



# Armed Forces Retirement Home

The premier retirement community for our veterans

# The Communicator

Washington, District of Columbia & Gulfport, Mississippi

VOLUME XIX ~ QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ~ VOLUME IV

OCTOBER 1, 2022 - DECEMBER 31, 2022

## Local Gulfport news station films resident greetings

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

The Mississippi Gulf Coast's local TV station, WXXV, came to AFRH-G to film greetings from our residents for Veterans Day, and the holiday season. These greetings will be shown on WXXV Fox News 25 through the New Year. Thank you to all the residents who participated and thank you to WXXV's General Manager Don Moore for always supporting our veterans.



Leon Hughes, USMC



Jerry Burghout, USN/USA



Louis Casebonne, USA



Bettylu Dennis, USN



Von Blunt, USAF



Pat Smith, USA



Fred Edward, USAF



Betty Atencio, USN/USA



Claire Dimler-Smith, USA



Tony Langdon, USA



Edwina & Terry Watson, USA



Donald Morrison, USN

## Commitment to Quality

By Elaine Fry | Performance Improvement Integrator

The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington (AFRH-W) received valuable input from our residents during our biennial Resident Accessibility Focus Groups. Residents from all levels of care participated in active discussion of perceived barriers to quality. Topics included Environmental and Architectural, Communication and Attitude, Community Integration and Transportation, Employment and Financial and any other area of importance. As a result of the information collected, improvements have been made in the efficiency and effectiveness of contracted shuttle services and support in obtaining Metro Access. Ocular readers and magnifying glasses were strategically placed in areas where Residents read printed informational documents. New computers were purchased and installed in the residents' Computer Lab. Campus Operations repaired walkways and streets and enhanced lighting throughout the grounds of the campus for enhanced safety.

AFRH-W employees and contractors have access to "Idea Generation Boards" in their assigned service areas. The "Idea Generation Board" is place where the teams can document their input on ideas, solutions to issues and improvements in the workplace and practices. As a product created from staff input from various staff surveys, the "Idea Generation Board" empowers team members and teaches and encourages appreciation of diverse contributions-everyone is valued.

These are just a couple of ways that AFRH-W demonstrates a **commitment to quality**. Other initiatives will be published in the next quarterly Communicator Newsletter.



## Meet the New Public Affairs Officer



Chief Operating Officer John RisCassi selected Ms. Karen Nowowieski to be AFRH's Public Affairs Officer starting October 11, 2022.

Karen comes to AFRH from DoD's Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), where she handled the agency's strategic communications, chaired its communications working group, led updates to the WHS.mil website, and assisted communications and support needs for DoD-wide boards, commissions, and task forces as well as the presidential transition. Prior to WHS, Karen was chief of communications for the DoD chief management officer, chief of communications and chief of protocol for the Defense Media Activity, assistant news director for the Pentagon Channel, and a master instructor for the Defense Information School. Following college and a four-year enlistment in the Army, Karen began her media career as an assignment manager at WJLA News Channel 8 in Washington, D.C. She holds a master's degree from Norwich University, professional degrees from the Protocol School of Washington and London School of Business and Finance, and a bachelor's degree from the College of New Rochelle.

The Public Affairs Officer leads the team responsible for resident marketing and admissions, website and social media content, information products such as the Communicator newsletter, and AFRH corporate communications and media relations.

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# AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988 Web site: [www.AFRH.gov](http://www.AFRH.gov) Email: [Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov](mailto:Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov)



Karen Nowowieski ~ Public Affairs Officer

Becki L. Zschiedrich ~ Gulfport Public Affairs

The *AFRH Communicator* is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by the *AFRH Communicator* staff for journalistic style and length. The articles included in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the management, staff, or residents of the AFRH.

## Serving America's Veterans

AFRH is not just a place to live, but a place to live more. Our model retirement communities are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

- Eligibility:** Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH. The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer, are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home.
- Active-Duty Career Retired:** Veterans who retired with 20 or more years of active-duty service in a regular component of the Armed Forces.
- Eligible for Retired Pay:**
  - Veterans, who served in a regular or reserve component of the Armed Forces, who are now eligible to receive retired pay and benefits.
  - Retired Guard/Reserves with over 20 years of creditable service (combined inactive and active-duty).
  - Veterans who qualified for an early retirement such as TERA (Temporary Early Retirement Authority).
  - Veterans who were given a medical or disability retirement with pay and full benefits.
- Service-Connected Disability:** Veterans with a service-connected disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- War Theater:** Veterans who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay and now suffer from injuries, disease, or disability.
- WWII Female Veteran:** Veterans who served in a women's component before June 12, 1948 who are determined to be eligible due to compelling personal circumstances.
- Beneficiary Spouse:** The spouse of a retired veteran may apply to live with the Retiree if he/she is enrolled as a beneficiary in DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) and was married to his/her sponsor prior to the veteran's retirement from the Armed Forces.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to: AFRH, Public Affairs Office, Box #584 ~ 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, ~ Washington, DC 20011-8400

Visit us on the web at: <https://www.afrh.gov>

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>



**WE CURRENTLY DO NOT HAVE A WAITING LIST. APPLY TODAY!**

## For the love of the game

By Willie Shives | Resident  
Edited by PK Knor | Resident



I began bowling when I was stationed overseas for the first time in 1958, in Bremerhaven, Germany. Bowling was the new craze for nearly everyone, especially for us younger guys with very little pay to do anything else. Recreation was our way of life other than drinking and/or romancing the ladies downtown. We had 16 lanes which were located in a huge building called Radio City. It also housed the Service Club, gymnasium, theater, snack bar, and PX. Our lanes were very primitive, compared with today. For my first two years there, we had no automatic pinsetters and had pin boys doing the work, setting up the pins, and returning the balls. If I recall correctly, we paid 25 cents a line and 5 cents to rent shoes. As far as oiling the lanes, that was done by pouring oil out of a can onto the lanes and spreading it around with a mop. As you can imagine, bowling conditions were tough. This was shown to be very true when our traveling team would go to other lanes. Although our high average man carried only a 183 average, the team would invariably win most of their games because the lanes were so much better. I never reached a high enough average to be on the base team, but I did average in the high 160s to low 170s. I had some success with team bowling when my team won our Dog Flight Championship, and later on, the Intramural Championship. I was also on the winning team in a trio scratch league. The team captain was the guy with the highest average on base



and I was especially proud that he picked me to be a team member.

While stationed at Eielson AFB, Alaska, I was fortunate to be on the base second team. In May 1963, I went with the base bowling team to a tournament at the naval station on Kodiak Island. We didn't win anything there, but the trip itself was somewhat memorable. After flying to Anchorage in a C-47, we switched to a C-123, for the flight to Kodiak. Even though it was May, we had to de-ice the plane before takeoff. There was a regular traveling league which consisted of two teams each from Eielson AFB and Fort Wainwright and one team from Fort Greeley. I was a member of our official squadron team that bowled in downtown Fairbanks and won a championship there. While stationed at Rhein Main AB in Germany from 1964-67, I was a member of our squadron bowling team. The only noteworthy bowling achievement accomplished at Wakkanai, Japan, from 1968-1969 was that my team won the Able Flight Championship.

While stationed at Minot AFB, N.D. from 1973-77, I was a member of the base bowling team. We won one championship in downtown Minot. Of note, we once had a 15th AF bowling tournament, where each participant would bowl on their home lanes and the scores were sent to 15 AF. I managed a 5th-place finish in the singles competition. I was a member of the CBPO team that won the Base Intramural Championship.

After retiring in 1977, I returned to my home state of Pennsylvania and started working part-time at Nellie Fox Bowl, south of Chambersburg, PA. My boss was Joe Wertime, who started the lanes with Nellie. After Nellie's death, Joe became the sole owner and he also ran a pro shop. He drilled many balls for me and I learned how different layouts and coverstocks could greatly influence a bowling ball's reaction on the lanes. I had only been working a short time when I rolled my first 700 series. In those days this was something special. Each year at the end of the bowling season in June, Nellie Fox Bowl would hold a doubles tournament. After working all day I would bowl in the tournament. In this tournament, I rolled my first series above 750, with a 761! I also took second place with a much younger partner.

