



Armed Forces Retirement Home

The premier retirement community for our veterans

The Communicator

Washington, District of Columbia & Gulfport, Mississippi

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The Armed Forces Retirement Home: your home sweet home

Courtesy of Army Echoes, AUG-OCT 2022

As retired soldiers plan for their future and prepare for aging, they may think about using a benefit available to them through the U.S. federal government—living at an Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH). However, they may not be aware of who is eligible to live there and what it costs.

The promise to care for retired and disabled military members was established by the executive branch in 1811. Today, the two AFRH campuses—one in Washington, D.C. and one in Gulfport, Miss.—provide three meals a day, recreation, trips, entertainment, on-site medical care and more to their deserving residents.

It may surprise some service members and their spouses that not all who served or retired are eligible to live at the AFRH. In fact, admission is limited to service members that spent over half of their time in service as an enlisted member, warrant officer, or limited-duty officer (Navy and Marine Corps). In other words, if you spent more than half of your military career as a commissioned officer, you are not eligible to become a resident of the AFRH. In addition to this main requirement, service members must meet one of five additional eligibility criteria.

What about spouses? Eligible service members and their spouses can apply to live at the AFRH as a couple if the spouse is eligible according to separate spouse criteria. Although veterans do not have a minimum monthly charge, spouses are subject to paying a minimum based on care. Spouses are also required to share an apartment with their veteran sponsor while both are independent.

It may also be surprising that applicants for residency must be able to live independently upon admission and be approved by medical and admission review boards. However, following initial admission, as residents age and need more assistance, the AFRH has four additional levels of care to accommodate them. The benefit of living at an AFRH is that it is reasonably priced based on your annual gross income. The monthly fee for residents varies by individual. However, it provides the same services for all residents including a room, three meals a day, 24-hour security, activities, access to all on-site amenities, transportation to medical facilities, and more.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home is the nation's premier life community for veterans of the U.S. armed forces and their spouses. Its mission is to fulfill America's commitment to its military veterans by providing an excellent community with exceptional residential care and extensive support services. The Home is one of America's most enduring veterans' retirement homes with campuses in Washington, District of Columbia and Gulfport, Mississippi. For more information, visit www.afrh.gov.



WASHINGTON, DC



GULFPORT, MS

Korean war veterans honored at unveiling of new memorial

Story and photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs

A group of residents and staff from the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C., attended the dedication ceremony for a new memorial honoring military veterans of the Korean War.

The "Wall of Remembrance" ceremony, held on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. by the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation July 27, recognized the service and sacrifice of veterans on the day the official Korean War Armistice agreement was signed in 1953 marking the end of the Korea conflict.

Guest speakers included second gentleman Mr. Douglas Emhoff and other representatives from the U.S. and South Korean governments.

AFRH-W residents, many of whom participated in Korea, were honored to be recognized during the dedication of the new exhibit.



South Korean Defense Minister visits vets at AFRH-W

Story and photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs



In a high-profile display of gratitude, appreciation and respect for the U.S. military's role in the Korean War, South Korean Minister of Defense Lee Jong-sup stopped by the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) in Washington, D.C., to thank Korean War veterans there for their service and sacrifice in a conflict that ended nearly seventy years ago.

AFRH leadership, CEO Stephen T. Rippe (retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen.) and D.C. Campus Administrator Susan E. Bryhan, welcomed the defense minister and extended their appreciation to him for visiting AFRH during his trip to the nation's capital.

During the visit, the defense minister toured the campus, greeted residents in the hallways and common areas, and stopped for photos and handshakes. From behind an official podium, he delivered a message of appreciation and honor to the residents, and presented AFRH with air purifiers and a minister's coin.

Following the presentation, residents and staff applauded the honorable gesture and gathered together for a group photo with the South Korean leader.

The defense minister had attended the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Dedication ceremony held in D.C. earlier in the day before traveling to AFRH to visit with Korean War veterans. The July 27 visit coincided with the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement on this date back in 1953 officially ending the Korean War.



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AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988 Web site: www.AFRH.gov Email: Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov



Becki L. Zschiedrich ~ Gulfport Public Affairs
Robert Mitchell ~ Washington 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!

