

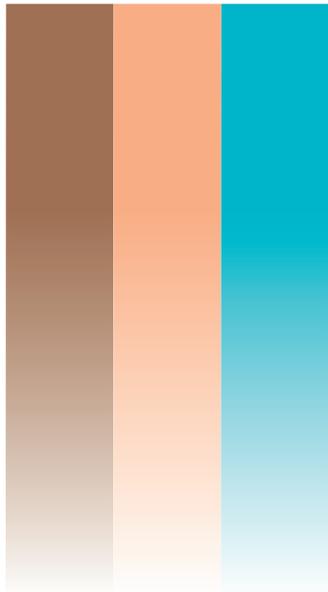


PRESCOTT
ARIZONA
2001
NATIONAL
VETERANS
CREATIVE ARTS
FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 15-22

HOSTED BY

THE NORTHERN ARIZONA
VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



arts • gram

A Daily
Production of the
National Veterans
Creative Arts
Festival

Saturday, October 20

8-8-88

by Susan Fishbein, Los Angeles, CA

What is the significance of the date August 8, 1988 or 8-8-88? For most of us, it means very little. But for Frank Harmon, a veteran from Prescott who struggles with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), it was a date that changed his life. It was on that date that he drove home having just learned from his doctor that he would be living with a disease that would eventually take away his speech, his mobility and deteriorate every muscle in his body.

A little more than ten years later, Frank sat in his wheelchair at the VA in Prescott, unable to speak. At the same time, a vibrant young woman named Andy Landis was in the same hallway, there to visit her dying father—a WWII veteran and former POW who had served at Normandy. Andy and Frank saw each other and something drew them to each other. It had to be fate.

Not knowing Frank couldn't speak, Andy began speaking about her father to this man with the kind and loving eyes in the wheelchair. "I'd talk and he would listen to me," Andy recalls. "When I said thank you, he smiled and made a low noise. I thought he was a wise sage who needed few words." When she realized he didn't have the ability to speak at all, she was flabbergasted.

That brief moment was a spark that lit a fire. The two have become surrogate family for each other. Despite the distance (Andy lives in Tennessee), their friendship grew. "Little by little, he told me his story by e-mail," Andy said. "I'm a writer," she continued, "and I knew Frank's letters and



Frank Harmon and Andy Landis share a special moment during rehearsals.

poems needed to be contained so people could see who he is...what's in his heart." Her husband encouraged her to follow her heart and work with Frank on the play.

"I wrote a story about how I was living with ALS and mailed it to her," explains Frank, who communicates by carefully writing out his words with a marker on an erasable board in his lap. "She had the idea for a play."

Like Henry David Thoreau, they both share the same philosophy that the earth and its elements inspire so much of life. It is with that spirit that they created the play.

The piece they are performing at the Festival is actually a small part of the full play. It's been performed at the VA here for patients and employees, but Frank said the full play is not quite complete. When it is, the first time it will be performed will be here in Prescott, at the VA.

Fate works in mysterious ways. "If it wasn't for my Dad, I'd never have met Frank," Andy says with a smile. Frank doesn't need to write out any words. The sparkle in his eyes says it all.

A Reporter's Thoughts from the Prop Room

By Paula Pedene, Phoenix, AZ

It's amazing to see a room with 40 flames and yet no smoke. But that's exactly what's happening in the prop room—a room with 100 red and blue vests, sequins, and 40 make believe golden flames. Creativity is inspired here. The paper flames come to life through the efforts of the prop team. One of the members, Joan Ricard, a Nurse Executive at VA here in Prescott, has ensured these flames have life.

In another corner, Lynn Swank is working with steam. "This is great," she says as she irons away. "The steam is giving me a great facial." In her everyday life, Lynn is a program assistant with VA's Geriatrics and Extended Care Service. But at

the Festival she is a costumer. "I'm just worried that my right arm may be a little bigger than my left when the Festival is over," Lynn adds. She has been ironing shirts, vests, uniforms, a kilt and other clothing for the show. "This magic sizing is the key," she confides. "It adds body without stiffness, and it makes my job easier."

Meanwhile, Wanona Heynen is working on a ten-inch hem. "Some of the alterations are very challenging," she tells me. "I'll have to hand sew this to make sure the alterations are perfect." Besides working at the Prescott VA, she used to work nights at the Prescott Fine Arts Theater so her work here is bringing back good memories. "I'd forgotten how much fun

this (alterations) was. I just love doing this!" she adds.