By the time I moved from Pennsylvania to AFRH-W in 1986, I had bowled many 700 series and carried over a 200 average in some leagues. Upon arriving at AFRH-W, the first thing I did was find the bowling lanes and start bowling. At that time the lanes were located in the Grant building. I bowled on several teams while there, but a league championship eluded me. My most significant accomplishment occurred in 1995 when I rolled a 768 series which included a 288 game. To my knowledge, these are the highest game and series bowled here. Having rolled 10 strikes in a row, I was in line for my first 300 game. I buried the ball in the pocket and left a solid 7-pin. I was so upset and disgusted, I missed the spare and had to settle for a 288. The 768 is my lifetime high. Among some of the awards for that game and series are a 285 pin and a 700 series pin from the Nation's Capital Area Bowling Association, as well as a Century wristwatch from the American Bowling Congress for a game 100 points over average. I bowled several seasons in the 90s on a Friday night Industrial League in Hyattsville and we won a championship in 1993.

In 2001, I left the home and returned to Pennsylvania. I bowled every chance I got; Monday night league; senior get-together Tuesday mornings; Tuesday night league; Wednesday night league; a Thursday senior get-together and a Thursday night league; and, I substituted sometimes in a Friday night league! Also in 2001, with the senior league on Tuesday mornings, I bowled my first 300 game at Park Lanes in Shippensburg, PA, but sadly it wasn't sanctioned! In 2008, in a senior league in Chambersburg, PA, I bowled another unsanctioned 300 game, but Lincoln Lanes gave me a trophy in recognition of my achievement. After my 12th strike, I had a terrific headache, and with my pre-existing blood pressure problems, I passed out (I guess) and ended up in the hospital for several days.

One of my last noticeable accomplishments was with a Friday night mixed league at Nellie Fox's in 2014-15. I ended that season with a 211 average, at the age of 76.

Since returning to AFRH-W I have rolled several 700+ series. Once in a shoot-out, I was bowling with fellow resident Pete Hudson, and I had a good series going! My confidence was high. Before getting up for the 10th frame I told Pete I needed two strikes and a count to make 700. I rolled two strikes and got seven more pins for a 702 series.

I got rid of my trophies many years ago, but kept some of the plaques which were mounted on them. The one which has the most significance for me is my initial team trophy.



# Architectural model of the old Naval Home

*Designed and created by Dan Ellis | Resident*

The Naval Home (1976-2005) was eleven stories high with the top ten levels serving primarily as resident rooms and the first floor base level housing all amenities including, Wellness Services, Memory Care and Long Term care residents in addition to the dining hall, administration, and security. (Note: In 2002, the name was changed to AFRH-Gulfport.)

The visual appearance of the structure was that of a bow of a ship. The bow, protruded from the southern end of the two wings facing the Mississippi Sound. Hurricane Katrina damages in 2005 resulted in its removal and construction of our present three-tower, eight story buildings, which opened on October 4, 2010.

The resident rooms in the old building were small, having only a half-bath. On each floor of each wing, there was a communal shower. There were no decks or balconies, but each room had a floor to ceiling window.



## AFRH-G resident highlight – Shaun Michael Hogan

*By Dan Ellis | Resident*



Shaun Michael Hogan was born to Warren and Mary Hogan in St. Louis, Missouri, on October 24, 1964. Having come from a true Irish family, his brothers were named Timothy and Kevin. Shaun's family extends to his children named Steffen, Timothy, Rebecca and Gabriel. He graduated from Union High School in Union, Missouri, in 1982 followed by his recruitment into the U.S. Navy on September 11, 1983.

Following his boot camp training at Great Lakes, IL, Shaun was assigned to AO "A" School in aviation ordnance at Millington, TN, in late 1983, where he was trained as an Aviation Ordnanceman (AO) to become an aircraft armament (weapons) specialist, receiving instructions on servicing, handling, storing and inspection of all types of weapons and ammunition carried on Navy aircraft.

He was then enrolled in Aviation Enlisted Aircrew Training School (AEATS) at Pensacola, FL, in early 1984 where he was provided training in aircrew duties and assignments, survival, first aid, and water rescue procedures.

Shaun received further training in Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) School at San Diego, CA. His final training was with The Fleet Readiness Aviation Maintenance Program (FRAMP) for P-3C aircraft at NAS (Naval Air Station) Moffet, CA, during 1984.

Shaun became an Aviation Ordnance specialist and had achieved grade E-3. As an Aviation Ordnanceman (AO), he became a weapons specialist charged with managing all types of ammunition carried on Navy aircraft. His job responsibilities included; inspecting, maintaining and repairing mechanical and electrical weapons and ordnance systems on aircraft and carriers. His first duty assignment was with (VP-4) Patrol Squadron 4 at Barbers Point, HI, from October 1984 to May 1988 and was raised to grade E-5. VP-4's operational excellence and contributions to the Cold War were recognized in 1987 in once again earning the Navy Battle "E" Award. From May 1988 to May 1990, he was assigned to Naval Air Station Key West Weapons Department. NAS Key West's national security mission supports operational and readiness requirements for the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, National Guard units, federal agencies, and allied forces.

Shaun's next duty assignment was with the Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 131 'Wildcats' at Cecil Field NAS FL from 1990 to 1993 and was raised to grade E-6. In 1991, the squadron was deployed onboard the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower to the Red Sea and North Arabian Gulf in support of "Operation Desert Storm." The deployment concluded when joining up above the Arctic Circle for cold weather operations during "Teamwork '92." Shaun's next duty was as a Small Arms Instructor while based with the Naval Training Center at Orlando, FL, during 1993 and 1994, when the base was closed down. He was then transferred to Millington, TN as an AO "A" School Instructor for the years of 1994, 1995, and 1996. This base also closed down and he was moved to Pensacola, FL, for the years of 1996 and 1997.

Shaun was then assigned to the Patrol and Reconnaissance Squadron (VP) 16 at Jacksonville, FL, commencing in 1997 through 2000 when raised to grade E-7. During this time the squadron had made deployments to Iceland and Sicily. From 2000 to 2002, he was posted to the USS Enterprise (CVN-65), that was based in Norfolk, VA and was raised to grade E-8. The USS Enterprise was the first and swiftest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in the world and was the longest naval vessel at that time.

He was then transferred to Recruiting Duty in St. Louis, MO, for 18 months during 2002-2003, and while there, he attended the neighboring Columbia College at Rolla, MO.

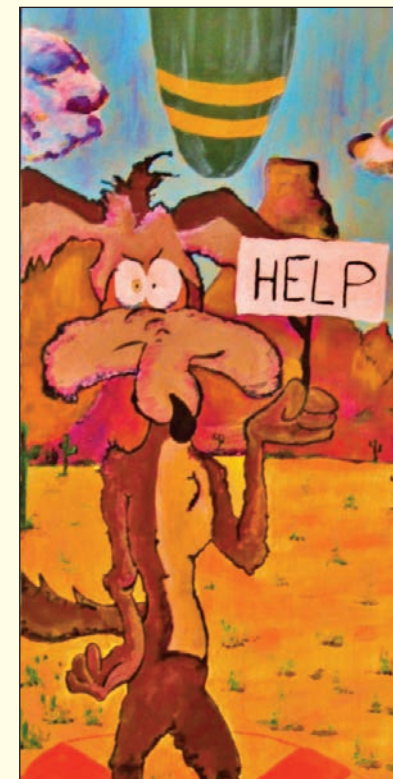
Shaun was then transferred to the USS Wasp LHD-1 at Norfolk, VA, for the years 2003 to 2005, during which time he saw action with deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Shaun retired from the U.S. Navy after 21 years on July 31, 2005. He expressed, "I loved the Navy, it gave me opportunities to work with all the services - the Marines, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard."

