

ROADRUNNER

JANUARY 2024

VOLUME 2024-01



FROM THE DIRECTOR

AFIO Comes To Blue Skies

Starting in February, the Association of Former Intelligence Officers (AFIO) will hold monthly meetings, on the first Monday of each month, starting at noon, in the Roadrunner Lounge. Watch the Roadrunner for information on the monthly topic. Although the target audience is AFIO affiliated residents, these meetings will be open to all and look to be very informative and interesting.

Safety

Reminder, cross traffic does not stop as you exit Freedom House Gate. Please use caution when exiting.

Yee Haw, It's Time For The Cowboy Breakfast At BSTW

Join us in The Lakeview on Friday, **January 26** at 7am for Blue Skies version of a San Antonio favorite kicking off rodeo season – The Cowboy Breakfast. We'll be serving free breakfast Tacos (many thanks to Morrison), there will be great entertainment provided by "Jammin' with Jim" (many thanks to the Thrift Shop). Put on your Cowboy duds and mosey on down for a good time!



New Residents

New residents coming soon to a neighborhood near you.

David & Camille Sweigart, #134

Hiram "Doc" & Annette Jones, #335

Ken & Sally Brockway, #447

Lee McLeod, #641

George & Glenna Verre Knippel, #737

Lou Genco, #2310



Save the Date:

Monday, January 1 – New Year's Holiday – Minimal Staff, No Transportation

Tuesday, January 2 - Root Open House - 3-5pm - Roadrunner Lounge

January 8, 9, & 10 - Undecorate Christmas - 9am (see schedule on page 2)

Wednesday, January 10 - B&A - 5pm

Thursday, January 11 - MOAA CEO Visit - 9am - Roadrunner Lounge

Thursday, January 11 - DRAC Meeting - 1:30pm - Roadrunner Lounge

Saturday, January 13 – Volksmarch – 8am-12pm - BST West

Thursday, January 18 - Resident Council Meeting - 1:30pm - Roadrunner Lounge

Thursday, January 25 - How BST Works for You - 2pm - Roadrunner Lounge

Friday, January 26 - Cowboy Breakfast - 7am - Roadrunner and The Lakeview

Monday, February 5 – AFIO Meeting –12 pm- Roadrunner

February 19-21 - CARF Survey

Resident Services Announcements

Caregivers (and others) Charging to Resident Accounts

If you want to give a caregiver, or anyone including Guests/other residents, permission to charge to your account please contact Guy or Nikki in Dining Services or Lori in Resident Services, preferably via email. This will eliminate Staff trying to figure out if they should allow the charge.

Coin Survey Attached

Please check page # 19 for a survey concerning a project residents have been working on. We want your thoughts!

In Memoriam

John Koval – December 8
Katie Hicks – December 9
Travis Smith – December 10
Jerrold Allen – December 13
Ahia Shabaaz – December 15
Neale Freeto – December 19

Undecorating Christmas

What goes up, must come down and here is the schedule for undecorating. Thank you, again, to everyone who put so much time and effort into making Blue Skies beautiful.

Monday, **January 8** - Only the large tree in the Lobby is taken down, Main Lobby, 9am

Tuesday, **January 9** - Any trees and decorations that went up on November 28

Wednesday, **January 10** - Any trees and decorations that went up on November 29

New Year, New Scams! ~ Ashlie Maltos

Callers claiming to be IRS employees might call and insist that you owe money and that it must be paid as soon as possible via gift card or wire service. If the call isn't picked up, they leave an emergency callback message. Think before you act. Ignore communications that implore you to act immediately, especially if you are told you owe money to the IRS, and it must be paid promptly. The IRS will never call you to demand immediate payment.



Pest Control Schedule

	Friday, January 5	Friday, January 12	Friday, January 19	Friday, January 26
Tower Apts.	631-638, 641-648, 441-448	611-618, 621-628	711-718, 712-728	731-738, 741-748
Cottages	2300-2400	2500-2600	2700	2800
Specials	Village Center, Kitchen, The Vista Office and A Wing	Exterior of Main Tower Building	Liberty House, The Vista B and C Wings	Freedom House: Int. and Ex.
Ranch Homes	837, 838, 839, 840	841, 843, 845	847, 851, 853, 855, Basketball, Tennis, Bocchia, Cabana/Restroom	857, 859, Pavilion 2

Resident Services Announcements

ACGA to Raise Maximum Annuity Rates by 0.4% for 2024

~ Air Force Villages Charitable Foundation

Charitable Gift Annuities (CGA) serve as a powerful avenue for individuals seeking to intertwine philanthropy with financial planning. Beyond providing a consistent income stream for donors or their beneficiaries, CGAs offer the unique opportunity to support charitable causes close to their hearts. These annuities can contribute significantly to the sustainability of charitable organizations such as Blue Skies. With the impending increase in suggested maximum annuity rates by the American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA), CGAs become an even more compelling choice, striking a balance between personal financial security and the profound impact of philanthropy in our society.

The American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA) has announced an upcoming 0.4% increase in its suggested maximum annuity rates effective January 1, 2024. The rate for a one-life CGA for a 75-year-old will be 7.0% vs the 6.6% offered per the previous rate table. The incremental adjustment reflects the ACGA's commitment to adapting to economic shifts while maintaining a balance between donor appeal and charitable sustainability. The move underscores the organization's proactive approach in aligning annuity rates with evolving financial landscapes.

Please see Mitch and Erika in the Development office or call us at (210) 568-3211 or (210) 568-3206 for more information. We are happy to provide you with confidential, no-obligation calculations, or assist you in setting up a CGA to kick off 2024 right.

