



The President's Corner

By Wilma Potts

Happy New Year, FMSC Family!

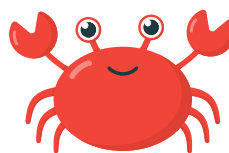
As we step into the promising embrace of 2024, let the dawn of a new chapter fill you with hope and enthusiasm. Envision it as a blank canvas awaiting the strokes of your joy, accomplishments, and goals. Let hard work be your compass, guiding you through challenges, and dedication be the fuel that propels you towards success.

Whether you are a familiar face or a new friend, we hope you'll discover a sense of belonging and camaraderie that feels like home. As you step into a Monthly Meet Up, Committee Meeting, or any of our events, envision it as more than just a meeting space or volunteer opportunity; consider it a community where friendships are forged, laughter resonates, and shared experiences create lasting memories.

Our hope is to provide you with a haven where you can be yourself, surrounded by individuals who appreciate the joy of connection, volunteerism, and celebration. Whether you're just checking us out, seeking friendship, or something else, may you find comfort and warmth within the heart of our club. Here's to forging new connections and creating a home away from home. Cheers to making the Fort Meade Spouses' Club your own and building memories that will last a lifetime!



Help out at our next Crabby Shack!
Details above



Mindy Rodriguez enjoys her gift at the Holiday Dinner.

Who We Are, What We Do

Our Outreach team is amazing! Meet them all and learn about their positions!



Sasha Hernandez-Ticali
Outreach Treasurer

Our fantastic Outreach Treasurer for this year (and last) is Sasha! She's an amazing person with a ton of dedication both to our club and her beautiful family.

As the Outreach Treasurer, Sasha takes care of our outgoing funds to community events and other charities while maintaining our budget based on the money we receive from the Post Thrift Shop and other charitable donations.

She is also the support system for two positions within the FMSC: Director of Scholarships and Director of Community Outreach! Keep up the fabulous work, Sasha!

We are on the hunt for 2024!
How many sets of the numbers can you find in this edition?



Behind The Scenes: Children's Holiday Party 2024

By Jennifer Denton

Each year, for the last 13!, the Fort Meade Spouses' Club hosts its Children's Holiday Party for every child with access to Fort Meade. The event includes games, crafts, gifts, an obstacle course, and a visit with Santa. With all of that in mind, it takes a team of people and a fearless leader to bring this event together successfully each year.

Stephanie Oberbeck, our 2023-2024 Vice President, held the reins for the Out of this World CHP! She managed each subcommittee and made sure the event was absolutely perfect for the children.

The CHP subcommittees include those mentioned above but also, Check-In Table, Goody Bags, Decorations, Entertainment, and more!

Does any of this sound like a fun way to volunteer? Keep your eye out for next year's committee information soon! There are so many ways to contribute and ensure next year's Children's Holiday Party is another raging success.



The Grinch makes one small step for Who kind.

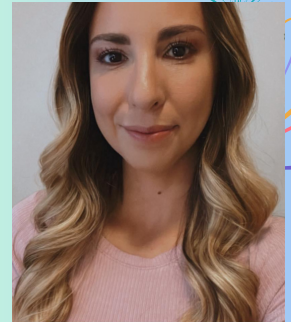


Mallory Noble helps a group work through an Out of this World Obstacle Course.



Group photo of most of our wonderful CHP 23 volunteers!

Elizabeth Beazley
Director of Community Outreach



The Director of Community Outreach is a very important position within the FMSC. So many of our events are organized by this person, for example, our Food Pantry, Cookie Crunch, Clean Up! Fort Meade and many more!

With all of these responsibilities, it takes a special person indeed to run this ship. The Director of Community Outreach must be caring and understanding, organized, innovative, friendly and encouraging.

Thank you so much Elizabeth for chairing the position this year!



Meghan and Tonya snap a candid at the Holiday Dinner.

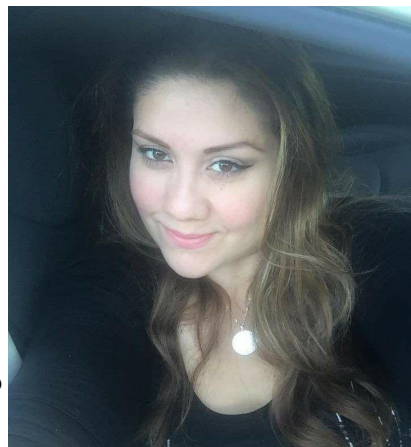


Milestones!