AFRH-W resident highlight – Herman J. Washington

By PK Knor | AFRH-W Resident



Herman J. Washington was born on June 29, 1937, as was his twin brother, Paul. His parents, along with his three younger sisters (which included another set of twins), lived in Cumberland, MD, where his father worked for the B&O Railroad for 50 years while his mother tended to the family.

Herman graduated from the last segregated high school in Cumberland in 1955 and was awarded a scholarship to Howard University. While there, he played clarinet and alto saxophone in the marching band and ran cross-country. Due to circumstances beyond his control, he could not attend college during his sophomore year. His brother had joined the U.S. Air Force, so in 1956, he did too.

Herman had an easy time in basic training at Lackland AFB, TX, not only because of the cross-country team but also because he rode a bike on the boardwalk in Atlantic City where he worked his last summer before the military. He had a 13-inch neck and a 28-inch waist!

He trained as a weather observer at Chanute AFB in Illinois. His first duty assignment was to Dover AFB, Delaware, where he was reminded that weather observation was a 24-hour-a-day job.

Herman's next assignment was to Ramstein AFB, GE, which he loved. He traveled when he could and visited Germany, Paris, Amsterdam, and Spain. Being a musician, he attended numerous concerts and met tenor saxophonist 'extraordinaire' Stan Getz in Amsterdam. He also was able to see Count Basie in concert!

From 1961-1964 he was assigned to Selfridge AFB, MI, where he met his wife, Rosemary. They were married on November 3, 1962.

In 1965 Herman spent a year in Korea on an Army aviation compound. U.S. Air Force weathermen were used to support the flights of airplanes and helicopters. The weathermen wore Army uniforms with Air Force ranks. He enjoyed this assignment.

From 1966-68, Herman was stationed at Lockbourne AFB, Ohio. He then attended Chief Observer School at Chanute AFB for one year, which was a permanent change of station. From March of '69 to October of '70 Herman was stationed at Duluth Air Force Station, MN, where he worked at the National Weather Service Office. He was then sent to weather forecaster school back at Chanute AFB from 1970-71.

As a result of that school, Herman was assigned as a weather forecaster at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. While there he gave 'over-the-counter briefings' to pilots who were not allowed to take off until they had a weather briefing! Two of those pilots were astronauts - Edward Mitchell and Michael Collins, who had been to the moon.

In January 1973, he attended the Military Airlift Command NCO Academy at Norton AFB, San Bernardino, CA, where each student had to give a speech. He had trouble coming up with a topic, so he started a hobby in photography. He not only took photos but developed them too, both black and white and color! This made for an easy speech.

In 1973 he was given a three-year assignment to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico. He and his family, which now included two daughters, Joyce and Cathleen, were excited about this move. But, before his car even arrived in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Air Force decided to close the base. At least he was able to experience tropical weather forecasting and the family toured the island before it closed. He gave the last weather forecast for the base.

Herman and his family were finally able to settle down for four and a half years at Williams AFB in AZ where giving pilots weather briefings was his main focus. In 1974 he was sent TDY to Craig AFB in Selma, AL, where he enjoyed a bicycle ride across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. In 1976, he was sent TDY to Mather AFB in Sacramento, CA. He was certified as a forecaster at both bases and promoted to Master Sergeant at Mather AFB.