Volksmarch at Blue Skies West

~ Sarah Manzke

Save the date! On Saturday, **January 13**, the San Antonio Pathfinders and Blue Skies Marketing have teamed up to sponsor a 5 or 10 km walk on our West campus, open to all! Please join this fun, non-competitive fitness event that weaves through our beautiful grounds while mingling with prospective residents and welcoming the community at large to Blue Skies! Residents can participate at no charge.

A volksmarch ("people walk") was developed in Germany in the 1960's. Its motto is "Fun, Fitness and Friendship". Volksmarching readily spread in Europe and was brought to the United States by returning military advocates, ultimately becoming an international organization in 1968 known as IVV (International Volkssport Verband). The USA's own AVA (America Volkssport Association) is an affiliate of the IVV, and its national headquarters are actually right here in San Antonio. Presently, there are over 200 Clubs in the AVA sponsoring over 2500 sport events annually.

The upcoming Volksmarch at Blue Skies West is an event to enjoy with multiple surprises, including some of San Antonio's favorite food trucks! Sign-in is anytime from 8:00am to 12:00pm in the Tower's front lobby, and then you can begin the walk through our wonderful BSTW neighborhoods. For our residents, we request that you do not park in the front lobby parking area. This area will be blocked off for our guests. Please do not remove the arrows around campus as they will be placed to help direct those walking. There are brochures at the Front Desk with additional information. All are welcome to walk and enjoy this spectacular way to exercise and have fun!

Resident Services Announcements

How BST Works For You ~ Daniel Casillas

Do you ever wonder how the Blue Skies guarantee to “take care of our own” works, or wonder how charitable dollars are used? If you’ve ever asked yourself these questions, then “How BST Works for You” is for you! This is a meeting presented by the Air Force Villages Charitable Foundation to provide residents information about the charitable history of Blue Skies, answer FAQs about the charitable assistance we provide to residents in need and to the whole campus, and how you can get involved with the AFVCF’s efforts. If you’re a newer resident (e.g., having lived at BST for 5-7 months), the information may be new; if you’ve been a BST resident for a longer period, please use this meeting as a refresher course in all things AFVCF-related!

If you’d like to attend on Thursday, **January 25** at 2pm in the Roadrunner Lounge, please email me at danielcasillas@blueskiestx.org or call me at (210) 568-3290. All are welcome! Some newer residents may receive a personal invitation.

CARF

BST has partnered with CARF for 30+ years to maintain an accreditation that ensures we are maintaining the best standards of quality across all levels of care and independent living at both campuses. BST is on a five (5) year survey cycle, with our next accreditation survey scheduled for February 19-21. Please watch for an announcement letter to be circulated with additional details. If you have any questions, would like to know more about our upcoming survey or discuss CARF, please reach out to Maureen Parrish, Director of Corporate Compliance (office: 210.568.3225; email: maureenparrish@blueskiestx.org).

Employee Anniversaries

Name	Department	Anniversary Date	Years of Service
James Ballard	Hospice	January 4	5
Monique Sutherland-Trevino	Freedom House	January 4	1
Ashlie Maltos	Wellness	January 9	9
Cynthia Figueroa	Freedom House	January 11	1
Darrell Jones	President & CEO	January 15	6
Teresa Elizondo	Wellness	January 15	4
Catherine Zendejo	Freedom House	January 17	2
Timothy Hohon	Capital Projects	January 18	19
David Soliz	Maintenance	January 25	2
Christen Cantu	EVS Housekeeper	January 25	2
Manuel Del Rio	Maintenance	January 27	7
Zytlally Vasquez	Hospice	January 30	4
Gina Cortez	Freedom House	January 31	4

Resident Updates

New Year's Eve Party! ~ Layne Perelli

Your Entertainment Committee planned an exciting New Year's Eve Gala to ring in 2024. Celebrate early with the New York City Ball Drop at 11pm, or dance the night away until San Antonio ushers in the New Year at Midnight. Alternatively, just pop in anytime for a quick glass of bubbly.



A wide variety of music will be performed by the Triple T Band until 12:30am. Festivities start at 8pm. Live music starts at 8:30pm. Everyone attending must have signed up by Wednesday, **December 27**. Call Layne Perelli if you would like more information.

Open House

Mary and Dave Root are pleased to announce an Open House in the Roadrunner Lounge on Tuesday, **January 2** from 3-5pm to celebrate their 65th Wedding Anniversary. No presents please.



Village Voices ~ Nancy Jones Sowada

Thank you for attending the performances of the Village Voices in December. We sang concerts at both campuses, as well as at Freedom House, Liberty House and the Mission. We appreciate the support of residents who donate to the BSTW Activities Coordinating Council and the AFV Charitable Foundation to keep us performing great music! We are taking some time off, but will begin rehearsals again on Tuesday, **January 9**, at 1:30pm in the Blue Skies West chapel. We have residents from both campuses. If you are resident on the East Campus and want to sing with us, please catch the bus at 1pm. In the spring we will be singing favorites from Broadway! On with the show!



Loose Threads ~ Barbara Folkson

Loose Threads will meet the 2nd Wednesday in January – Wednesday, **January 10** at 10am. We will meet in the pool table room behind Lori DeWitt's office. I will bring a plastic tub of fabric that was donated by Annette Johnson -- some Christmas, some Valentine's. Hope to see you at our meeting. If you have any finished blankets or quilts for Threads of Love, bring them to the meeting.