Following his return home to Rolla, MO, Shaun was employed by the U.S. Army at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, as a civilian Army Contractor WG 6 conducting weapons maintenance. In continuance with his military training, he was solicited by the Kuwait Air Force and served as an Aviation Ordnanceman for five years, ending in 2011. He was stationed at the Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait located near the border of Iraq. Its operation was under the supervision of the Kuwaiti Air Force with the help of the United States Air Force.

Shaun retired to Philippines where he built a home, ran the beaches, rumbled on the waves and learned how to spell Filipino.

On November 1, 2022, Shaun was welcomed to AFRH-G where he quickly found a place to keep him busy in the Arts and Crafts Department.



Shaun has not been at AFRH-G very long, but he is sure producing masterpieces in the art room. Thank you for sharing your talent with us.

## AFRH-W world class bowler

*By PK Knor | Resident*



During his Air Force career, Pete Hudson learned how to bowl and became an exceptional bowler. While this article is about his bowling career, his military career and life episodes are intermingled. Pete Hudson was raised in Lynchburg, Virginia, joined the Air Force in 1954, and had basic training at Lackland AFB. He then trained as a medical technician at Brooke Army Medical Center, TX. His first assignment, in 1956, was to the 50th TAC Hospital, Yokota Air Base, Japan. He was next assigned to Langley AFB, Hampton, Virginia. While there, he was sent to the Advanced Medical Administration Course in Montgomery, AL, where he met and talked with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Montgomery bus boycott.

He was honorably discharged, then reenlisted in 1958, and was given a special duty assignment to the U.S. Air Force Academy, CO. As a team member, Pete used his medical administration training and knowledge in the establishment of the Cadet Dispensary and, two years later, the Air Force Academy Hospital. While there, he experienced President Dwight D. Eisenhower as the main speaker for the first cadet graduating class. He also met USAF BG Jimmy Stewart at a cadet social. This assignment is where Pete's 'league' bowling career started. In 1962, at Hahn Air Base Hospital in Germany, Pete competed and won membership to the base bowling team! His assignment to Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, in 1966, saw him enter his first individual tournament and he "walked away" with the \$300 singles first prize. Next, he was assigned to USAF Reserve Regional HQ, CA. In the Fourth Air Force Bowling Tournament, at Hamilton Air Force Base, CA, he placed first with a 191 average and received a traveling bag. His lifetime career-high

game was 289 and his high series was 736.

Pete retired from the Air Force in March of 1974. Following his military career, he attended Thomas Nelson Community College where he received degrees in applied science and public administration and graduated 'cum laude.' He then earned a BA degree in political science from Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA. After college, Pete spent 15 years as a management analyst at the Malcolm Grow USAF Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base, DC. Pete later attended an advanced bowling instructor class with Don Johnson, a famous PBA bowler and instructor, in Las Vegas, NV. After becoming a certified bowling instructor, he set up his own company, "The Advanced Bowling Clinic," which provided bowlers with the tools to improve their game. He videotaped their bowling and deciphered where they needed help. He was known as "The Tweaker!" Pete moved to AFRH-W in 2009 where he continued to bowl and offered help to anyone who asked.

Pete currently volunteers at the chaplain's suite and serves as office manager and Protestant chapel funds custodian. He is happy to be a resident of AFRH-W and enjoys life here.



CHAMPS -- The 26th Air Division team, with four Hamilton bowlers took top team competition during Western Regional Tourney action at the Rose Bowling Lanes this week. They are, from top left corner, Carl Thor, C. C. Carter, Pete Hudson and Chuck Farris. Standing out the team are, bottom left to right, Bob Hooten from Fallon AFS, Nev., and Glenn Higo, Cambria AFS, Calif. Higo and Hudson also took first in the doubles competition. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Sgt. W. L. Dzikowski)



# AFRH-Washington

## Salute to veterans

By Steven Briefs | Recreation Supervisor  
Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

On November 4, the Salvation Army National Headquarters sponsored a program that highlighted the service of our residents who served during WWII with a special plaque. Each of the 23 names on the plaque were read and those residents stood up and were acknowledged the applauded. In addition, five other residents were honored for their outstanding service to AFRH-W, whether for volunteering to support our programing or in participation of the variety of programs we offer. They were, Fred Ebner, U.S. Coast Guard, John Blumer, U.S. Navy, Billy Bowen, U.S. Air Force, Hilary Rosado, U.S. Army and Muriel Kupersmith, U.S. Marine Corps.

The U.S. Coast Guard Honor Guard opened with the presentation of the Colors. Commissioner Kenneth G. Hodder spoke of the faithfulness of our residents in their service to our country, and Chairman of the American Defense International Van Hipp spoke about the rich history of our country plus thanked those residents who left their families to answer the call to defend our country.

The Salvation Army Brass band played a variety of patriotic and hymnal music that was inspirational and appreciated. It was a nice evening for everyone.



## Veterans Day celebrations

Story & photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

Every year on Veterans Day the residents are visited by the Lambda Gamma Gamma Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. They are a military alumni chapter located out of Ft. Meade, MD. They have been coming to AFRH for Veterans Day for 37+ years and always look forward to giving back to their fellow veteran brothers and sisters. It began as a morale and welfare visit, but over the years transitioned into what it is today...hosting a morning BINGO. This provided a fun way of honoring our veterans. Among the prizes this year were watches, Bluetooth speakers, and clocks. The veterans were also served a delicious cake. Several games of Bingo were played and then they socialized with the residents and enjoyed cake and punch together. We were so happy to have them back after a two year hiatus, due to Covid. Our residents look forward to their visit again next year.



## On duty over 140 years

Story & photo by George Wellman | Resident

The eagles were removed from Eagle Gate at AFRH-Washington on 9 November 2022. The eagles were silent sentinels at the gate since the mid-1870s. They were loaded onto a small truck for their journey to Ohio. They will have their talons sharpened, their beaks aligned, and their feathers preened before being returned as silent sentinels for their next century of service.

During their many years of service, the following significant events occurred at the Soldiers' Home:

- 1877 – Eagles installed at the gate
- 1893 – Water tower at Lincoln's Cottage was built
- 1955 – First female resident, Ms. Regina Jones, admitted to AFRH
- 1974 – Soldiers' Home designated as a "National Historic Landmark"
- 1995 – Mother Teresa visits Stanley Hall Chapel at the Home
- 1980 – Tunnel between Sheridan and Scott completed
- 2005 – Hurricane Katrina strikes Gulf coast; Gulfport residents moved to AFRH-W
- 2008 – Lincoln's Cottage opens to the public as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- 2010 – Gulfport residents move back to their campus after five years
- 2011 – Earthquake on east coast; significant damage to the Sherman Building
- 2013 – New Scott building officially opened at the Home
- 2015 – Prince Charles, now King Charles III of England, visits the Home
- 2016 – President Obama serves Thanksgiving dinner at the Home
- 2020 – Worldwide COVID pandemic occurs
- 2022 – Oldest resident (102 years) ever admitted to the Home
- 2022 – Eagles removed from the gate for restoration



## Another awesome visit with People Animals Love!

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Residents of AFRH-W are always happy when People Animals Love (PAL) stops by with their furry friends for their monthly visit.

December's visit brought pet therapy handlers Claire, Shirley, and Susan with the lovable dogs Sadie, Bo, and Bella.



## Notes from the AFRH-W resident advisory committee chairman



I was sure I would not be writing another article for the Communicator, but things changed. I have made a decision, with the support of the residents, to continue as RAC Chairman.

This has been a busy time here at the Home in Washington DC. Two of our RAC Floor Representatives Hilary Roisado and Donald Senger made a telecom presentation to the local ward leaders and representative of the Friends of the Soldiers Home (FOSH) detailing the residents' concerns as it relates to opening our campus for their access. I was so proud of them, but more important so were the 40+ residents listening in at the Community Center. They gave them a standing ovation upon completion of their presentation.

