

The Village Times

December 2025

From the Editor

The Heartbeat of Our Community

Every thriving community has something special at its core — not buildings or budgets, but people. Here in our member-owned community, each of us plays a vital role in keeping that heartbeat strong.

When we gather for meetings, lend a hand on a committee, or volunteer for a project, we're doing more than "filling a seat" or "helping out." We're shaping the kind of place we all want to live in — one where voices are heard, neighbors are connected, and decisions are made by us and for us.

Without enough participation, things begin to slow down. Important decisions can't be made

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As the year draws to a close, we celebrate the many ways this season brings light, warmth, and connection into our lives. Whether you mark the holidays through faith, family traditions, or simple moments of reflection, this is a time to pause and appreciate the gifts of friendship and community that we share.

In our gathering of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, we are united by kindness, care, and the spirit of togetherness. May the days ahead be filled with peace, comfort, and joy—and may the new year bring continued health, laughter, and moments that make your heart glad. With warmest wishes, your Board Of Directors.



See Memorial on page 2

On November 1, 2025, Evergreen Village gathered in gratitude as a new veterans memorial and flagpole were dedicated to our community—thanks to the vision and generosity of Eagle Scout candidate Matthew Mascera, a 17-year-old Junior at Bangor Area High School.

Matthew is a proud member of Boy Scout Troop #41, sponsored by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. In pursuit of his Eagle Scout rank, he sought a project that would serve others and leave a lasting impact. That opportunity came through Evergreen Village resident Helene Walsh, who proposed the idea of a memorial and flagpole to honor those who served.

With the guidance of resident Mark Bergman, who helped organize the project, and the support of many hands and hearts, Matthew brought the vision to life. The memorial now stands as a symbol of respect, remembrance, and unity—visible to all who pass through our grounds.

Matthew extends heartfelt thanks to his family: his father Matt, his mother Jodi, and his sister Sophia, as well as his Aunt Julie, Nana, and Grandma. He also acknowledges the mentorship and encouragement of coaches Mr. Davis, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Karner, along with Vinny Vega, Seaghan and Zander Campbell and Kyle Bonopane.

This project reflects not only Matthew’s dedication and leadership, but the spirit of collaboration that defines our Village. We are proud to be part of his journey and grateful for the legacy he leaves behind.

Thank you, Matthew, for reminding us that service and remembrance go hand in hand—and that the next generation is already making a difference.



Photo by Staff Photographer



Chair Yoga Stretch Classes

Chair Yoga Stretch classes were started by Michelle Dinnen some time ago, thank you so much Michelle. She is currently unable to continue leading those classes. But we decided to continue on with classes and Ginny Frank has stepped in to lead.



Please consider joining us on Wednesday and Friday morning from 10 to 11 am to keep yourselves limber and strengthen your balance to prevent falls.

This is not a rigorous cardio workout, it is designed for stretch, balance and keeping our joints free and moving. We do 90% of the class seated in a chair.

PERSON OF THE MONTH

Many thanks to Phyllis Cowell on her many years of service to the community from the time she moved into Evergreen Village in 2012 until the present. In 2014 she became the President of Evergreen Village Activities and then when that disbanded in 2022 she became President of the now Evergreen Village Wellness and Social Club. Over the years she has planned many activities, trips, dinners, Christmas parties, Toys for Tots and many more. She always remembered to print up flyers and make sure a sign-up sheet was posted at the clubhouse. Now Phyllis has decided on December 31st to hand over her gavel to another resident who has a tough act to follow. Good luck and thanks again and don't be a stranger.

