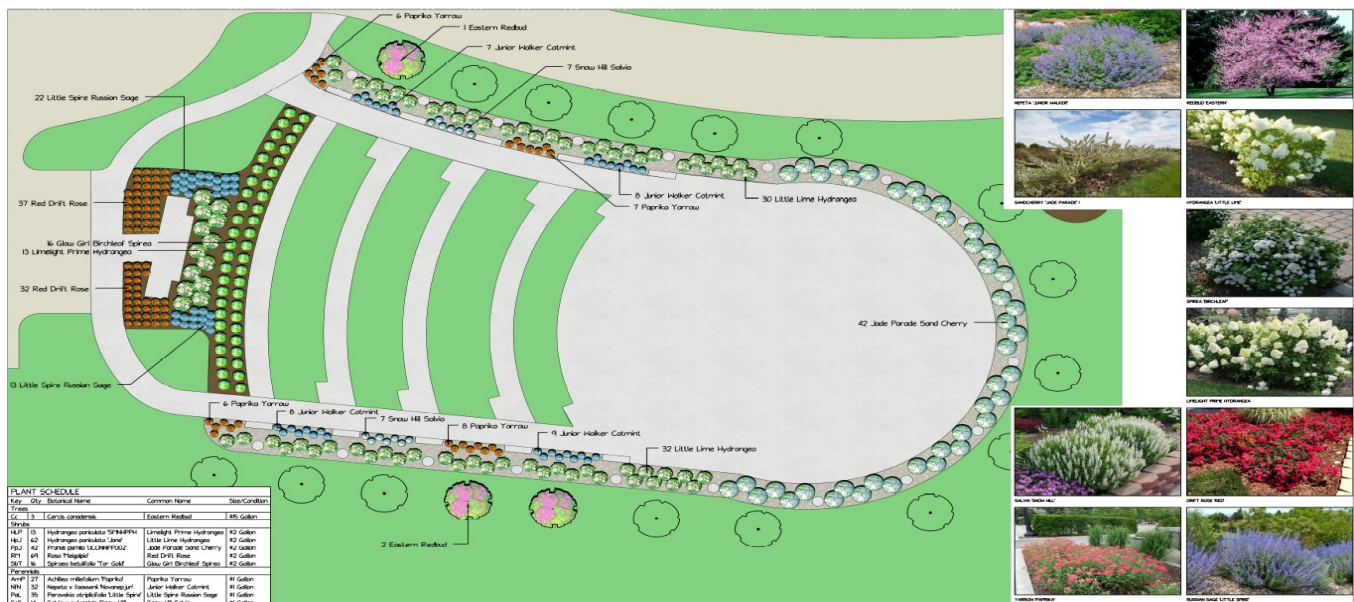


By Dorin C. Vaipan,
CNVH Administrator

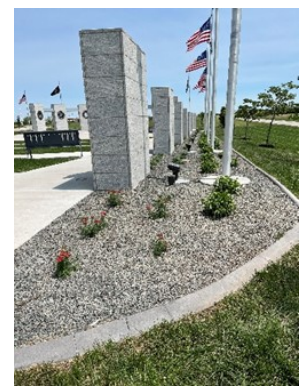
Message From the Administrator

I would like to continue where I left in my article posted in the last issue and add a few photos of the upgraded vegetation around the monument located on our property by the East 56th Street, this being the result of our discussions with the CNVH Memorial Monument Committee.

As a reminder, we met in April with select members of this committee and we reviewed together the current physical condition of the monument, the physical projects required, the provision of the US flags to be flown at the monument, as well as the need to upgrade the landscaping surrounding the monument by removing the dead plants and replace them with selected vegetation that will last longer while beautifying the entire project. Below there is a rendering of the project, where you can see the location of the new plants as well as the color theme of red, white and blue.



I am happy to report that the work was completed on May 28-29, 2025. While most of the newly planted plants didn't have the chance to bloom yet, please enjoy viewing some photos of the executed project.



If you have questions, feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. Thank you!
Dorin C. Vaipan, CNVH Administrator

Member Council: Member of the Month - Anna DeLaet

Anna DeLaet has been living at the Central Nebraska Veterans' Home since March of 2019. She was born and raised in Shelton, NE.

She married Elwood "Lynn" in the 1950's and they had four children Doyle, Deb, Pam, and Lynna. Her husband Lynn was in the United States Army after being drafted and served in the Helicopter Division during Vietnam. After the war he was stationed in Germany. During her life she has lived in Shelton, Lexington, and Kearney but briefly lived in Germany during her husband's time stationed in the country.

For work Anna worked twenty plus years for the courthouse's Assessor Office. Outside of work she has enjoyed various different pursuits including, but not limited to attending Presbyterian Church, cards, bingo, ceramics, embroidery, going to the casino, and playing bridge.