When Kendra Borurgart of the US Forest Service saw that VA was putting on a show, she knew that they would need people to help alter costumes. "I offered to help," she said. Her son, Nick, is also assisting by sewing buttons and providing sequins and beads where they are needed.

Sharon Padnuk, who works for the VA here in Prescott, is making sewing magic. She's trying to make a 36-inch waist pair of pants fit a person who has a 44-inch waist. "I'm seeing people I haven't seen in a long time," she said. "It's been fun meeting the vets and everyone has been so friendly. It's really made us more of a team."

Need to Know...

Medical Room: Room: 328. If the nurses are not there, call: 273-1354.

Hospitality Room: Room: 219/221. Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Today's dish includes ham and potato salad.

Travel: Stop in the host room and check with Jim Moran on the transportation team, to review your return travel itinerary for Monday. Call your airlines to make sure the times have not changed.

Want more the this year's Festival? Check out: <http://www.va.gov/vetevent/CAF> for issues of the Arts•gram, artist profiles, photos and more!

Nosey Notes

by Spilzie Beans

Attention Ron Foster: Van driving school lessons begin next week. We encourage you to attend. Spies report that as Ron's wheelchair van was leaving the VA, he forgot the lift on the ground dragging it across street. Maybe Ron has dreams of being a drag-racer??

Special birthday greetings go out to Andy Landis, Frank Harmon's drama partner. Her birthday was yesterday, and while we aren't saying which birthday it is, Frank made sure it was special by presenting her with a framed photo of her father, a WWII veteran who served at Normandy and was a POW.

We get fan mail!! Here's a note Spilzie got yesterday: "Dear Spilzie—I was relieved to see you are back. I was afraid you had retired once you got to Prescott

(not knowing how old you are, or anything...). Your column in the morning is my daily 'slap in the face.' Better than that caffeine kick!—signed, A True Fan." Thank you fan...and keep those notes coming!

Did you know that one of our artists created a piece of Presidential art? It's true. Don Taylor, our Best of Show winner, wrote a letter in 1996 to the then-First Lady offering to design and build a rocking chair for President Clinton. The White House gave him the go ahead and he delivered the chair—in person!

At Karaoke last night, Jim Vierzba, Fresno Team Leader, discovered a new technique for reaching those high notes. When he was getting close to the high note while singing, he just took a running leap into the air. Maybe you should pass that secret onto Paul!

Beads & Roadkill

Wally Edison sweeps the kitchen floor to recapture the beads that try to escape his intricate artwork. “I find beads everywhere, even in my bed,” says Wally. However, no matter where the beads may try and run to, they won’t deter Wally from completing his artistic vision.

Each evening when he returns from volunteering at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, he relaxes for hours with his bead work. Sometimes an artist must become very resourceful in the pursuit of creative freedom. His award winning “Sioux Peace Pipe Bag,” contains materials from an extremely unusual source. “I use road kill and collect the porcupine quills that are no thicker than a pencil lead.”

Wally’s passion for his medium began five years ago while volunteering in the VAMC’s Hobby Room. Wally obtained some books and a kit and attempted to create a pair of moccasins. His current project is a new pair of moccasins which he hopes will be another award winning piece of artwork in a future Festival.

He and his wife of 53 years, Shirley, also a volunteer at the Minneapolis Medical Center, are looking forward to next year’s festival. It is especially exciting for them as the Festival will be in their hometown.

Special Show Note

During the performance on Sunday, there will be a brief period of fireworks and explosive noise. The special effects will take place after the singing of “America the Beautiful” at the end of the first act. If anyone is bothered by this type of noise, you may step out of the theater until it is over.

Show Notes from the Director’s Chair

By Paul Dieke

We’re Almost There!

It has been a wonderful journey these past few days, and we’re almost at our destination — a magnificent show for our audience! What troopers you are! You have hung in there and worked hard. I want to congratulate YOU for your success in helping reach our goal of a great production! I thank YOU for many hours of dedicated work, which helped us to get here.