Attention New Residents ~ Judy Howen

Even though it is holiday time, we have had several new residents move in. That is exciting for all of us. A handy tool to get acquainted is the Resident Bulletin Board in the main hallway of the Towers. Mark your calendar for Wednesday, **January 10** from 4-5:30pm in the Helen LeMay Room. Judy and Bob Howen will be available to take your picture. We welcome each one of you.

Resident Updates

Distinguished Flying Cross Society ~ Bob Certain

The Alamo Chapter of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society will hold our monthly meeting on Wednesday, **January 10** at 10am in the Roadrunner Lounge at Blue Skies West. This month Gerhard Frisch will present an Airbus A400 briefing on Avionics, performance, and capability. The Airbus A400M Atlas is a European four-engine turboprop military transport aircraft. It was designed by Airbus Military, now Airbus Defense and Space as a tactical airlifter with strategic capabilities to replace older transport aircraft, such as the Transall C-160 and the Lockheed C-130 Hercules. The A400M is sized between the C-130 and the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III; it can carry heavier loads than the C-130 and can use rough landing strips. In addition to its transport capabilities, the A400M can perform aerial refueling and medical evacuation when fitted with appropriate equipment.

Rodeo Theme to Set Mood for January 10 at B&A

All BST West residents and guests are invited to tune into the San Antonio Rodeo Vibe at the Wednesday, **January 10**, Birthday and Anniversary event (B & A event). Doors open for hosted Social Hour in CC1-3 Rooms at 5pm. Dinner service in The Lakeview is at 6pm. Cactus Country Band will keep the rodeo theme going for entertainment.

Bob Howen will be available to take Birthday & Anniversary pictures from 4-5:30pm in the Helen LeMay Room. Please check in with Judy Howen.

The dinner includes:

Starter: Coleslaw Salad

Entrée: Brisket & Kielbasa Sausage, potato salad and creamed scallion corn pudding

Dessert: Pecan Pie

Cornbread Muffin

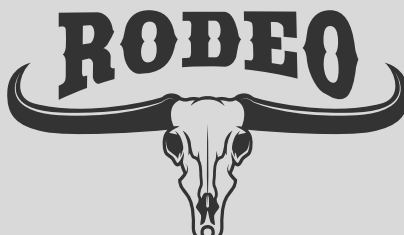
Water, Coffee, or Iced Tea

\$25 Per Person

Alternative: Chicken & Kielbasa Sausage

Dinner reservations are required. All those planning to attend, including guests, must sign up on the Sign-Up List in CC3. If you need to cancel after 11am Monday, January 8, call the Dining Services Office (210-568-3232). If you wish to create a table of 6-8, call Bonnie Gardner or Donna Bowman. Seating will be assigned for all others. Reservations are not taken through the Dining Room for this event.

Social Hour hosts are Joann & Ross Bennet, Linda & Jack Briggs, Tom & Cynthia Cochran, Mike & Connie Connolly, Sandra & Mark Davis, Clarke Ehrlich, Barbara & John Folkson, Roman & JoAnn Gonzales, Susan Griffith (chair), Paula Haley, Bill & Virginia Hopfensack, Ed Jackson, Warren Moore & Ahia Shabaaz (in memoriam), Nancy & Bo Ohman, JoAnn Oldham, Betty Overacker, Diantha & Layne Perelli, Corlea Plowman, Katherine Rajczi, Denise & Dennis Rosenberry, Marti & Mark Wessman, Mike & Pamela Westwood, Caroline Wilkins, and Howard & Ruby Williams.



Resident Updates

DRAC ~ Leo Bell

Thank you for a second term as your DRAC Chair.

Congratulations to Caitlin Brennan for being awarded the DRAC Challenge Coin. She receives this for her exemplary work in our dining services.

Thank you, Caitlin.

The next two kitchen tours in 2024 are Wednesday, **January 24** and Wednesday, **February 21**, each at 2pm. Sign up is REQUIRED. To sign up, please contact Juanita Hess (see Resident Directory).

Sherry Brands and Debbie White have left the DRAC. Thank you, Sherry, & Debbie for your service. Dotti Cowan has joined the DRAC. Welcome, Dotti (in Tower 1).

We need one representative for each of the following areas: Tower 3, 2500-2800, and Liberty House. Please consider joining us and being an effective DRAC representative. May we all have a very prosperous 2024!!

The New Year greets our January Front-of-the-House (FOTH) winner Kayla Ramsey. Our unsurpassed, superb grill master Andra Griffith is again being honored as Back-of-the-House (BOTH) awardee. We are most grateful to these superior winners.

The DRAC Executive Staff is putting together a list of initiatives for the calendar year 2024. The next Roadrunner will tell of a few we look to accomplish.

Come and speak to the new Chef Geronimo, newly promoted Nikki Villa, and old-hand partner Guy Fanelli each first Thursday, 9:30am in the Roadrunner Lounge during Coffee-with-the-Chef.

Our next scheduled DRAC meeting is Thursday, **January 11** at 1:30pm in the Roadrunner Lounge.



MOAA CEO to Visit Blue Skies ~ Jim Conner

Blue Skies of Texas will host Lt Gen Brian Kelly, President and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America, on Thursday, **January 11** at 9am in the BST West Roadrunner Lounge. He will speak on the latest affecting the military community and the priorities of MOAA for the coming year. There will be time for a Q and A following. All MOAA members and those interested are encouraged to attend. A sign-up sheet will be posted in CC3 or register using Touchtown. Preregistration is not required but will help with the room logistics. Following this presentation, Lt Gen Kelly will speak at the Alamo Chapter luncheon at 11:30am at the Ft. Sam Golf Course. Registration for this event is required through www.alamomoaa.org. For more information, contact Jim Conner or Dan Van Syoc (see resident directory).

