

# UNION GROVE NEWS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WISCONSIN VETERANS HOME AT UNION GROVE



REPTILE SHOW



A VISIT FROM ELVIS



PURPLE HEART ART

## CELEBRATING OUR CENTENARIANS

Fun Fact: The oldest confirmed living person was Jeanne Calment of France, who died in 1997 at the age of 122 years and 164 days. Research suggests that Centenarians have been doubling in number every decade since the 1950s and that by 2050, there will be close to 1,000,000 American Centenarians making it the fastest growing age segment in our population. There are somewhere between 96,000 and 105,000 Centenarians in America according to various data sources and Union Grove Veterans Home is proud to be home to three of them.



Dorothy Davis was born on 7/10/1921 and recently celebrated her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday. She was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and lived there most of her life. She was an avid sports lover and played volleyball, basketball, golf, and more. Dorothy went to school for business and for a period of time traveled the country selling soft good products. Dorothy played the organ and loved to sing. Dorothy had two sons and shared that her and her husband were “always doing things with the kids, playing tennis or golf. It is so important to make time with your kids to do real things.”



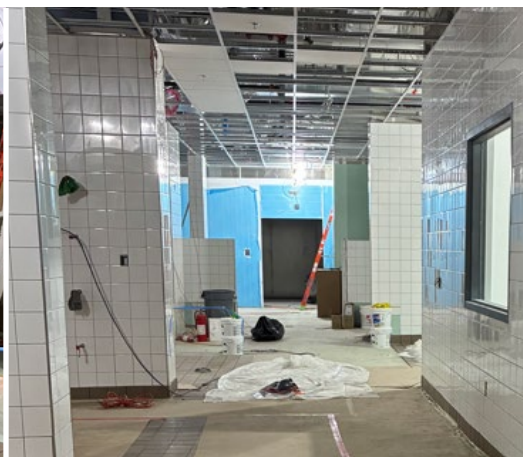
Don Hetland was born 8/28/1925 in Beloit, Wisconsin. He is celebrating his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year! Don earned the American Campaign Medal while in the Army during WWII and traveled to France, Belgium, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Philippines, and Japan during his service. He met his wife while “driving around in the car,” and has five children. Don is known for his strong faith and great sense of humor. He loves gospel music and sang Tenor in a quartet. He shared his favorite song is “Jesus Sweetest Name I Know.” Don is a fan of the Green Bay Packers and the Milwaukee Brewers.



JC Dunbar was born on 2/21/1925 and turned 100 this year! JC served in the Army during WWII where he earned the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and the WWII Victory Medal. He served in Northern France and Rhineland. He was born in Wegener, South Carolina but considers Detroit his home town after moving there after the war. JC started working on the farm at a young age and made his living doing various jobs to include sheet metal work. JC was a Deacon at his church. He loves music of all kind but his favorites are Blues, Jazz, and church music.

## NEW KITCHEN CONSTRUCTION

The construction team continues to move forward build our new kitchen, working on the main cooking area, walk-in cooler, and more. The project is expected to be completed at the end of October to mid November.



## EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT — DEANNA

Meet Deanna, this month's employee highlight for the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove!

Deanna is an Accountant – Journey/Medicare and Medicaid Reimbursement Specialist. She currently works in the Finance Department at the Wisconsin Veterans Home in Union Grove, and has worked with WDVA for 19 years in October 2025.

According to Deanna, the most rewarding part of her job is working with and getting to know the veterans and their families.

"I enjoy listening to their stories," she says. "I have always respected the fact that our members chose to dedicate a portion of their lives to our country, and I feel like I owe them so much for their service."

Deanna recommends that new staff take the time to get to know the members. She says, "Listen to their stories and learn their history. It will definitely impact your life."

Additionally, she believes in having patience. "There's been a bunch of staff changes and a lot of staff are newer and are still learning what works best. So, make sure to share your thoughts and ideas but also be open to change," Deanna says.

In her free time, she loves to go camping or explore Wisconsin's state and county parks. Her goal is to visit all of our state parks. She also enjoys spending time in northern Wisconsin by her parent's home and helping with their garden, canning, and their chickens, Henry and Betty.

