



it's about growth.

December Newsletter

crestwood pleasant hill

12.31.19

Welcome!

With our final edition of the decade, we want to update you on some of the current things happening in our building, in the community, and in the world. Have ideas? Feedback? Suggestions? We'd love to hear all of it, so please reach out, and enjoy!

Anniversary Dates

Employees celebrating their Crestwood anniversaries in December:

- Latricia – 14 years (12/1)**
- Amare – 29 years (12/10)**
- Weimar – 13 years (12/16)**

Thank you for your service, we appreciate you!



Soraya, our 2019 Employee of the Year! Check out Soraya and all our year-end award winners beginning on Page 5!

Upcoming Events

- 1/7 at 2pm:** Open Policy Meeting
- 1/7 at 5:30pm:** Trinity Center Volunteering
- 1/14 at 5:30pm:** Trinity Center Volunteering
- 1/21 at 5:30pm:** Trinity Center Volunteering
- 1/28 at 2pm:** Community Meeting
- 1/28 at 5:30pm:** Trinity Center Volunteering
- 2/7 at 1pm:** Chili Cook-Off



Happy holidays from Crestwood Pleasant Hill!

In this Issue...

- ✓ Crestwood Values Award Winners
- ✓ Community Partner Award
- ✓ Dreamcatcher Employees of the Year
- ✓ 2019 Year in Review
- ✓ Wildcat Fever
- ✓ Susan Explains Santa Claus
- ✓ So You Think You Know Jasmin
- ✓ What's Cool with Hannah
- ✓ Netflix and Gabe
- ✓ ...and much more!

2019 Community Partner Award – Linda Arzio

At our Thanksgiving celebration last month, our facility recognized Contra Costa County Conservatorship and Public Guardian Manager Linda Arzio as the recipient of our annual Community Partner Award. Linda's added efforts at partnership with our facility have strengthened communication and led to better services for our residents. Thank you for all your efforts, Linda!



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Netflix and Gabe

Free Fire



After a rough experience last month with *Eli*, Gabe checked out Ben Whitley's dark action-comedy *Free Fire*. "There are a bunch of name people – Brie Larson is the only one I can name, though. It has that one South African guy, it's got that one guy who played the Scarecrow in the first Christopher Nolan *Batman* movie. It's got Armie Hammer with a beard – I'm pretty sure that's his name." This is helpful, thanks Gabe. He continued, finally giving us something of substance, "It's about illegal gun sales to the Irish, set in Boston. I'm pretty sure everyone gets shot in the leg at one point." Known around these parts for his limited interest in lengthy commitments, Gabe loved that it was a shorter movie, especially for the genre. "And even though it was only an hour and a half, I'm pretty sure that the middle is an 84-minute shootout in a warehouse. That's essentially the whole movie. People getting shot at, shot through, shot for, shot between – whatever prepositions you want to use." Gabe's follow-up to this was bizarre and on-brand, "There's no unlikeable character, no good guys or bad guys. Just people getting shot at, and they're all the same people. It was exactly what it was expected to be – a shoot 'em up movie, the end."

Gabe recommends *Free Fire* for: Fans of John Denver's music. There's a notable song that plays multiple times.

Gabe does not recommend *Free Fire* for: John Denver. He seems like a nice guy and there's a lot of violence.



Susan Explains Santa Claus



In America's favorite feature, our beloved and eccentric Director of Culinary Services gets the opportunity to give her colorful, creative, alternate explanations to otherwise agreed-upon facts.

Want to hear Susan explain something in her own unique way? Let us know!

Susan, tell us how Santa Claus works...

Santa. I don't believe in Santa. How long have people believed in him? I don't think my mom's generation believed it. And why – who chose that costume?? The red and white with the beard? I went to Catholic school, and they didn't teach us to believe in Santa Claus. And from the North Pole?? I don't think I taught my kids about Santa. We talked about the Fairy Tale. What is it? Every time their teeth came out, we put silver coins under the pillow. And they collected them, it was disgusting. But Santa Claus? Santa Claus is the parents. Kids are not stupid, they know. They say he goes down the chimney – Santa is fat, how can it be? I don't get it. Maybe my kids heard about it from their friends, but not from me. Maybe my kids put milk and cookies in the living room when they were very young. They tried staying up all night waiting for him – what were they thinking?? I think my ex ate the cookies and drank the milk, because I don't believe it was Santa. Believing about Santa – maybe. It makes kids behave. Ohhh, that's why the parents tell the kids, so they behave all year to get the presents from the Santa. I think that's it. Why does it have to be so hard? Why do you have to use Santa as a trap for them? I lie to my kids for good reasons, not for that.

