



TOGETHER WE'RE  
**CARING**  
FOR AMERICA'S HEROES  
BOISE VETERANS HOME

## Volunteer and Activity Services Program Update

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**April 2022**

### Volunteer Opportunities

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Update: 4/4/2022 Currently working with American Legion/Matt Wroble for the coffee situation, however we are still looking for the "Golden Unicorn!"

*Special Volunteer request: Volunteer Kappy is retiring from his Starbucks coffee collection for health reasons. He is looking for someone to replace him in visiting Starbucks across the Treasure Valley and collecting their donations. The residents have come to enjoy the high-quality coffee that Kappy, through Starbucks, has provided for many years. Let me know if you can help and I will get you in touch with Kappy. Jo Ann Daron (208) 780-1700*

*The Golden Unicorn...Nurse Manager Matt Jessen let me know that he is looking for a volunteer to work in the evenings (after 10 pm) to help with wheelchair cleaning. We cannot clean them during the day – because the residents are using them. As we continue to struggle filling vacant positions, this is something that we would like to ask your help with. Is there a "night owl" who would like to help? Matt figured finding someone to help would be like finding the Golden Unicorn. I have seen you respond to amazing things and I believe with your support anything is possible! Let me know if you are feeling particularly "golden." Jo Ann (208) 780-1700.*

### Boise Veterans Home News

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Census: Skilled Nursing - 72; Residential – 16

**Dining Room Reopening:** On Monday, April 4, we officially reopened the dining room for the lunch meal for residents from all units. Then the initial plan is to reopen breakfast and lunch only, Monday through Friday in the main dining room and the other meals will happen on the units. We will gradually phase in additional meals and days.

**Fire and Life Safety Survey:** We had our annual fire and life safety survey yesterday. For the second year in a row, we were deficiency-free! This is a huge compliment not only to the maintenance staff but to everyone who works so hard to keep our building safe for our residents.

Our biggest need and challenge continue to be staffing the dietary department as well as the evening and NOC shifts for both CNAs and Nurses.

**3% Cost of Living Adjustment:** The Legislature has approved a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all employees of the Division of Veterans Services.

Governor Brad Little was onsite last week to ceremoniously sign a bill earmarking \$75 million to replace and upgrade the Boise, Lewiston, and Pocatello homes.

**IVAC Commissioner:** Governor Little appointed Rockey Davis to one of the two vacant positions on the Idaho Veterans Affairs Commission. Rockey Davis represents District 2 from Lewiston.

COVID-Veterans Home Covid Hotline: (208) 780-1336

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0 residents positive, 0 staff positive (updated 4/04/2022)

As of April 1, the current CDC COVID community transmission levels are substantial (orange) for Ada and Elmore counties and moderate (yellow) for Canyon County.

### April Events: upcoming outings/activities

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Activity staff continue to be redirected to support the nursing staff

#### April

- 1 – Doppelganger Event; Governor visit
- 2 - Resident council resumes
- 15 – Egg Coloring and Easter Bunny visit
- 16 – Robie Creek Race – course set through veteran home parking lot
- 17 – Easter Service
- 18-25 – Tropical Island Week
  - Food Truck – Island Social
- 27 – Banjo Man and Ice Cream Social/Back patio
- 5, 12, 19, 26 - Weekly Pinochle games resume
- 11,18,25 - Drives to Lake Lowell

Canteen: Making progress and now open four days/week.

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## Historic Signing

Friday, April 1 at 10:30 Governor Little and legislators were onsite at the front of the Boise Veterans Home for a formal bill signing of \$75M to replace the Boise Veterans Home and renovate our sister homes in Lewiston and Pocatello.







# Mardi Gras

*Or "Fat Tuesday" for all us non-French speaking people! Good food, good fun, good people and Beads!*



# Pizza Party

Thanks to Vietnam Veterans of America we were again able to offer pizza and had enough to include staff!





# Millennials stand out for their technology use, but older generations

also embrace digital life – here in the home both generations collided and well...magic (and smiles) happened!







# National Vietnam Veterans Day

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was a modest affair in the home and while the community was reflecting and connecting at Kleiner Park, the residents at the home also reflected on their experiences. The residents shared that the "beer and good friends" were among some of their best memories.

Below is a portrait (shared with permission) of one residents experience in Viet Nam.

Howard White, U.S. Army 1967- 68.

White was born and raised in Nampa, Idaho just a few miles west of Boise. Vietnam was the farthest away from home he has ever been.

He entered the Army in early 1967 and left in late 1968 giving him nearly two years of active duty, most of it spent in Vietnam. He said he was supposed to be trained as a light mechanic but ended up in Vietnam as a gunner and radio operator on convoys.

"We had night convoys and they were just wiping us out like crazy," he said, "Every night we'd get hit two or three different times on different passes. The people that you knew, talked to and ate with, they got hit and we'd just pick them up and throw 'em in the vehicles," he said.

He said it wasn't all bad in Vietnam, that he did share some good times with the friends he made there. Some of those friends he still maintains contact with and has seen in recent years. He found beauty in the country and the people of Vietnam, citing the Montagnard people as some he grew to like and respect. Most of what he saw in Vietnam he still doesn't understand.

"I think there was a lot of things that went on over there that shoud'na been goin' on," White said, "but I guess that's the way it is with any war, I don't really think we had any business being over there in the first place, but it's not for me to say.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: FRED WYNEKEN

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*Fred Wyneken has been volunteering one day per week in the Canteen at the Idaho State Veterans Home for 22 years.*



*Originally from Chicago, Fred met his future wife Bonnie in Southern California. They have since been married 59 years. This year Fred is enjoying his 80th birthday!*

*Fred retired in 1996 after working 35 years in law enforcement and shortly after moved to Boise to be closer to Bonnie's parents.*

*When I asked Fred – "Why the Veterans Home?" without hesitation he said, "Because I never served, I wanted to serve the vets." Some would argue that both he and his wife who retired from the Veterans Administration, have both "served." I certainly would!*

*When I asked about what motivated Fred to stay involved he said "I feel the vets have given so much, I was never in a position where I could join, that I wanted to give back because they have given so much for us."*

*Fred's favorite memories revolve around conversations with the WW2 vets, he regrets that so many have passed on.*

*While we love seeing Fred weekly, he does divide his attention by holding weekly Bible-based classes at the maximum-security prison (pre-Covid) as a volunteer with the Chuck Colson Prison Fellowship Ministry.*

*At the end of the day, Fred acknowledges that "It's reward to be able to give back and know that I'm making a difference!"*

*By the way...if this snapshot isn't inspiring enough...I asked Fred how he maintains his excellent health and he mentioned that he and his wife workout daily. In fact, Fred used to love jogging, but after his doctor said no more, rather than be sidelined Fred walks on his treadmill for 3.5 miles at 3.5 speed at an incline of 15! I tried to do that...and well, I didn't make it.*

*Jo Ann Daron, Volunteer Services Coordinator, Idaho State Veterans Home-Boise*

[Come Join Us!](#)

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As you can see Volunteers help in so many ways but at the end of the day, it's the kindness, compassion and extra care that makes the Veteran's day better. If you want to be part of the magic at the Idaho State Veterans Home, come Join Us!

Scan the QR code to fill out a volunteer application or follow this link: [Veterans Home Volunteer Application](#)

After filling out the application, we will set up an interview with you where we will discuss opportunities in the home and the onboarding in more detail.

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# VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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