

ROADRUNNER

DECEMBER 2024

VOLUME 2024-12



FROM THE DIRECTOR ~ BRIAN GRAYBEAL

Happy Holidays to you all!

As the holiday season approaches, it's the perfect time to reflect on the things that make this time of year so special—friends, family, and cherished traditions. At Blue Skies of Texas, we are a vibrant community, and that sense of togetherness makes every celebration brighter.

For many of us, the holidays bring back memories of cherished traditions: decorating the tree, baking cookies, or gathering around the table with loved ones. These traditions remind us of the love and joy we've shared over the years. But the holidays are also an opportunity to create new traditions. Whether it's joining a holiday craft session, attending a community event, or simply exchanging heartfelt stories, the season invites us to embrace fresh moments of connection.

This year, I hope we focus on what truly matters—spending time with those we care about and welcoming the warmth of community. Together, we can make this holiday season one to remember, filled with laughter, love, and the joy of shared experiences.

From all of us at Blue Skies of Texas, we wish you and your loved ones a holiday season full of peace, happiness, and cherished memories. Here's to the traditions we treasure and the new ones we create together!

Save the Date:

Wednesday, December 4 – Christmas Piano & Soprano Duo – 2pm – Main Lobby

Friday, December 6 - Lunch will be take out only, 11am - 1pm. Dinner will resume as normal. The Bistro will be open 7:30 - 10:30am & reopen from 3 - 6:30pm

Friday, December 6 – Tree of Lights Ceremony – 11am – Main Lobby

Friday, December 6 – Villages Voices Christmas Concert – 2pm – Main Lobby

Sunday, December 8 – Resident Concert Series: Opera SA Singers – 3pm – Main Lobby

Tuesday, December 10 – St. Louis Catholic School Christmas Play & Music – 10am – Main Lobby

Thursday, December 12 – DRAC Meeting – 1:30pm – RR Lounge

Friday, December 13 – Holiday Performance from Briscoe Middle School – 10am - Main Lobby

Sunday, December 15 – Village of Holiday Lights – 5pm – Main Lobby

Monday, December 16 – Blue Skies West Santa Shuffle & Golf Cart Parade – 5:30pm – Main Lobby

Thursday, December 19 – RC Meeting – 1:30pm – RR Lounge

Friday, December 20 – Merry, Mingle & Jingle – A Resident Appreciation Gathering – 2pm – Main Lobby

Wednesday, December 25 – Christmas Holiday – Minimal BST Staff, no activities

New Residents

New residents coming soon to a neighborhood near you.

Barbara Sumlin, #145

Peggy Thomas, #627

Liz Wright, #712

Al & Dee McCoy, #828

**Phil de Tournillon &
Denise Canchola, #2212**

Rick & Janna Smith, #2701

Resident Services Announcements

Holiday Closures:

Christmas Holiday for Blue Skies Employees is Wednesday, December 25. There will be no transportation and minimal staff on campus. Please make note of the following closures:

Tuesday, **December 24**

Broadway Bank - 9am-12pm

Wednesday, **December 25**

WHASC - closed

Broadway Bank - closed

Mail Delivery - suspended

Blue Skies Transportation - suspended

Blue Skies Staff - minimal, as on weekends

Friday, **December 27**

Broadway Bank - normal hours

Lakeview Daily Dining Reservations for Dinner and Brunch - Starting December 1

- Reservations are for dinner service only - not for lunch service
- Daily reservations open 10 days in advance
- Cut off to make or cancel reservations is 2pm, day of the reservation
- Walk-ins accepted after 5:45pm, and wait time will depend on reservation count
- Reservations must include the names of all parties
 - When making reservations, hosts can put guest names in the "Internal Comments"
- For parties of 5+, 100% of the party must be present to be seated
- Brunch walk-ins accepted after 11:45am (same as it's been)

December will start as a test month and then may continue into January, depending on feedback and response. If you have questions, see dining room staff.

Fact or Fiction

Blues Skies of Texas doesn't "really" recycle.

This is fiction.... and the facts

(can you hear the drumroll) 😊

Blue Skies of Texas is committed to protecting our planet for future generations. Together with Tiger Sanitation we are always taking steps to care for our environment, especially through recycling efforts that make a big difference. Many residents may have noticed Tiger Sanitation's trucks rolling through the community. At first glance, these vehicles might look like regular garbage trucks, but they serve a unique and important purpose. Rather than heading to a landfill, these trucks deliver recyclables to two specialized recycling facilities. At these facilities, employees sort through glass, plastic, cardboard, and paper with precision and care, ensuring that each material is processed correctly. This human touch is essential in making sure recyclables are handled responsibly, keeping valuable materials out of landfills and giving them a second life.

For Blue Skies residents and employees, participating in this recycling initiative is easy—and impactful. By simply separating recyclable materials, everyone contributes to a cleaner, greener future. Together, we're showing how a community and its partners can make sustainability a shared mission.

Here's to a cleaner, brighter future for Blue Skies of Texas and beyond!

National Guard Anniversary

The military organization we know today as the National Guard came into existence with a direct declaration on Dec 13, 1636 in Salem MA. The National Guard remains a community cornerstone and still consists of Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen who provide assistance in natural disasters, as well as deployment to far-away countries to protect the United States' national interests abroad. To all current and former National Guard members, Happy Anniversary!

Resident Services Announcements

Revised Pet Policy Effective 1 December 2024

We are excited to announce that the revised Pet Policy for Blue Skies of Texas will go into effect on 1 December 2024. This updated policy was developed with input from residents and staff to ensure it is fair, clear, and supportive of a harmonious community for all.