Anna DeLaet, CNVH Member

Her fondest memories are of traveling with her husband and friends in the camper. Her greatest accomplishment is raising four children and seeing them grow up and turn into the people they have become. She appreciates that all four of her children visit her regularly. Congratulations Anna on being selected the Member Council Member of the Month!

Member Council: Employee of the Month

MAKAYLA MORGAN in NURSING



Makayla Morgan has been a Registered Nurse (RN) for about seven years. She started her career at Kearney Regional Medical Center in the medical-surgical department. She demonstrated great leadership skills and was promoted to be a permanent charge nurse, at which she excelled. She was looking for another growth opportunity and applied at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) in 2024 for the House RN role and recently celebrated her one-year anniversary. Makayla has a great sense of humor and cares deeply for our members and she is all about "doing the right thing." She is an invaluable asset to our organization, she has been a wonderful House RN, and we are grateful she uses her skills and expertise at CNVH. We are so happy she is here!

Remembrance Ceremony

By Ralph Healey

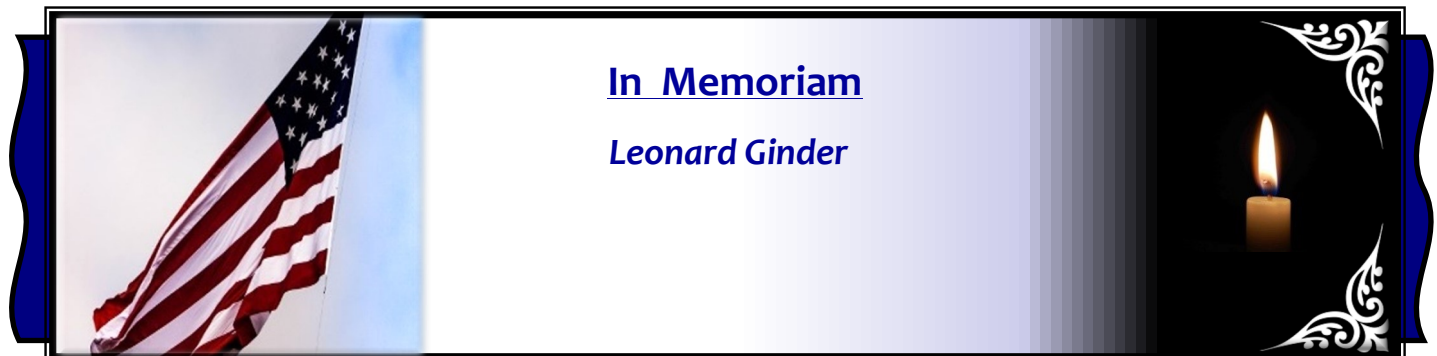
On Monday May 26th the Central Nebraska Veterans' Home held a Remembrance Ceremony in our Chapel for Memorial Day. Dorin Vaipan our Administrator, opened the ceremony with a welcoming and the Pledge of Allegiance, followed with the Star-Spangled Banner performed by Kelli Hoff, a Medication Aide here at CNVH.

During the ceremony, some of our veteran members laid a wreath for each branch of service to remember those that have served. Following the laying of the wreaths, our Director of Social Services read each member's name and branch of service that had passed in the last 12 months, and a red poppy with the member's name on it, was placed on the Remembrance wreath. The families of those members were invited to the Remembrance Ceremony as well and some were able to at-



tend. This was a very meaningful service for our members, the staff, friends, and families. The ceremony was closed with the rendering of Taps.

The branch of service wreaths stayed on display in the Chapel for 24 hours. The Remembrance wreath with the poppies and the member names will stay on display in the Chapel for the next 12 months until the next service in 2026.



National Veterans Awareness Riders

By Jessica Modlin, Activities Manager

In May, we had the honor of having the National Veterans Awareness Riders stop at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home. This is an annual event, and they stop every year unless they get held up in weather on their way across country. This year we had a little over 50 riders join us on a Saturday afternoon.

Prior to the riders arriving at the Home, members gathered in Freedom Hall and played bingo until the riders arrived. When the riders arrived, they drove their bikes around the lake and parked on the sidewalk circling the lake. The group then came into Freedom Hall. The members always enjoy being silent right before their arrival time to see if they can hear the rumbling of the bikes come.

After the riders arrived, they did a short ceremony in Freedom Hall and then spent time visiting with the members. They presented one of our Desert Storm Veterans that was in attendance with a medal for her service. The members enjoy this activity every year when they come. Many members enjoy talking with the riders and hearing their stories and the riders



feel the same about the members' stories. The members are also able to go outside and look at the bikes as well. Before the riders arrived, I asked the members to raise their hand if they use to ride a motorcycle and there were several members that used to ride.