Redbox and Max – *Blinded By the Light*



Deciding on your next movie rental? Max has you covered!



This month I reviewed *Blinded by the Light*. The movie centers around a Pakistani man named Sarfraz Mazoor, who lives with his parents in London, while trying to help his strict father make ends meet. Sarfraz struggles to please his father as he searches for his place in the world. While attending community college, he meets another young Pakistani man who would end up making a huge impact on him. The new friend introduces him to the music of Bruce Springsteen, and it changes Sarfraz's life. He begins finding himself in the music, and develops a stronger connection to himself through the lyrics. Through the process, he learns how to stand up to his father, which ultimately improves their relationship and leads to him being a better, more confident person. Check it out if you're looking for a feel-good movie or just love the music of the Boss!

COMMUNITY

DIY Gift Basket Edition

(Editor's note: given the later than expected release date of this month's newsletter, this article may appear to be out of date, but we can assure you that it is never too late to make a gift basket for someone you love!)

Are you looking to give a gift of something personal, made from home, that won't break the bank this holiday season? Are there close friends, co-workers or neighbors that you want to show some love to but don't want to find a random store bought item that shows you didn't put in a ton of time thinking about? Gift baskets put together at home are a great way to show time, effort and creativity in your gift. They are also great for a white elephant/ gift exchange, with so many themes to choose from. Last year I made a *self-care kit* for all my girlfriends that included home-made body scrubs and scented candles. In the past, I put together a *zombie survival kit* for my future brother-in-law which was filled with snacks, a variety of tools and first-aid supplies that I collected from my house and purchased at the dollar store. When some good friends of ours were moving into their brand new home, Tyler and I put together a basket of essential household items such as cleaning supplies and toilet paper. For this year's Thanksgiving Lunch raffle, I put together a baking basket complete with basic baking tools and a few ready to bake recipes in mason jars from my kitchen. Really, the options are limitless and the process is fun!



Our Newest Dreamcatchers!



Adriane
Dishwasher



Vanessa
Receptionist/Housekeeper

“The Joy of brightening other lives, bearing each other's burdens, easing each other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of the holidays.”
– W. C. Jones



Stay tuned for our next Green Machine upcycling workshop!

Get to Know Max!

What is your proudest accomplishment?

Buying a house.

What makes you laugh the most?

Riding motorcycles in the rain – it is so fun.

If you were in charge of a country, what's the first law you'd introduce?

No cursing.

What's the most unusual thing you've ever eaten?

Shark jerky. It was disgusting, and I don't usually eat things from the ocean, but I'll try anything once.



Dreamcatchers Employee of the Month: Terrie

Job: Composter and Dining Room Attendant
Favorite Books: Go Ask Alice and The AA Big Book
Favorite Movie: *My Name is Bill W.*
Favorite Music: Christian music
Favorite Quote: The Serenity Prayer from AA
Favorite Pastimes: Babysitting and AA meetings
Favorite Sport: Basketball



Terrie is our award winner this month due to her excellent performance and accountability in two separate jobs. Terrie credits the Dreamcatchers program with building her self-esteem, resulting in her feeling more confident in general. She says working in her composting position makes her feel “one with the earth” and working cleaning the dining room makes her feel like she is working in a restaurant. Terrie’s plans for the future include finding a job in the community working in a kitchen. She would also like to begin attending Diablo Valley College, where she wants to study special education with the goal of becoming a teacher. Thank you, Terrie, for your great attitude and good work. Congratulations!

Holiday Food Drive!

We have just a couple days left in our annual food drive as we look to aid in the fight against hunger in our community. Our fourth annual food drive is in support of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano County, and we are accepting any remaining donations through January 5th in barrels located throughout the building. They are prioritizing nutritious, nonperishable food items, and will accept any packaged, unopened items not past their expiration date. Remember, every single can/item you donate helps an individual in need! Thank you all for your contributions as we look to do our part in this community.

So you think you know Jasmin??