A special thank you goes out to the Old Soldiers Home Foundation for sponsoring the special Veterans Day program that the residents will not soon forget. As usual, our recreation services department and many volunteers decorated for Christmas.

I hope everyone had a great holiday and look forward to sharing the New Year with our residents and staff.

Fred Layman

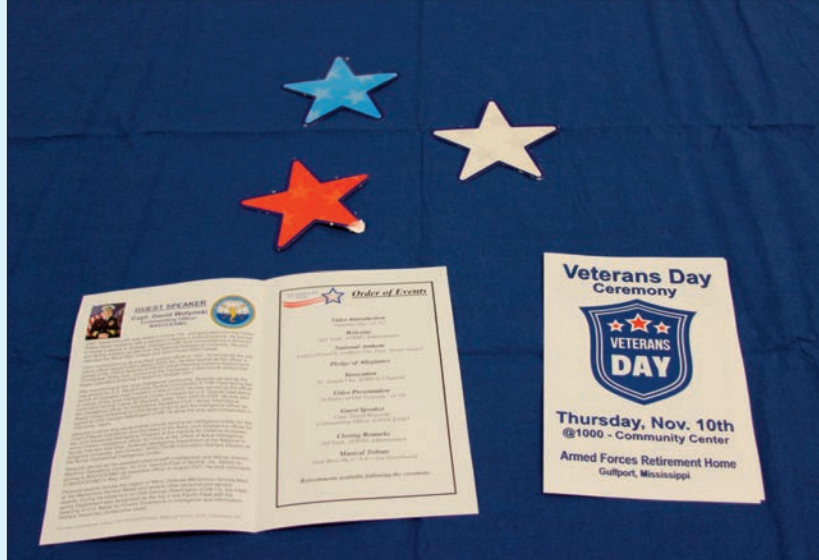
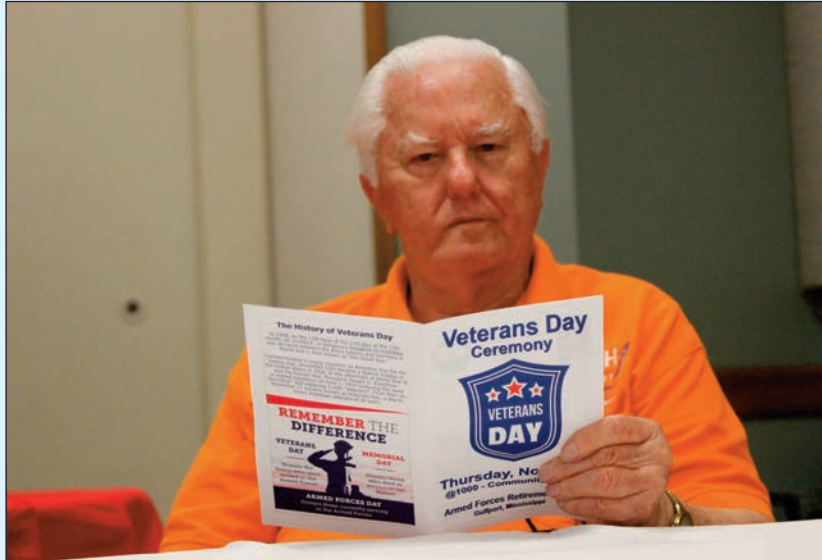
# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G Veterans Day Ceremony

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G held a Veterans Day Ceremony in the Community Center in celebration of all of our veterans. Chief of Resident Services Christopher Alexander was the emcee. Special thanks to our guest speaker Capt. David Wolynski, Commanding Officer NAVOCEANO, and the Gulfport Fire Department Honor Guard for coming out in support of AFRH-G. Thank you also to our residents for your service to our country. We appreciate each and every one of you. It's because of YOU that we have our freedom, and we will forever be grateful.

Happy Veterans Day! God Bless the U.S.A.!



## AFRH-G remembers Pearl Harbor 81 years later

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Residents and employees gathered in the Hall of Honors at AFRH-G for a remembrance ceremony marking the 81st anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. On December 7, 1941, this attack plunged the United States into World War II leaving more than 2,300 service people dead.

Music Therapist Susan Bergman played a riveting rendition of "Amazing Grace" on the bag pipes after attendees watched a video of the Pearl Harbor Infamy Speech.

Administrator Jeff Eads was the master of ceremonies and he spoke about that significant Sunday morning on December 7, 1941. He spoke on how America's naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by aircraft and submarines of the Imperial Japanese Navy, killing 2,403 American military personnel and civilians and injuring 1,178 others. The attack sank four U.S. Navy battleships and damaged four more. It also damaged or sank three cruisers, three destroyers, and one minelayer. 188 aircraft were destroyed and 159 were damaged.

The day after the attack, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II. Following Mr. Alexander's welcome speech, Pastor Gibson presented the invocation.

AFRH-G resident Claire Dimler-Smith presented the commemorative wreath honoring those lost on December 7, 1941. It was a somber ceremony for residents, and it was a day to remember and honor the lives lost so their sacrifices are not in vein.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.~Franklin D. Roosevelt



## Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



Another year has passed and things are returning to "normal" whatever that is here. We have been able to have community events, attend town hall meetings, RAC meetings, ice cream socials, bingo and movies just to name a few.

This holiday season I wish to express my gratitude to all of you who have supported me in my brief tenure as RAC chair. It's an unfortunate reality of life here that our health can pose limitations on what we can do. Since I am departing, we will go through the RAC election process again in January 2023, and I hope you will all take the time to vote.

To all of you and your loved ones, I wish a very Merry Christmas and a hopeful and healthy New Year!

Pat Smith



Administrator Jeff Eads and Pat Smith present previous RAC Chair, Art Jones, a certification of commendation for his time and dedication as RAC Chairman.

# AFRH-Washington

## AFRH-W Casino Night on Election Day

Story & photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

On November 8, the AFRH-W Recreation Department hosted a Casino night. There were Black Jack Tables, One-arm Bandits, Slot machines, Wheel of Fortune, and the Roulette wheel. Plus a High Low card game where the residents could win prizes such as hats, gloves, and blankets.

Approximately 50 residents came to participate at the annual casino night event. Each resident was given 50,000 in bills of "phony money" to use at the different gaming tables. Bills could be turned in for either tokens to play the slot machines, or chips to use at the casino table games.

There were appetizers including a resident favorite - chicken-wings & seven-layer chip dip. The Defenders Inn was open for our thirsty players.

The top three winners who made the most money of the night were:

- 1st- William Over won \$150 VISA gift card
- 2nd-Van Hayes won \$75 VISA gift card
- 3rd- Harry Dressler won \$50 VISA gift card

We could not do this event without our volunteers from NAM KNIGHTS and the Lord Fairfax Silver Chapter USAWOA, (United States Warrant Officers Association). Volunteers came from far and wide to help the residents enjoy this exciting night.

Special thanks to NAM KNIGHTS who donated the beer for the event and to Dick Markle, Treasure of the USAWOA, who donated \$250 toward VISA prizes for this event.



## Autumn victory garden

Story & photos by Steven Briefs | Recreation Supervisor

John Baker has a heart for gardens. He learned it from his childhood working in the family garden, then his own garden after marriage and children. Now, as he resides on the campus of AFRH in Washington, he again has taken up gardening. John says he is happiest when he can work with good soil, tomato plants and even when it is time for weeding. He tends to his plants nurturing them, watering them, and talking to them. John also says as long as the plants do not talk back to him he will continue talking to them. He looks for the sunshine to provide energy for the tomatoes to grow, and then he offers them to anyone who will enjoy his labors. Sometimes it is the small things in life that make us the most content. Three cheers for John's tomatoes!



