

The President's Corner

By Wilma Potts

Happy Holidays, My Fellow FMSC Family!

As the holiday season approaches, let's take a moment to reflect on the importance of coming together with loved ones, sharing joy, and creating lasting memories.

Some of those lasting memories are shared with those sitting around us right now. The FMSC allows us an outlet to strengthen bonds while providing for our community and each other.

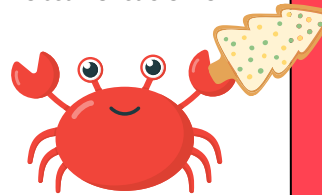
This is a magical time that provides us with a unique opportunity to pause our hectic routines, express gratitude, and spread warmth to those around us.



Our President and several other members help run the Crabby Shack at our Texas Roadhouse Fundraiser!



Help out at our next Crabby Shack!
Details above



Tonya Starbeck presents a welcome kit to a new member.

Are there more cookies or ornaments in this edition?
Count to find out!

Who We Are, What We Do

Have you met our Membership Team? Read on to learn more!



~open~

Membership Director

This important position is currently waiting on Executive Board appointment!

Membership Director has a detailed role in taking care of the FMSC Members as well as planning some awesome events just for us! Stay tuned to learn more!





Behind The Scenes: Rolling into the Roll Off

By Ashley Jones

Did you know that the FMSC hosts one of the largest fundraising events on Fort Meade each December? Gift Wrapping at the PX is a multi organization fundraising event, and this year we have 18 organizations including the FMSC wrapping gifts outside the PX.

Before we can start wrapping gifts a lot of behind the scenes work has to take place. The President of the FMSC starts working on the Roll Off event early in the fall. Just a few of the things that the President preps ahead of this event are the contracts for each organization, communication with management at the PX, and advertisements for this event. Then each organization sends a representative to the roll off where they are assigned a number and wait for the chance to select their desired dates and times for their organization to wrap gifts. Once all of the representatives get their slots, they prep their supplies, and gather their volunteers. Each organization then shows up at the PX to wrap gifts and raise funds for their groups/causes.

We invite you to come and wrap presents with us and/or bring gifts to be wrapped by one of our many worthy associations. We are excited each year to host and facilitate this amazing fundraising event for our community.



President Wilma Potts kicks off this year's Roll Off Fundraising sign up!

Our Best Pals

Our friend of the month comes from the Lee family! Syren is a 16 year old blue cream short hair. She has been with her family for every move they've been through with the army. Syren is the most stubborn argumentative old lady but she can't get enough cuddles and doesn't care who they're from.

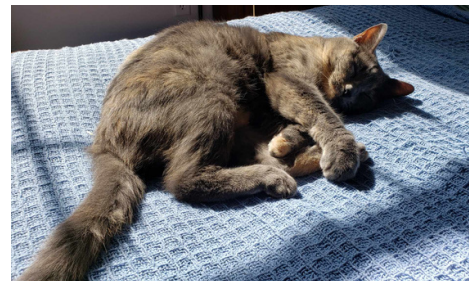
Syren would start her perfect day by demanding breakfast and couch snuggles from her humans. Once this chore has been completed, Syren will then retire to her box fort to plan the next sneak attack upon her fur sister. After thoroughly pouncing the daylight out of her, Syren will seek out a warm patch of sunlight in which to bask while thinking fondly of her victory.

In the evening, Syren demands dinner and more couch snuggles. She will be content with this until her humans retire for the night, at which point she begins nightly house races. Syren's day is not complete without a closing performance of her award winning cat operetta.

Tonya Starbeck
Director of Member Development



The Director of Member Development has a very important job to do. She is responsible for welcoming our new members and helping them understand our club a little better as well as recognizing each person's club anniversaries. Tonya says she really loves helping people and being able to find the answer to their question. She also enjoys being able to help new members get acquainted with the FMSC; helping them get their footing and understand all its moving parts as well as connecting them with the committee they have a passion for.



Syren enjoys a sunny spot!

Milestones!