Gadabouts ~ Andrea Sandifer

Grab your lunch in the serving line and join us in the Roadrunner on Friday, **January 12** at 11:30am (2nd Friday of the month) to plan our Gadabouts year 2024. This is your opportunity to sign up to host an outing and share any ideas that you might have to improve our time together. Come one come all. Gadabouts is open to all singles and caregivers. It's a time to meet new people while enjoying food that is always delicious.

Thank You

Mac and I want to thank all of you wonderful people for making Mac's 80th birthday so special! To the many well-wishers, card givers, gift givers, huggers and joy givers we are so grateful for each and every one of you. You celebrated Mac, and we truly appreciate you! Again, Thank You all so much! Blessings, Karen and Mac McDonald

Resident Updates

Ham Radio in Space Anniversary

~ Betty Overacker

As of November 2023, students have been talking to astronauts in space for 40 years! The space shuttle, "Columbia", first used an amateur radio to communicate with people on earth in November 1983. That program known as the "Shuttle Amateur Radio Experience" (SAREX) ended in 1989. On November 13, 2000, amateur radio equipment was launched to the space station with a new name, "ARISS"(Amateur Radio on the International Space Station), and has continuously operated since then. Each year ARISS hosts approximately 100 student contacts. The current statistics are that over 100 astronauts have communicated with more than a million students in 49 US states, 68 countries, and on every continent. The objective of this program is to encourage and inspire students to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. Prior to a scheduled contact, students study related topics, and prepare questions to ask the astronauts. Usually, these ARISS contacts go beyond the students, and the entire community participates in the program. This is one of the many programs sponsored by Amateur Radio. All are welcome to the next BST Amateur Radio Club Meeting on Tuesday, **January 16**, in Meeting Room 110 at 11:30am. Please contact Bob Stuckert for more information.

73—(Best regards in Ham Language)

The Dirty Dozen ~ Marty Corcoran

We have all been there. When there are difficult times, we all want to be able to say something to the person going through the difficult time. What do you say and how do you say it when you don't know what to say? Come and learn what to say and what not to say. That would be what the dirty dozen is, what not to say.

We will be meeting on Thursday, **January 18** in conference room 112 at 2:30pm. All are welcome. Call Marty Corcoran (info in the directory) for more information.

Handbells ~ Nancy Jones Sowada

Thank you for attending the performances of the Blue Skies West Handbell Choir in December. We performed at both campuses, as well as at Freedom House and Liberty House. We are taking some time off, but will begin rehearsals again on Thursday, **January 18**, at 10:30am in the Blue Skies West craft room. If you can read music and can have good attendance every Thursday, please join us as we learn new music in the spring.



Red Hat Luncheon ~ Vivian Ray

The January Red Hat Luncheon will be hosted by Joy Hough and Connie Germann on Friday, **January 19** at 11:30am, at Los Azulejos Restaurant, 2267 NW Military Highway, SA. Please be in the lobby by 10:30am. The bus leaves at 10:45am.

When you sign up on the sheet in CC3, INDICATE "W" if you are using a Walker or a Wheelchair because the bus only accommodates one wheelchair. If you sign up and can't go, it is essential that **you remove** your name from the sheet by the Wednesday morning before the luncheon because **you will be charged** the transportation cost if you are a "no call, no show," and you may have **prevented someone** on the waiting list from going.

Resident Updates

Thrift Shop Christmas Sale Update

~ Susan Shumaker

Many thanks and Happy New Year to everyone who donated their gently used Christmas decorations to the Thrift Shop Christmas Sale. Your generosity helped to make our annual sale a huge success. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to our amazing group of helpers. Susan Flood and Sandy Seigel, who baked a ton of Christmas cookies for us to give away. Peggy Adam, Lu Shuster and Cynthia Cochran sorted, arranged, and priced the items for the sale – and also worked during both the sales. None of this would have been possible without their hard work. We look forward to seeing you all at next year's sale.

A BIG Thanks...

A big thanks for our Protestant Chapel for sponsoring the enormously successful toy drive. Christian Assistance Ministries, located in downtown San Antonio, expects to make Christmas happier and exciting for at least 800 children. The Blue Skies residents are incredibly generous. We took two carloads and a van load of brand-new toys to be used in their free Christmas store. Parents who are really struggling are given an opportunity to choose toys for their own children. Thanks to each one of you who participated.



Resident Portal ~ Ron Miller & Bob Seigel

Have you visited the Resident Portal recently? There are new, and old, features that you may want to use: Menus, Comment Card, RC & DRAC Minutes, BSTW Weather station, Movie & Library databases, Meal Plan Status, In-House Channel Slides, Dining Reservations . . . and more! We encourage you to visit and explore them all.

bstwresidentsportal.com/ Want a link to the Portal put on your phone or computer? Have any questions? Contact Ron or Bob . . . or any of the Computer & Technology Support Group Volunteers (Contact Information at the Front Desk).

Holiday Decorating Committee

The Holiday Decorating Committee gives a heartfelt “Thank You” to all of the resident volunteers who helped us with: the Tree of Memory, the Tree of Lights, the Blue Skies tree in the lobby, 14 other trees around the main building and elevator lobby areas, the main staircase, the balconies overlooking the Lakeview Room, nativity sets throughout the building, the fireplace and the Library, and the hallway from the Executive Offices to Liberty House.

Whew, that's a lot of decorating!! And, our beautiful Christmas Village is beyond description!