## Dusk at AFRH-W

By George Wellman | AFRH-W Resident

I am a better photographer than a writer, so I put together these photos of AFRH-W at dusk. Floodlights were recently installed in front of the Stanley Hall Chapel, Rose Chapel, and the Sherman Building. These historic buildings are beautiful sights during daylight hours. However, with the strategically positioned lights focused on the front facade of these buildings, the sights after sundown are spectacular.

There are numerous benches located on the AFRH-W campus. I chose three of the benches for discussion due to their proximity to the buildings that are identified in this article. The General McKee Bench – The plaque on this bench was designed and commissioned by resident volunteers in the Chaplain's Office at AFRH-W. It recognizes the dedicated work that General McKee, former Governor of the Soldiers Home from 1978-1990, did to make the Home a comfortable place for the residents. Some of his accomplishments include: installing the stained-glass windows in Stanley Hall Chapel, installing the 1855 pipe organ in Stanley Hall Chapel, and recognizing the need for a tunnel and building it between the Sheridan and Scott Buildings. General McKee's retirement remarks included the statement that the tunnel was his most noteworthy commission. The Sheridan/Scott tunnel officially opened in November 1980. It is used daily and remains a selling point in the Home's marketing efforts.

The Helping Hand Bench – The plaque on this bench is a compilation of a photographed section of a stained-glass window and a statement. In the stained-glass portion, there is a hand extended toward a disabled man. The statement about several Biblical personalities summarizes their talents and other noteworthy accomplishments. The overall connotation of the plaque is: "We only have a few years here, help others during your journey."

The Whisper of a Resident Bench – The commemoration on this bench by a resident tells the story of how much the Home means to him after being here for a couple of years. If this hilltop was pleasing for President Abraham Lincoln and his family, it is good enough for us.

The next time you are in the District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia (DMV), stop by our campus for a visit. The lights will be on with a bench on which to sit!



## Chevy's Mexican Restaurant

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Tacos, Enchiladas, homemade tostados, spicy salsa, and fried ice cream were among some of the delicious menu items healthcare residents of AFRH-W enjoyed dining on recently for lunch.

Residents were asked what types of foods they liked and where they would like to go for lunch? A resounding, "let's go to a Mexican restaurant" was cheered on by all. Chevy's, a Mexican restaurant located in Greenbelt, Maryland, was the restaurant of choice by the residents. It was a great pick! The service was wonderful, the food was tasty, and the atmosphere was festive and friendly. Residents are looking forward to trying new and different restaurants in the DC/VA/MD area!



# AFRH-Gulfport

## Gulfport resident turns 100

Story & photos by *Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

Charles "Charlie" Melson was born on November 12, 1922 in Birmingham, Alabama. He served in the United States Navy during WWII. Charlie has been living at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport for eight years. We had the honor of celebrating this milestone with him by having an ice cream social in the community center. Happy 100th Birthday Charlie!



## Navy celebrates being on watch 24/7 for 247 years

Story by *Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist*

Photos by *Lee Corban | Recreation Services Supervisor*

October 13 marked the 247th year that the U.S. Navy has stood the watch for our nation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To celebrate this occasion, Capt. Jeff Powell, Commanding Officer of the Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, accompanied by Command Master Chief Mike Lopez visited the AFRH-G and helped cut the birthday cake with 100-year-old Navy retiree and AFRH-G resident Howard "Beau" Bowman. Prior to cutting the cake, Capt. Powell spoke on the importance of the Navy and the tremendous contributions and progress the NCBC Gulfport has made over the years. AFRH Ombudsman Master Chief Alexander Bradshaw, USN presided over the afternoon ceremony on behalf of the AFRH Administrator.



## Beat Army! Beat Navy!

Story & photos by *Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant*

Army and Navy first met on the field on 29 November 1890 and have met annually since 1930. Between the "prisoner exchange" and the singing of each team's Alma Maters, this game is one of the most traditional and enduring rivalries in college football.

In 122 previous meetings between the two teams, four quarters has always been enough time to determine a winner. This year proved to be different. For the first time ever, the rivalry went into overtime. What a thriller it was! Navy fumbled the ball on the goal line and set up the game-winning field goal by Army in the second overtime period. Army won 20-17 in the host city of Philadelphia.

No matter the score, everyone enjoyed the food and camaraderie. Hooters restaurant catered hot wings and provided door prizes, pizza was delivered, and other snacks were available for the perfect tailgating necessities. Thanks to everyone who came out to make this an awesome game-day experience at AFRH-G!



## Gulfport High School invites residents to breakfast

Story & photos by *Tony Langdon | Resident*

Thank you to Gulfport High School for inviting AFRH-G residents to breakfast on Veterans Day. Nine of the residents wore their uniforms to the breakfast. The residents thoroughly enjoyed visiting with the students.



## AFRH-G celebrates 75th Birthday of the U.S. Air Force

By *Sean Campbell | Lead Recreation Specialist*

Photos by *Doug Carroll | Resident*

The AFRH-Gulfport staff and residents celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the United States Air Force on Monday, September 19th. Col Jason D. Allen, Vice Commander of the 81st Training Wing at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, served as the special guest speaker for the ceremony. Residents enjoyed cake and refreshments in the community center after the cake was ceremonially cut by Col Allen, AFRH-G resident James Dovin, and Airman Jesus Osornio.

Happy 75th Birthday U.S. Air Force.



## AFRH-G – Resident Volunteer Spotlight

Story & photos by *Rosie Lake | Activities & Volunteer Coordinator*

Volunteer recognition happens every day in one form or another in our home. As the "fairly new" volunteer coordinator for AFRH-G (almost eight months in), I've had the pleasure of getting to personally know many resident volunteers. I try my hardest to make my rounds and let them all know, just how much I appreciate all their hard work on a daily, if not, weekly basis. We've shared many stories and made many wonderful memories already...it humbles me to know, that I get paid to do what I do. Today was no exception, there were a few residents that were highlighted by our leadership and I wanted to be sure to share that with each of you. The AFRH-G Director's coin is one way our leadership recognizes a person's service, deed, or acts. This is done without a ceremony and often with nothing more than a smile and a handshake. A coin was recently given to Mr. Robert Brodeur, Mr. William Best, and Mr. Earnest Rousch by our very own, Mr. Jeffrey Eads, AFRH-G Administrator. Mr. Robert Brodeur, clothing store volunteer, sorts through all donations and makes sure donations are organized and displayed well for our residents' shopping pleasure. Thanks Mr. Bob for always taking care of things in the clothing store. Mr. William "Bill" Best, thrift store volunteer, organizes, prices, cleans, and displays merchandise...and will even help deliver within the Home, if needed. Mr. Earnest Rousch, thrift store volunteer, also organizes, prices, cleans, and displays merchandise, all while displaying the best customer service attitude around! Bill and Earnest make a great team in the thrift shop...and always go above and beyond to help residents with all their shopping needs. It goes without saying...our resident volunteers are the Best!

Thanks for being the reason I smile...I appreciate each and every one of you!



# AFRH-Washington

## Creepy crafts

Story & photo by Jenna Kriegel | Art Specialist

They're creepy and they're kooky, mysterious and spooky. They're altogether ooky. They're Creepy Crafts! Residents at AFRH-W kicked off Fall festivities by making spooky Halloween décor. Friends from all care levels and creative skills gathered in the Community Center during the first week of October to make paint pumpkin rocks, make jack-o-lanterns from recycled jars, and assemble giant paper skeletons. Many of these haunted masterpieces were displayed in residents' doorways as part of the annual door decorating contest.



