

THE VETERAN VOICE

WISCONSIN VETERANS HOME AT UNION GROVE

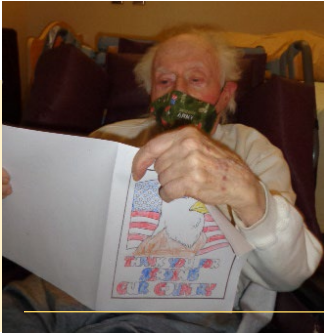
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Veterans Home - Union Grove



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Veterans Day Celebration

Though this year we have had to adapt and change many activities and interactions on campus, the Union Grove team still wanted to make Veterans Day a special celebration for our Members. Veterans received branch specific masks, beautiful cards and artwork from local schools and organizations, certificates of appreciation, and a special catered fried chicken meal. Thank you to all our veterans for your service!



January Member Birthdays

William Baumgardt – 2nd – 1/18

William Bradley – GH – 1/15

Thomas Brodek – 2nd – 1/19

Frank Denoto – 2nd – 1/29

Ernst Groth – 1st – 1/25

Brad Irelan – 2nd – 1/29

LeRoy Keenan – 3rd – 1/17

Eugene Kras – GH – 1/9

Joseph Mooradian – 2nd – 1/27

Louise Thornton – 3rd – 1/18

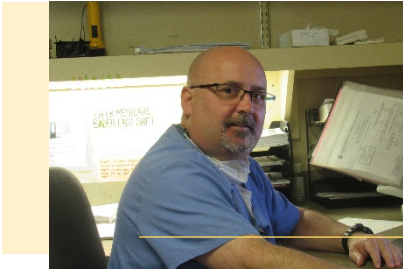


Going Digital

The Veteran Voice is going fully digital in 2021. If you are interested in still receiving this newsletter, submit your email at www.WisVetsEmail.com to be added to the email list.

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From Delivery Driver to Nurse

By: Patty Harrison

George Hamilton is a very familiar face at the Veterans Home at Union Grove. He is around a lot – picking up extra shifts and helping on holidays. So, you might not guess that he has not always worked at Union Grove. In fact, George spent a big part of his early career doing a completely different kind of work – for 21 years, he delivered Wonder Bread to stores. A job that, he says, he pursued after the birth of his first child, simply to "pay the bills."

But when Wonder Bread went out of business in November 2012, George had the opportunity to go back to school with support from the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance program. That is when he chose a nursing career and has been at Union Grove for 3 years. A typical day as a nurse, he says, is about so much more than getting medicine and taking vitals.

"It's about really taking care of the Members. I've always been super connected to the people I take care of and their families," he said. "You hear their stories, and you build more of a personal relationship. One thing that's nice with long-term care is that you're usually taking care of a person for an extended period and you get to build a relationship with them."

George says he tries to bring a sense of joy to the community and that he likes to "keep the place a little lighter and a little happier," humming in the halls or breaking out in song. He doesn't claim to be a superstar singer, but with eight kids at home, ranging in age from one to 29, he does have an expansive repertoire: "I can sing a country song, or I can sing a Ludacris song. I can go from Barney one minute, to Def Leppard the next. You name it, I've heard it and I can remember part of it."

He says that one of the things he appreciates most about working here is the community, from the volunteers who come in to help run activities and staff the deli (prior to COVID) to the camaraderie of his colleagues. One of his fondest memories is the 100th birthday party held for his grandmother, who was a Member of Union Grove for nine months, where his work family and his biological family celebrated together. To finish this story visit www.WisVets.com and visit the News & Media page.

December Member Birthdays

Robert Patyk – 3rd - 12/2

Kenneth Mandy – 3rd - 12/4

John Goodwin – 2nd - 12/4

Robert Brauer – GH - 12/7

Garth Rasmussen – GH - 12/11

Edward Bodamer – GH - 12/16

Edward Hartman – GH - 12/16

Jesse Sanchez – 1st - 12/17

Willie McLain – 1st - 12/19

Joseph Nosalik – 3rd - 12/28

Kenney Blue – 3rd - 12/28

Randall Krall – GH - 12/28

Roger Jagodinsky – 1st - 12/29

Welcome New Members

Harold Bjugstad – Army – WWII

James Flynn – Navy – Vietnam

Terry Gildart – Army -Vietnam

William Lutz – Navy – Vietnam

William Schmidt – Army – Korean

Kent Swanson – Navv – Vietnam

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Message from the Secretary

Mary M. Kolar

The winter holidays are upon us, and while we begin to prepare typical of the season – unpacking decorations and shopping for ingredients for grandma’s best recipes – I know this year’s celebrations will be far from typical. As our country fights against the COVID1-9 virus, perhaps the most important part of many holiday celebrations will be missing – the opportunity to gather with family and loved ones.

This year will surely be a hard one for everyone. However, the Members in our Veterans Homes are uniquely prepared for this kind of holiday season. Why? Because we have done this before. Most of us have served in the military, away from our families, sometimes in poor conditions or difficult circumstances, sacrificing for the betterment of others. We know how to connect through letters and phone calls when physical space separates us and we have learned to celebrate with “adopted” family, our brothers, and sisters with whom we served.

We have done this before, and we can do it once again. Let us serve as an example to those who may be, for the first time, experiencing a special day away from those they love, and, together, let us try to make the best of difficult times. I know the Union Grove staff are making plans for joyous celebrations this season. I hope the Members and staff at Union Grove will lean on each other when needed, as we all did during our time in the service and find a way to enjoy the holidays together. To the Union Grove community -- Members, family members, friends, staff, and volunteers – I wish you happy and healthy holidays and look forward to the day we can celebrate together.

Holiday Wish List

The following are some of our most common donation requests. In addition, our Members would also love to see and hear you! Consider creating a video of holiday wishes or caroling for us to share with small groups or on our internal television station.

Clothing and Self-Care Requests (new only, please):

Handkerchiefs

- Men’s and women’s socks
- Men’s body wash and deodorant
- Men’s underwear
- White undershirts

Activities Requests:

- Coffee table books
- Adult coloring books
- Acrylic paints and paint brushes

Food and Drink Requests:

- Prepackaged treats
- Microwave popcorn

For a complete list of items visit:

www.WisVets.com