It couldn't have been done without you, our star sellers, un-wrappers, fluffers, tree assemblers, and ornament hangers. Your creativity and positive spirit made it a fun week – and the results speak for themselves. The building looks fantastic. We couldn't be more proud of our friends and neighbors. ~ Ellen Skiba, Pat Perry and Pat MacIntyre.

Resident Updates

Library ~ Barbara Folkeson

New Books: (LARGE PRINT): Judgement Prey (Sandford); The Inheritance (); An Evil Heart (Castillo); The Edge (Baldacci); Resurrection Walk (Connelly); The Secret (Child)

Library Donations: The library greatly appreciates all the donations we receive; we know it is hard to dispose of books and other materials. Due to copyrights dates, space constraints, and duplications we cannot keep all donations. If books are older than 5 years, we put them on the donation table for residents and employees to enjoy.

Duplicate newer donations, we take to Liberty House and/or the Castroville Public Library.

Donations remain on the donation table 7-10 days and then they go to recycling. We have noticed that residents are also putting donations on the table, which is OK, with some guidelines. If you have a lot of donations, please contact Barbara Folkeson or Peggy Durack before bringing them to the library. Some items that should be recycled: OLD road maps and AAA travel guides; books with dark, yellowed, brittle pages; OLD magazines and catalogs (over a year old).

Some items that should go to the trash: Cassette and VCR tapes; CD's of outdated computer software; CD's of photos; and audiobooks with missing CD's.

Items we do not take: National Geographic magazines, encyclopedias, textbooks, medical books, cookbooks.

Follies Update ~ Marcia Tinsley

There is no way I can thank everyone enough for all the help you have given me through the years. It's been my great pleasure to work with all of you. However, I'm not through yet. I plan to start at Dance Team so that we can get together, get some exercise, and perform at various functions. We already have plans to perform in the B&A in September 2024. I have some ladies already signed up, but if there are any of the new residents who would like to give it a try, please contact me. We will begin after the first of the year.

Let's Get Serious About Driving in San Antonio ~ Paula Haley

More than 83,000 people have died on the roadways in Texas during the last twenty years. That's more than the total deaths during the Vietnam War. That's pretty serious and it's almost scary to drive around San Antonio. So what can we do about it? You can take the AARP Defensive Driving Course and learn the newest and best ways to stay safe on the roads. We have a great team of instructors waiting to teach you how to stay alive on the roadways in San Antonio. The class will be on Friday, **February 9** at 12:30pm in the Roadrunner Lounge. There is a roster in CC1 for you to sign up. In addition, you can receive a discount on your car insurance. The discount lasts for three years so if it has been over three years you need to take the class again.

Thrift Shop Christmas Decoration Sale – Seeking Donations ~ Susan Shumaker

As you put away your Christmas decorations.... It is never too early to think about the Annual Thrift Shop Christmas Sale....The Thrift Shop Furniture Sales is seeking donations of gently used Christmas decorations. If you would like to make a donation please call or text Susan Shumaker (See Resident Directory).I would be happy to pick up your donated items. Thank you for your continued support of the Thrift Shop Christmas Sales!



Resident Updates

Calling All Dramatic Readers!! ~ Dottie Conner

I am looking for some residents who would like to entertain friends by doing a Reader's Theater. This is very easy to perform - just sit on a stool and read your favorite (short) piece of literature (for example, a short story, poem, excerpt from a book, etc.) enhanced by voice, expressions, a few props if needed, etc. It can be done by 1 person or a small group. No rehearsals necessary. (OK - maybe 1 run-through for timing.) I need light reading this first time - funny, lively, or fascinating pieces, 2-8 minutes long. It will be in the Roadrunner on Tuesday, **February 27** at 7pm. Contact Dottie Conner (in resident guide) via phone or email if you are interested. This is low stress and a lot of fun! Come join in!

Entertainment Committee Presents a

Reader's Theater in February! ~ Dottie Conner

Some of our very talented residents are ready to entertain you with dramatic readings of their favorite pieces of literature. They are choosing light, lively, or funny pieces for this event, which will be held in the Roadrunner room on Tuesday, **February 27** at 7pm. (Mark your calendars!) It would be a perfect way to finish your evening; after a meal in the Lakeview, just bring your dessert or drink next door and relax as you listen to our readers tell their tales. Or just pop in for an entertaining hour! The Blue Skies Drama Club members will also be supporting this event. Readings are open to everyone - contact Dottie Conner to join in the fun.

Travel Photo Galleries ~ Bill and Linda Ball

Bill and Linda Ball have added a couple of new photo galleries to their photo/video website. The links below will take you there.

Gallery #1: Sightseeing Along the Maine Coast - October, 2023:

In October, we traveled from Portland, Maine to Acadia National Park. From visiting lighthouses, shipyards, wildlife parks, and one of America's finest botanical gardens, plus several days at Acadia National Park, we collected many photos of beautiful New England scenery at the peak of the fall color season, and had a great time along the way.



Gallery #2: Holiday Lights at Bellingrath Gardens - November, 2023:

In late November, we drove from Bradenton, Florida to San Antonio, with a stop in Mobile, Alabama to see the holiday lights at Bellingrath Gardens.

Bellingrath Gardens and Home is the public garden and historic home of Walter and Bessie Bellingrath, located on the Fowl River near Mobile, Alabama. Walter Bellingrath was one of the first Coca-Cola bottlers in the Southeast, and his wealth built the estate garden and home. He and his wife, Bessie, lived in the home which has since been converted into a museum, and the gardens were opened to the public in 1932. Bellingrath Gardens celebrates the holidays with a display of over 3 million lights.