## Titanic display at AFRH-W

Story & photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

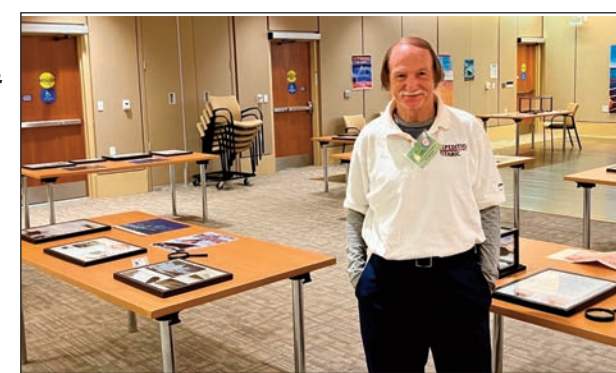
We had a gentleman by the name of Ed Wolford who came and displayed his Titanic collection. We had over 50+ residents and staff take a look at his propaganda.

He had coal from the ship, and glassware and wood from the deck of the ship.

Asking Ed how he got interested in collecting items from around the globe, he replied, "So I got started into being a treasure hunter from my grandfather who was in World War II. After the war was over, my grandfather went back to Europe to find artifacts that were stolen by the Germans and returned them to the families and governments."

He then said, "Later I would travel with my grandfather on expeditions to search for Amelia Earhart, lost treasures and hidden gold of World War II, the Titanic, and Egyptian tombs. My grandfather knew everyone in Egypt so that was easy. We searched for big foot, found remains of the wholly Mammoth in Siberia and so much more."

It was like going back into time looking at all of the items he displayed.



## AFRH-W Jenga challenge

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Recreation Therapy had a fun and exciting afternoon playing Giant Jenga with Scott 2 residents and staff. It took a lot of strategizing for each person to try to remove a block without having the entire structure fall down! Residents Roy Krause, Armin Schiw, and CNA Evelyn Chandler-Payne took their time in assessing what the best moves would be to make it harder and more difficult for each other. The object of course is not to be the one to knock all the blocks down.

Leslie Scott, the co-founder of Oxford Games Ltd., created Jenga. It was based on a game that developed within her family in the early 1970's using children's wooden building blocks that the family had purchased from a sawmill in Takoradi, Ghana. The name Jenga is derived from kujenga, a Swahili term which means to build. The staff and residents of Scott 2 look forward to taking on any challengers at an AFRH-W Jenga Tournament!



## Jazzy Tunes luncheon

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Residents of AFRH-W enjoyed wonderful afternoon of smooth jazz by world-renowned musicians: Carl Cronwell, Saxophone, Wade Beach, Piano, Steve Novosel, Bass, and Chuck Redd, Drums.

Special thanks to the recording industry's Music Performance Trust Fund (MPTF) in association with American Federation of Musicians local 161-710 and President Ed Malaga, Jr. for connecting with AFRH-W to bring fabulous music to our veterans. It is a special day when residents get the opportunity to listen in to live professional musical performances.

Along with great music, residents enjoyed a tasty lunch provided by the dining hall and enhanced with delicious appetizers and desserts. Residents are looking forward to future musical events with MPTF!



## Arirang Chamber Orchestra Performance

Story & photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapy

AFRH-W is pleased to have the return of the Great Korea Foundation, who hosted monthly performances prior to Covid. On Saturday, October 8, they were joined by the Arirang Chamber Orchestra to perform for the residents.

The orchestra consists of students from middle and high school who come together, under the direction of their conductor, Dr. Dae Jin Bae. This performance was "A Salute to our Veterans" and they opened with the U.S. National Anthem, followed by the Korean National Anthem. After several more patriotic songs, a couple of the students and their conductor each had a solo performance to end the show. The residents were pleased to have them return and look forward to the next performance! I would like to thank Michelle Mi Sook Won, the President of Great Korea Foundation for her support.



## Poetry performances

By Leslie Toomey | Librarian

Photos by Amanda Jensema & Leslie Toomey



Resident poets and performers gathered in Scott Theater for the annual AFRH-W Poetry Performances program. This year's performers included Hilary Rosado, Emmy Lu Daly, Rose Williams, Joe Nesnow, Rick Walk, and Norma Rambow. Each performer recited two to three poems during the course of two acts.

At the conclusion of the program, each performer received a red rose. Residents, guests, and staff then enjoyed a reception with wine, cheese, and chocolate.

The AFRH-W Poetry Club meets on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the Sheridan Building, Room #1103, and welcomes new members. Most members read other poets but are all welcomed to bring original poems too.





# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G Halloween party & costume contest

Story & photos by **Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs**

The AFRH-G Halloween Party was so much fun, not to mention spooky, and full of laughter. It was absolutely SPOOKTACULAR!! We had a great turnout of residents and employees wearing costumes. Thank you to all who participated in making this such a great event and thank you to recreation for putting on such a fabulous Halloween party.

Congratulations to Sandy Joiner for winning first place as the scary clown. Second place went to Diana Dopp, Doris Denton, & Faye Jefferson as the Sanderson sisters from Hocus Pocus, and King Houston placed third.



## Pumpkin carving

Story & photos by **Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist**

On October 19, 2022 the healthcare residents were up to their elbows in pumpkin goop while scraping out pumpkins. Some were resting from their turns, as others were scraping out the seeds and "goop" from inside the pumpkins. Some residents separated the seeds from the goop for roasting later on during the day. Many laughs and stories of pumpkin carvings were shared around the table. A fun time and a "must do" activity for Halloween.



## The witches brewed up some fun

Story and photos by **Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist**

On Monday, October 24, 2022, the "Witches Brew" social was back on the schedule. The residents enjoyed "witch" trivia and stories while drinking a blue potion and eating a dessert. The potion was brewed to cast a spell of fun and laughter to whomever drank. A dessert was made with fresh worms and sweetness... just the right touch to go with the tasty brew. No one grew warts that day... just a grin from ear to ear.



## Boo! Spooky Fun House & Trick-or-Treat!

Story & photos by **Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services**

AFRH-Gulfport residents in healthcare and Independent Living (IL) ventured through the B Tower 2nd floor as activity room B242 was transformed into a Spooky Fun House. On Wednesday, 10/26/22, healthcare residents from Loyalty Hall were greeted by IL resident ghouls and received their candy bags from Carol Davis, a.k.a. Park Ranger after they knocked on Susan's office door for surprise Trick-or-Treating. The room was filled with a variety of personal Halloween themed animatronics, music, haunted house props, and colorful hanging lights. How did this all begin & where did it come from? After starting the Spooky Fun House 20 years ago when Susan's son had his first Halloween, trick-or-treaters would come through their decorated greenhouse that was attached to their house in Baton Rouge. From then, it became an annual tradition with adding items each year as some stopped working or would break. After moving to the Gulf Coast in 2007, it went from being in their garage to inside the car for Trunk-or-Treat to Lynn Meadows Halloween Star Dance to a tent set up with tables and hanging lights. How did this begin at AFRH? With COVID-19 changing how resident's access Recreation, the Spooky Fun House was a way of thinking outside the box to provide a memorable individualized experience for healthcare residents in 2021 and now in its second year at AFRH, it has expanded to include Independent Living residents, too. As residents toured the room, they asked, "This took some time...this didn't happen overnight." Planning ahead, Susan worked each day on different parts of the room starting with the hanging lights then the spider webs to bringing up tables to adding batteries to decorating the hallway to setting up the animatronics to turning on everything for the open days! It will come down quickly as it will be set up for trick-or-treating in her neighborhood. Boo! Here's wishing everyone a Spooktacular Happy Halloween!



## Of course we must celebrate!

Story & photo by **Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist**

The healthcare residents enjoyed beer flights to celebrate National Beer Day. Cheers and glasses clanking were heard as the residents enjoyed a few cold ones on that hot September day. With five choices of beer to taste from: the U.S., Mexico to Italy, the "Modelo" won as the favorite from the participants. Cheers to a good beer!



## DisCatcher installation

By **Rosie Lake | Activities & Volunteer Coordinator**

Photos by **Rosie Lake & Lee Corban | Recreation Supervisor**

Thanks so much to the 81st LRS squadron at Keesler AFB, for providing some volunteers to install some new permanent DisCatcher stations. These airmen came out early and took advantage of working in the cool morning weather, with the hopes that our residents will enjoy recreational disc golfing for years to come!! Thanks again to SrA Johnathon Clark, SSgt Kenneth Velez Sanchez, A1C Palmer Braga and SrA Mathew Licare-McGee for your service to our country and AFRH-G.



