

# Local VFW members contribute to community

from Anne Basel

FOR IRON COUNTY TODAY

Our House is a residential assisted-living facility in Cedar City, Utah. Members of the local Cedar City Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 10846 were keen to find some community-based activities that would aid in advancing the quality of life for both VFW members and Iron County citizens. It only took a few brief introductions for the doors to start opening.

To date, one introductory meeting with the Administrators of Our House has evolved into a regular weekly event for the VFW that centers on an 'anyone welcome' card game, along with a light-hearted and very entertaining conversation round-table. Some of the residents of Our House look forward to their lively and friendly poker games each Monday, while others are happy to just hang back a bit and listen to the boisterous activity and laughter as the piles of chips move back & forth across the table. Some of the players are old hands at the game, but others are fresh and new and just learning. No matter what, everyone enjoys a free endless chip count, the potential for a win, and a lot of laughter.

VFW members Barry Basel and Dennis Robison have encouraged those wanting to have a seat at the poker table to not only join in with the merriment and games, but to share a few stories of days gone by. It only takes a few questions and a bit of laughter to get the stories flowing about what Cedar City was like in the distant past, or adventures survived on the distant reaches of the planet, families nurtured, loves won and lost, and all the other parts of lives well-lived!

In the words of one observer, "It's lovely to witness the camaraderie and enjoyment of everyone involved, not to mention the generosity of time and intention by the VFW members for the good of us all".

In coordination with resident Activities Director, Shyann Price, other activities in which the VFW members have participated in with the Our House community, have



PHOTOS COURTESY OUR HOUSE



The Our House poker table is the place where everyone is a winner with the great laughs, stories and memories made.

included a shooting experience at 3 Peaks Shooting Range, book readings, trivia contests, dog visits, and even a rousing game of Scrabble on a quiet Sunday afternoon. All of these activities have been presented in a light-hearted and very informal manner and have been very well-received by the residents.

Price, says of the VFW volunteers, "Barry and Dennis have gone above and beyond any expectation I ever had. They are so consistent and reliable and have created lasting bonds with the residents. They have become a part of our family at Our

House. Monday Poker Games have become a hot topic!"

She added that while talking with residents and reviewing our activities, one lady said, "I wish we could have more Poker days!" Price couldn't agree more, saying, "We could have more Poker days, but what we really would be wishing for is more Barry and Dennis Days."

Having Barry and Dennis come into our facility has boosted morale. There is something so honorable about having veterans coming to the facility as volunteers. I could never thank them enough for the time

they take out of their day to come spend with us and they are always so happy to do so. And it's not just about Poker! I have learned so much from Barry and Dennis during the times that they have come and have shared so many stories and good jokes that make you laugh until you can't breathe. Talking about hunting and teaching Barry what "tag soup" is has got to be one of my favorite memories. The residents absolutely love visiting with them as well as playing Poker, or any other activity they come up with, or get roped into helping with.

I hope others can be inspired to volunteer and to do so with a pure heart like Barry and Dennis as it really makes a difference in the lives of the people with whom you interact.

Going beyond the VFW motto of, "No one does more for Veterans", VFW Post Commander Barry Basel and VFW Post Quartermaster Dennis Robison are aspiring Veterans to lead their Post into the future by focusing on what Veterans can do for the whole community at large, as well as for other Veterans.