By Meghan McDonald Carlson

Celebrating a decade of service and friendship
- Laura O'Leary

Over the past ten years in the Fort Meade Spouses' Club (and its predecessor the Enlisted Spouses' Club), Laura O'Leary has shown her dedication to service and exuberant spirit again and again. Ever-ready with resources, including a seemingly-endless supply of handy websites, Laura is the first one to offer concrete, helpful suggestions. Through her six years in the Club, former member Katie Christly recalled numerous times Laura pointed her to helpful resources, including at her going-away dinner. Katie lovingly recalled being initially warned that, "while Laura may lick you, she won't bite."

And it's not just about pointing people to external help. When member Mindy Rodriguez landed in the ER as a new member, Laura was one of several Club members who appeared to cheer her spirits and be with her. Mindy recalls the hilarity of Laura's Mary Poppins-esque bag full of delightful items—socks, puzzle book, a blanket and more. Mindy says, "I barely knew her and she took the time to not only show up for me but she showed out, too!"

It's really no surprise that that exuberant spirit preceded her days with the FMSC. Former member Michelle Morgan remembers meeting Laura at the Defense Language Institute in California. Michelle instantly saw how "cool and energetic" Laura was, and also that she "showed a great willingness to help whenever" she could. Imagine Michelle's surprise to find her fellow Navy veteran again at Fort Meade! (Thank you for your service, ladies!) That spirit of service has been on display year after year as Laura has served in many positions on the Executive Committee and Joint Board of our dear FMSC. We're so grateful she spends her time, energy and love with us!



Fond memories with Laura!



Showing her true Unicorn Self!



Laura is a vital and well loved part of this club!

Mallory Noble Director of Hospitality



The Director of Hospitality has an important job to fill for our membership family. She is there to host our events and coordinate our activities. Mallory loves a good show and she is happy to share one with the FMSC each month... and on very special occasions

Jenn Stenberg Director of Member Support



The Director of Member Support is here for you! If you are celebrating or struggling, Jenn is there to organize a helping hand or offer a gift or letter just to remind you that she and the FMSC care about each and every one of you!

Deck the Halls or Give Thanks First?



The Great Holiday Debate

By Stephanie Oberbeck

In the frosty skirmish between winter holiday enthusiasts, the battlefield is adorned with tinsel and strewn with turkey feathers. On one side, you've got the early decorators, those festive folks who believe in turning their homes into winter wonderlands before the Thanksgiving turkey even hits the oven. On the other side, you've got the Thanksgiving traditionalists, staunch defenders of the fourth Thursday in November.

Early Decorators: Team Tinsel

For them, November 1st marks the official start of the Winter Olympics of Decorating. Their philosophy is simple: why wait for the turkey to thaw when you could be untangling your holiday lights? They've got a box of decorations for every occasion. Their philosophy is that if it sparkles, it's fair game. These enthusiasts argue that starting early spreads joy and extends the holiday season. After all, who doesn't need a little extra cheer before AND after enduring another round of awkward family political discussions during Thanksgiving dinner?

Thankful Feathers

Write one thing on each feather that you are thankful for.



Spokesperson, Mindy Rodriguez: "Why limit the magic to just one month? If I want to hang mistletoe in October, I will! Besides, the earlier I start, the more time I have to perfect my gingerbread house skills."