The show began in 1995 and runs from the Friday after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve. USA Today included Bellingrath's on its 2014 list of the "10 Best Public Light Displays in America".



To see more of Bill's pictures and videos taken over the years, just use the link to go to the photo/video site.

Resident Updates

Entertainment Committee ~ Layne Perelli

Our 37th Annual BSTW Christmas Party hosted by your Entertainment Committee on Sunday, December 10, was a huge success. Special thanks are due to Lionel and Beverly Moore, who orchestrated the entire Festival of Lights Decorating Contest. Bev found 20 impartial judges (who will remain anonymous) and set up clear rules and directions for them to follow. Especially of note were the satellite photographs from space of the towers with the diagram of the tower rooms overlaid on it so judges could select the winning balconies. Bev also arranged for tour buses accompanied by enthusiastic guides to take us around campus to experience the magic of our holiday lights. Lionel created a beautiful series of posters to reveal and showcase the winners.

But we also want to recognize the efforts and community spirit of every resident who set out any lights and decorations to make Blue Skies such a wonderful place to live! Thanks to our Activity Coordinators, Teresa Elizando and Carol Estala, for providing cookies and eggnog throughout the evening. And of course, special applause to Larissa Alejo and her Environmental Services Group for their hard work in setting up overflow seating for the entire Lobby and also for maintaining such marvelous audio quality all night long. The evening's superb entertainment was provided by the Cox Family Singers. Bernita and Karl Cox, and their five adult children, have been wowing San Antonio audiences for over 15 years, and they certainly did that here on Sunday. Their amazing harmonious melodies coupled with their own special arrangements gave new life to the traditional songs they sang. Everyone left with their hearts overflowing with Christmas spirit after this joyous performance!

Need some help! ~ Jim Conner

I am asking for a resident to co-chair with me to organize a Memorial Day Ceremony next May. I would envision an outdoor event reading the names of all the deceased residents from the past year, a few words about the significance of the day and conclude with some songs by the Village Voices and a performance by the John Jay High School Drill team. The Villages Voices and the Drill Team are on board with this event and Leo Bell will introduce the Drill Team and say a few words about JROTC. I need someone willing to help me develop an appropriate ceremony. If you are interested, please contact Jim Conner (see resident guide).

Blue Skies Garden Club Beekeepers Show CEO, Darrell Jones, the Beehive

Our CEO, Lt Gen (ret.) Darrell Jones visited the BST West Garden Club beehive recently to see how the bee apiary operates. Beekeepers Harlen Sager and Jim Conner were on hand to suit him up and show him how the hives operate. Gen Jones was able to handle the frames with bees, check the size and health of the colony, locate the Queen, and smoke the bees to keep them calm. He observed the larva and brood that will be the next generation of bees in the hive. Gen Jones was a bee-zy CEO that afternoon!



Resident Updates

December Mystery...

The Christmas Village in the Bistro

Every year one of our residents puts up a beautiful display of a miniature Christmas village. This is the private collection of Kathy Ramsey. She stores the village all year in her cottage, then she and her elves; neighbor Jeanne McNamara, daughter Theresa, and son-in-law Jean, bring it to the Bistro and assemble it. The village takes weeks to set up not only because of the lights, but there is a fountain with running water, a tunnel with a train running through it (built by her son-in-law), a skater circling on an icy pond, etc. It is two-tiered and takes up an entire wall. A lovely gift for all of us – thank you, Kathy!



Thank You



We thank You, our friends, neighbors and residents at Blue Skies and Freedom House who stopped to give us a hug, handshake,

or words of consolation and comfort following the loss of our mother, Katie Hicks. To the Freedom House caregivers, our sincerest gratitude for your endless hours of loving care. It took a team who cared about her every need over the years Katie was with you. We could not have managed without you.

Freedom House Staff and Hospice worked so well together and were there to support us as well.

Thank you All, Sherry and David Brands

Where is the money coming from??

~ Jim Conner

Ever wonder who pays for B & A entertainment, Christmas decorations and financial support for more than 35 resident activities on campus? Residents do, by contributing to the Activities Coordinating Council (ACC). Most people do it via a monthly allotment, but you can also make a onetime contribution. Activities submit an annual budget request in the fall and there is a meeting in early Dec where each activities budget request is voted on by residents. All BSTW residents are welcome to attend this meeting and vote. As an organizer for a BSTW activity, I find it very comforting to know how much money our activity can plan on using in the next year. It is also a big advantage when trying to recruit volunteers to run activities. We have fewer residents that contribute than enjoy the benefits of this program. Please be sure you are doing your part. Allotment slips are available at the front desk.

Resident Updates

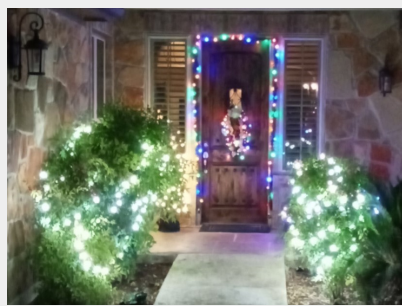
Season of Lights ~ Beverley and Lionel Moore

Every light we see has a purpose. It may be the sun, the moon, and the stars placed in the heavens by our creator; an incandescent bulb; a string of LEDs; a spotlight; or a candle. It may be a source of warmth for our bodies, joy for our hearts & peace for our souls. It may push back the extra hours of darkness during the Winter months. It may illuminate something or someone specific. Or, it may just bring us joy that allows grace & gratitude to flourish.