Thank you, Deanna, for all your hard work at the Union Grove Veterans Home!



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## WE'RE SEEKING A GARDENING GROUP!

Do you love gardening? Have plants to share? Or just have a green thumb? Bring your interest and skills to the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove! The Veterans Home is seeking a gardening club or group to clean up flower beds and plant in the patio areas. Come brighten a veteran's day with the gift of nature. If interested, please contact Dana Kugler at [dana.kugler@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dana.kugler@dva.wisconsin.gov).

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## A FEW WAYS TO SPEND TIME VOLUNTEERING WITH OUR MEMBERS THIS AUTUMN

Provide one to one visits for Members on our Memory unit and Boland Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Take Members for wheelchair walks outside, weather permitting

Water plants and weed during gardening season

Assist Members with computers and technology

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PLEASE CONTACT DANA KUGLER AT 262-838-6723 FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTEERING WITH OUR MEMBERS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT!



## A VISIT FROM ELVIS

The King was in the building earlier this summer! Members had rootbeer floats, snacks, and enjoyed the great music of Elvis Presley, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Wisconsin.



## FRIENDLY REMINDER TO FAMILY AND MEMBERS REGARDING CLOTHES

Our laundry department is having a hard time fitting clean clothing in members' very full wardrobes. Families are encouraged to visit and clear out old or unused garments before the holidays. Thank you!



*Member Dennis Aldrich displays his Purple Heart painting by artist Mike Klieber*



## PURPLE HEART ART

Artist Mike Klieber of Burlington, WI has been donating his time and supplies to create personalized art for our members at Union Grove. Mike started his journey in art after he retired in 2002. Mike stated, “I was trying to find something to do so I picked up a paintbrush.” Mike served in the Air Force for 7 ½ years and spent one year in Vietnam.

Mike shared that his favorite thing about creating art is making others happy. If my finished project is something that somebody likes, I am happy with that. My goal is my art will make somebody happy.”

Mike worked for the Sheriff’s department and spent time in Union Grove. He was searching for a place where his work would be appreciated. Mike shared that he used to attend craft fairs to display his art. Looking for a way to continue his art without putting as much pressure on himself, he searched for people he could donate to.

Mike has donated many pictures to UGVA over the past year. Some are displayed in the PUB, Chapel, hallways, and members rooms. His most recent pieces were personalized and given to the facility Purple Heart Recipients on Purple Heart Day. Purple Heart Day is observed annually on August 7th to honor and recognize the sacrifices of those service members who have been wounded or killed in action while serving in the U.S. military.

“Being a Veteran, its rewarding to go in there and give the members art to enjoy. I only paint pictures that I like; that I would put up in my home. I don’t really paint anything I wouldn’t hang on my wall.”

Thank you, Mike, for finding us and sharing your beautiful work!



## REPTILES IN RESIDENCY

Cold Blooded Parties traveling Reptile Show visited members at Boland Hall on August 12<sup>th</sup>. This program featured several reptiles that members were able to interact with and hold. Thanks to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Wisconsin for sponsoring this hands-on event.



# DEMENTIA Live®

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## A Experience for Professional and Family Caregivers

### DEMENTIA LIVE

UGVA has been working on an initiative to educate staff on the best dementia care practices. While partnering with Greenfield Rehabilitation UGVA hosted Michelle Strega MS/CCC-SLP CADDCT-CDP, Director of Sales and Marketing/Recruiter to train 12 staff on August 13<sup>th</sup> by taking the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar. The curriculum was provided by the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. Since completing this class, staff have the option to achieve status as a Certified Dementia Practitioner with support from Union Grove Veterans Home. Staff hold this certification with an option to renew after two years. More classes will be scheduled in the near future to educate more staff. Staff were excited to participate in this class and could be heard sharing things they learned with others the next day.

UGVA also partnered with the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Racine County to provide Dementia Live on August 27<sup>th</sup> for staff and families. This was a unique inside-out understanding of dementia as well as the aging process. Participants gained a heightened awareness of the challenges associated with living with dementia and left with valuable tips and tools to improve communication and connection. Staff at the VA will continue to offer the Virtual Dementia Tour periodically after this initial event.

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