What’s your favorite thing about working at Crestwood?

I’m always surprised at what my day will end up being. It’s never the same and I really like that.

What are your pet peeves?

When people eat very loudly

What are your long-term goals?

I’m studying sociology, and am interested in doing more volunteer work. I want to volunteer at hospice, and want to help in the end of life process.



What’s something people don’t know about you? Do you have hidden talents?

I like to sing, especially Aretha Franklin. And right now I’m learning how to play the piano.

Pathways Service Coordinator Jasmin has been a positive, thoughtful part of our team since joining us in March!

COMMUNITY

Contributing to Our Community

The Curran household makes a monthly donation to varying causes. Donations of any amount can help organizations in need, and come with the side benefits of feeling empowered to aide causes of personal importance. In this feature, we highlight organizations to which you may want to donate, should you be inclined. Whether you are donating \$5 or \$100, you can make a real impact.

This month’s donation went to:

Fair Fight



Our facility (and family) believes strongly in civic engagement and the idea of each person using their voice and their vote. Unfortunately, voter suppression efforts are still rampant across the country, and thankfully, Fair Fight is looking to do something about it ahead of the 2020 general election. From taking on legal battles to ensure people aren’t stripped of their voting rights to fighting voter intimidation at the polls, Fair Fight is a force for equality. To learn more, check out [Fair Fight](#)

We have continued splitting our donations between RAICES and a new cause. For more information or to help, www.raicestexas.org/

2019 Values Awards Winners!

Each year, our community votes for the staff who best represent each of our Crestwood values. With so many amazing people working in our building, every vote and comment matters. Congratulations to our well-deserving 2019 winners!

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR



Soraya

"It's like Soraya was born to do this work. She is so great with our residents, so thoughtful, so hard-working. Her work after becoming a Service Coordinator has been what you'd expect from her – compassionate, understanding and personal. She means so much to so many people."

FLEXIBILITY



Marie

"I don't think there is anything Marie cannot do. She does it all with the best attitude, no complaints. She always shows she is happy to help."

CHARACTER

Sam

"Sam's impact on our community is felt across the board, from the smoother functioning of the med rooms to the relationships he has formed with every staff member and resident. He is beloved in this building for so many reasons and exemplifies every single one of our values."



COMPASSION

Ben

"The patience and thoughtfulness Ben brings to his work with the residents on his caseload, especially, are clear indicators of his compassion."



COMMITMENT



Mary

"She'll never tell anyone, but Mary fights behind the scenes daily for every employee. She never wants the attention or recognition, only wants to spend every minute of her time here getting her job done and making things easier for other people. She is a wonderful person and a delight to work with."

FAMILY

Jen

"Jen just jumps in where needed and at all times with zero complaints. She is always willing to take on the extra task whenever necessary. She is kind, thoughtful, honest and trustworthy. She is someone you can count on and believe in, and full of integrity."



ENTHUSIASM



Patrick

"No one exemplifies having positive energy like Patrick. He brings an infectious attitude to the building because it is clear how much he wants to help those that we serve."

COLLABORATION

Hannah

"Though she's only been with us since June, Hannah has already become known as someone you can count on. She's helped out both programs, taken on multiple new admissions and a new role at once, and built incredible relationships already."



CHILLI **COOK OFF**



FEBRUARY 7TH

1:00 until done

Bridge Dining Room

AWARDS FOR:

- 1. Best Overall**
- 2. Hottest / Spiciest**
- 3. Runner up awards, too...**

(Rules will be given to contestants)

Let Mike know if you are interested in participating – mlynch@cbhi.net

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Myth or Fact

Holiday Eating Packs on the Pounds

Fact. However, don't fret too quickly. It's not as much as you might think. One study reports that over the 6 week holiday time each year, there is an average weight gain of two pounds. Not bad, right? So if you're worried about it, don't go overboard on all the holiday feasts but be sure to enjoy yourself too. After all, who can turn down gingerbread cookies?

Addiction Therapy Group

Why Group Therapy Is Effective for Drug and Alcohol Addiction

- Companionship
- Communication
- Insight
- Accountability

GROUP THERAPY

A group of people facing similar issues, trying to gain a deeper understanding of their disorder

Discussing common challenges

In a safe & controlled therapeutic atmosphere

If you're interested in returning to or starting the 10-week closed therapy group with Angelica on Wednesdays at 10:30am, please see Angelica by January 3rd! Group resumes January 8th.