Here are the key updates:

- **Definition of Pets:** The policy applies specifically to dogs and cats. Other animals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Leash and Supervision Requirements:** Pets must always be leashed or securely enclosed when outside a resident's home. Cats not leash-trained must be transported in a secure carrier when entering or leaving buildings.
- **Visitor Pet Rules:** Pets belonging to visitors must follow the same rules as resident pets. Residents are responsible for ensuring their guests comply with the policy.
- **Aggression Policy:** Blue Skies has zero tolerance for aggressive behavior to ensure the safety of both residents and pets. Such cases will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

For emotional support animals, proper documentation, including a doctor's note, is required to qualify under the Assistance Animal Policy. This ensures transparency and fairness across the board. We encourage all residents to review the full policy for detailed information. We will announce when it has been placed in the Policies & Procedures binder, located in the Library.



BST Employee Gift Acceptance

~ Maureen Parrish

The BST Code of Conduct states employees will NOT solicit or accept personal gifts from residents, their families, or vendors. As much as we value our residents/families and vendors, we want to maintain a professional boundary that is healthy for all. The holidays is a good time to remind everyone that there are only two instances that are exceptions to the policy: 1. stylists working in our salons may accept tips, 2. when the item(s) offered are perishable and shareable within the department – i.e. food items.

Residents/Families wanting to give a special “thank you” to staff may donate to the Employee Appreciation Fund at any time during the year or should consider speaking or writing directly to the supervisor of the staff you want to praise.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this policy further, please contact Maureen Parrish, Director of Corporate Compliance, by phone at 210.568.3225 or by email at maureenparrish@blueskiestx.org.

You’re a Mean One, Mr. Scammer!

~ Ashlie Maltos

Criminals tend to target holiday shoppers because they’re busy, distracted and shopping more than usual. It’s easy to get caught up in the holiday bustle but be sure to be mindful.



No matter whether you’re shopping online or in person, pay attention to your surroundings, who’s asking you for information and why. Don’t give out your personal information without authenticating the source. And keep an eye on your balances. Not only on your credit cards, but also Apple Pay, Venmo and other payment sources for suspicious activity.

Resident Services Announcements

Spectrum News

Spectrum recognizes that our residents of Blue Skies of Texas have needs that differ from other customers, and they've established dedicated support lines to meet these unique questions and concerns. The tenant support line 833-697-7328 can help you with the following:

- Installation, disconnection, or transfer of services
- Upgrading or adding new services
- Billing questions and concerns
- Service troubleshooting

If your questions or concerns are not met when contacting the Spectrum Support line contact Teresa Santana of resident services.

BST Sensors

Want quick and easy access to your community after hours? If so stop on by and receive your sensor today. These are available to all BST residents. Come see me today and I can provide you with further details.

Written Art Display

Have a short story, poem, or literature that you would like to share with all. Stop by Resident Services and we can display your written art for all to see.

Employee Anniversaries

	Location	Anniversary Date	Years of Service
Vanessa Dehoyos	Human Resources	December 3	3
Aleisha Dillard	Resident Services	December 4	9
Josefina Diaz	Freedom House	December 5	1
Theresa Villanueva	Freedom House	December 5	2
Jaqueline Martinez	Freedom House	December 6	19
Daniel Golembiewski	Cook	December 7	4
Michael Vause	Courtesy Officer	December 16	2
Rebakah Saenz	Dietary Aide	December 16	2
Maria Gutierrez	Resident Services	December 19	1
Cristina Galindo	EVS - Housekeeper	December 19	1
Betty Martinez	Courtesy Officer	December 19	2
Nicholas Zgourides	Liberty House	December 21	1
Mary Alice Rangel	Capital Projects	December 24	5
Maureen Parrish	Corporate Compliance	December 24	5
Cindy Cuellar	EVS - Housekeeper	December 28	3
Annabell Garcia	Freedom House	December 29	4
Roberto Corvera	Cook	December 29	4

Resident Services Announcements

Holiday Cyber Security ~ Maureen Parrish

Another holiday season is upon us and that means...online shopping, pop-up ads with tempting offers, and exploring new websites in your search for the perfect “something.” Agencies like the FBI, U.S. Secret Service, and the DHS Cyber Crimes Center are promoting caution due to cybercriminals being more active during the holiday season, taking advantage of people's distractions. Here are some tips to help you stay safe online:

Be wary of phishing - Phishing emails are more common during the holidays, so be careful of emails from unknown senders or links in suspicious messages. Phishing emails and text messages often tell a story to trick you into clicking on a link or opening an attachment. You might get an unexpected email or text message that looks like it’s from a company you know or trust, like a bank or a credit card or utility company. Or maybe it’s from an online payment website or app. Scammers often update their tactics to keep up with the latest news or trends, but here are some common tactics used in phishing emails or text messages:

- *Stating they have noted some suspicious activity, too many log-in attempts, or claim there is a problem with your account or your payment information – if it is a website you have recently been active on, contact them directly to verify by phone.*
- *Messages sent that include an invoice you don’t recognize.*
- *Unsolicited offers that want you to click on a link to make a payment or ask you to click on a link to receive a “special offer” or individual coupon.*

Use strong passwords - Use a complex password for each device and don't use the same password for multiple accounts. You can use a password manager to help.

Keep software up to date - Enable automatic software updates to ensure your devices have the latest patches for vulnerabilities.

Shop securely - Only shop from trusted retailers and avoid websites you've never heard of. Check that the site uses SSL protection by looking for https in the URL.

Use a secure payment method - Use a credit card, pre-paid debit card, or a reliable third-party payment service like Google Pay or Apple Pay.