## Volunteers clean resident PMD's

By **Darren Jones | Custodial COR**

On November 2, 2022 we had another successful PMD Cleaning Event! I want to thank Master Sergeant Kristine Richardson and her group from KAFB. They did a wonderful Job. I also want to thank our Volunteer Coordinator Rosie Lake for reaching out and finding the volunteers, recreation for setting up the chairs, fans, coolers, ice and water, custodial maintenance for setting up the hoses, chemicals, buckets, brushes, towels and trash bags. As you see, this is a TEAM EFFORT and your participation is appreciated.



# AFRH-Washington

## Mormon Tabernacle Festival of Lights

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Residents had a lovely night seeing the lights at the Mormon Tabernacle Festival of Lights in Kensington, Maryland. We strolled through the nativity scenes, watched the Rockville Brass Band, and topped the night off with hot chocolate and apple pies from McDonalds.



## Mugs of cheer

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Honorary Regent Sheri O'Connell, with the DAR Descendants of '76' Chapter, stopped by on December 6 with a lovely donation of fresh flower mugs of cheer! The mugs were created with love and care by the Gardeners of the Junior League of Washington, DC. The Gardeners worked their magic on the mugs at the St. Dunston Church in Bethesda, Maryland. The mugs were passed out to the residents as they came to the AFRH-W Scott Community Center for the AFRH-W Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. The Gardeners are also comprised of some of the DAR Descendants of '76' Chapter members.



## No bake cookies

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

It was a lovely morning making "no bake cookies" with AFRH-W Registered Dietitian Kim Eccles.

Kim, made herself at home by creating a "kitchen" in the Leisure Lobby of the Long-Term-Care House. The five-ingredient no bake peanut butter thumbprint cookies were a hit with the residents! Ingredients included smooth peanut butter, almond flour, maple syrup (Vermont if you can find it), a pinch of sea salt, and berry preserves for topping. Residents enjoyed not only watching Kim in her cooking demonstration, but also her nutritional talk on the ingredients used. Kim, put the residents to work in creating their own individual cookies but it was a task getting the resident chefs not to eat the cookies before they were completed!



## 'Tis the season

Story & photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

The holidays are in full swing here at AFRH-W! Residents and staff alike had a few days of special holiday events sponsored by the Recreation Therapy team. First we had a special visit from members of the U.S. Army Old Guard Fife & Drum Corps., who performed traditional holiday tunes from colonial times to today. Members of the Fife and Drum Corps wore traditional uniforms including tricorne hats, white wigs, waistcoats, colonial coveralls, and a red regimental coat which date from circa 1781. For this special performance, they topped off their uniforms with Santa hats in the spirit of the season. This was their first return visit since the pandemic and everyone was so happy to see them. Everyone was dressed to impress in their holiday attire for the annual Recreation Therapy Holiday Party. The Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) joined us as always and brought their holiday spirit! Along with volunteering, members of the D.A.R. District V also donated all the gifts that were handed out to all who attended. They have been supporting our veterans at AFRH-W for 20+ years.

This year, also returning for the first time since the pandemic, Melanie, with her new partner Eddie, were here to entertain and get everyone on the dance floor. The tunes were flowing, feet were tapping, and dancers were twirling. Santa and Mrs. Claus also made an appearance at the beginning to spread cheer and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## Santa, Mrs. Claus, Rudolph & elves visit the upper levels of care at AFRH-G

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Santa, Mrs. Claus, Rudolph and Santa's elves visited the upper levels of care at AFRH-G. They brought presents and a bunch of smiles to the residents of Tower D. Santa & Mrs. Claus weren't in their regular suits because it was still warm on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, so they chose to wear their "beachy" clothes and Ray Bans. However, a cold front is coming soon, so I'm sure Santa will be back in his red suit. Rudolph's nose and antlers were lighting up the hallways and you could hear the jingle bells coming from a mile away. Christmas is definitely in the air at AFRH-G. We hope everyone is having a wonderful holiday season.



## Drum it up!

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

The AFRH-G Music Therapist Susan Bergman held "Drum it Up" for the independent living residents in the Community Center on September 28. The residents had so much fun being mentored by Susan and learning about all the different types of drums. Susan not only plays the drums, she also plays over 30 other instruments. It was not only a stress-reliever, it was also so much fun. Everyone left with a smile, not to mention they all sounded like rock stars. Check out the recreational calendar for more "Drum it Up" sessions with Susan in the future.



## Salute to the Military

By Tony Langdon | AFRH-G Resident

On 4 October 2022, eight AFRH-G residents attended the 41st annual Salute to the Military breakfast event, hosted by the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi. The keynote speaker was Mississippi U.S. Senator, Roger Wicker. Thank you to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce for donating tickets for the residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport.



## Residents love to give back

Story & photos by Lori Kerns | Librarian

Our residents are so blessed when it comes to the generosity of our community, especially during the holidays. So it is delightful to see our residents also giving back. Each year, AFRH-G holds a Toys for Tots drive, a U.S. Marine Corps Reserves program, to collect toys for children whose parents cannot afford to buy Christmas gifts. Our generous residents spare no expense



when donating toys each year. The collection point in the main lobby of the Home overflows with dolls, princess costumes, scooters, bikes, and more! This year, in addition to the Toys for Tots drive, the Resident Advisory Committee (RAC) has started a Reverse Advent Calendar. This drive lists a specific food item requested for each day leading up to Christmas. The items will then be taken to NCBC Gulfport to stock their food pantry. It's the most wonderful time of the year, but it's even more wonderful seeing our residents give back to the community that appreciates them so much!



## Gulfport residents raise money for hurricane victims

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

The residents of AFRH-G set up a table outside the dining hall on October 6 to accept donations for the Florida victims of Hurricane Ian. The donations will be split between the Salvation Army and Samaritan's Purse. Thank you to everyone who donated and organized this very special act of kindness.



## AUSA - Association of the United States Army says, "Thank You!"

Story & photos by Rosie Lake | Activities & Volunteer Coordinator

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA), Magnolia Chapter President, Ms. Teresa Frame and AUSA member Mike Martin, visited AFRH-G on 9 November 2022, to show their appreciation and say "Thank you" to our residents for their dedicated service to our country. The AUSA team donated and served cake at our resident art show. Our residents really enjoyed the cake and appreciated the kind gesture. AFRH-G is thankful for community partners like AUSA, we appreciate you!



## Spirited: A special movie presentation

Story & photos by Lori Kerns | Librarian

On Monday, 12 December AFRH-G residents enjoyed a special presentation of the new Christmas movie, Spirited. The movie, starring comedic actors Will Farrell and Ryan Reynolds, is a hilarious musical twist on the Dickens' classic, A Christmas Carol. The special presentation began at 1800 in the community center. Residents were able to be seated at tables to enjoy the refreshments provided. Hot dogs and nachos have been a staple at these special movie presentations but for this particular movie, special holiday treats, such as hot apple cider, hot cocoa, and Christmas cookies, were also provided. Of course popcorn and candy were not forgotten! This special holiday presentation was a success!



## Cross-crawl exercises

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Cross-crawl exercises are movements that use opposite sides of the body at the same time such as walking, crawling and swimming. Opposing sides work together to coordinate the right arm and left leg then left arm and right leg. Performing these movements allows electrical impulses and information to move across both hemispheres of the brain. This helps not only with physical coordination but also with thinking-based activities such as reading or learning something new. Interested in learning a few cross-crawl exercises? Come by the Exercise Room at 0900 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and I will be happy to show you a few. If you can't make it to a class, just come by my office in the fitness center or catch me in the hallway. The exercises are not difficult and won't take much time but the benefits are wonderful!