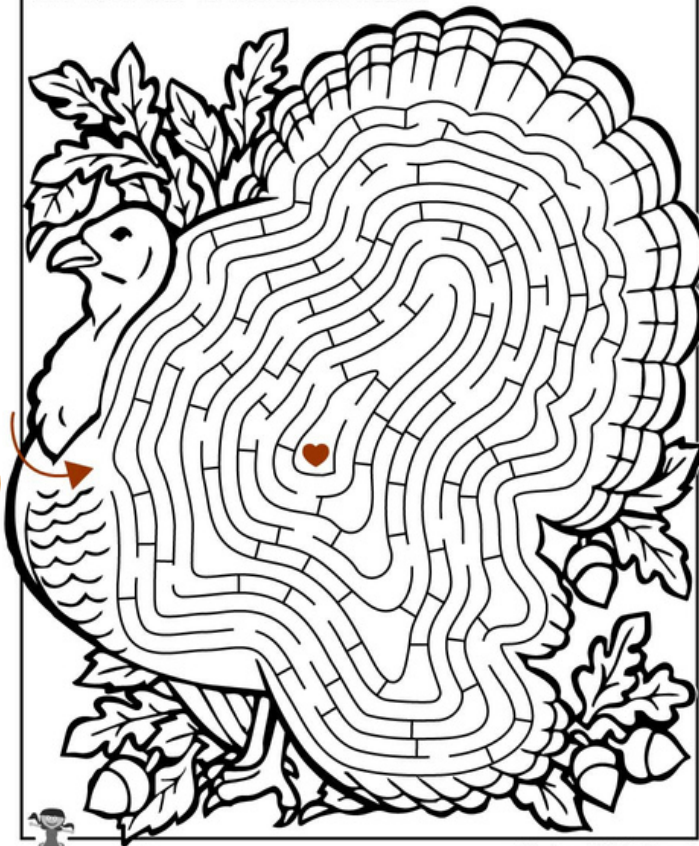
Thanksgiving Traditionalists: Team Turkey

These steadfast defenders of Thanksgiving argue that each holiday deserves its moment in the spotlight. They're not against decking the halls, but they believe that Thanksgiving deserves to shine before the winter holidays take over. These traditionalists argue that their beloved feast of plenty is already overshadowed by Christmas, and starting the festive frenzy early only makes matters worse. Turkey, stuffing, and gratitude should take center stage before tinsel and twinkling lights steal the spotlight.

Spokesperson, Jesse Oberbeck: "We're not anti-decoration; we're just pro-Thanksgiving. Let's feast on turkey and practice giving thanks before we start building snowmen, lighting the menorah, and hanging stockings."

As the snowflakes begin to fall and the holiday spirit rises, the debate over when to deck the halls continues. Whether you're Team Tinsel or Team Turkey just remember that the true spirit of the season lies in unity, joy, and maybe just a sprinkle of friendly holiday competition. So, grab your garland, dust off the roasting pan, and let the winter wonderland war commence!

FIND YOUR WAY TO THE TURKEY HEART!





What I Want You to Know . . . Recipe Showcase!!!

By Jennifer Denton

As the winter holidays approach, I tend to lean into my family traditions and recipes. Nothing says Thanksgiving like sausage and mushroom stuffing or some mashed rutabagas. Christmas always brings Petticoat Tails, a simple shortbread cookie with vanilla icing. We asked our members to share their recipes and the memories that go with them.

Ashley Jones shared a special cookie her grandma made, the Red Hot Sugar Cookie. I have never had this cookie but I am very interested in giving them a try!



Erika Kutterna shared a pie her mom makes every holiday season, Peanut Butter Pie! I know this one will be a win in many homes, allergies notwithstanding.

Tara Varney shared a memory. "We made Lefse for the holidays when I was young," she said. "It's a Norwegian tradition. Potato flatbread that we covered with butter and sugar, jelly, cream cheese, or Nutella, then rolled up."

These treats all sound amazing! If you are just as interested as I am, and to see a few I didn't mention, be sure to check out the QR code below! Which one are you most likely to make?



BECOME A MEMBER

FMSC Happenings!

Membership Drives

By Tara Varney

We've been busy spreading the word about our amazing club during this year's spooky month. The Fort Meade Community Expo took place on October 5th at the McGill Training Center, featuring over 40 organizations from in and around Fort Meade that provided community members with valuable information and resources. Some of these organizations included the University of Maryland Global Campus, Blue Star Families, and of course, the Fort Meade Spouses' Club.

For the second year, the Army hosted the Fort Meade Armed Forces Resiliency Fair at the Parade Field on October 20th. The purpose of the Resiliency Fair is to provide substantial information for service members and their families in five focal areas-physical, emotional, social, family, and spiritual. At the Resiliency Center in Kuhn Hall, individuals can find support and guidance for effective coping mechanisms related to work-related stress. Our FMSC members actively engaged in sharing valuable information about the club with spouses and prospective members.