Get a Jump Start on the New Year at the Y

James wants to encourage all residents to join him by using our membership at the local YMCA. Trips to the Y are offered twice a week including Fridays at 1:00pm and Sundays at 5:45pm. James says the YMCA has a lot of open space to collaborate and work out with everyone. He recommends the swimming pool, all the exercise equipment, and the big space to play basketball. Join him!

Angelica's Recipe of the Month

Smoked Mixed Nuts

Back in July, Tyler and I bought a smoker grill, which is an apparatus for cooking at low temperatures in a controlled, smoky environment. It has been a lot of fun trying new foods to smoke and comparing them to the normal quick BBQ grill. Every year for Christmas, Tyler and I deliver a variety of baked goods to all of our friends. You might remember last December's truffle recipe in this newsletter. This year we decided to try something new and cooked up a big batch of smoked nuts as our Christmas treats. This rub recipe is what we tried but you can also use your favorite go-to barbecue rub (I bet they would be just as good). Also, I haven't tried it yet but I would imagine you can follow these same steps on a regular BBQ if you don't have a smoker at home. We are eager to see what our friends think. Try this at home and let us know what you think.

- 2 cups of your favorite *raw* nuts. Be sure they are unroasted and unsalted. (We used pistachios, almonds, cashews, walnuts, and pecans)
- 1 tbsp of olive oil
- 1 tbsp of sugar
- 1 tsp of sea salt
- 1 tsp of ground pepper
- 1 tsp of smoked paprika
- ½ tsp of ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp of cumin

Mix all ingredients together, making sure there's a nice coat spread evenly and place on a foil pan or grill basket. At 250, let sit in the smoker or barbecue for 1 hour, stirring several times. Let cool completely before storing.



WILDCAT FEVER



Our award-winning annual staff competition was back for the second iteration, focusing on teamwork, diversity, inclusivity and fun. Congratulations to CrestHood, our 2019 champs!



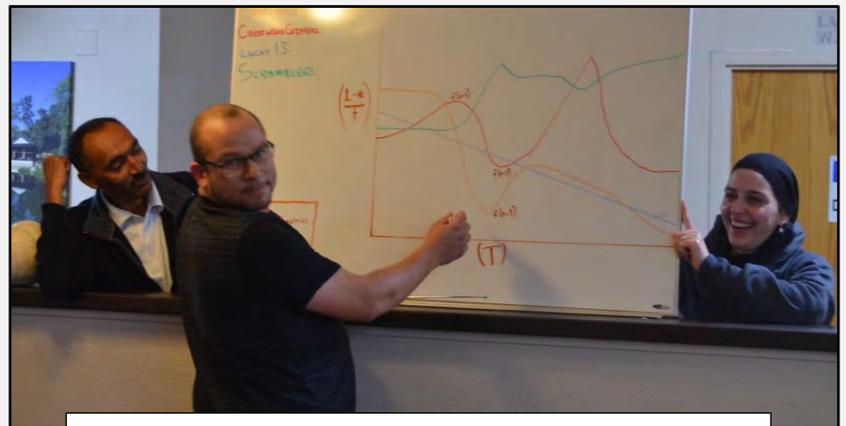
Teams showed off their range of culinary skills in the cook-off, aka Crestwood Death Kitchen



Ryan proudly rocks his new participation ribbon after CrestHood wins it all



The culture fair is a huge hit, as Bebe, Amare and Marshet share Ethiopian customs, and Amina and Claudio bravely perform traditional dances



The Great Debate is a smash hit again, and Sam ultimately takes it for the Scramblers by highlighting that Logic-Emotion/Theatrics ultimately determined the debate's winner



Tamila advocates for a global economic reset

Soraya warns that she **will** look at your phone if you bring it out in public!



Mike reminds the crowd that if his kids want a phone, they can move out of the house!