Monitor your accounts - Check your online accounts regularly for suspicious spending. You can also use text and email alerting services offered by many banks and credit card companies.

Disable Bluetooth, wireless, and NFC when not in use - These features can increase the risk of your data being intercepted.

Online shopping can be an excellent resource but also has some very real risks. Enjoy the upcoming holidays and stay safe out there!

Pest Control Schedule

	Friday, December 6	Friday, December 13	Friday, December 20	Friday, December 27
Tower Apts.	331-338, 341-348, 431-438	411-418, 421-428	511-518, 521-528	531-538, 541-548
Cottages	1700	1800	1900-2000	2100-2200
Ranch Homes	811, 813, 815, 817	821, 823, 825, 826	827, 828, 829, 830	831, 834, 835, 836, Pavilion 1
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.

Resident Updates

Christmas Toy Drive – December 1-10



Our Blue Skies Protestant Chapel is sponsoring a TOY DRIVE for families facing a serious crisis.

The toys will be distributed by Christian Assistance Ministry. People come to CAM in all sorts of crises. This agency has the ability to offer immediate help but they also have relationships with many of the other nonprofits and/or government agencies for longer term assistance. Each year they have a free Christmas Store where parents can come shop for a few gifts for their own children. In today's economy you can imagine trying to squeeze Christmas Gifts into a budget that doesn't reach next payday. Everything has skyrocketed in price-- toys are no different. Let's bring some joy to these families ...put a smile on a child's face. We kindly ask that toys be new for children (infants through teens). They can also use new or used Christmas lights, decorations, or gift wrapping. Deadline is Tuesday, **December 10**. A huge thanks in advance ---our Blue Skies residents are a generous group and Christmas is the season of Giving. Collection boxes are in the lobby. For more information on CAM or the toy drive, call Mary Jane Caudill or Judy Howen.

AFIO Chapter Meeting

The Current Intelligence briefing by the Association of Former Intelligence Officers (AFIO) will be on Monday, **December 2** at 12p, in the Roadrunner Lounge. The presentation will be on the Chinese J-35 aircraft, North Korean soldiers in Russia and Ukraine, and several "short subjects" related to current events. The presentation will begin at noon and is open to all Blue Skies of Texas residents and their guests. The program is compiled from open-source intelligence and is not classified.

In Memoriam

William Neubrand - November 2

Janice Collin - November 25

Freedom House Dementia Caregivers Support Group ~ Jane Hill

The Freedom House Support Group will meet on Thursday, **December 5** at 1:30pm in the Freedom House chapel. If available, join us for lunch at noon in the Lakeview Dining Room. The group is open to all those affected by loved ones with memory issues, such as Alzheimer's. This is a forum to share experiences and receive guidance and support. If you are planning to bring your loved ones, please RSVP to Cindy Yanez at 210-838-6300 or email: cindyanez@blueskiestx.org.

Village Voices ~ Nancy Sowada

The Village Voices enjoyed singing at the Veterans Day program at Blue Skies West in November. We are looking forward to singing for the tree lighting ceremony at the West campus on Friday, **December 6**. Celebrate with Singing is our December program. We hope you will come and enjoy music for Advent, Hanukkah, and Christmas. We will be accompanied on piano, oboe and handbells. The Blue Skies East performance is Thursday, December 5 at 2pm in the CC rooms. The Blue Skies West performance is Friday, **December 6** at 2pm in the Main Lobby. We are also singing at The Mission on Tuesday, December 10; Freedom House, Tuesday, **December 10**; and Liberty House Tuesday, **December 17**. Join us! Everyone is welcome!



Resident Updates

A JOYful Celebration

~ Bob Harris

Stop by and enjoy a glass of wine on your way to dinner and with Joy Daugherty a Happy 90th Birthday, on Saturday, **December 7** from 3:30-5pm in the Roadrunner Lounge. No gifts please, just your good wishes!



Attention New Residents

~ Judy Howen

We are excited we have had several new residents move in during the months of October and November. We want to know you...to get acquainted...to call you by name. A big help is the Resident Bulletin Board in the main hallway. We'll be taking pictures on Wed, **December 11** in the Helen LeMay Room from 4-5:30pm and will add your picture to our growing family. You will be given a call as a reminder. This is our popular December B & A celebration so put on your Christmas plaid, your red and green and we'll snap your photo (ask your sponsor about the B&A).



December 11 B&A to Feature Holidays

~ Corlea Plowman

All BST West residents and guests are invited to celebrate the holidays of the season at the Wednesday, **December 11**, Birthday and Anniversary event (B & A). Doors open for the hosted Social Hour in CC1-3 Rooms at 5pm. Dinner service in The Lakeview is at 6pm. Returning for more rave reviews as this year's entertainment are the NESAs Dancers.

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: Festive Holiday Salad: Green Leaf Lettuce, Mandarin Oranges, Sliced

Almonds, Pomegranate Seeds, Feta Cheese Crumbles & Raspberry Vinaigrette

Entrée: Garlic Herb Beef Tenderloin with Creamy Brie Mushroom Sauce, served with Horseradish Mashed Potatoes and Parmesan Brussels Sprouts

Dessert: Bread Pudding with Bourbon Sauce

Bread: Croissants

Water, Coffee, or Iced Tea

\$41 Per Person

Alternative Entrée: Lobster Tail with Butter Sauce

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, **December 9**, 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 include Betty Ann Adams, Kip Kiplin, Billy Bingham, Linda & Jack Briggs, Patrick & Lauraine Caruana, Ann L. Christensen, Tom & Cindy Cochran, Bonny & Julie Conrardy, Uwe & Brenda Fohlmeister, Rich & Bonnie Gardner, Jerre & Kathy Griffin, Homer & Becky Hall, Bob and Mary Kay Ingram, Annette Johnson, Tom & Karen Keck, Vera Lee, Joel & Jean Lichtenstein, Bonnie Lutz, Mike & Karen McGinty, Judith McKinney, Linda McMillion, John & Eileen Merryman, Bob & Evelyn Nettleship, JoAnn Oldham, Corlea Plowman (Chair), Brian & Kathleen Raymond, Stet & Karen Reid, Harlan & Karen Sager, Frieda Schutza, Bruce & Suzanne Smith, Chuck & Mary Sneed, Jim & Chris Wakenell, Kent & Gerry Williams, Duane & Peggy Young, and Fred & Judie Zedeck.

