



LIBERTY EXPRESS



April 2026

Intergenerational Joy During Read Across America

Members recently shared smiles, stories, and special moments with young learners at Family Suite Pre-school and Daycare as part of the nationwide celebration of *Read Across America*. This meaningful intergenerational activity brought together the members from CNVH and the children for a morning filled with reading, laughter, and connection. The children picked some of their favorite books for the members to read and members took turns reading aloud to attentive little listeners who gathered close to hear the stories. This visit created a warm and welcoming environment where friendships naturally formed between the members and the children. After the members were done reading to the children, the children shared songs and some dancing with the members before leaving.



Intergenerational programs like this provide valuable benefits for both the members and the children at Family Suite Pre-school and Daycare. For the members, the experience offers a renewed sense of purpose, joy, and community engagement. For the children, it fosters respect for older adults while building confidence and excitement about reading.

The Central Nebraska Veterans' Home is proud to support activities that strengthen community ties and celebrate lifelong learning. Programs like this remind us that stories and friendships truly bring generations together. There truly is nothing better to see other than these smiles on the children's and members' faces.

Message From the Administrator



By Dorin C. Vaipan,
CNVH Administrator

Unlike the blizzardy March a year ago, March 2026 had record hot temperature values of 97 degrees Fahrenheit, preceded or followed by a roller coaster of low temperatures in the teens and back to 80's! Additionally, strong winds created clouds of dust from the barren but very dry fields. The excessive drought and the strong winds were the perfect "ingredient" to spread and sustain massive pasture fires, which reached unprecedented sizes in the history of the State of Nebraska! At Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH), Maintenance Department started in March the preparations of the grounds for the spring, beginning with firing the 5,000 underground sprinkler heads, with the intention of adding a bit of moisture to the grass. All of our Toro snowplows on tracks had been converted for the grass-cutting season. The snowblades and tracks were removed and instead, cutting decks were fitted in.

CNVH and Western Nebraska Veterans' Home (WNVH) had in March the combined kickoff meeting regarding the Dietary IDDSI Program implementation. IDDSI stands for the International Dysphagia Diet Standardization Initiative, which is a global, standardized framework that classifies seven different food textures and drink thicknesses for people with swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) to ensure their safety and prevent choking or aspiration.



St. Patrick's Day at CNVH was a great day filled with themed activities. Some of our teammates took a moment to pose for a Shenanigans Squad group photo.

Every year in March a survey team from the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USVA) conducts healthcare and life safety code surveys in our facility. The USVA surveyors arrived at CNVH on March 23rd and inspected both the nursing home as well as the domiciliary side of our facility. They exited on Friday March 27th, very pleased with what they had seen. As a reminder, the purpose of the annual survey is to make sure that at CNVH our members receive good quality care, in a safe environment. Also, the surveyors are checking on our overall compliance with the USVA policies and procedures, Life Safety Code compliance, as well as other regulations.

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 - Ken Catlin

Ken Catlin has been chosen as April's member of the month. Ken grew up in Gibbon Nebraska. He has three children, Jolene, Paul, and Amy.

Ken joined the Navy and trained at Camp Pendleton and then was brought out to Oakland, California. He was in the operating room as a medical assistant at the Naval Hospital there.

After he got out of the service, he spent some time working in San Diego, California before moving back to Nebraska. He ended up working in Adams County as a Sheriff and for 23 years at the state penitentiary.



In his down time Ken enjoys playing chess, horse racing, working the non-denominational church at the penitentiary. He was active in an EMS Provider Group, umpired baseball for five years, and co-chaired the election community for State Senate.

Ken was honored recently to have one of his grandson's named after him and to have his niece ask him to walk her down the aisle for her wedding. Ken has really enjoyed the activities at the home that keep him busy. Congratulations Ken on being this month's Member Council Member of the Month!