By Marie Wolfrum

December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
The Christmas Dinner at PUB 447 Has Been Cancelled						
	1	2 Stretch 10:00 am	3 Camera Club 6:30 pm UMBT Tree Lighting 5:00	4	5 Stretch 10:00	6
7 BAHS Band Tricky Tray 1:00pm Portland Firehall	8	9 Stretch 10:00 am Last Day for Toys for Tots	10	11 Soup Night Mt.Bethel Fire- house 4 to 7 pm	12 Stretch 10:00 am	13
14	15	16	17 Stretch 10:00 am Camera Club 6:30 pm	18	19 Stretch 10:00 am	20
21	22	23	24 Stretch 10:00 am	25	26 Stretch 10:00 am	27
28	29	30	31 Stretch 10:00 am Camera Club 6:30 pm			

Cards for Soldiers Update

23,206 Christmas Cards were delivered to the military warehouse in Shoemakersville., PA, on Saturday November 15th, The residents of Evergreen Village wrote out **1310** of that total. Heartfelt thanks to ALL who wrote out or donated cards for this project. We appreciate every single card. We'll do it again next year and the info will be on the clubhouse bulletin board if you want to join in My **daughter, Holly**, took over this project with 800 cards 10 years ago -and - over 23,000 this year!!! With your help, we provide smiles to soldiers around the world who won't be home for the holidays Thank you! thank you! thank you! MERRY CHRISTMAS by Carolyn Leidy

From the Editor *cont. page1*

without a quorum. Events and improvements that add joy and value to our lives get delayed or set aside. The gears that keep our community running smoothly depend on the time and involvement of its members — of you.

Let’s imagine for a moment:

A garden that once bloomed with color is now overgrown. Not because anyone stopped caring — but because the few who tended it became too few to keep up. One day, a new resident sees the fading flowers and decides to help. Then another joins in. Before long, the garden is vibrant again — not just with blossoms, but with laughter and friendship.

That’s how participation works. Every small effort — attending a meeting, joining a committee, helping with an event — nourishes the larger whole. You don’t need special skills, just a willing spirit.

So if you’ve been thinking, “I’m not sure I’d be much help,” or “Someone else will take care of it,” please remember: our community is that “someone else.” Each voice, each vote, each volunteer hour strengthens us all.

Together, we can ensure our community doesn’t just function — it flourishes.

From Marie’s Desk

by Marie Wolfrum

Treat for your guests with a Holiday Cheese Ball to go with your favorite drink.

Ingredients:

- 2 (8oz) pgs. cream cheese
- 1(8 1/2oz) can crushed pineapple, drained
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onions
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion
- Chopped pecans

Directions;

Mix all ingredients except nuts, form mixture into a ball and roll in nuts.

Serve with assorted crackers.



With Sympathy;

Our Condolences to the family of; Ellen Rose R.I.P.



Mark your Calendars

On December 7th at 1P.M. the Banger H.S. Marching Band is having a Tricky Tray and Bingo at the Portland Fire Hall



Full Moom

Photo by Ginny Frank

BELIEVE

It was Christmas Eve, the year was 1960. Like years before, we spent this day at my Aunt Steffie & Uncle Joe's home. Fun, family & gifts, plus a feast of Italian & Polish food. Late that evening it was time to brave the very cold weather and head home, hopefully before midnight, when the magic started on Christmas day. Out to my dad's Ford to squeeze into a corner of the rear seat with my grandparents, sister and a blanket. We would be long past half way home before the heater would reach the back seat. Looking out the window, and trying not to sleep, what a wonder seeing the holiday lights everywhere. But I was especially watching the sky for a sleigh & reindeer and that big bright star I was sure was out there that eve. Oh yes, at 9 years old I believed.

But as life would have it, one year later, Christmas eve 1961, it was very different. During the summer of 61', my favorite uncle who called me Ignatz Mouse after the cartoon strip, had died at 35 years of age. Next my grandfather passed in the early fall and then my grandmother a few weeks later. I had seen them

everyday of my life, as we all lived in the same house. What a huge absence in my heart. On the road home that Christmas Eve, I couldn't even look out the window. Sitting in the near empty rear seat the holiday lights meant nothing. It took 20 years before I found that bright star and believed again.

The holiday season is a special time but so much prevents you from believing in it, really seeing it. Maybe it's the frustrating shopping or the money worries that go along with it. Or the lack of time to finish all that needs to be done, gift buying, decorating, wrapping. Maybe it's worry about traveling safely and being out in the freezing cold. Or maybe its dealing with family that seems hard to love after a difficult year. And let's not forget about the worrisome news on the TV all the time.