Resident Updates



People's Choice Award ~ Beverley Moore

This year's Decorating Competition has a new category and for the first time everyone can weigh in on who has the best decorations of the season. This award is for any single unit you believe deserves special recognition. Some but not all examples might be:

- A stand-out unit within a lesser decorated neighborhood
- A stand-out unit within a very decorated neighborhood
- A display that represents the season for you
- A display focused on a single category such as: Humorous, Flight, Faith, Victorian, Santa, Grinch, etc.
- An Elevator Lobby that you think tops them all
- A Balcony that you think cannot be beat
- A Garden home that exceeds all the rest

Look for Ballots and a Ballot Box near the Front Desk sometime after Thanksgiving. And remember, ONLY 1 vote in 1 single category. Your ballot will have to be voided if you vote for more than 1 single category. This is on the honor system so, please, no multiple votes – no stuffing the Ballot Box. As if anyone would . . . right?

Thank you!

Thank you, Brenda Perry, for the bunting and American flags that you organized for Veteran's Day. BSTW looked very festive and patriotic. Thank you, too, to all the folks who helped!

Hughes Recognition

Blue Skies West residents Ed and Joann Hughes were surprised when they received special recognition at the Jon Wayne Veteran's Appreciation BBQ on November 9th. Ed was one of only two WWII veterans there and the crowd of 500+ cheered loudly for his service. Ed went to Japan at the end of WWII as part of the occupational forces after their surrender and continued to serve through two years in Vietnam as a C130 pilot. Joann also served as she took care of her family through 22 military moves while raising their three children. That's just two of the many very special people here at Blue Skies!

Distinguished Flying Cross Society ~ Robert Certain

The Alamo Chapter of the DFCS will not meet in December.

Resident Concert Series ~ Alan Snyder

Prior to any introductory comments or a single note being played Sasha Moutouzkine, Chloe Kiffer/Moutouzkine, and Jean Kiffer were met by BST audience with spontaneous round of enthusiastic applause as they entered the lobby. This was an annual family celebration for these entertainers, and the BST audience knew they were in for a world-class performance. Sasha on piano has been playing here for about 12 years, his wife Chloe, on violin, has been joining him for the last 6 years. And Jean, on saxophone, has joined his daughter, Sasha, for the last 4 years.

Their performance included works by Beethoven, Chopin, Leslie Sanford, and others. It even included a piece composed by Jean for Sax and Violin. They lived up to their reputation for "beautiful tone, technically dazzling and beauty".

The concert was also dedicated to Joe Manci as a celebration of his 97th birthday. Celebratory cakes and refreshments were enjoyed after the concert.



Resident Updates

Veteran's Day ~ Dottie Conner

The Veteran's Day ceremony at Blue Skies of Texas West featured several history making (for Blue Skies West) items: One of the oldest continuously serving sea services, the Coast Guard, with a 234 year history condensed into a 6 minute speech by Coast Guard VAdm Kent Williams, and the newest service, the Space Command, with a 5 minute history by Army Col. Jerre Griffin (condensed from 20 pages). The Village Voices, led by Nancy Sowada, sang the new Space Service song for us for the first time, and USAF LT COL Jack Dole presented the Space Service Flag (purchased by Teresa Santana for the occasion) for the first time in a ceremony of service flags organized by USAF SMSGT Ginger Jones.

Decorating Competition ~ Beverley Moore

Very soon the People's Choice Award and 5 areas of Decorating Competition will be "judged" by an anonymous group of your peers. We know that not everyone leaves their decorations fully lit for the entire season. As a result, not all judges in past years have seen the full effect of your decorations. To ensure that our judges have ample opportunity to visit your locations more than once, we ask your competition offerings be fully lighted 6pm through 9pm for 5 nights: Friday, **December 6**, through Tuesday, **December 10**.

Past Judges would tell you that for many of our judges one pass is not enough to make a decision on the ultimate winners.



Carol Sing – Sunday, December 22 at 3pm

Once again our Protestant Chapel will be sponsoring the popular traditional hymn/carol sing. Music is such a big part of Christmas. Somehow lifting ALL our voices in song is a definite "pick me up". Many find great joy in the Christmas rush....Come and join your Blue Skies family for music, Christmas cookies and hot cider. Invite your neighbor. You'll leave whistling a happy tune!



Blue Skies West Handbells ~ Nancy Sowada

Ring Noel! The Blue Skies West Handbell Choir will be ringing in the holiday season. We will play for the tree lighting ceremony at the West campus. We are playing with the Village Voices on 3 pieces, including the piece called Bell Carol of the Kings which incorporates the beautiful Ukrainian Bell Carol, Celebrate with Singing and O Come O Come Emmanuel at their main performances. Plus, our Blue Skies East handbell performance is Thursday, December 12, at 2pm, in the CC Rooms and the Blue Skies West performance is Friday, **December 13**, at 2pm, in the Main Lobby. We are also playing for the Tree Lighting Ceremony at Blue Skies West on Friday, **December 6** and with the Village Voices choir on Thursday, December 5 at Blue Skies East and Friday, **December 6** at Blue Skies West. In addition, we are playing at Freedom House on Wednesday, **December 11** and Liberty House on Friday, **December 20**. Please come and help us celebrate with ringing! Everyone is welcome!



