



Korean War Veteran Recognition Ceremony

September 2026

By Jessica Modlin, Activities Director

In August, we were honored to host a Korean War Veterans Recognition Ceremony at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home (CNVH), which was part of an initiative launched this year by Governor Jim Pillen and the Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs to honor Nebraska's living Korean War veterans. This was a memorable service, honoring 18 Korean



War veterans. Freedom Hall was packed with our members, family, and staff to honor these veterans. Dorin Vaipan, CNVH Facility Administrator served as the Master of Ceremonies. The opening of the ceremony started with the Posting of the Colors by the Kearney VFW Post 759 and American Legion Post 52 Color Guard, followed by Dave Kreutzer, CNVH Director of Social Work, leading the crowd in the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.

A special guest joined us to help ensure these veterans knew the importance of their service and the gratitude of the people of Nebraska, the United States, and the Republic of Korea. Our special guest, Lieutenant Governor Joe Kelly, was sworn in as Nebraska's 42nd Lieutenant Governor on January 5,

2023. Lieutenant Governor Joe Kelly shared some remarks with the veterans, family, and guests at the ceremony.



Following Lieutenant Governor Joe Kelly's remarks was the presentation of the recognition coins. Dave Kreutzer our Social Work Director read each Korean War Veteran's name while the Lieutenant Governor Joe Kelly and Dorin Vaipan our Administrator presented each veteran their coin. Concluding the ceremony there was an opportunity to members, family, and staff to thank the veterans for their service during the Korean War.

Message From the Administrator



*By Dorin C. Vaipan,
CNVH Administrator*

August was a good month, with good temperatures and sufficient moisture to have our lawn look very nice. Of course, it is not only nature's work, but also the constant attention to details of our Maintenance outdoor crew. Thank you all for maintaining our 67 acres of land so nice and clean!

This is a perfect segue to speak about our pond. For about a week, some of you have noticed that the water levels got lower day by day. That was because Maintenance was getting ready to install the new fountain pump, which will work on a different program in order to extend its life. The pump will be automatically shut off over the nighttime and it will be turned off and stored for the winter season. And more pond-related news: Nebraska Game and Parks restocked our pond on August 24th with 100 canal catfish, a minimum of 10 inches long each.

In a previous issue of "Message from the Administrator", I mentioned that we are planning to upgrade different programs, software or platforms, in order to make our working lives easier. Such a program that is to be installed in the next months and before the end of the year is called Framework. This is a professional program dedicated to the management of pharmaceutical products which will enhance our NDVA pharmacists' work effectiveness.

I am sure that many of you have noticed that temporarily, the daily food production doesn't take place in the main centralized kitchen in Juliet building, but instead it takes place in designated kitchenettes in the homes. That is because we had a pressurized water installation located in the kitchen ceiling leaking water on the electronic controls of the commercial range hood. That means that as long as the range hood fire suppression mechanism is not working, no kitchen equipment located under the hood may be used, per the Life Safety Code. We are working diligently to get the needed parts produced out of state and then installed by a local provider.



In the last week of August, trips were organized and planned for members to attend the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island. The members expressed an interest in attending different shows, including the veterans related activities or visiting the NDVA's State Service Officers' booth. Also, members are participating with crafted ceramics at the State contest, and for 2026, 14 of such items passed the Buffalo County Fair's contest and qualified for the Nebraska State Fair's contest. Congratulations, CNVH members!

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 – Tom Christy

Congratulations to Thomas “Tom” Christy on being the Central Nebraska Veterans’ Home Member Council’s Member of the Month! Tom was born in Milburn, Nebraska, and raised in Anselmo on a farm. He graduated in 1954 in Anselmo and worked as a ranch hand for a few years before joining the Army in 1959. He did boot camp in Fort Riley, Kansas. During his time in the army, he had to have several surgeries as they discovered one of his legs was an inch shorter than the other and it made keeping up in marching hard.



After his time in the military, he took classes to learn how to sell and apply chemicals and fertilizers. This then led to him managing a grain elevator in western Nebraska, another one in Lincoln, NE, and another in Heartwell. The problems he had with his leg in the military ultimately lead him to retire as they persisted. In his downtime, Tom enjoys fishing, hunting, baking pies and cakes, and he loved cooking for others.

When younger, Tom was often helping people break in horses and going on trail rides. Tom and his wife Barbara both helped in church and were active members of different churches depending where they lived and what was available. Tom’s favorite accomplishment was raising three children who grew up to be outstanding citizens. Congratulations, Tom, for being this month’s Member of the Month!