I hope that's not you. Please make time to look inward and believe in the goodness and love associated with these holidays, whichever ones you celebrate. Walk slower through the stores, notice the wide eyed, smiling children anxious for the big day to arrive. Shop early and online if you can, less frustrating, no

waiting in lines, and easier to keep the bills in check. Don't forget to say thanks to the delivery drivers, if it wasn't for them you might be in the mall right now. Decorate early, you never know what the weather might bring, and prevent those last minute rushes and trips to buy one more string of lights when one string stops working. As for family, you are not alone. We all have those sons or daughters-in-law, grand kids or maybe it's the in-laws to deal with. Tolerate them for the holidays. You know you love them.

Lastly change the channel on the TV. Find "It's A Wonderful Life" or "Miracle On 34th Street". Black & White not your cup of tea? Try "A Christmas Story", "White Christmas" or "Elf". Maybe something more for the guys, turn on "Die Hard", yes it's a Christmas movie, sort of. And don't forget "Charlie Brown's Christmas". There are literally 100s of great holiday movies to enjoy.

So believe again this season. See the love around you and spread it around yourself. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Blessed Kwanzaa.



HAPPY
HOLIDAYS

Thank You for Your Service: Dan Meyers' Story

Greetings!

That was the salutation on letters sent by the U.S. Selective Service System during the Vietnam War era (and earlier). The tone was official and direct—informing young men of the date, time, and location to report for induction into the armed forces.

One such letter arrived for Dan Meyers in early 1967. His two cousins, Dan J. Meyers and Peter D'Hass, had received theirs a few months earlier and were already in boot camp. All three were just 20 years old.

Dan was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey, for 10 weeks of basic training. Between basic and his next assignment, he took a brief but meaningful detour—he married Jane Hensler. Soon after, he was sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, for advanced infantry training, where he learned Morse Code, Navy hand signals, and trained as a radar operator/technician. He also learned the hard way what it feels like to be 200 feet from a 155-millimeter artillery round breaking the sound barrier—the blast sent him diving for cover under a nearby jeep.

After 14 weeks of intensive training, Dan returned home on leave, only to receive devastating news: both of his cousins had been killed in Vietnam.

Dan's orders took him to South Korea, specifically the DMZ at the 38th parallel. He served temporary duty (TDY) in Vietnam for two weeks before returning to Korea. Until January 1968, the nightly news focused on Vietnam and the Tet Offensive. That changed dramatically when, on January 21, North Korean commandos attempted to assassinate President Park Chung-hee at his residence, the Blue House in Seoul. Two days

later, North Korea captured the USS Pueblo in international waters, holding its 83-man crew hostage for 11 harrowing months. This was the tense backdrop of Dan's service.

Though Korea was considered a "cold war" zone, border clashes were frequent and deadly. Dan took part in nearly 20 skirmishes. In one instance, his unit investigated reports of North Korean soldiers crossing the Imjin River. Shots were fired—thankfully, they missed. Dan and his fellow soldiers operated under "no-return fire" orders unless explicitly approved by their commander.

Dan's tour ended in January 1969, but the memories remain vivid. He describes his experiences as "the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." Here are just a few:

Within weeks of arriving in Korea, a lost German Shepherd puppy "adopted" Dan. He named her Battle. With his commanding officer's permission, Battle became his roommate and base buddy for nearly a year. One day, she went missing—taken by villagers nearby. Dan still mourns her loss.

On a routine patrol, Dan's unit encountered village children playing in a river. The GIs stopped and showered them with candy, bringing joy to their day.

Early morning, around 1:30 a.m. Christmas Day, 1968 he recalls walking across a footbridge under a full moon and remembering the song, "I'll be Home for Christmas" and crying his eyes out until he realized he was not alone. There were so many more just like him in that faraway country. By 8:00 a.m. the North Koreans started shelling again just to keep them on their toes! Merry Christmas to all!