Resident Updates

Dining Room Advisory Council ~ Leo Bell

This is my final article as the DRAC Chair. On **December 12**, a new Chair will be selected. I have been honored to be the Chair for two years and I leave feeling great about DRAC accomplishments during that time.

I give my thanks and gratitude to Sandi Snyder, Ron Miller, Nancy Reeder, and Barabara Wilson for being a remarkable Executive Staff and my principal advisors.

A review of the November 2024 Roadrunner recaps some of our successes together.

Thanks also to my hardworking, responsive DRAC representatives. I hope their diligent, meaningful work on the last dining survey will be valued beyond me and the Executive Staff. Vacancies remain for many neighbors. Please step up and volunteer to help. I hope the team we forged with Guy Fanelli, Chef Jeronimo, Nikki Villa, and the dining staff will continue.

Reminders: 1) Kitchen tour on Tuesday, **December 17** at 2pm. Lu Schuster is the tour coordinator. 2) Wine Tasting on Friday, December 20 at 2pm. Sign-up is SOON on Uniguest. 3) The next Coffee-with-the-Chef is Thursday, **December 5** at 9:30am in the Roadrunner Lounge.

The second quarterly Jerry Garcia Tie Sunday Brunch is Sunday, **December 8**. Please wear a J-G tie and sport it proudly. I'd like at least 3 tables of 8 showing Sunday Best. Our first quarterly event is shown above. Peggy Gracy joined the men in rocking choice J-G ties.

The New Year's Eve party is a potluck and, for me and the late BG Russ McCarthy, a mess dress uniform event. Please, let us keep this going in memory of BG McCarthy.

The next DRAC meeting is Thursday, **December 12**, at 1:30pm in the Roadrunner Lounge. Newly selected representatives should attend and choose a new DRAC Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Standing committee membership will also need to be updated.

BSTW Resident Council Meeting ~ Jane Hill

The Residents' Council meeting will take place on Thursday, **December 19** at 1:30pm in the Roadrunner Lounge. All residents are welcome, especially those new to Blue Skies West. Come and find out all that is happening around our community.



Lobby Celebration – Sunday, December 15 ~ Beverley Moore

The Lobby Celebration of “Light Up The ‘Skies 2024” will be held Sunday evening, December 15, starting at 6:30pm. Cookies & Punch will be provided. Once the Bus Tour participants who left at 6pm have returned and secured seats, the various winners of both the People’s Choice Award AND the Juried Decorating Competitions will be revealed. We are saving the best for last: a concert by the Cox Family Singers of San Antonio. As those who attended last year will tell you, this

concert will be a season highlight.



Resident Updates

“Sweepstakes” ~ Betty Overacker

Each year the American Radio Relay League, (ARRL) the national amateur radio club organization, sponsors two weekend “Sweepstakes” contests whereby the United States and Canada amateur radio operators exchange interaction with as many other US and Canadian stations as possible within 24 consecutive hours. The first “Sweepstake” is “CW” (Morse Code) and occurs on the first weekend in November; and the second is “Phone” (voice) held on the third weekend in November. The objectives of these events are self-improvement of radio operating, and interaction with other radio operators to relay succinct information. The BST-W Amateur Radio Club (W5AFV) again participated in this contest as they have for the past four years, in which their scores were fantastic as indicated by the plaques located outside the Radio Room. This year’s scores were 325 contacts accomplished in 82 sections out of 85 in Canada and the US for the Morse code Sweepstake: and 265 contacts in 79 out of 85 sections in the phone contest and 6 of the 14 Canadian sections being contacted. Our scores were great, and we are hoping for another plaque to confirm this. The next BST-W Amateur Radio Club meeting is on Tuesday, **December 17**, in Meeting Room 110 at 11am. Please contact Bob Stuckert for more information. 73—Best Regards in Ham Language.

Resident of the Month

There is a bustling and ecstatic group of residents gathered at the Bistro’s side wall, plus some unusual sounds are present. It is the Christmas season, and Kathy Ramsey with the assistance of her family and neighbors has constructed her “Christmas Village” display. In her previous homes, Kathy displayed a “Christmas Village” yearly for her family and had collected multiple Village pieces. With her downsizing to accommodate her move to “Blue Skies” in 2017, she distributed much of her precious “Christmas Village” pieces to her children. Her first Christmas at “Blue Skies” she was delighted to discover that an elderly resident displayed a “Christmas Village” in the Bistro yearly. He gladly accepted Kathy’s help and her additional pieces to his “Village” display. The next Christmas, this Resident was no longer capable or willing to construct the “Christmas Village”. Kathy went to work to retrieve her “Village” pieces from her family and developed a spectacular “Christmas Village” layout. Each year there are additional attractions to behold. The display includes a town center with shops, a working fountain with flowing water, several residential areas, Churches, and a ski lodge. The activities displayed are skaters, skiers, snowboarders, and those enjoying the snow. Transportation modes are a horse drawn carriage and a whistling electric train. The construction of this “Village” is a labor of love for Kathy’s family, and a great addition to our fantastic Christmas decorations. Thank you, Kathy, for sharing your “Christmas Village”!! Nominated by Jeanne McNamara.