Thoughts on Freshness

We want to explode on stage with energy and vigor! I know much effort has been expended, and long hours have occurred, but we can rally for a powerful presentation on Sunday by:

- Reducing stress. Review all of your lines and songs, and think through the whole show. The more you feel prepared, the less stress you will have.
- Rest up. Please no late night tonight. Go to your room, rest and regenerate your energy for the show tomorrow.
- Eat well. Don’t have a last minute desire to starve yourself to look thinner. You need to feel satisfied and energized to do a fabulous performance.
- Enjoy the experience. You’re set to perform well — relax! The more you enjoy it, the more the audience will too. Give us lots of pizzazz, sparkle and sincerity.



Thoughts on Community

I want to commend you for supporting each other, the technical staff and the sponsors as we developed our show. The fact that we have drawn together tightly as a group will show in the exciting, well-paced and well-performed show that we’ll have on Sunday.

Thoughts on Our Audience

The most important part of our performance is the audience. They are the reason that we have prepared so carefully and worked so hard in rehearsal. I am absolutely certain that if you continue to give your all to the show, they will be amazed, entertained, and inspired.

Be sure to thank audience members as you greet them after the show. Their hearty applause and sincere compliments will let you know how much your efforts are appreciated.

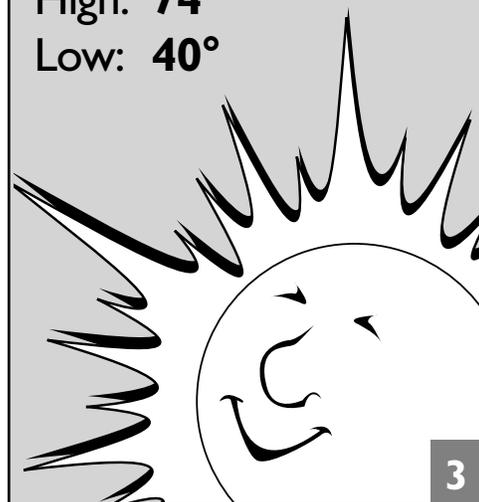
Weather Corner

Today:

Sunny

High: 74°

Low: 40°



National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Schedule Saturday, October 20

Performer's Schedule	6am	Artist's Schedule
7-8:30am ● Breakfast Cottonwood/Sedona Rooms	7	● 7-8:30am Breakfast Cottonwood/Sedona Rooms
8am ● Team Leader Meetings - Prescott/Chino Rooms	8	
8:30am ● Team Leaders meet with performers	9	● 8:30am Team leaders meet with artists
9am-10am ● Chorus number rehearsal, all performers-GMR*	10	● 9am - Noon Depart for trip to Sedona to tour galleries
10-11:30am ● Selected Acts Rehearse - Granite Mountain Rm "Stress Free" session - Prescott/Cino Rooms	11	
11:30am-12:30pm ● Lunch at hotel - Sedona Room	Noon	
12:30pm ● Depart for Yavapai College Performance Hall	1pm	● 12:30-1:30pm Lunch at Sedona Elks Club
12:45-1:30pm ● Prepare for dress rehearsal		
1:30-5:30pm ● Full Dress Rehearsal (costumes & make-up) with orchestra and ALL performers	2	
	3	● 3-5pm Stress Free Workshops at Hotel Prescott/Chino Rooms Native American Artist Demonstration Eagle's Nest Lounge
	4	
	5	
5:30pm ● Depart Theater and Dinner at hotel - Goldwater Ballroom	6	● 5:30-6:30pm Dinner at hotel - Goldwater Ballroom
7-9pm ● Ice Cream Social followed by Art Royer's WWII USO show Goldwater Ballroom	7	● 7-9pm Ice Cream Social followed by Art Royer's WWII USO show Goldwater Ballroom
	8	
9-11pm ● Social time at hotel	9	● 9-11pm Social time at hotel
	10	
	11	

Today's Menu

Lunch

Performer's-Prescott Resort
Chickem Breast, Hamburger, or Bratwurst
Assorted Cheeses
Baked Beans
Green Salad w/dressing
Fruit Slices
Assorted Desserts
Beverages

Artists-Sedona Elk Club
Chicken Ceaser Salad
Roll & Butter
Fruit Slices
Beverages

Dinner

Chicken Premavera
Braised Beef w/mushrooms
Potatoes or Rice
Green Salad w/dressing
Tomato and Cucumber Salad
Rolls and Butter
Assorted Desserts
Beverages

Tomorrow's Breakfast

Create your own omelette
Scrambled Eggs
Breakfast Meats
Breakfast Breads
Cereal
Milk and Juice
Hot Beverages