The National Veterans Awareness Riders began in 2005 as a not-for-profit organization dedicated to honoring all veterans. Their mission is: to remember, honor and support veterans and those currently serving in all branches of the military. This is a 13-day event each May in which the riders ride from Auburn, California to Washington, DC. Each day they visit Veterans Homes and Hospitals across the country to let veterans know they are not forgotten!

SUN EXPOSURE

As we move into the month of June, and the temperatures are getting warmer, members start spending more time outside. This is a great opportunity to remind everyone of summer safety:

- Apply sunscreen and insect repellent before going outside, wear long sleeve shirts when possible, and a hat that protects both the head and the ears. Sunscreen and bug repellent are located at the Control Points and staff will be happy to assist with applying them as needed.
- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water.
- Be sure to watch for the excessive heat signs on the neighborhood doors when the heat index is above 90 degrees. We do encourage you to stay inside or limit your outside exposure during these times.

Meet CNVH Leadership: Director of Nursing - Kris Hughbanks

By Ralph Healey

Kris Hughbanks was raised on a farm outside Glenvil. She stayed there through high school then moved to Kearney for college at Kearney State College. She later went through St. Mary to earn a master's degree and then went to UNMC to earn her Doctorate. She started at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) three and a half years ago.



Kris Hughbanks,
Director of Nursing

ing her grandchildren who live on opposite sides of Nebraska. Raising four children who are all successful and happy in life has been one of her favorite accomplishments in life.

In her free time Kris enjoys playing the piano, listening to music, golfing (or watching it on TV), Dateline murder mysteries, and playing with the grandchildren.

Prior to working in the home, she was at Good Samaritan Hospital for thirty-five and half years. She was mostly in Critical Care for her career there but moved over into management for the last twelve years before moving to the CNVH.

Kris is married with four children and five grandchildren. Kris jokes she raised the Brady Bunch but backwards as she brought the boys to the family and her husband brought the girls. She especially enjoys going back and forth across the state visit-

Kris really enjoys her job here at CNVH and feels everything from the leadership, to staff, and the members bring her a lot of joy as we work to deliver the mission of the home.

In her retirement Kris is looking forward to writing both music and two books, one she wants to do an inspirational stories book of people she has worked with and another a humor book about situations she has encountered in nursing.



Merrymakers now part of Dreamweaver Foundation

May's Merrymakers performance was by Joyce Torchia (left) out of Omaha. Joyce, a former United Airline Steward entertaining people in the air, chose to retire to a life of

bringing music to the people of Nebraska and Iowa. The performance started with *Walkin' in the Sunshine* by Roger Miller. It also included *Under the Boardwalk* by the Drifters and *Leaving on a Jet Plane* by John Denver. The performance was a blending of popular country music and folk-rock

songs from the 60's. Joyce did a great job getting the audience involved in the performance and had people following along. Joyce also introduced the new Dreamweaver Foundation affiliation that the Merrymakers performance group is affiliated with. Dreamweaver Foundation is a non-profit organization that works a lot like Make-A-Wish, but they primarily work with Seniors and their program brings joy, music, and heartfelt experiences to aging adults and their loved ones. They are dedicated to creating meaningful moments that last a lifetime. Dreamweaver Foundation attempts to help people learn that, "It's never too late to dream!"

Fishing Tournament

June 24, 2025

The **Thomas Pribnow Memorial Fishing Tournament** is planned and coordinated by the Central Nebraska Veterans' Home's Activities department for the pleasure of our members. More details will be posted in facility as the event draws near.

There are eight Catch Categories:

Bluegill

(Biggest weight or length)

Big Bass

(Biggest weight or length, both small and Large mouth)

Catfish

(Biggest weight or length)

Best Catch

(based on weight)

Top Angler

(Biggest Fish Points)

King of Flight

(Neighborhood Highest Points)

King of All Flights

(Highest Total Points)

Top Hauler of the Day

(Highest Average Weight and Length of total caught)

Master(s) Angler Champion(s)

(Any member who caught a verified Master Angler fish during the tournament is eligible).

THOMAS PRIBNOW MEMORIAL FISHING TOURNAMENT



Central Nebraska Veterans' Home
Kearney, Nebraska

Purpose/Vision

The Thomas Pribnow Memorial Fishing Tournament was established to honor the life of our late friend and Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) teammate Thomas Pribnow with the vision of tournament founders Tom Betzold and Brandon Pierce.

Check us out on the web!

<https://veterans.nebraska.gov/cnvh>

Special Points of Interest Next Month:

- Merrymakers Concert featuring Mike McCracken
- Annual Thomas Pribnow Memorial Fishing Tournament

*The Liberty Express is published monthly
by Central Nebraska Veterans' Home.*

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