Resident Updates

Thrift Shop Announcement

~ Annie Moore

With the Christmas Holidays coming up, the Thrift Shop will be open through Friday, **December 20** but we be closed Friday, **December 27** so everyone is able to enjoy time with family and friends. It will reopen on Friday, **January 3**, 2025. NO donations will be accepted from **December 18** through the remainder of the year. Acceptance of donations will resume on Friday, **January 3**, 2025, during thrift shop operating hours - 7am to 1pm. After the New Year, regular donations will be accepted on Tuesdays from 9-11am as well during regular thrift shop operating hours.

Once again, we will have reminders of the closure on the In-House Channel, the Uniguest app, and signs will be put up in the usual locations. It will also have the times of operation plus when we will start accepting donations.

We want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Looking forward to seeing you again in the new year.

Cox Family Singers of San Antonio

~ Beverley Moore

The Cox Family Singers of San Antonio is a family group of a cappella singers that beautifully blend their voices in a joyous celebration of the Season. Their presentation is sure to be enjoyed by all. The Concert is expected to begin at approximately 7pm, on Sunday, **December 15**. Be sure to be there!!



Library News ~ Barbara Folkeson and Peggy Durack

As you get ready for the holidays, look around your residence for library books you borrowed. If you are done reading them, please return them so other residents can enjoy them. We are about halfway done with a project to clean out and reorganize the DVD's and music CD's. We found many illegal copies as well as duplicates, some of which we have been putting on the donation table. We also want to thank the ACC for continuing to provide funds to the library so we can purchase Large Print books, Readers Digest Magazine Large Print and for Liberty House, Readers Digest Condensed Books Large Print. Recent books added:

Three Inch Nails (C. J. Box); *Chaos Agent* (Greaney); *Den of iniquity* (J.A. Jance); *Mystery Guest* (Prose); *In Too Deep* (Lee Child; Large Print); *The Waiting* (Connolly, Large Print); *Christmas Duet* (Macomber Large Print); *Here One Moment* (Moriarty, Large Print)

Liberty House

Dead List (Corwin, mystery); *Counting Miracles* (Sparks); *Obsessed* (James Patterson; Michael Bennet mystery); *Crosshairs* (James Patterson; Michael Bennett mystery); *Inheritance* (Nora Roberts)

Accessing the RC Action Log

The Action Log is a tool used by the Blue Skies West Residents' Council to document issues, concerns and suggestions brought by residents that require attention and resolution. Progress on items is discussed at the monthly Residents' Council meetings.

In response to queries, here are instructions on how to access the current Action Log on Uniguest:

- Go to BSTW Portal on Uniguest
- Click it twice
- Scroll down to RC Resident Council
- Scroll down to RC Action Log
- On a Smartphone, tap to enlarge screen
- On a computer, look for the Plus sign (+) at the top of the file.

Click on the plus sign and it will enlarge the page.

Resident Updates

PEO ~ Karen Tidler

The Blue Skies chapter of PEO has been busy this past month. On Thursday, November 14 the drawing was held for the lovely quilt made by our own award-winning quilt maker Brenda Perry. Donna Schmidt was the lucky winner.



From left to right. Brenda Perry, quilt creator, Donna Schmidt, new owner of quilt, Mary Jane Caudill, PEO Treasurer, and Robbie Certain, PEO Chair
Wreaths and Swags should be available to pick up the first week of December. There are a few wreaths that haven't been spoken for, so if you are still interested contact Mary Jane Caudill.

SAVE the date! On Tuesday, **January 14**, our chapter will be celebrating our 50th birthday and everyone is invited to come join us for birthday cake and ice cream in The Vista Sunroom.

Grand Re-Opening of our Pooch Park

~ Dottie Conner

On October 28 BST West hosted a Grand Re-Opening of the Pooch Park. A few of our vendors donated time and materials to spruce up the park. American Home Roofing, Enhanced Landscaping and Texas Services all donated time and materials. They added lighting and seating, new toys, signage, and even a new waterspout for dogs and birds. Come and see all the improvements they have made so we can enjoy our park even more. If you see any of these vendors around campus, give them an extra wave as thanks!



Bus Tours - Sunday, December 15 ~ Beverley Moore

This year's Bus Tours of "Light Up The 'Skies 2024" will run BEFORE the Lobby Celebration. The 3 Tours will depart at 6pm from the front of the Lobby and return by approximately 6:30pm. There will be no Bus Tours after the Celebration. Try to arrive in the Lobby no later than 5:50pm for a prompt departure at 6pm. It is first come first served. Do not miss your chance!



Resident Updates

2025 New Year's Eve Party ~ Layne Perelli

Your Entertainment Committee has planned an exciting New Year's Eve Gala so you can ring in 2025 in glamorous style with all your friends from Blue Skies.

Feel free to salute the occasion in your most elegant, formal attire.

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.

We encourage all residents, singles as well as couples, to join in the festivities!

A wide variety of musical styles will be performed for your listening and dancing pleasure by the fabulous Triple T Band, until 12:30am.

Doors will open in the Lakeview Dining Room and Roadrunner Lounge for decorating tables and setting up your drinks and snacks at 4pm.

Festivities start at 8pm. Live music starts at 8:30pm.

Everyone attending must be signed up in CC3 by Friday, December 27. Anyone can host a table and

organize up to 16 guests of their choosing. Just make sure all names are listed on your sign-up

sheet. (Call Layne Perelli if you would like to make arrangements

for a larger group.) Or, if you prefer, sign up to sit at one of the

several open tables that will be available.



+ 
2025

 Happy 
New Year

 +



Roadrunner Newsletters

If you are interested in a printed version of the Roadrunner, one can be made available to you at the front desk. Don't forget that you also have the option of having the Roadrunner emailed to you.