Member Council: Employee of the Month Peter Boatright in Nursing

Peter Boatright has been employed at CNVH for one and a half years. He is a Medication Aide on Bravo. Peter is an exceptional employee. He works well with his teammates.

He is a hard worker, and the members on Bravo speak very highly of him. They trust the care he gives them. We are blessed to have him as part of our team.

Congratulations Peter on being Member Council’s Employee of the Month!

Merrymakers/Dreamweaver Concert with Mark Irvin

In August, the members enjoyed an afternoon concert presented by Merrymakers performer Mark Irvin. This activity was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. The members were tapping their toes, and their fingers to the music and singing along.

Mark Irvin is a music educator, singer/songwriter, recording artist, and freelance musician from Omaha, Nebraska. The members enjoyed listening to the music that Mark played and enjoyed interacting with him throughout the show. During the show, Mark played his piano or his guitar while he was singing the members' favorite songs.

Mark also shared during the performance about how he started as a self-taught musician out of high school and spent most of the 1980's working as a musician. He grew up in a house of music and this was a vital part of the family. The love of music throughout his childhood helped develop his deep love of music.



In Memoriam

David Puls

Marvin Abels



Kool Aid Bingo and Kool Aid Stand

By Jessica Modlin, Activities Director

In August, we celebrate Kool-Aid Days at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home, around the date when they have the Kool-Aid Festivities in Hastings, Nebraska. At the beginning of the gathering, we did a drawing for the Great 250 Scavenger Hunt (see the article below). Following the drawing, we kicked off with a mix of regular bingo and Kool-Aid bingo for the members to have a chance to win extra bingo coupons. In the middle of bingo we paused bingo and the members enjoyed some Kool-Aid themed treats including a Kool-Aid cookie from Eileen's Colossal Cookies. The members also had the opportunity to try different flavors of the colorful beverage from the Kool-Aid stand. They look forward to this activity each year! The Kool-Aid cookies from Eileen's are a special item only available during the month of August. They must be ordered super early because Eileen's runs out so quickly. The members started sharing stories about enjoying Kool-Aid in their childhoods throughout this activity. This activity was sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.



The Great 250 Scavenger Hunt

By Jessica Modlin, Activities Director



There have been many great events held this Summer commemorating the 250th Birthday of the United States. One local event has been the Great 250 Treasure hunt in Kearney, put together by Visit Kearney. This event started in June and is running through the middle of September where there have been glass keepsakes hidden at various locations around Kearney. These glass keepsakes were made by members of the UNK Glass club over the course of several months and feature a red, white, and blue design. One of the locations that has been used to hide a glass keepsake each week has been the Central Nebraska Veterans Memorial. Visit Kearney was kind enough to donate ten glass keepsakes for our members here. From August 3rd through August 11th members were able to go around the facility to try and find the hidden Kearney-area logos with the glass keepsakes as part of our Great CNVH 250 Scavenger Hunt. Members who completed the Scavenger Hunt and turned in their sheets to the Activities department were entered into the drawing to win one of the ten keepsakes. Special thanks to Visit Kearney and the UNK Glass Club for helping us put on this event!

Meet the Leadership: Dayna Phillips, QA Manager

By Ralph Healey, Editor

This month we will be learning more about our Quality Assurance Director Dayna Phillips. Dayna has been with Central Nebraska Veterans' Home for five years. Dayna grew up in Loup City, NE. She and her husband have a son and daughter. Their son is still in school at University of Nebraska-Lincoln and their daughter, who graduated from Creighton University, is getting married this month, so Dayna has been busy helping prepare for that ceremony. Dayna started out working in long-term care in high school and has continued to for most of her life since. In school she earned her bachelor's degree in education. The time she spent working in long-term care ended up resulting in her not using her education degree as she stayed in long-term care, eventually going back to school for her Long-Term Care Administration degree.



During her down time Dayna enjoys vacationing with family and spending time with her neighbors and friends. Dayna is active in her church, the Health Care Association, Miss Amazing Pageant, and St. Jude's Annual Telethon. Many know that Dayna likes to bake and has been focused on mastering the art of Sourdough bread lately. Dayna feels her greatest accomplishment has been raising two healthy and successful children and spending many years in the health care field ensuring people have the best possible care. Her favorite part of working at the home has been helping ensure the members live in a safe and quality home, while ensuring that staff are successful, efficient, and supported in their day-to-day work. The ability to work with others who serve our members with their whole heart, throughout her 33 years in long-term care has been a blessing in Dayna's life.

Antique Tractor Preservation Day Bingo

By Jessica Modlin, Activities Director

Antique Tractor Preservation Day was celebrated in August with members gathering in Freedom Hall for a special bingo, which was introduced with a video about the top 10 antique tractors. Also available was an informational brochure with information about the antique tractors.