Lastly, we got our Potter on at the NSA Civilian Welfare Fund and Fort Meade MWR-sponsored Trunk or Treat Celebration on October 28th. Hundreds of children and their parents came out to see decorated trunks and get a lot of candy. There were fire trucks, food, and fun activities for all the participants. The Harry Potter-themed trunk we created not only received a warm reception among the kids but also ignited a spark of curiosity among the parents. When we attend community events, we not only help promote our club, but we also provide valuable opportunities to spouses. For many, their local community is their primary support system, and being present at events gives them the option to grow that system. Volunteer in our next community event and help us spread the word about FMSC!





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



Have you heard of the Children's Holiday Party? It's one of the wonderful ways the Fort Meade Spouses' Club gives back to our community and we are preparing for it right now! If you are interested in helping one of our committees prepare, check in with our event volunteer coordinator, Mavi Conner!

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!

On the hunt for some holiday ornaments? Look no further! We have some beautiful choices created and sold by our amazing Morale team!



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



Come join us on Saturday to freshen up our Post Thrift Shop! We hope to see you there!

POST THRIFT SHOP 2023 BEAUTIFICATION

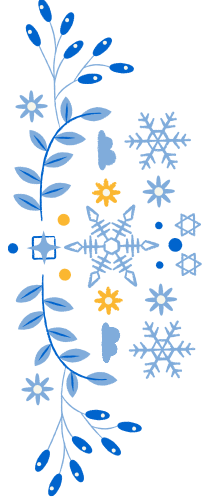
Join us and help us revamp our Post Thrift Shop!

SATURDAY, NOV 18 9AM - NOON 392 LLEWELLYN AVE

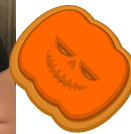


Monthly Meet Up! All Hallows Gala

Tonya Starbeck presents some certificates for members with club anniversaries. Congrats and thank you all for being a part of the FMSC!



We celebrated in Spooky Style at our All Hallows Gala!



Our Director of Hospitality, Mallory Noble, awards a prize to our brand new Director of Morale Funding, Ryane Page.



Laura O'Leary presents Meghan Carlson with a prize!



Emily Gershey is handed a well-earned Volunteer certificate by Wilma Potts.



The Post Thrift Shop donates another generous contribution towards FMSC programs! We couldn't do it without you!

Welcome



By Mavi Conner

HAPPY Anniversary! POST THRIFT SHOP





Meet OUR DREAM TEAM!



"We have a fantastic volunteer force but our staff is present at the store day to day and they are the main reason for the success of our little shop. I don't know how we became so fortunate to have this fabulous and strong team, we are beyond grateful to have them"
Mavi Conner - Thrift Shop Council President

By Mavi Conner



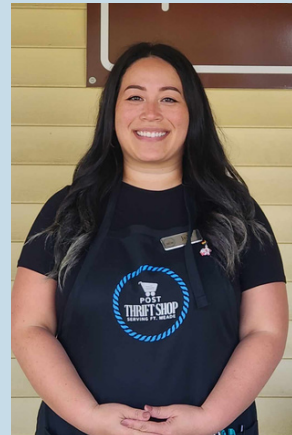
ASHLEY JONES
STORE MANAGER

"I love working with a dynamic and positive team. It makes my heart happy knowing that all our hard work is going towards helping the community. Plus also I love a great deal!"



TARA PIERSON - VARNEY
CONSIGNMENT CLERK

"I love the shop atmosphere, finding good deals, and getting paid to have fun"



JULIE MUNOZ
CASHIER

"The deals I find at the store are fantastic especially name brand items. I love my customers and the relationship we have with them"



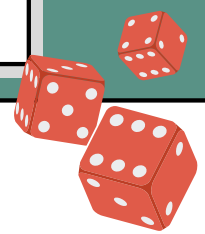
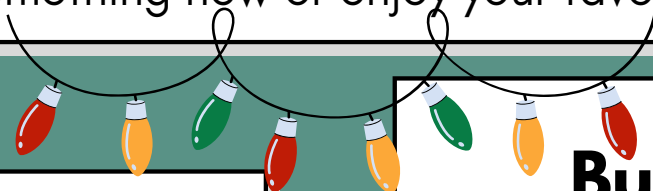
SIERRA LAMB
MERCHANDISE CLERK

"I am fascinated with the treasures I find and the flexibility to shop with our unique Thrift Shop hours"



FMSC CLUBS

Try something new or enjoy your favorites!