We are grateful for the many decorative light displays this season & for all who participated in making our “Season of Lights” 2023 a success. What a blessing you all are!!



Balcony #713



Gardens #837



**Towers 1 & 2
5th Floor Lobby**

Recognition that is much deserved goes to:

Mike & Marguerite Fox with their blue & white Balcony #713;

James & Vivian Ray with their light display at Gardens #837;

1st & 2nd Towers-5th Floor residents displaying so many seasonal symbols;

Oaks 2600s residents with their fun & playful blow-up displays;

Lakes 1400s residents with their amazing variety of light displays.



Oaks 2600s



Lakes 1400s



In the spirit of the season, let's all commit to saying “Thank You” to our various “Field Generals”. They organized the troops, replaced defective light strings, made late night runs to Target, Walmart (or their storage units & garages), & generally kept things humming.

Resident Updates

Resident of the Month ~ Nominated by Ron Miller

This past year, 2023, multiple BST veteran residents received additional disability benefits with the passing of the PACT Act, a new law that recognized the health hazards of exposure of toxic waste environments while on active military duty. Ralph Kelly immediately commenced to notify prospective veterans of the PACT Act to determine if their medical conditions and active duty assignments met the Act's criteria. Then, Ralph assisted residents to accomplish the needed monumental documentation. With the overwhelming number of eligible residents, Ralph coordinated with management to have VA representatives present at Blue Skies to assist the residents with their benefit applications. Ralph has assisted innumerable veteran widows with receiving DIC (Disability Income Compensation), which has increased their quality of life. Also, many residents received Ralph's assistance to obtain professional medical care for a disabled spouse allowing the veteran to remain at home. The VA financial benefits that Ralph has enabled residents to receive have allowed them to maintain a more comfortable life style. Thank you Ralph for the many hours you spend weekly to assist our residents with their VA benefits.



Save the Date

Friday, March 22, 2024
The Quarry Golf Course of San Antonio

Presented by
AIR FORCE VILLAGES
Charitable
Foundation

Join us for our annual tournament to benefit
Freedom House, our memory care facility.

PLAY FOR 2024
Freedom
GOLF TOURNAMENT
30TH ANNUAL

For more information, contact Daniel Garcia Casillas
at 210-568-3290 or danielcasillas@blueskiestx.org

Sports, Games, & Scores

Bridge Results ~ Stu Flood

Sign-up sheets are in CC3. We play on Mondays at 1pm and Thursdays at 6:30pm (show up at least 15 minutes early). This is party bridge. We try to stick to the ACBL Rubber Bridge rules, but we are playing for fun. Come and play!



	1	2	3	4
Thursday, November 16	Gant / Higginbotham	Tuttle / Wood (2 Slams)	Badder / Wernette	Skucas / Skucus (1 Slam)
Monday, November 20	Flood / Wood	Bader / Reedy	Gant / Higginbotham	
Monday, November 27	Gant / Higginbotham	Flood / Wood (Slam)	Reedy / Cole	
Thursday, November 30	Tuttle / Wood	Wagner / Wesson	Bader / Wernette	
Thursday, December 4	Germann / Wesson	Hough / Hough	Flood / Padgett (Slam)	Skucas / Hood
Monday, December 11	Germann / Wesson (Slam)	Padgett / Flood	Wagner / D. Skucas	Wood / Tuttle
Thursday, December 14	Cowan / Cowan	Skucas / Skucas	Bader / Wernette	

Tennis & Pickleball ~ Linda Prose



Our Tennis and Pickleball courts offer a great opportunity for fun and exercise. Please come out and join us for Tennis on Monday and Friday mornings and for Pickleball on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings. My phone number is in the Resident Directory. See y'all out there!

Bunco ~ Betty Chalfont

The Ladies Bunco group meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 6:30pm in CC3. Bring \$1 for the "pot." A group of ladies meet beforehand at 5pm in the Roadrunner Lounge and enjoy dinner together in the Lakeview before Bunco. We would love for you to join us early to eat at 5pm, followed by Bunco at 6:30pm.

Winners for December

Corlea Plowman, Annette Johnson
Ann Wood, Betty Chalfont

Blackjack Quarterly Winner ~ Alan Snyder

Mike Durack – 9000 points
Jim Wakenell – 3900 points
Chris Wakenell – 3600 points

Sports, Games, & Scores

Seasoned Soles ~ Pat and John MacIntyre

Photos by Lu Schuster

For the Seasoned Soles November ended with turkeys trotting. Pat Perry ran the San Antonio Road Runners Turkey Trot 4-miler, and Lu Schuster and John MacIntyre ran the Marine Corps Turkey Trot 10K virtual.

Then December began with the biggest race in San Antonio; each year the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon visits San Antonio, arriving this year on December 2 and 3. Richard DeVillez and his daughter and son-in-law ran the 5K, as did John Paul Sullivan. Pat and John MacIntyre ran the 10K, and Pat Perry and Lu Schuster completed the Half Marathon.

The following week, Dan Van Syoc travelled to Midland, TX to run the Nighttime Jingle Bell race 5K with his son and grandson.

On Saturday, December 16, several of the Seasoned Soles were at the J W Marriott Resort to participate in the Nick at Night races. We will comment on their results in the next RR.

Happy Holidays to everyone from the Seasoned Soles!



Deadline for the next Roadrunner is Monday, **January 22**

Send articles to roadrunner@blueskiestx.org

Next Publication Date: Wednesday, January 31

Roadrunner deadline will be the 22nd of each month.