Simply email your request to

Roadrunner@blueskiestx.org and you will be added to the newsletter email distribution list.

Deadline for the next Roadrunner is
Sunday, **December 22**

Send articles to
roadrunner@blueskiestx.org

Next Publication Date:
Tuesday, **December 31**

Resident Updates

Rotary Corner ~ Debby Cox

All residents are welcome to attend any of the meetings of the San Antonio West Rotary Club which meets right here at Blue Skies of Texas West to hear one of our great speakers or to learn more about our service projects. We meet the first and third Tuesday of every month in the Roadrunner Lounge from 12-1pm and you are welcome to bring your lunch.



Our Tuesday, **December 3** speaker will be Rafa Veraza, Rotary Global Grant Scholar to Botswana. He will share his experiences in Botswana during and after being a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. His Rotary experience helped him obtain a full scholarship in Public Health which led to working with UNICEF and WHO programs. He followed that with a PhD in Transitional Science from a consortium of universities in the San Antonio area and is now the CEO for Vascular Perfusion Solutions developing new equipment to increase the life of heart transplants in transport with a goal of 8 hours which will allow transport all over North America.

Tuesday, **December 17** at 6pm will be our Christmas party in the Roadrunner Lounge. All are welcome, if you want to attend, please contact Debby Cox to get more information.

Both of our November speakers were very informative. Lieutenant Karim Shuaib II, a Corps Officer for the San Antonio Salvation Army, explained how the Salvation Army is much more than the bell ringers you see at Christmas time. They provide a tiered Emergency Shelter along with education to help homeless people find jobs and become self-sufficient. BTW, they are looking for volunteer bell ringers for this Christmas season. If interested, visit www.salvationarmy.org.

We had ten visitors to hear Dr. Roxane Delgado, of the UT Health School of Nursing, talk about support for families living with dementia. Here is a link to their website:

<https://utcasatx.org.regivers.org/>. This national award-winning program recently expanded its scope to include family caregivers for military and veterans. If interested in getting help from this organization, visit <https://UTCaregivers.org>.

One of our major Christmas projects is to support families in need at Allen Elementary School. This year we are helping nine families with a total of thirty-nine children, so the need is extensive. We would greatly appreciate any support Blue Skies residents may be able to provide. The funds will be used to buy both toys and clothes for each child. Additionally, a \$100 gift card will be provided to each family to help cover food or other essential needs. Larger families will receive larger gift card amounts, depending on the total donations collected. You can contribute by writing checks made out to Dwayne Hopkins, our Club President, and bringing it to our next Rotary meeting on December 3 or by mailing it to Dwayne Hopkins at 244 Cibolo Ridge Drive, Lavernia, TX 78121. We will deliver all the gifts to Allen Elementary on December 17 at 8:30am. You are also welcome to join us at the school to see first-hand how much these gifts are appreciated.

If you would like to learn more about our Rotary Club, please call Debby Cox (see Resident Roster) or you can visit our web site or Facebook page:

<https://www.RotaryClubofSanAntonioWest.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/RotarySAWest>

Christmas Lights at Blue Skies West

“Years ago, at Christmastime of 1992 in fact, the Tree of Lights tradition was initiated at Village West (then known as Air Force Village II) by Col Bob Drebelbis. It is a beautiful concept, one that has become a legend in our community. Residents purchase a “Tree Light” to honor a loved one, living or deceased, for the Christmas tree in the Main Lobby. At the time, Bob asked me to write an appropriate tribute for the occasion, and the following poem, also a tradition, is read during the Christmas program. Proceeds from the contributions of “Lights” go exclusively to The Vista.” The story told by Mrs. Shirley Stephens Martin, who passed away in 2023. The funds this year will go towards the Hagauer Memorial Scholarship Fund.



Merry Christmas, Dear Friends!

Our Village II Christmas Lights
When we grow old and we've lived a long time
And the walk up the hill is a mighty high climb...
Though our eyes are much dimmer than what they once were
And the page of a book blends to a misty blur...
Strange as the case may seem to be,
NOW is the time we can CLEARLY see!

We see ourselves as we really are
When we've lived a lot and we've traveled far;
A need for each other becomes very clear
And neighbors are precious, friendships so dear!

As Christmastime nears and our thoughts turn to pleasure,
We'll build on our memories with ones we can treasure,
Though our eyes are much dimmer, we plainly can see
These brilliant lights shining on our Village tree!

Each light means a loved one has joined us this day
To light up our season, our joys to portray;
May we each see more clearly, as Yuletide begins,
How fortunate we are to have family and friends!

~Shirley Stephens Martin~

Sports, Games, & Scores

GAME Night

Friday Night Games ~ Karen Tidler

We've been having fun on Friday nights, starting at 6:30pm in CC3, playing games. This particular night included two tables of 5 Crown, Chicken Foot (a dominos game), Phase 10, Scrabble, Rummikub and a table learning bridge. New folks are welcome, even patient to teach you how to play the games.



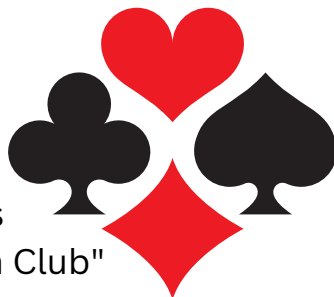
Bridge

The bridge group meets on Mondays starting at 1pm to play Party Bridge. Showtime is 12:30pm. This is an open game, but you need a partner please. We meet in CC3. There is a sign-up book in CC3. The bridge club also plays Duplicate, one Tuesday a month. This is a limited space game. There is a sign-up book. Contact Joy Hough with questions.