By Tara Pierson-Varney

One of the most memorable of these events is the Back 2 School Bash. After a canceled event left the club stuck with 500 backpacks, Mavi was challenged to find a way to dispose of them. In less than a week, she created and hosted the Back 2 School Bash. It was a huge success and has continued every year since. "I have grown because of the club within my family, my marriage, and myself." Because of this, one of her greatest joys comes from organizing events to honor and celebrate the Ft. Meade community and the club members in her life. As Vice President, Mavi loved planning the Children's Holiday Party, National Night Out, FMSC Holiday Party, our yearly Club Trip, and many other events.

Mavi, you have been and continue to be such an integral part of this club. Thank you for your many hours of hard work, both physically and mentally. Thank you for making us feel welcomed and appreciated, and thank you for being you. Congratulations on 13 years!



In many military careers, jumping from place to place every 3 years on average is common. Very few military spouses, whether active or retired, have the opportunity to stay at any organization for more than that, let alone over a decade. For 13 years Mavi Conner has devoted her time and energy to the Fort Meade Spouses Club. She has held just a few positions including Director of Hospitality, Director of Communications, Vice President, President, and currently Parliamentarian and Director of the Post Thrift Shop.

When asked why she has stayed in the club for so long, she replied earnestly that the many friends she has made through the club have supported and motivated her through the good times and bad times of her life. "Because of the support I received from my club friends... I want to be there to help in any way I can." And help she does. Mavi can be found at nearly all FMSC events front and center. You can't help but be drawn to her contagious enthusiasm and irresistible, cheery sass. Her presence exudes a warm and welcoming energy that instantly puts people at ease.

A throwback photo to ESC appreciation posts in 2017. She was and remains an amazing asset to our club. Keep your eyes peeled for Mavi in our other event pictures in this edition.

Dawne Lee Director of Scholarships



The Director of Scholarships this year, Dawne, is just gearing up for her busy season! Our Scholarship form has recently gone live and the work begins!

Dawne says she has been enjoying the ability to connect with so many people in such a positive way. She really likes being able to spread a little positivity.

'I think the biggest surprise has been how many people I've been able to reach. The number of people wanting to know about our scholarships has been way larger than I anticipated and I'm excited for the applications to start coming in.'

Thank you Dawne! You are doing the best job finding our future scholarship awardees.



Love Shared and Given

By Jennifer Denton



As we move towards February, our thoughts inevitably turn to Valentine's Day. In my house, I like to get a little chocolate gift for my girls and prepare the griddle for heart shaped pancakes, a tradition passed down from my childhood. Love is shared in so many ways during this time of the year making it a great time to be present and enjoy it!

In full accordance with sharing love, the FMSC has some goodies for you too! Our director of Morale Funding, Ryane Page, is hosting a special 'Valentine Gram' fundraiser! You can show your friends how much you care by sending a little love their way and supporting our Morale activities at the same time! (The Club Trip is on the horizon!) I know I will be making a list and adding reminders so I can support the club and shower my friends with a little Valentine's love.

The Director of Hospitality, Mallory Noble, has got her sights on sharing the love as well! We will be having not one but two socials in the month of February!

Our first opportunity to get together and have some fun will be on February 2nd. The plan is to meet up for dinner and then head to a movie; Mean Girls!! Of course, you can absolutely sit with us!

Our next activity will be a blast for the whole family, a School's Out Bowling Lunch on February 19th. What could be more fun than bowling a few frames with your family and friends? Be sure to invite those new friends and share in the FMSC love together!

I know I am excited to spend some time with friends and share the love this February!

2024

Jenn Stenberg and Ryane Page enjoy each other's company at the Holiday Dinner.



FMSC Happenings!

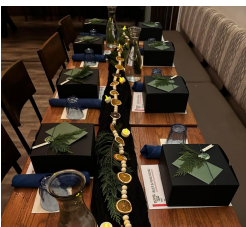


Holiday Dinner and a Club Trip! By Jennifer Denton

Were you able to make it to the Holiday Dinner? No worries if not, there is still an opportunity to get together and celebrate during our upcoming Club Trip!

