



January 2026



## Christmas Time at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home

### Christmas Trees at CNVH

This past holiday season, Christmas Trees at CNVH were sponsored by several organizations in our community. These gorgeous creations helped make the homes and common areas throughout the campus look extra festive for all to enjoy! Thank you to all for bringing Christmas Joy to our facility!

The organizations that provided trees were: Graczyk Lawn and Landscape, Knights of Columbus, Sampson Construction, The Buckle, and Gold Star Parent Tree. This year the UNK Health Science Club group came out to help set up and decorate the trees. This helped with getting everyone in the Christmas spirit.

### Christmas Gifts 2025

Several organizations sponsored all of our members for a Christmas Gift. The meaning behind this is to ensure that every member receives something for Christmas. The organizations received a Christmas bulb with the member's wish list on it, noting items the member shared they would like for Christmas.

Once the organizations received the Christmas bulbs, they went out and shopped for the members. It is suggested to the organizations to spend between \$30 to \$40 on each gift but that is just a suggestion, and some were able to spend a little more and some a little less. The important thing is that everyone received something for Christmas. Gifts were distributed to the members on December

23rd during their neighborhood Christmas parties. They could choose to open their gifts during the party or save them for Christmas Day.

This year our sponsors for the Christmas gifts were: Ashley Furniture Staff, YRTC Staff, Veterans First Committee, St. James Church, St. George Orthodox Church, Icon Poly, 1st National Bank Staff, Miller and Associates Staff, Corporate Edge Staff, Bruning Bank Staff, and VFW Auxiliary. Thank you to everyone that sponsored and brought some more Christmas joy to the Central Nebraska Veterans' Home.





By Dorin C. Vaipan,  
CNVH Administrator



The month of December, which concluded the year 2025, brought in at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) the colors of Christmas and its celebrations. Throughout the facility, 19 Christmas trees were set up and other seasonal decorations. The Activity Department was busy scheduling events, including choral singing, Christmas lights tours, gifts presentations or holiday-related concerts. Our CNVH employees added to the holiday's cheers, and they organized different department potlucks or even the Elves Celebration Day (see photo).

In December, I had the honor of presenting updates about CNVH at the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) meetings, where Veterans Affairs' County Officers from the majority of Nebraska's counties attended the meetings in Kearney. In my remarks, as we aim to be the preferred Long-term Care (LTC) employer in our community, I emphasized the constant positive culture change at CNVH, by improving supervisory skills, being transparent, listening to your staff, following up timely, and ultimately gaining their trust.

As a result of the culture change, since 2022, we reduced our staffing openings from 118 to 9 today, which allowed us to gradually replace the 84 agency staff working in May 2022 in Nursing, Dietary and Housekeeping to no agency staffing in 2025!

Hiring of nurse aides in 2022/2023 focused mainly on offering the CNA class while in 2025, most of the CNA hires were already certified CNAs.

More than that, a key indicator of the working environment's positive culture change is reflected in the reduction in the staffing turnover. In 2024, LTC turnover average was 54% in USA while CNVH's turnover rate was 46.2%, which is 7.8% better than the industry average. In 2025, LTC turnover average was 42.1% in USA while CNVH's turnover rate was 24.5%, which is 17.6% better than the industry average! Also, do you know that 64 of our employees are family related? They recommended and recruited their own family members to come work at CNVH, being another indirect indication that the working culture had improved at CNVH.

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 - MARLON CUMPSTON

This January's member of the month is Marlon Cumpston. Marlon has been in the home for just shy of five years.

Marlon grew up in Arnold, Nebraska. After 8th grade he dropped out of school and moved to 3 Bar Ranch outside of Valentine. He got married and had a daughter during his time. His first wife then ended up passing due to cancer leaving him as a single father of a five-year-old.

Marlon then met his current wife Margie Cumpston who already had two children of her own. They then had three children together giving them six children in a big, blended family.

Marlon joined the Marines in 1954 serving active duty until 1957 when he switched to the reserves



Marlon Cumpston

until 1963. Marlon served on the USS Razorback in submarine reconnaissance duty.

Marlon primarily worked as a rancher and farmer during his life, but he also worked at a racetrack for a period. During his down time Marlon enjoys boxing, horseback riding, big into 4H activities, spending time with animals, the Huskers, and welding. Marlon also built three different salons for his wife Margie in his down time.

Marlon found his faith in the First Christian Church where he served as a deacon. Marlon's favorite part of living at the facility is all the nursing staff. Congratulations to Marlon for being Member of the Month!

## Member Council: Employee of the Month

### JENNIFER PRINGLE in Food Services

Jenn Pringle has been a part of the CNVH Food Services team for four years. During this time, she started as a server for a short time and was then promoted to Manager.

Jenn is appreciated for her continued effort, commitment, and teamwork she brings to her role each day. She is not afraid to jump in, in any role or duty and help where needed to get the job done. She works hard for the members communicating their needs and she works equally hard for the staff in Dietary to ensure they have what they need. Thank you for your dedication and support!



