



## Dining Services' Pop-Up Events Add Variety

Like a jack-in-the-box, Dining Services' Pop-Up Events are designed to delight. Last month, they hosted their first pop-up dinner in The Bistro. This dinner, featuring steamed lobsters, was enjoyed by more than 40 residents.

Haider Mahmood, Director of Dining Services, who developed the plan for the pop-up events, explained that he had heard of colleagues in other communities offering similar dining events. Plus, like so many of us, the restrictions of COVID can be – to be honest – really boring. He wanted to add some variety to VHRC's dining landscape – even if only for a meal.

"I wanted to change up the dining experience. I wanted to give the residents a dining experience to look forward to. Also, events like these help to keep the dining team on their toes and motivate them to do their best," said Haider.

Haider said he was very pleased with how the evening went and gave kudos to his team – Jimmy Phomsivilai, Dining Services Manager, and Madelin Argueta-Chevez, Penthouse Supervisor, and all those who helped bring the event together. "I thought everyone was just awesome," said Haider.

The event got high marks from those who enjoyed the dinner as well. "I enjoyed it very much," said Tony McMahon. "It was well-prepared and well-presented. The



*Chef Nik Chanthavisouk prepares a lobster for Dining Services' first pop-up dinner.*

crowd seemed to enjoy it and I did too."

Haider is hoping to do two such events per month. The next event – an Oktoberfest lunch – is set for Oct. 13, but it has already sold out. However, residents can look forward to another pop-up dinner later in the month. Also, Dining Services recently resumed the Men's and Women's breakfasts – men have their breakfast on the first Tuesday of the month and women on the third Tuesday.

"I hope these events are another way we can start to at least feel like we are returning to normal," said Haider.

## Celebrating a Century

Jane Peak, who has lived at VHRC longer than any other resident, will celebrate her 100th birthday on Oct. 21 – a milestone she never expected to achieve. “I had no expectation when I was younger of living to this age,” says Jane, who had lengthy hospitalizations for kidney disease as a teen and for hepatitis in her thirties. “I am very thankful to be alive” – and to have stayed remarkably healthy ever since.



*Jane Peak at the 2019 NMCGRF Gala holding a framed U.S. Coast Guard burgee.*

Jane met her husband, Paul, at a dance at the Coast Guard Academy in New London in 1942, when she was a student at Connecticut College across the street. The day after he graduated, they married. When Paul went off to serve in the war, Jane got her master's degree in psychology at Yale. During his 30-year career in the Coast Guard, the Peaks moved a lot, always near an ocean, including to Hawaii – “we loved it there.” Wherever they went, Jane jumped into volunteering, often in the health care fields. In Hawaii she spent two years in a state facility teaching a disabled adult to read, and in San Francisco she made regular visits to the Coast Guard sick bay to visit homesick young recruits.

After retirement in 1989, the Peaks moved to Vinson Hall, which Jane had helped to fundraise to build in the 1960s, as a member of the Coast Guard Wives Club of D.C. During the past 31 years, the Peaks have been a driving force at

Vinson Hall, where until his death in 2014 Paul was known as “the mayor.” Jane has stayed active with Vinson Voices, the Needlers, George’s exercise classes, and pool volleyball. “I’ve loved every minute of my life at Vinson Hall,” says Jane, who is currently staying with family but looks forward to being back in residence. “I’ve had a wonderful life.”

### *The Campus Voice*

This publication is created for Vinson Hall Retirement Community in an effort to inform and delight. This publication is produced by the Office of Philanthropy and Engagement, but attempts to reflect the work and efforts of all VHRC residents and staff.

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