The FMSC 2023 Holiday Dinner took place on December 12th at Bushel and a Peck in Clarksville Maryland. The dinner is offered for those members who meet specified requirements for volunteering; 6 hours for the FMSC, 4 hours for the Thrift Shop, and 1 fundraising hour per month in the three months prior to the event. Our Club Trip has similar requirements in order to be included, not least of which is volunteering during our December gift wrapping season.

You may wonder why this is so important to be listed as a requirement for the trip. The money we earn through gift wrapping supports our club morale fund which is used to pay for these wonderful events. In the past, the FMSC has gone to Luray Caverns in Virginia, Kalahari Resort in the Poconos, Charlottesville, Virginia, and many more! We would love to have you join us and make this year's Club Trip spectacular!



A beautiful table setting is the backdrop for a meal full of good cheer.



The ladies all together at the 2023 Holiday Dinner.

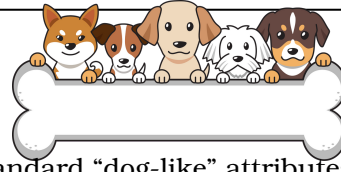
Vacay Vibes

Wilma Potts shows off her gift at the 2023 Holiday Dinner.



Our Best Pals

By Meghan McDonald Carlson



When many people search for canine companions, they seek out standard “dog-like” attributes, your fetching, house-guarding, and so on. However, for the forward-thinkers—like the Oberbeck family—canines have been too long forced into those outdated roles. Where is the glory for the hyper-shedders? The dogs afraid of their shadows? These little sweeties also have a part to play in family life.

For a good dozen or so years, Zuzu and Luna have proven loyal, loving, and willing to leisurely nap for many hours at a time. And yet—they are also varied and spirited (they often have opinions at Book Club, for instance). What can we say? They contain multitudes. First there is little Zuzu. With her tiny body, jet-black coat and soulful brown eyes, you might take her for meek or unassuming. You’d be wrong. (She’s actually just imploring you for snacks. All the snacks.) You should also know that her slight frame and halitosis have no bearing on her chutzpah. She is mighty and fearless, don’t you worry!

It’s a good thing, too, because her compatriot Luna is, how shall we say, afraid of all the things, all the times? Her nerves alongside Zuzu’s, ahem, ovaries mean they kind of have a yin and yang thing going. But while Luna will happily take snack breaks alongside Zuzu, her affectionate duties are more active ones. Where Zuzu is the go-to companion when the humans need a lap simply warmed up, it is Luna’s task to distribute proper hugs. She takes this seriously, which you’ve likely surmised from that single, upright ear. Yes, the dogs of the Oberbeck household are contributing members, even if they go against the grain.



Cookie Crunch!



Elizabeth and some of our lovely volunteers wrap up the Cookie Crunch, an Outreach initiative to spread holiday cheer to the single servicemembers in the barracks.



HOW TO DONATE?

By Mavi Conner

WHEN DONATING TO OUR POST THRIFT SHOP, CONSIDER GIVING ITEMS IN GOOD CONDITION, AS DAMAGED OR UNUSABLE ITEMS MAY BE DISCARDED. CHECK THE SHOP'S DONATION GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS WE ACCEPT. CLEAN AND ORGANIZE YOUR DONATIONS TO MAKE SORTING EASIER FOR THE STAFF. ADDITIONALLY, CHECK ON HOURS OF OPERATION, DONATIONS LEFT AFTER HOURS ARE NOT ONLY A WASTE THAT WE HAVE TO DISCARD BUT ALSO A MAJOR SAFETY ISSUE WE ARE CURRENTLY DEALING WITH.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

DO'S

BRING DONATIONS THROUGH OUR FRONT DOOR DURING OPEN HOURS.

SORT YOUR DONATIONS AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

WHEN DONATING CLOTHING AND SHOES, PLEASE ENSURE THEY ARE CLEAN AND USABLE. NO TEARS, SMELLS, OR STAINS.

DO REMEMBER ALL OUR PROCEEDS GO BACK TO THE FORT MEADE COMMUNITY.

DON'TS

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE ANY DONATIONS BY ANY OF OUR ENTRANCES.

DON'T DONATE BROKEN ITEMS OR STUFF IN NEED OF REPAIR OR THAT CAN'T BE USED.

DON'T ASSUME WE CAN USE IT OR SELL IT, THE CRITICAL RULE IS, WOULD YOU GIVE THE ITEM TO SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT?