Hannah goes in on gender disparities in pay



Ryan works "Wu Tang Forever" into a conversation about billionaires

DREAMCATCHER EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR



Cheryl
Office Department
Employee of the Year



Jason
Housekeeping Department
Employee of the Year



Jerud
Green Department
Employee of the Year



Jamisha
Dietary Department
Employee of the Year

Darby's Eco Product of the Month:

Allbirds

When I hear that any article of clothing or accessory is made from wool, I'm immediately reminded of, and then recoil at, the memory of the scratchy holiday sweaters I was stuck in as a child. So, of course, I was skeptical when my boyfriend brought home (for himself) a pair of Allbirds, sneakers made from wool, fearing he would face the same scratchy fate. Much to my surprise, the Allbirds tagline "The World's Most Comfortable Shoe," came to fruition! Though I haven't tried his shoes on, I trust him when he says "they're the most comfortable shoes I've ever owned, not to mention that they're an essential part of the tech bro uniform." All the key points? Hit. What really strikes me about Allbirds, though, is not just their comfort but the sustainable practices of the company as a whole. Allbirds' shoelaces are made from recycled plastic bottles, they use 90% recycled cardboard for their packaging, and, most excitingly, the soles are made from sugarcane that "would otherwise be discarded (thereby releasing climate-change causing carbon dioxide into the air)," according to Time Magazine, which named their SweetFoam soles an invention of the year in 2018. And, of course, there's the wool. Allbirds sources their wool from New Zealand where "sheep outnumber humans six to one" (but don't worry, that doesn't mean sheep are harmed in the sheering process, I checked.) Utilizing a natural and renewable resource allows the company to use 60% less energy than standard synthetic shoe production uses. So if you're in the market for a new pair of kicks (be that runners, loungers, skippers, toppers, mizzles, or breezers; and if you aren't sure of what any of those are, you aren't alone.

Check out the Allbirds [website](#) for a visual of each one), consider a pair of these sustainable shoes!



Raising an Eco Toddler

Toddlers are incredibly wasteful! Let's work together to take care of them while also protecting our planet.



Green Toys

The production and packaging of most things is excessive and environmentally problematic, let alone children's items with all their added safety measures. The remedy? Enter Green Toys, a company whose toys are made of 100% recycled products. They are safe, well-designed and American-made (which if nothing else reduces the environmental toll of shipping). Additionally, they are battery (and noise) free, saving you money and encouraging imaginative play. You can find tons of options through their [website](#), on Amazon or in local stores like Whole Foods. Maggie has their tugboat (below) for her baths, which also doubles as a means for pouring water all over her to rinse her off. After the holidays, she also now has a few other options, including a cool-looking plane and a mini wagon. From the old milk jugs that make the toys to the soy-based ink on their packaging, Green Toys is all about sustainability! Highly recommend!



Reminder: Gift Card Recycling!

As you spend any gift cards after the holidays, don't forget that they are now on the list of items we collect year-round to recycle and/or donate! Thank you for helping us keep used gift cards out of landfills!

Darby's Eco Tip of the Month: Amazon Shopping

Were you a last minute holiday shopper? Are you generally not interested in fighting mall crowds? Amazon saves the day, per usual. But at what cost? While Amazon's "research shows that delivering a typical order to an Amazon customer is more environmentally friendly than that customer driving to a store," there's still the problem of all the packaging waste. But if Amazon was the only way to go for you this holiday season, have no fear! The retailer has a program called Amazon Second Chance, which is a guide to all things recycling. Check it out at <https://www.amazon.com/amsc> today!

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

Interns Wanted!

Are you or someone you know an undergraduate student or recent graduate looking to begin a career in mental health? Look no further! Our internship is a 12-week program focused on giving interns hands-on experience working in a community mental health setting, and an opportunity to develop an individualized project in our building. We have successfully worked with students and their universities on providing college credit.

We are always accepting applications and about to be our next round of interviews!

To apply, send resume and cover letter to Darby at dwitherspoon@cbhi.net

Now Hiring!

Looking to join a compassionate, thoughtful, creative, fun team? We are currently looking to add great staff to our facility community. Previous experience in the field is not required, and we prioritize people with a personal connection to the work, and a desire to help people toward more fulfilling, meaningful lives.

Current open positions:

- Dietary Assistant
- Housekeeper
- Recovery Coach

To apply, send resume and cover letter to Gabe at gflores@cbhi.net

MOVING????

Need some boxes? See our award-winning Director of Dietary Services in the kitchen and she'll supply you with whatever you need!

Got Stuff That Needs Recycling?