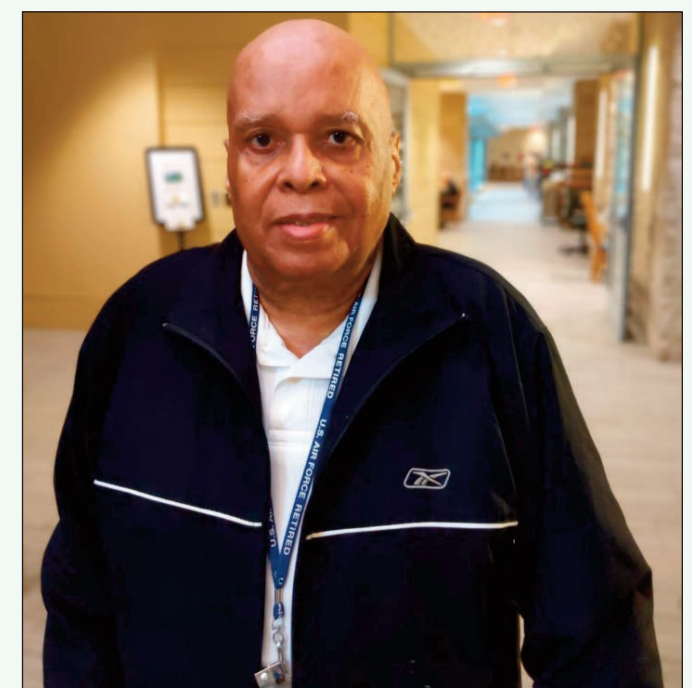
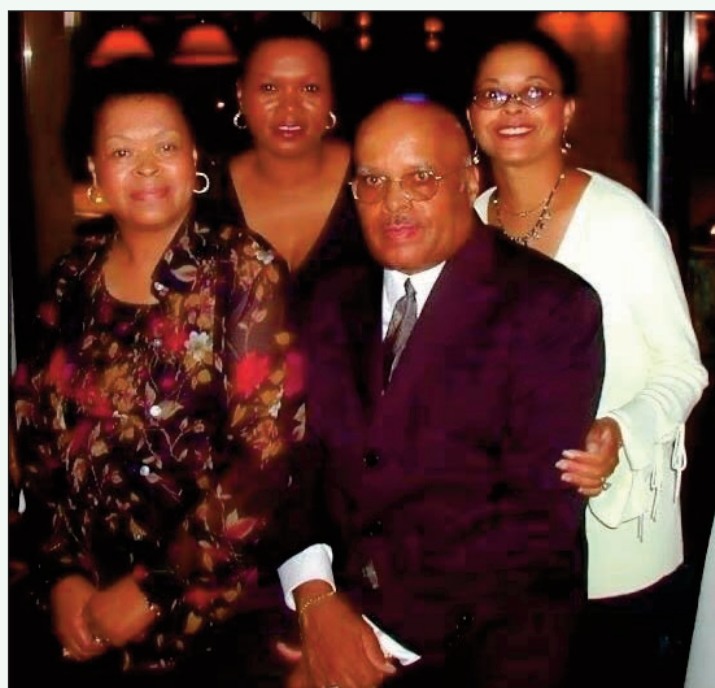
While at Williams AFB he met Lieutenant Pete Peterson, who later became a U.S. Air Force Thunderbird pilot. As a Captain, Peterson was one of the four Thunderbirds killed in a crash in Nevada in 1982.

In 1977, Herman was assigned as an Air Force Advisor to the 105th Air National Guard Weather Flight at Selfridge AFB, MI. He was certified as a weather forecaster there, and when he retired in October 1979 with 23.5 years of service, he was hired as a civilian federal weather forecaster. He worked at Selfridge for six years and then seven years in Cleveland, Ohio, with the National Weather Service until he completely retired in 1999.

During his time in the U.S. Air Force, Master Sergeant Herman earned an associate degree in applied science.

Herman loved retirement and traveling with Rosemary around the country. They lived in and traveled through 35 states and crossed the U.S. twice. They also enjoyed the ocean and spent their vacation time on 15 cruises. After 59 years of marriage, Rosemary passed away as a result of illness.

Herman moved into AFRH-W in 2017. His wife was an excellent cook, so we don't have to tell you how he feels about the food here! Health problems have slowed him down, but he is very pleased with the care from our Wellness Center. He still manages to win at bingo regularly, attends the special programs in the community center, and enjoys watching movies.



The life of Gulfport resident, King O. Houston

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



King O. Houston was born to Odette and Garda Houston in Rochester, NY, on January 28, 1951. His early education was gained at Haworth Elementary School in Haworth, NJ, and later, he attended Pittsford Sutherland High School in Pittsford, NY. He graduated from Portsmouth High School located in Portsmouth, NH.

Following his graduation, King worked for a retail store as a department manager. It was there that he met his wife Evelyn Bumbarger, who was working in a different department. They were married in 1969, and she chose to accompany him along his military career. Evelyn worked as a legal secretary during most of his assigned locations.

King joined the U.S. Air Force in February, 1971 and was assigned to Lackland Air Force Base for basic training before his transfer to the 90th Security Police Squadron at F. E. Warren Air Force Base at Cheyenne, WY. While there, Evelyn worked as a secretary for the owner of a local retail store.