The Journey Home

A week after Christmas, Dan boarded a C-130 cargo plane—

alone. The aircraft was so spacious, he joked you could host two basketball games inside. A few hours into the flight, the co-pilot invited him to climb a 30-foot ladder to the cockpit to watch the sunrise. "It was a beautiful sight," Dan recalls. "I felt like a pilot."

They landed in Tacoma, Washington, where Dan was debriefed for three days before being discharged. On his flight to Newark, the pilot announced that troops would need to change into civilian clothes before landing. In uniform, they risked being spit on or having things thrown at them. As they walked through the terminal, vile comments confirmed the warning. Dan and his fellow soldiers split up to blend into the crowd.

Dan walked toward Rt. 22. Around 4:00 a.m., a man en route to Allentown stopped and offered him a ride. The man asked many questions, then pulled into a diner and bought Dan breakfast. Back on the road, Dan said he'd get out at Rt. 519 and find his way to Belvidere. The man refused. "No," he said. "I owe this to you." Dan still remembers that act of kindness—a stark contrast to the hostility he'd just experienced.

□ Life After Service

Dan and Jane had three sons: Greg, Steven, and John. Dan worked at M&M Mars in Hackensack, NJ, for 30 years. He suspects the rotating swing shifts contributed to the PTSD he still experiences. After retiring from Mars, he worked part-time as a U.S. Security Supervisor at various locations, including Walmart.

Today, Dan lives in Evergreen Village with his wife of 30 years, Mary Ellen.

Thank you, Dan, for your service—and for your continued contributions to our community.

DATE HERE

AROUND THE TOWN

-December 3rd. Mt. Bethel Annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

5:00 - 6:00 PM at the firehouse.

-December 11th. Soup Night pickup at the firehouse, 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM. Contact Sherry to pre-order 908-672-9961. December soup choices are Italian Wedding or Cheddar Broccoli. Bread is also available. Soups are hand made by the Woman's Auxiliary and proceeds are used for charity projects and equipment. One quart is just \$10.00. You may also be able to buy soup that night, but pre-order is a guarantee.

-December 19th. National Ugly Sweater Day. Do you like fun holidays? OK then, dig out that crazy sweater you would never actually wear any place else and wear it proudly. Just have some fun.

IN THE VILLAGE

-December 9th. - Last day for Toys For Tots giving. Still time to drop off an unwrapped gift and pickup your "Warm Feelings".

-A reminder that seniors are targets for fraud and scams. Never release personal information such as dates of birth, social security numbers, passwords, credit card numbers etc., when someone calls, even if you know the company calling. Legitimate companies do not ask for these items by phone. If you do have a actual question or issue, perhaps about a bill etc., always be the one calling them from a phone number you know, like from a bill mailed to you. If you get a call, offer to call them back from a number you look up and not one they give you. Use the same caution online. Don't open or click on questionable emails. Be safe.

From the Kitchen of:

Carolyn Leidy

BOX CAKE cookies

Easy, good and fun for kids to make.

Preheat oven to 350 F

1 Box ANY cake mix

2 eggs

1/2 cup VEGETABLE oil.

Mix all ingredients and drop on lightly greased cookie sheet (there's oil in mix).

Bake at 350 for 11 minutes

Options

I add white chips to Red Velvet, PB chips to chocolate,

and almond slivers to the white mix.

Try rainbow sprinkles in and on for a birthday.

OR icing on any mix

Be creative and enjoy.

Peace and Happiness from our families to you and yours

the Staff



Focus on the Camera Club



Matthew Mascera and family at Evergreen Village's new Veterans Memorial *Photo by Ginny Frank*



Fall Visitor

Photo by Ginny Frank



Fun Run—Fundraiser

Photo by Adam Anik



Full Moon

Photo by Sam B

Newsletter Staff

- Sam Brockman
- Rich DeLeo
- Barbara Massarano
- Marie Wolfrum
- December Contributors
- Carolyn Leidy
- Ginny Frank
- Adam Anik