DON'T FORGET A DONATION RECEIPT.

For our donation guidelines and updates, find us on social media or visit our website www.PostThriftShop.org

Monthly Meet Up! FMSC Gingerbread Village 2021



Elizabeth and Akuah have a chat by the Christmas tree.

Painting Gingerbread Cookies and Sharing some Holiday Cheer!



Ashley shares a smile while she prepares to take our meeting minutes.

friendship



Tara hides from her photographer.



Jessica and her tiny Anna are ready to celebrate. Babies in arms are always welcome at our Monthly Meet Ups.



Meredith is always ready to lend a helping hand,



Wilma and Elizabeth are ready to welcome you to the December MMU!





2024

Hardest you LAUGHED	Best TRIP taken	Favorite PHOTO on your phone	Biggest LESSON learned
One WORD to describe this year	SOMETHING you want to do next year	Best SONG	Proudest MOMENT
Most MEMORABLE moment	Favorite HANG-OUT spot	Best thing you did for SOMEONE ELSE	Best MOVIE
Something UNUSUAL you did	Best DAY	Biggest ACHIEVEMENT	Something you WON'T DO next year
Most EMBARRASSING moment	Best ADVICE received	Something you'd like to FORGET	Something you LOOK FORWARD to next year

Don't worry about resolutions, write your best wish for 2024!



A space just for your New Year thoughts.

I SPY NEW YEAR

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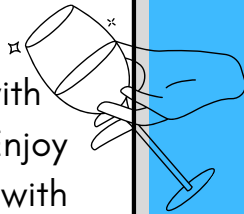


FMSC CLUBS

Try something new or enjoy your favorites!

Wine

Kick off the New Year with new friends and wine! Enjoy a beverage and snacks with us on January 26th at 7pm.



Bunco

What's better than games and a group of fun people to play them with? Check out Bunco club on January 19th at 7pm.



Book

Enjoy some down time with a wonderful book then meet up to talk about it! Join us at 9:30 pm of February 19th!



Playdate

Get those busy kiddos outside to play with friends! A solid nap is in their future! Next meeting to be determined!



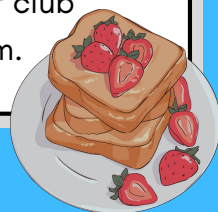
Walk N Talk

Start your resolutions off right with a monthly walking date with friends! Next meeting on January 19th at 9:30am.



Breakfast

Try a restful morning of coffee, tea or hot chocolate with a side of good cheer with friends! Breakfast club meets February 9th at 9:30am.



Cooking

Find a brand new recipe to try with your family and enjoy togetherness with good people! Our next meeting is February 5th at 6:30pm.



Upcoming Events!

Food Pantry

Presented by Fort Meade Spouses' Club  TowerCares 

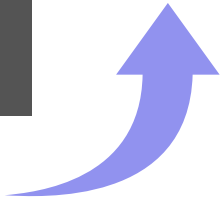
Every Thursday
11:00 AM- 1:00 PM
Inside The Post Thrift Shop
392 Llewellyn Ave.

Available to all ranks & status w/ valid ID
For More Information or Immediate Need
Contact outreach@fortmeadespousesclub.org



2024

WANT TO HELP?
SIGN UP HERE!



Are you ready to get involved? Support the Club and your community by volunteering at the Post thrift Shop!

Visit postthriftshop.org for store hours, volunteer info, and FAQs!



Calendar Snapshot

- Jan. 22 Hospitality Meeting
- Jan. 24, Feb. 14, TS Open Nights
- Jan. 25, Feb. 29 TS Work Night
- Jan. 25, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22 Food Pantry
- Feb. 3 TS Bag Sale
- Feb. 6 Volunteer Admin Meeting
- Feb. 7 Photography & Publications Meeting
- Feb. 8 Community Outreach Meeting
- Feb. 13 Scholarship Meeting
- Feb. 15 Monthly Meet Up!

Social Clubs:

- Jan. 19- Walk n Talk Club & Bunco Club
- Feb. 19- Book Club
- Jan. 26- Wine Club
- Feb. 5- Cooking Club
- Feb. 9- Breakfast Club

Contact Ashley Jones for access to the Google calendar

2024

The Pinch is the product of the FMSC's Photography & Publications Committee. This issue was curated & edited by Jennifer Denton.

Join us!

photopublications@fortmeadespousesclub.org