Member Council: Employee of the Month

Megan Lafferty in Nursing



Megan has been with Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH) since it opened. She always takes the opportunity to spend time getting to know the members, their likes, their dislikes, and their quirks. She goes above and beyond to take initiative to make her unit better whether that's organizing daily tasks or brainstorming a new way to approach a problem.

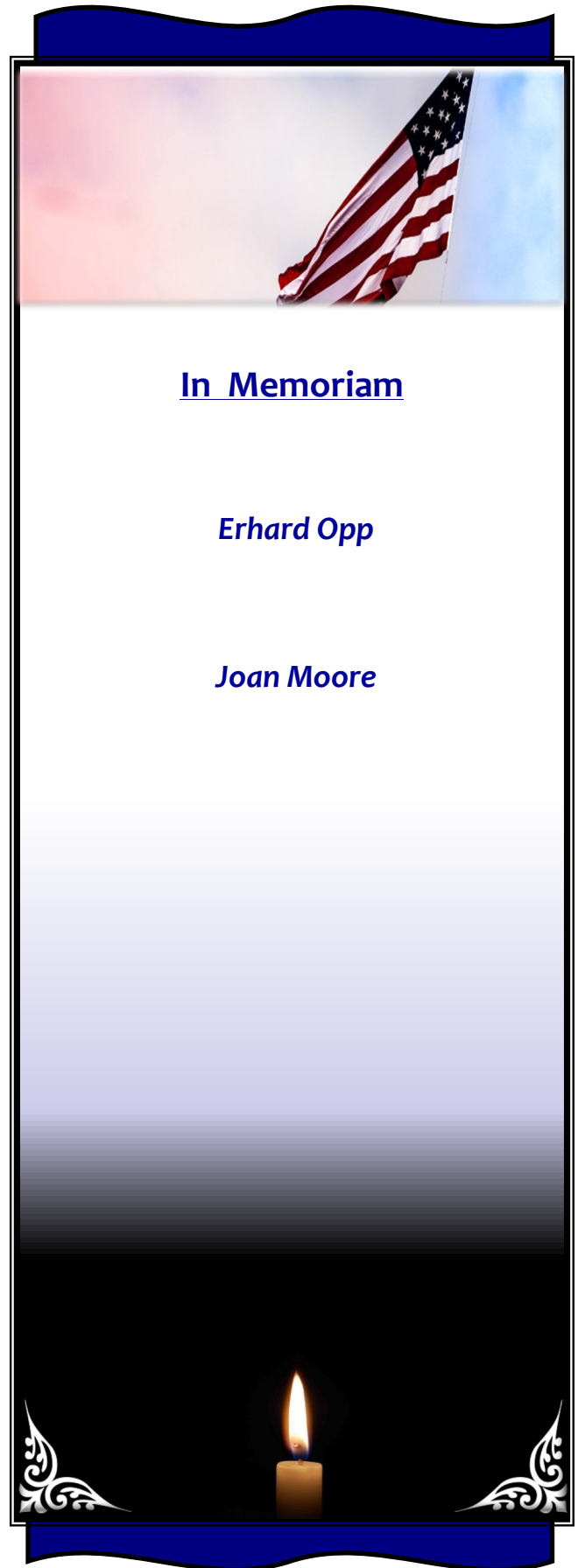
She is observed by surveyors nearly every year for medication pass and she always does a stellar job with no deficiencies, which receives compliments from the survey team. Megan is an asset to CNVH! Congratulations on being Employee of the Month!

Merrymakers/Dreamweaver's Concert-Tom "Woody" Strohmeyer

In March our monthly performer was Tom "Woody" Strohmeyer. He has been entertaining for the past 20 years. The members enjoyed a lively musical performance by Woody. The afternoon was filled with familiar tunes, toe tapping rhythms, and plenty of opportunities for the members to sing along and reminisce.

The performance included a wide variety of well-loved songs that brought back special memories for many in attendance. Selections ranged from classic country favorites made popular by Johnny Cash along with hits associated with George Strait. Patriotic music such as *God Bless the USA* also added a meaningful touch to the program, creating moments of pride and reflection.