Throughout his military career, his primary duty assignment was with the security police, being responsible for ensuring the safety and protection of U.S. Air Force personnel, equipment, and resources. His assignments included controlling and securing terrain inside and outside military installations, as well as managing, supervising, and controlling secured areas.

In 1973, he was transferred to the 607th MMS at Taegu Air Base in South Korea and was assigned to aircraft security. Shortly afterwards, he was transferred to the 635th Security Police Squadron at U-Tapao Air Base Thailand with base security duty. During this period, Evelyn worked stateside as a legal secretary.

In 1974, King was transferred to the 509th Security Police Squadron at Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH, where he had been promoted to grade E-5. Evelyn worked as a secretary for a ski distributor.

In 1975, he reenlisted for another four-year tour and was transferred to the 56th Security Police Squadron at Luke Air Force Base near Phoenix, AZ, and achieved the rank of E-6. During this tour, in 1976, King and Evelyn were blessed with a baby girl whom they named Alanna.

In 1979, King returned overseas and was assigned to the 6012 Radio Relay Squadron at Kunsan Air Base at Gunsan, Korea, located in the southwest section of South Korea.

From 1980 to 1982, he was transferred to the 93rd Security Police Squadron at Castle Air Force Base, CA, and had gained the rank of E-7. During the period of 1983 to 1986, King served at 7402 Munitions Support Squadron at Ghedi Air Base, near Brescia, in northern Italy. From 1986 to 1989, he was assigned to HQ USAF/SP at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Evelyn worked as an administrator for the Red Cross. During the years of 1989 to 1991, King served at HQ/Electronic Systems Division at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Mass. He was medically discharged as an E-8 in July of 1991. Evelyn worked as a secretary for the base commander.

As a civilian once more, he became an instructor during 1991 to 1995 at Ithaca, NY. There, he taught computer courses providing disabled students with the knowledge and the tools of the trade of the computer industry. Ninety percent of his graduating students became gainfully employed as a result of his training.

From 1995 to 2006, King became the Network Administrator for Tompkins County, NY. During this time he established communication systems and technology for each government department and supervised the personnel in software and hardware selections that led to comprehensive solutions. Evelyn was a paralegal for a local attorney.

He also served as on the Board of Directors for the Finger Lakes Independence Center and was the Board Chairman for seven years.

King and Evelyn moved to Congress, Arizona, in 2006, where King volunteered as a Board Member of the Congress Health Council and was elected to the board of the Congress Domestic Wastewater District. He served as treasurer for both boards and Evelyn was employed as Secretary/Treasurer for the Congress Fire District.

In 2021, King and Evelyn became residents of AFRH-Gulfport. Besides volunteering as a movie host in the theater, he can be found in the Fiddler's Green playing his harmonica or singing during karaoke nights. Evelyn volunteers in the Home's library.

King and Evelyn are proud of their daughter, Alanna, who had trekked along their journey from base to base. She has brought them two grandchildren, Emmitt and Zoe.



AFRH-G resident highlight – Robert “Bob” Rainbolt

Written by Bob Rainbolt | Resident & Edited by Lori Kerns | Librarian



Robert “Bob” Rainbolt was born Feb 19, 1947, in Berkeley, CA, and grew up in Morrilton, AR. He started working at a young age, as a lot of boys did back then, selling newspapers, selling peanuts at the weekly cattle and hog auction sale, and shining shoes at a local barbershop. When he was 16, he started working every Saturday at the local cotton mill and weeknights at a local drive-in restaurant as a waiter, short order cook, and dishwasher. The ten dollars he made at the cotton mill made his weekly car payment.

Bob is a graduate of Morrilton High School and Saint Leo University. He moved to Reidsville, NC in 1965 for the summer to live with his sister and family. He found work at Burlington Mills, operating three huge sewing machines making side hems for drapes.