Spiritual News

Catholic News ~ Rebecca Vallejo

Saturdays - 11am Mass (For Sunday, by special dispensation of the Archbishop) in the High Flight Chapel

Benediction and Adoration – Wednesday, **January 3** immediately following the 9am Communion service led by Deacon Richard in the Willow Chapel, located in the Vista Second Saturday of the Month - Birthdays and Anniversaries will be recognized with a special blessing at Saturday Mass

Saturdays/Sundays - Freedom House: Catholic residents will be visited, beginning about 1:30pm, with Holy Communion and prayers.

Wednesdays - 9am, Communion Service led by laity in the Willow Chapel unless we have a priest who will celebrate Mass at that time. NO Wednesday Mass in the High Flight Chapel until further notice.

Third Tuesdays – 9am, Catholic Council meets in Conference Room #110. Guests are welcome.

Fridays – Adoration 1-5pm, Blessed Sacrament Chapel

St. Vincent de Paul, Castroville - First Saturday Donations

Pastoral Care - To meet privately with a priest for Reconciliation or Anointing, please contact Fr. Richard Bendorf (see Resident Directory). Hospitals have a Catholic priest available; ask a staff member to contact him.

Homebound - If you are homebound and unable to attend Mass but would like to receive Holy Communion, you may contact John Siebert or Rebecca Vallejo by phone, text or email, and they will arrange for a Lay Eucharistic Minister to bring the Holy Eucharist to your apartment/cottage (see Resident Directory).

High Flight Protestant Chapel Services ~ Carmen Perez

High Flight Protestant Chapel Services

- Sundays 9:30 & 11am - High Flight Chapel
- Sundays 10:30–11am Fellowship time – Main Lobby
- Sundays 10:45am - Freedom House
- Thursdays 10:30am - Liberty House (3rd level)

Our Sunday service is repeated on Wednesdays at 10:30am on Channel 1890. If you are not a Spectrum subscriber, we invite you to view services on the monitors in the Towers lobby.

Pray For Our Nation held at 10am on the 1st and 3rd Fridays, in the Helen LeMay Room. All residents are invited to pray for our nation. Please consider joining us.

Advent Devotional Services: The Protestant Church holds special Advent services, which are being held each Wednesday at 10:30am in the High Flight Chapel, beginning Wednesday, **December 6**. A Christmas Eve service (Candlelight, Carols and Communion) will be held at 5pm. All are invited to attend.

We welcome you anytime. If you are interested in joining or wish to speak to one of our pastors; Wayne Knutson, Gil Richardson or Dan Figueroa, please leave a message with the church office (210-568-3372) and they will be in touch.



Episcopal Church

Episcopal Services with the Holy Eucharist continue on Thursdays at 3pm in the High Flight Chapel.

Commemorative Blue Skies Coin Survey

Commemorative coins, also known as Challenge coins, are in the design process to be used by the Residents Council, DRAC, and others to recognize individuals for their contribution to our Campus. These coins will also be available for purchase by residents in anticipation they will be used as Blue Skies mementoes for children, grandchildren, and others. This survey has been created to assist the RC's Commemorative Coin Committee obtain resident feedback on the project.

Please return the survey to the front desk, or to your RC Representative,
no later than Wednesday, **January 31.**

1. Commemorative coins are commonly used by military units, government agencies (E.g. Police and Fire departments), individuals, and many companies.

Do you agree that having a Blue Skies commemorative coin is a good idea?

YES NO No Opinion

2. Profits from the sale of the coins to residents would be used by the Blue Skies West ACC (Activities Coordinating Council) for the benefit of residents. Do you support this use of coin profits?

YES NO No Opinion

3. The cost will be \$7. Would you be interested in purchasing Blues Skies commemorative coins?

YES NO No Opinion

☐ I'm definitely interested. I will preorder coins at the Front Desk (fill out back of this form).

☐ I'm not interested in purchasing the coins at this time.

☐ I'm not sure. I'd like to see the coin first. A sample coin is at the Front Desk.

☐ I'm definitely interested. I do not want to order at this time, but anticipate buying #_____ coins in the future.



**IF you plan to order please fill out the order form on the
reverse side of this page.**

Commemorative Blue Skies Coin Pre-Order Form

This two-inch coin is a great memento for your children, grandchildren, and others.

Pre order yours now, at the Front Desk, thru January 31st.

Cost: \$7 per coin, will be charged to your Blue Skies account when the order is placed.

Delivery anticipated in March or April.



I would like to order #_____ coins.

Apartment #_____

Signature _____

COMING SOON

A survey team from CARF International* will be visiting on

FEBRUARY 19-21, 2024

We invited the surveyors to evaluate how well we meet international standards for quality. The survey will tell us what we are doing well and ways we might improve. As a result of this survey, we may earn or continue accreditation.

As part of the survey, the surveyors will interview people who receive services, their families, our staff, and others. Some questions the survey team members might ask people are:

- Do we provide a clean and safe setting?
- Do you receive the services you need and want?
- Are you treated with respect?
- Do you take part in planning your services?
- Are you told what you need to know about your services?
- Are your questions answered in a way you understand?
- Do you know where to go with questions or concerns?

If you would like to talk with one of the survey team members or want to learn more about CARF International, please let one of our staff members know. You may also contact CARF International directly.

- Internet: www.carf.org/contact-us
- Email: feedback@carf.org
- Mail: CARF International, 6951 East Southpoint Road, Tucson, AZ 85756
- Toll-free telephone: (866) 510-2273
- Fax: (520) 318-1129



* CARF International — A group of companies that includes CARF, CARF Canada, and CARF Europe.