## Music To Our Ears

Throughout the month of December, the members at CNVH had many opportunities to listen to different groups that came to the facility and performed Christmas music for them. The Faith Singers came to Fox-trot and performed some Christmas songs for the members. The Faith Singers is a group of ten kids that practice on a regular basis. They performed songs for the members and they also played hand bells for the members. This is a very talented group of kids and the members enjoyed listening to them.

Also, in December on a Saturday afternoon there was a piano recital in Freedom Hall. There were many students that came to share their talent with the members. Another music opportunity that the members had in December was our Merrymakers Concert and the performer for December was Mike McCracken. Mike put on a great show for the members and there were many toes tapping and finger tapping throughout the

concert. The Merrymakers Concert was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.



## Meet the Leadership - Eileen King

By Ralph Healey, Editor

This month we will be learning more about the leader who has shaped the Food Service department here at CNVH. Eileen King, our Food Services Director has been with the home for four and a half years. She was born in Burwell, Nebraska, but grew up in Taylor, Nebraska. This small town did not have a lot of children at the time. She was one of four kids in kindergarten, and by first grade they were down to two. As the years went on, they ended up with seven people in her graduating high school class. Eileen is married and has two children and one grandchild. In her down time, she enjoys pickleball, cooking for others, and spending time with her grandchild. She has been a Confirmation Leader, involved with the Big Sister's program, and No One Dies Alone. Eileen started as a dishwasher in her grandmother's restaurant. She spent twenty-eight



Eileen King  
Food Services Director

years at Good Samaritan Hospital in food service, leaving there as a Food Service Manager. When Eileen arrived at CNVH the home was still catering all the food into the home and she only had eight staff to help serve food. As she worked to build the team, they transitioned into making the food here in the home. Now they offer eggs made to request once a week due to

the dedication her staff have towards the members. Over time Eileen feels the food service department has been built into a high-quality team with caring staff who provide the home with its meals. Eileen enjoys working at CNVH because she gets to know the members, unlike a hospital where people are constantly coming and going. She really enjoys the members and staff and the service provided to the members.

## Christmas Program by Family Suite Preschool

Some special singers joined us at the beginning of December to kick off the Holiday season. The members enjoyed a morning activity with the Family Suite Preschool.

Family Suite Preschool came out to CNVH and performed their Christmas Program for us. The members enjoyed hearing the little ones sing and perform their Christmas songs. There was a lot of dancing with the songs as well.

Prior to the concert, each student started working with a member to make Christmas ornaments to take home with them and place on their own trees. The members enjoyed making this connection with the children and working with kids. There were a lot of smiles and laughter in the room.



## Holiday Show

In December, the members enjoyed an afternoon at the Holiday Show in Freedom Hall. The Holiday Show was put on by the staff here at CNVH and a group of volunteers to bring Christmas joy to the members.

The Holiday Show opened with jokes and an opening song performed by Lance, our Business Office Manager. Following our opening act, Kris, our Director of Nursing, and Lois, our APRN performed a piano duet and played O Holy Night. This left the room in silence with their great talent.



Next up in the show was Art, a volunteer who performed on the guitar and sang Pretty Paper and The Little Drummer Boy.

The next performance was Kearney High School String Quartet performing Deck the Halls, We Wish You a Merry Christmas, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, We Three Kings, Up On the Housetop, Good King Wenceslas, Jolly Old St. Nicholas, and Joy to the World. Following the Kearney High School String Quartet, Gracie, an employee in Food Service, sang Silent Night and while singing she did the American sign language for it as well.

The Holiday show closed with Donna, a visitor, playing the piano with Christmas carols which provided the perfect opportunity for a sing along.

Thank you to everyone who took their time to share their talents with the members at CNVH and bringing them some Christmas joy.



## Holiday Bingo

The members enjoyed an afternoon of Holiday Bingo before Christmas along with some festive treats. Faith United Church in Gibbon provided cookies from Eileen's that were decorated for Christmas. The bingo coupons for this event were sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of American Legion in Grand Island.



At this event, when the members got a bingo, they got to select a gift box out of the Christmas bag, open it up and see how much bingo money they won! They were excited to see what was inside the box. Beyond this, the members also received an additional bingo coupon.



As usual, members enjoyed their afternoon of playing bingo and winning prizes!



## New Year's Eve Happy Hour Celebration

Members at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home closed out the year 2025 with a New Year's Eve Happy Hour Celebration. What better way is there to celebrate the end of the year, but by watching the Nebraska Corn Huskers play in the Las Vegas Bowl!

During the Happy Hour we turned the bowl game on the big screen in Freedom Hall for the members to enjoy. Even though in the end the Huskers lost, the members still enjoyed watching the first half of the game in Freedom Hall and enjoyed cheering on the Huskers with their friends.

During the Happy Hour, the members were able to enjoy a piece of hamburger pizza from Pizza Hut and something to drink. This activity was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.



Check us out on the web!

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

#### Special Points of Interest Next Month:

- Merrymakers Concert - Mark Irvin
- Waffle Feed

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