Wine

Get festive with some fabulous people on November 24th at 7pm.



Bunco

Do you like to throw dice? Show your competitive side on November 17th and maybe win some fabulous prizes

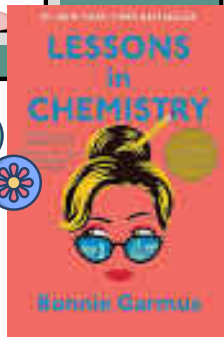
Playdate

Take a minute to entertain your kids with new friends! Be ready to play on November 20th at 9:30 am.



Book

Ready to cuddle up with a good book? Check out Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus with your favorite warm beverage on November 20th at 7:30pm.



Walk N Talk

Don't let the low light and warm meals slow you down! Get out there and walk with some new or old friends on November 17th at 9:30am.



Cooking

Ready to try some new ideas with your weekly menu? Come hang out and make something yummy on December 11th at 6:30pm



Breakfast

December 8th at 9:30am is the best time to try some holiday coffees with some steaming hot tea! Find out all about the FMSC and the people in it.





2023 FMSC Social media challenge

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE? MAKE SURE YOU PARTICIPATE!

2023 FMSC Social media challenge

- Challenge 1**
July - September
Prizes at October MMU
- Challenge 2**
October - December
Prizes at January MMU

Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the goal of the social media challenge?**
The goal of the challenge is to encourage FMSC members to actively engage with the club's public social media posts which helps publicize the club and our community events! The challenge is for club **#membersonly**
- How do I track if I've completed the challenge requirements?**
You can self-track the challenge requirements if you prefer, but the Social Media Director will verify them at the end of the challenge. **#mathismathin**
- What if I meet all of the social media requirements early in the challenge?**
If you are active on social media, you may meet the requirements quickly, but we encourage you to keep up the great work by continuing to engage with FMSC posts! **#socialmediasuperstar**
- Can I participate if I don't have both a Facebook and an Instagram?**
Yes! You only need to have either a personal Facebook or Instagram account in order to participate. The challenge requirements can be met on either account, or on a combination of both. **#options**
- What can member's win if they complete the challenge?**
There will be two opportunities to win prizes! Members who meet the challenge requirements will be entered into a raffle at the end of the first and second challenges. Prizes will be presented at the October 2023 and January 2024 MMU **#winnerwinnerMMUdinner**

- Like & Follow the FMSC on Facebook & Instagram!
- Share (3) different FMSC Events to your social media feed & story.
- "Like" (15) FMSC social media posts.
- Comment on (3) FMSC social media posts.
- Tag FMSC in (1) social media post on your feed or story.



Make sure you are registered and if necessary fill out an exception form here>>>
We can't wait to celebrate and exchange gifts!



- ### Calendar Snapshot
- Nov 18**
TS Beautification
 - Dec. 13, 27**
TS Open Nights
 - Nov. 27**
Hospitality meeting
 - Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21**
Food Pantry
 - Dec. 2-**
Children's Holiday Party!
 - Dec. 3-5, 7-9, 12, 16, 21-24**
Gift Wrapping
 - Dec. 5-**
Volunteer Admin meeting
 - Dec. 6-**
Photography & Publications meeting
 - Dec. 12-**
Holiday Dinner

- ### Social Clubs:
- Nov. 17-** Walk n Talk Club
 - Bunco Club**
 - Nov. 20-** Playdate Club
 - Book Club**
 - Nov. 24-** Wine Club
 - Dec. 8-** Breakfast Club
 - Dec. 11-** Cooking Club

Contact Ashley Jones for access to the Google calendar
HAPPY HOLIDAYS



The Fort Meade Spouses' Club
HOLIDAY DINNER
Qualification Requirements

FMSC HOURS
6 per month

THRIFT SHOP HOURS
4 per month

FUNDRAISING HOURS
1 per month

for September, October, and November

Save the Date
FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY PARTY
IT'S GOING TO BE
OUT OF THIS WORLD

December 2nd, 2023

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