

LOCAL

O*V*H

Klinger contest a highlight of Ohio Veterans Home's annual M*A*S*H bash

By TOM JACKSON

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PERKINS TWP.

The men who showed up in dresses and necklaces for the annual M*A*S*H 4077 picnic at the Ohio Veterans Home brought new meaning to the phrase "dress for success."

The men in feminine attire were OVH staffers and volunteers competing in a "Klinger contest," named after the cross-dressing corporal in the long-running TV show. They helped provide entertainment for the picnic, a summer tradition at the OVH for the last several years.

The home has 681 residents and about 520 were able to attend the picnic, said Gary Chetwood, director of public affairs for the home.

The OVH tries to have one big outdoor event every summer, said Steve Mattune, the deputy director. A popular antique car show returns in July, he said.

After balloting from the picnickers was completed, the winner of the Klinger contest was James Heilman, 17, an OVH volunteer from Old Fort.

Col. Christine Cook, OVH network superintendent, visited a thrift shop and provided several of the dresses worn by the men.

OVH social worker Jeff Clem, 40, said he was modeling a "breezy and cool" dress.

"It's embarrassing," he said. "I can't believe I'm doing it."

Clem said he was dragged into the contest after being challenged by another contes-



Register photo/ABIGAIL BOBROW

Kirby Brown, RN supervisor at Ohio Veterans Home, parades as part of the look-a-like contest for "Klinger," the cross-dressing corporal from the TV show "M*A*S*H" at the theme-picnic at OVH on Wednesday.

tant, Kirby Brown, an OVH supervisor. Brown, 41, who carried a cigar and purse, said he had been challenged to take part by Gary Yun, another RN.

"Nobody was stepping up to the plate," Yun explained. "The residents enjoy it. I did this two years ago."

The residents also apparently liked Andrea Klausung, the 31-year-old social service director who defeated several other women in the "Hot Lips Houlihan" contest, named after the fictional M*A*S*H unit's

head nurse. Klausung said her curly blonde wig and some strategically-stuffed tissues helped her win.

Dave Cellar, 89, an OVH resident for seven years who served as a World War II medic, said he appreciated the picnic.

"It's great," he said. "A

veteran's home is a great place to live."

Al Steiner, 84, a Navy veteran, and Art Rohlik, 83, who served in the infantry in Italy, said they enjoyed the event too.

"It gives us a chance to get out in the fresh air and hobnob with real people," Rohlik said.