Prior to starting the bingo, they listened to a brief radio clip about the importance of farming, antique tractors, and why the past of farming is important for the future and for generations yet to come. There was also a display of model antique tractors and related information sheets. The members enjoyed their afternoon learning more about antique tractors and of course, playing bingo!



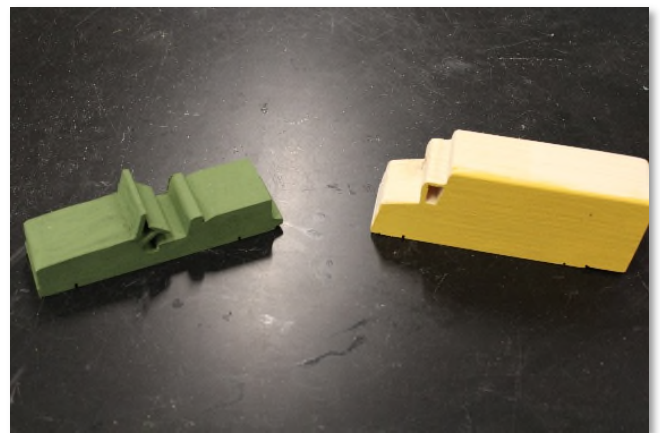
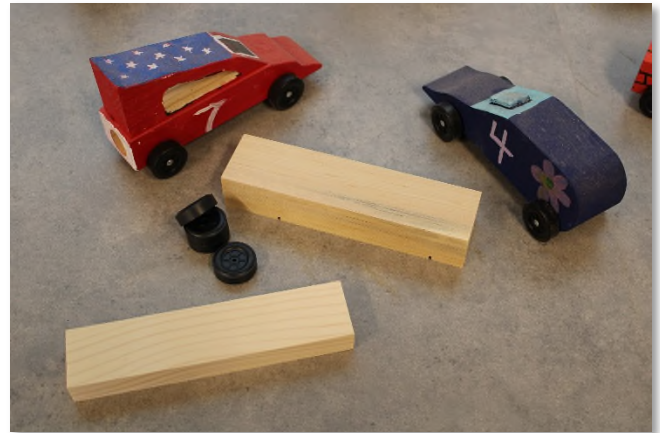
Annual CNVH Pinewood Derby

By Ralph Healey, Editor

This year the Pinewood Derby is once again scheduled in September (check your calendar for the date). Members have already been down in the wood shop working away, making cars for this year's event. This annual event is free for members to participate in. You just need to come down to the wood shop and the staff there can help you make a car, but it does take a few sessions to make one due to the sanding and painting process so come down soon.

There is always a pre-judging event leading up to the event for looks and style of car. So, you can go classic trying to rebuild a car you once owned, or you can go futuristic and build something you think would be fun to drive, or we also have members do unique creations that probably wouldn't work on a full-sized car but turn out to be a lot of fun to make in a derby car.

You do not need to be a regular member of crafts or the wood shop to participate if you want to stop in to make a car to join the fun. Stop in soon, we look forward to working with you down in our wood shop!



A Night Out at UNK Football Game

By Brandon Pierce, Activity Specialist

On a night in August, University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK) was honoring all First Responders and Military Serviceman as part of their Military and Service Appreciation Day. It was a great venue for our veterans. UNK hosted a special pre-game tailgate outside the stadium, giving generations of military personnel time to bond over food. The veterans of Central Nebraska Veterans' Home were offered special seating on the university third-floor observation deck, ensuring everyone could enjoy the game in comfort.

The crowd witnessed the Lopers put together a physical game, an instant classic low scoring gridiron battle, where Wayne State snuck a game winning Field Goal to win the game over UNK 21-20. All the members had a great time taking in the great game atmosphere. At one point between the 3rd and 4th quarters. The crowd was singing and dancing to the music and the CNVH veterans joined in the dancing fun. As the crowd exited the stadium, veterans and fans were talking about the most memorable moment, witnessing the entire stadium standing as one to salute the veterans in attendance. A true American tribute and honor to teamwork and sacrifice.

Check us out on the web!

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

Special Point of Interest Next Month:

- Pinewood Derby
- Merrymakers/Dreamweaver Concert – Bill King

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

Administrator: Dorin C. Vaipan

Editor: Ralph Healey



GOVERNOR
JIM PILLEN

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
JOHN HILGERT

CENTRAL NEBRASKA VETERANS' HOME ADMINISTRATOR
DORIN C. VAIPAN

Central Nebraska Veterans' Home

4510 E. 56th Street
Kearney, NE 68847
Phone: 308-865-6000