Bob moved back to Arkansas in September 1965 and worked in construction until he was drafted into the Army in March 1966. He took basic training and advanced individual training at Fort Polk, LA. His first assignment was to Fort Meade, MD, with a new Army unit to prepare for deployment to Vietnam. The unit, First Logistical Command (1st Log), was assigned to the largest command in Vietnam. Bob had an Army career of many assignments such as Headquarters New England Defense (24th Artillery Group, NIKE), a transportation battalion in Mannheim Germany, Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas, and 25th Infantry Division Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. He was then discharged in Hawaii and had a concurrent active duty assignment as a U.S. Army Warrant Officer assigning him to Fort Devens, MA. His further assignments were to I Corp (Combined Field Army) in Korea, transportation battalion at Fort Story, VA, and U.S. Army Field Station in Berlin. After his tour of duty in Berlin, Bob was chosen to attend the warrant officer senior course at the warrant officer college at Fort Rucker, AL. Bob was further reassigned to 7th Transportation Group at Fort Eustis with duty at Fort Story until retirement in July 1988.

After military retirement, Bob held many positions working for varied contractors before obtaining a position as a government employee in Stuttgart, Germany. He went on to hold his last position as a senior logistician for the Army G-4 at the Pentagon.

Bob's hobbies include photographing anything and everything that does not move, especially small towns, and in particular their courthouses, old train depots, post offices and old theatres.

Bob has four children and seven grandchildren.



AFRH-G Hall of Honors donation

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Gulfport resident Sharon Price submitted her father's WWII Japanese Phrase Book for the memorabilia committee to consider for display in the Hall of Honors. These books were issued to combat squads in order to help them communicate with prisoners. They continued to be useful to the troops in Japan, and included commonplace phrases and words, as well as military commands and tactical questions. The AFRH-G Memorabilia Committee accepted this donation and it is currently on display in one of the glass cases in the Hall of Honors. Thank you to Sharon Price for this incredible donation and to Faye Jefferson for taking over the memorabilia committee. All memorabilia submissions will have to go through the committee and be approved to be displayed in the Hall of Honors.



Cruisin the AFRH

Cruisers are invited to drive through the AFRH-G Campus and let our veterans re-live their glory days by seeing history on wheels.

- Drive Through Only
- No Stopping/Parking
- Driver MUST stay in cars
- Watch out for pedestrians!

Tues. Oct 4th @ 2pm – 2:30pm

Drive Through & Thank our Veterans !!

Located at 1800 Beach Drive, Gulfport, MS 39507 (Access AFRH from the Service Drive)

AFRH-Washington

From the AFRH-W administrator



It has been a busy summer with lots of activities ranging from music, sports events to gardening. As I write today, we are fortunate to have zero active COVID cases on campus, so we were able to relax masking for vaccinated residents and staff. It is nice to see faces again! Many of our events this quarter included music. Voices of Vets, Songs for Seniors, Navy Country Currents, and the 257th Army Brigadier Brass Band entertained us all with their voices and instruments.

It was a busy quarter with VIP visitors. First, was the Republic of Korea Minister of Defense who enjoyed spending time with our residents and generously presented us with air purifiers. Some of us were honored to attend the Korean War Memorial Wall of Remembrance dedication ceremony. Major General Sherrie L. McCandless, Commanding General, District of Columbia National Guard returned for a visit for her band's concert. The new Deputy Director for the Defense Health Agency, Dr. Mike Malanoski, made his first annual visit to see us. He especially enjoyed spending time with some of our residents during lunch. Our most recent VIP visitor was the Secretary of the VA, Honorable Denis McDonough. He served breakfast and enjoyed spending time with our veterans.

As is our tradition, we honored service birthdays for the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Air Force. We held our birthday cake cutting ceremony and our newer tradition of a steak birthday meal. We all enjoyed several picnics to celebrate national holidays including Independence Day and Labor Day. Taking advantage of our improved backyard, we had hot dogs and a pickle ball tournament using our new sport court, thanks to The Old Soldiers Home Foundation's generous gifts. A record number of community members were welcomed on campus for the annual Friends of the Soldiers Home 4th of July event that includes one of the best views of the DC fireworks and great food trucks. And we had several softball games to enjoy among many other programs that our recreation staff hosted.

Food grown by residents became salsa and pickles and enjoyed by many. Other food events included an Italian lunch and a mashed potato bar and of course, it would not be summer without several ice cream socials, one hosted by The Enlisted Association (TREA). We are always fortunate to be remembered by so many generous community members. Synchrony Financial returned with a busload of staff from all over the world to host activities and distribute many gifts. DAR dropped off over 25 wheelchairs, fully assembled, which residents eager for a new ride quickly picked up.