We might do it for you! We currently collect the following items for donation/repurposing:

- Batteries (for safe disposal)
- Dead pens (for an artist)
- Empty pill bottles (for donation to countries in need of safe receptacles)
- Ink cartridges (for recycling)
- Gift cards (for recycling)

DREAMCATCHERS JOB OPENINGS

Flourishing vocational program seeks people interested in finding a meaningful role while helping the facility function.

Dishwasher: Sunday, 8:15-9:15am

Pill Bottle Cleaners: Tuesday, 8:30-9:30am

Receptionists: Tuesday, 11am-12:30pm
Thursday, 9:30-11am,
11am-1pm, Fri 9:30-11am

Landscaper(s)/ Gardeners Mon/Wed/Fri, 9-10am

Alt. Meal Maker: Monday 10-10:30am

Composters: Wed/Fri, 8:30-9am

Dining Room Attendants Mon 12:30-1:30, Tues 1-2pm,
Wed 12:30-1:30, Fri 12:30-1:30,
6-7pm, Sat 1-2pm, 6-7pm

Please see the Dreamcatchers bulletin board for details, and see Gabe or Deirdre for an application!

Have a local event, restaurant or activity you'd like us to review?
Or a hill you'd die on that you'd like to share? Let us know!

LOCAL

The Hill I'll Die On Keep Those Nuts Out of My Baked Goods

Let's start by getting something out of the way. The spirit of giving is special during this holiday season, and spending time to bake some goodies for another person (especially during such a busy stretch) is a true expression of love and kindness. "It's the thought that counts" is a very real thing when it comes to baking something for someone. So that said, why would anyone go through the time, effort and thoughtfulness of baking for another, only to *obliterate* the final product by adding nuts??

I pride myself on being able to see multiple sides of just about any situation (even if my opinion at times lands strongly on one pole). And this is a black and white issue for me – nuts ruin baked goods without exception. If you're reading this, there's a decent chance you've argued this topic with me, and now you get to sit back as I rant uninterrupted from my soap box.

I've heard all the arguments – "It adds a nice crunch and texture," "It's an old family recipe," "It just gives them that little extra something." I love you, but none of those talking points hold up, so please stop embarrassing yourself. I've picked through your brownies to find the good stuff, I've swiped the cashew shavings off your cookies, and I've lost my mind when macadamia nuts disguised themselves as white chocolate chips. It takes a gallon of water to grow an almond, so even if you don't mind damaging your final product with some unnecessary nut, at least avoid it for the sake of the planet.

Pecan Sandies? More like We Can't Stand These, am I right??? Carrot cake and walnuts? Let me make something clear here – good carrot cake (which obviously only happens with a great recipe and without nuts) is almost exclusively a vehicle for frosting. And that carrot cake better indeed be great, because a spoon is a perfectly good replacement vehicle to get *my* needs met. So tell me then why some people want to throw bitter, Paleolithic Era nuts into an already tenuous vegetable cake??

Baked goods at their core are about decadence, about the sinful, naughty bliss of indulging in a momentary treat centered entirely on personal ecstasy. And you want to destroy that by adding a few pistachios?? Don't ruin my experience by making me focus, and worry about mindlessly breaking a tooth as I'm melting into an otherwise brilliant combination of butter and sugar.

Still not convinced? Then please name me a baked good that is made *better* by adding some kind of nuts. Wondering why you can't? It's because it doesn't exist. Checkmate.

-Travis

What's Cool with Hannah



- Eco-friendly/homemade gifts
- Decorating cookies
- Tiny Christmas decorations (tiny tree w/tiny ornaments)
- Ham
- Going to bed before midnight on New Year's Eve



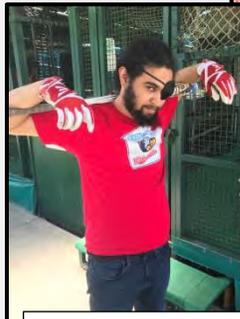
James checks out the reindeer exhibit at the California Academy of Sciences

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

Thank you to all the friends, family and partners who have been part of what we do!



Annual Talent Show!



Wildcats Three-Peat!



Two Bowling Tournaments!



Lots of sports!



Annual Biggest Loser Competition!



Volunteer work!



Second Annual Dog Show!



Tons of great times!



Annual Photo Contest!



Relay for Life!