Woody showcased his musical versatility by playing multiple instruments throughout the performance, including the piano, guitar, trumpet, and even the harmonica. At one point he even combined the guitar and the harmonica. Many members were seen smiling, tapping their feet, and singing along as the music filled the room. This activity was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.



Supporting Our Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month, and we celebrate our volunteers the week of April 19th. The volunteers we have at CNVH are very valuable to us. We couldn't offer the opportunities we have here at the home without them. A few things they help with include working in the library, escorting to and from facility activities, assistance in the wood shop, and helping us with activities around the building.

If you see a volunteer in the building, please take the time to thank them for everything they do for CNVH. This month, just like every month, we are grateful for the volunteers we have. Let's show them some love. Later in April we will be celebrating our volunteers with a special Volunteer Recognition Dinner.

St. Patrick's Day Bingo Party

The members enjoyed a festive afternoon filled with green decorations, holiday cards, festive necklaces, and bingo to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The members received an "extra free spot" on their bingo card if they had the number "17" on it. As the bingo caller started to call out numbers and members started to get bingos the room was filled with the spirit of having a lucky bingo card. The CNVH Leprechaun stood guard at the bingo board to bring good luck to all the members.



Activities like this provide important opportunities for members to stay socially engaged, experience joy, and celebrate holidays in a fun environment. The day truly proved that a little luck and a lot of friendship can make for a great afternoon of fun and laughter.

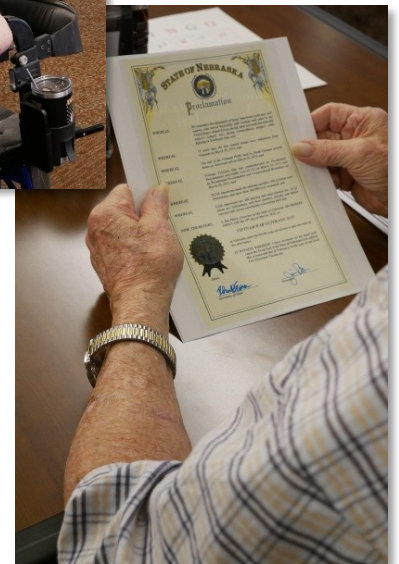
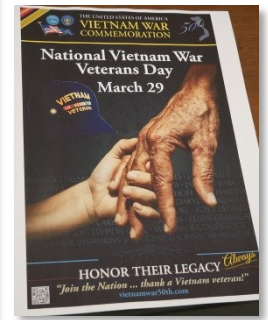
This activity was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.

Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony

The members and staff of Foxtrot gathered for a meaningful Vietnam recognition ceremony. Everyone took the time to honor the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Vietnam War. Our Administrator, Dorin Vaipan, joined us and read the Governor's proclamation which recognized Vietnam Veterans and acknowledged their dedication to our county.

The reading served as powerful reminder of the courage and resilience shown by those who served during a challenging time in history. Prior to Dorin reading the proclamation, he shared some of the history of the Vietnam War.

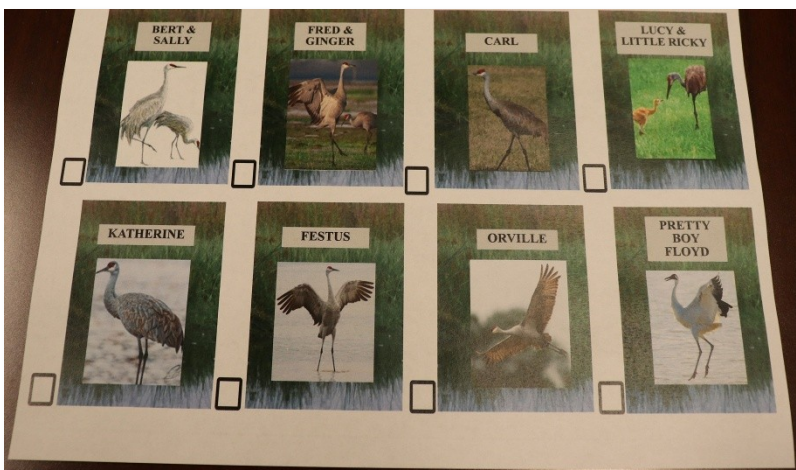
At the conclusion, all Vietnam Veterans were asked to stand up and to be recognized for their service. Thank you to all our Vietnam Veterans across the campus for their service and their sacrifice and Welcome Home.