Since this is an unusual input to announce three months of points leaders (results) I cannot list all the names of all the players. I assigned points to the people who came in 1 through 3. Since participation is not consistent. I am calling this the "Leaders List September-November."

1. Ann Wood 18 points
2. Gail Gant 17 points
3. Al Wesson 16 points
4. Connie Germann 15 points

Congratulations to the "Best in Club"



Golf Range Adds New Practice Feature ~ Ron Miller, Golf Range Manager

Target nets have been added to the golf range. Golfers may now improve their chipping and pitching accuracy. Nets will be available at the ball bin area. Golfers will take and return the nets using the honor system. Storing the nets, and not leaving them on the range, will increase their useful life and not impact range operations and mowing schedules.



Sports, Games, & Scores

BSTW Poker Clubs ~ Ron Rickard

We have Monday night and Tuesday night Poker Clubs here at BSTW. Both Clubs meet in the game room across from the Thrift Shop, and both Clubs are looking for new regular and substitute players. All qualified games are both high hand and low hand split pots. We gather and play from about 6:30 until 9:30pm.

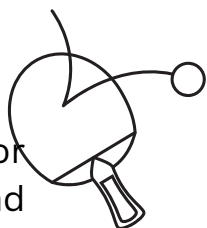
Both Clubs play with a \$5.00 chip buy-in and have nickel/dime/quarter---3 bet limits. Clubs play with a deck including a joker (which can be an ace or used as a wild card in straights and flushes). Games include OMAHA/5 Card Draw or Stud/7 Card Stud & 10 Card Stud. Texas Hold-em is not played because of betting limits.

The Monday night Club also plays several additional various wild card games which can be challenging. Stop by either night and check out the play to spur your interest.



Ping Pong ~ Bob Stuckert

There is a ping pong table, located in Vista Room 19, for community use. Paddles and balls are in the first wardrobe on the right as you enter the room. Play is on a first come, first served basis. Please cover the table when you are finished.



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. Please contact Linda Prose (see resident directory) for details on the start times. See y'all out there!

Mahjong ~ Nan Smith

Wright Patterson Mahjong meets every Tuesday at 1pm in CC3. National Mahjong meets every Wednesday at 12:30pm and Friday at 1pm in CC3.

All are welcome. Please come and join us. We will teach you to play, if you are new to the game.



Sports, Games, & Scores

Adventures of the Seasoned Soles

~ John and Pat MacIntyre

Fall began with a very early morning trail run on November 8 in Government Canyon called the Government Canyon Recharge Trail run. Two of our intrepid walkers started in the dark for the 8K race/walk (John Paul Sullivan) and the 15K race/walk (Pat Perry). They both saw the Dinosaur tracks in Government Canyon but didn't get there in time to see the real dinosaurs.

Lu and Jim Schuster ran the Battle of Leon Creek 10 Miler on November 16. Lu was first in her age group while Jim was 3rd in his.

On November 17, Pat Perry ran the Girls on the Run 5k.

A number of the Seasoned Soles will have participated in the BSTW Turkey Trot on November 22, and Pat Perry will be racing in the San Antonio Road Runners Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning.

More about those walks and races next month. See you at the BSTW Turkey Trot!



RoadRunner Golf Association

On November 14, a beautiful day for golfing, Blue Skies own RoadRunners Golf Association held a tournament at the nearby Golf Club of Texas course. Afterward, the winners were announced at a pizza event in the Pavilion next to the tennis courts. The awards were for: Low Net – Homer Hall, Longest Drive – Jack Briggs, and Close to the Pin – Mark Wessman.

Congratulations to all!



Ladies BUNCO Group

~ JoAnn Oldham

The BSTW Bunco players will be taking December off to enjoy the busy holiday season with family and friends. Keep those dice warm and ready to resume play in January.

Winners for November

Ann Wood, Cathy Bee, JoAnn Oldham, Brenda Perry, Bernice Houston, Annette Johson, Betty Chalfont

Spiritual News

Catholic News

Feast of Immaculate Conception – Monday, **December 9** at 4pm in the High Flight Chapel.

Advent Penitential Service Monday, **December 11** at 2pm in the High Flight Chapel.

Christmas Eve – Tuesday, **December 24**, at 2pm in the High Flight Chapel.

Saturdays – 11am Mass (For Sunday by special dispensation of the San Antonio Archbishop) in the High Flight Chapel

First Saturday of the Month – Anointing of the Sick following Saturday Mass

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

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

Wednesdays – 9am, Communion Service in the Vista Willow Chapel

First Wednesday – 9:30am, Benediction and Adoration following Communion Service in the Vista Willow Chapel

Third Wednesday – 9:30am, Rosary following Communion Service in the Vista Willow Chapel

Fridays – 3-4pm, Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration, and Divine Mercy Chaplet in the Vista Willow Chapel

Pastoral Care – To meet privately with a priest for Reconciliation or Anointing, please contact Fr. Richard Bendorf (see Resident Directory).

Homebound – If you are homebound and unable to attend Mass but would like to receive Holy Communion, you may contact John Siebert, Barbara Wilson, Mary Tucker, or Gil Wolfe 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).

Hospital Visits – Most hospitals have a Catholic priest available; ask a staff member to contact a priest.

Centering Prayer at Blue Skies West

~ **Linda Ricketts**

Centering Prayer will meet on Fridays, **December 6 and 20** at 8:30am in the Willow Chapel located off the kitchen in the Vista.

Questions: Call or email Robert Ferre or Judy DeVillez.

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