## Madrigals concert at AFRH-G

Story & photos By Rosie Lake | Activities and Volunteer Coordinator

The Madrigals from the Long Beach High School Concert Choir, led by their director, Terry Walker, visited and performed for our residents on 8 December 2022. The residents were all smiles during and after this well attended Christmas concert. The students sang beautifully as they delivered their best version of some of our favorite Christmas carols. Thank you all for the magnificent concert!



## Bay Oaks Quilt Guild gifts

Story & photo by Rosie Lake | Activities and Volunteer Coordinator

Ida MaCuck, from The Bay Oaks Quilt Guild contacted AFRH-G, wanting to donate quilts to our residents. The Bay Oak members make and donate quilts to several organizations within their community. Mrs. MaCuck donated eight beautiful quilts on behalf of the members and plans on donating several more.

Thank you so much, we appreciate the thoughtfulness of our community!



# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G resident wins three gold medals in the Transplant Games of America!

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G resident Joseph "Joe" McDonald represented Mississippi in the Transplant Games of America (TGA) on August 2, 2022 in San Diego, California. He took home three gold medals in shotput, discus, and softball throw. Joe has been competing in TGA since 2006, after recovering from a kidney transplant in 2005. He thought he would do well at the games because he had been competing against the same 80-year-olds for about 15 years when they were all in their 60's.

Joe was born on May 6, 1941 in Glenville, NY. He served in the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy and has combined service of 28 years. He retired from the Army as Sergeant First Class. He moved to AFRH-G in October 2021. Congratulations Joe!



## What a milestone!

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-Gulfport resident Mr. Matt "Mad Dog" Machion crossed into the 100,000 mile club on his motorcycle at the young age of 71! He has owned his 2004 BMW R1150 RT since July 2003. He bought his motorcycle in New Jersey while living in Pennsylvania before moving to AFRH in January of 2019. Since then he has traversed the United States twice and Canada once. He said that the coldest weather he has taken the bike through was in the Rocky Mountains when there was snow on the ground.....IN JUNE! (We don't understand that nonsense in South Mississippi.) He also used to love going to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in August to get about 20 quarts of blueberries. He would fill his saddlebags with the berries and bring them home to give away. Driving almost daily down Beach Boulevard along the Mississippi Gulf Coast has helped him rack up his mileage. When I asked him if he planned on keeping his bike until the wheels fall off, his response was, "or until I fall off!" Mad Dog retired as a TSgt from the U.S. Air Force. We are so glad you are part of the family at AFRH in Gulfport and you are living proof that age is just a number. Congratulations and keep on enjoying the ride!



## AFRH-G resident art show

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G held an art show in the Community Center where residents could sell the art that they created. All kinds of beautiful works of art created by our residents were for sale. There were so many different items such as paintings, magnets, T-shirts, photography, jewelry, woodwork, pottery, and painted oyster shells. We have the most talented residents living here in Gulfport, and we were honored to be able to purchase their masterpieces. Thank you to all the artists who participated and thank you for sharing your talents with us.



## Cruisers rumble thru AFRH-G

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

THANK YOU to all 500+ Cruisers who came thru the AFRH-G gates on October 4! You brought so many smiles and laughs to all of our veterans. It was an absolutely gorgeous day in South Mississippi, and all of you made it that much better. We look forward to Cruisin' the Coast every year and it's because YOU all take time out of your busy schedules to show your gorgeous hot rods, antique and classic cars to our veterans. We already cannot wait until next year.



## AFRH-G fire drill & full evacuation

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Every single day firefighters risk their lives to save others. A firefighter does more than put out fires. They also help with hazardous materials, road traffic incidents, medical emergencies, floods, and even rescue animals.

A firefighter needs 100 hours of training before legally being allowed to enter the interior of a burning building. When an emergency call comes in, firefighters have less than two minutes to get dressed! This includes all of their gear, which can weigh from eighty to one hundred twenty pounds. During the AFRH-G fire drill, the firefighters had to climb up seven flights of stairs with all of their gear. That, in itself, is not an easy task.

On behalf of the Armed Forces Retirement Home, we would like to thank the Gulfport Fire Department Battalion 1 T-1, Battalion 2 T-2, E-5 and E-6 for assisting us with our mandatory fire drill and full evacuation. We also would like to thank all the employees in the manpower pool and all the residents for their cooperation during this important drill.



## Volunteer Spotlight - Cruisin' the Coast with AFRH-G

Story & photos by Rosie Lake | Activities & Volunteer Coordinator

Cruisin' the Coast drive-thru event on 4 October 2022, was truly a treat for our residents. Thanks so much to the AFRH-G staff and resident volunteers that made this event a great success!! There is much to do behind the scenes to prepare for such an event, and the military community at Keesler Air Force Base, 81st Medical Support Squadron provided the volunteers we needed. I would like to extend a special thank you to MSgt Kristine Richardson from the 81st MDSS Medical Logistics Flight, who organized and led a group of volunteers to help with the tasks at hand...from directing traffic, passing out water bottles, to tearing down and storing equipment. Your service to our country and to our Home is truly appreciated!



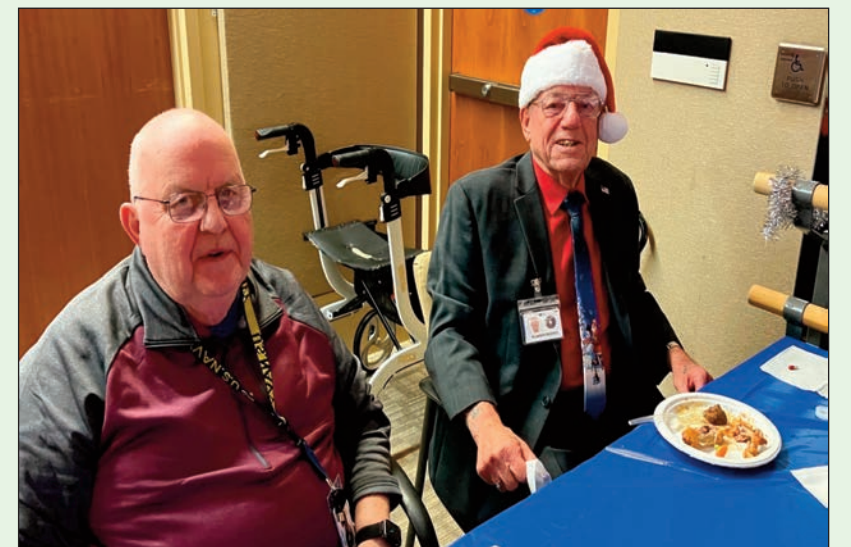
# AFRH-Washington

## Tree Lighting and Holiday Dance at AFRH-W

Story & photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

FOSH (Friends of the Soldier Home) donated a piano to the Home and the U.S. Marine Corps Jazz band came to play from Quantico, VA. Santa & Mrs. Clause came for a visit, and the residents had a giant snowball fight in the Community Center. The Clauses lit the tree up. There was dancing and desserts to round off a full evening. The snowball fight lasted the entire rest of the evening.

The Band ROUTE 66 played for the holiday party. Ten lucky winners won door prizes from the Home. Residents and guests had fun dancing all night long. Thank you to dining team, who created a wonderful holiday spread that everyone enjoyed.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On December 1, 2022 AFRH-G held the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in the main lobby. Santa appeared in his beach clothes, since he was on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and greeted everyone in the lobby who was there to see him. The Grinch tried to steal Christmas, but Santa set him straight when he was trying to take everyone's candy canes. While strumming her guitar, Music Therapist Susan Bergman led everyone in singing Christmas carols. Santa & resident Freddie Van Pelt flipped the switch to turn on the tree lights (even though the Grinch tried to unplug it!) The sound of joy and cheer quickly spread throughout the building. Christmas cookies and punch were served after the ceremony.

Thank you to everyone who participated in decorating this AFRH-G resort. We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