Sandhill Crane Bus Tours

Throughout the month of March, the activity staff have been taking members out for Sandhill Crane Bus Tours so that the members can see the annual migration of the cranes. The tours took place around Kearney and the surrounding areas. The members enjoyed this annual event to see the breathtaking sandhill cranes as they pass through the area. The sandhill cranes coming to the Kearney area is a major draw for visitors from all over the country and our members are lucky enough to live in the heart of it.

Another opportunity that the members had this month involving the sandhill cranes was a scavenger hunt located within CNVH. The members had an opportunity to look for the cranes and turn their sheet in for a prize! Members could be seen searching all over the home trying to track down these hidden birds. The members enjoyed both these activities!



Sunshine, Fresh Air and Safe Outdoor Fun

By Jessica Modlin, Activities & Volunteer Services Director

As we move into warmer temperatures outside, I want to take this moment to provide some good reminders. We have great outdoor areas around campus to utilize for activities with our members.

Gardening

The neighborhood patios have raised garden tubs for members to use to plant flowers and vegetables. Members, please see your Recreation Specialist if you are interested in planting flowers or veggies in the garden tubs. Plants and flowers cannot be planted directly into the ground. Everything must go into the raised tubs. If we have several members that want to plant things we will need to share garden tubs and space. CNVH Recreation Department will be purchasing communal flowers and veggies to plant in the garden tubs for the members to enjoy, check your activity calendar for planting day.

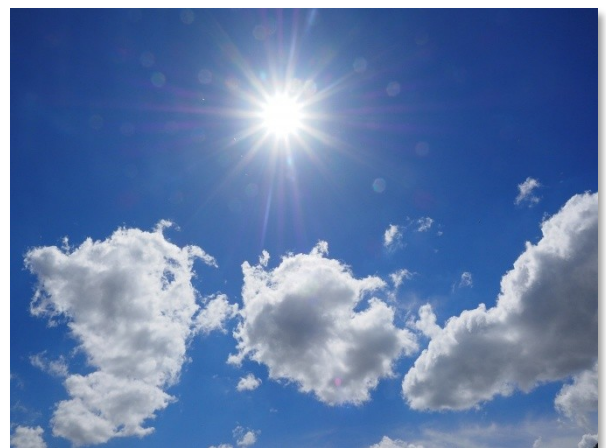
Our Lake

Our lake is another popular area that members enjoy spending time. Our lake is stocked with rainbow trout, largemouth bass, bluegill, and catfish. Members that would like to go fishing can contact their Recreation Specialist to see when the next fishing time is scheduled. This is also posted on your monthly neighborhood calendar. Members that can independently fish should contact Recreation Staff to check out fishing poles and tackle to fish at their own leisure. Members that are fishing independently can go to the Reception desk in Juliet and someone from reception can check bait out to you for fishing, fresh from the bait refrigerator, and then you can return it when you are finished. The Recreation Department provides worms and stink bait for fishing. Bait cannot be stored in member refrigerators or in the refrigerators in the neighborhoods.

Sun Exposure and Insect Repellent

Here are a few important reminders about sun exposure.

- ◆ 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.



Please be sure to let Nursing know at your neighborhood control point if you are going outside to enjoy our beautiful grounds.



Special Points of Interest Next Month:

- Merrymakers/Dreamweaver Concert-Bill Troy
- Titanic Bingo

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