We honored our latest Employee of the Quarter, Margaret Adzowu, one of our hard working nurses, selected from among other outstanding staff members. Congrats to all!

On a sad note, we said an unexpected good-bye to one of our dedicated Security Officers, Shamatto Clarke, an Army veteran. We will all miss spending time with him as he diligently served our residents.

As we close out summer and welcome the cooler weather of fall, stay safe and enjoy rooting for your favorite football team!

Susan Bryhan



Republic of Korea Minister of Defense meets resident Harry Dressler.



Secretary of the VA, Honorable Denis McDonough visits with residents.



Garden bounty, soon to be pickles and salsa!

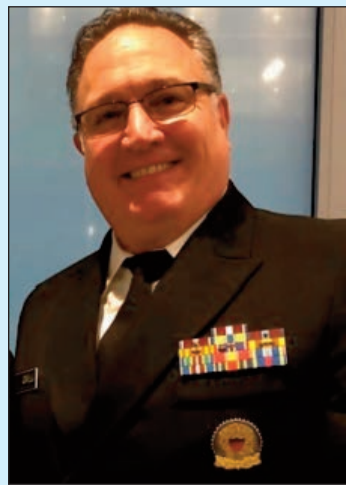


Resident George Wellman took this shot of the Rose Chapel on August 11.



Resident George Wellman caught the full moon in this photo of the chapel.

Armed Forces Retirement Home announces Deputy Chief Operating Officer Selection



Armed Forces Retirement Home Chief Operating Officer John S. RisCassi has announced the selection of Captain Daniel M. Coviello, Jr., U.S. Public Health Service (retired), for appointment to the Senior Executive Service.

Mr. Coviello will be assigned as deputy chief operating officer, with responsibilities to include serving as the agency's second-in-command and chief of staff, management of procurement, contracting, operations and services, and external reporting.

Mr. Coviello retired from the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service as group director for multiple regions overseeing innovation, financial management, and contractor oversight. Prior assignments included division deputy director at the Health Resources Services Administration, center director at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, deputy branch chief at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and chief of staff in the Office of Security and Strategic Information.

Mr. Coviello also served in the U.S. Air Force where he developed plans for deployed hospitals supporting Operation Enduring Freedom as well as managed the service's family practice residency program. Prior to his government service, he was a healthcare administrator for multiple clinics and surgical centers. He holds a master of science in healthcare administration from St. Joseph's University and a bachelor of science in health sciences and humanities from Drexel University.

Enlisted Association leaders visit AFRH-W

By Travis Smith | Strategic Advisor
Photos by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs

Leaders from The Enlisted Association (formerly The Retired Enlisted Association or "TREA") visited AFRH-W on August 24. Incoming Board President Deb Oelschig (USN Ret) and Executive Director Debbie Osborne met with AFRH CEO Major General Rippe to learn more about AFRH, toured the Washington campus, and served ice cream sundaes to residents. Organized in Colorado in 1963 where it is still headquartered, it was recognized by the VA as a veterans service organization in 1986 and chartered by Congress in 1982.

Today its members provide emergency financial assistance, scholarships, connect veterans with services and benefits, and provide opportunities through membership programs to network and advocate on issues important to enlisted veterans and their families. Learn more about TREA at www.trea.org.



TREA The Retired Enlisted Association

By Steven Briefs | Recreation Supervisor

To be in the right place and the right time is always a good thing. On Wednesday, August 24th, members from the Retired Enlisted Association came by to host an Ice Cream Sundae social for our residents. We enjoyed vanilla, chocolate, strawberry, and butter pecan flavors. Toppings such as walnuts, cherries, M&M's, cookie pieces along with caramel, chocolate and butterscotch syrups were available to decorate the ice cream creations. The TREA members wanted to say "thank you" to our residents for their service to our country and offer literature about their organization. There were lots of smiles and conversation enjoyed by everyone, and we encouraged them to return as often as they can.

Notes from the AFRH-W resident advisory committee chairman



This is my final article for the Communicator as my AFRH-W RAC Chairman term comes to an end. I would like to thank all of our RAC representatives and committee members for their support and their efforts to help our fellow residents. I also would like to thank our AFRH-W staff for their support, especially for the many times they have helped me and the residents to resolve our concerns.

I would like to welcome our new RAC chairman and RAC representatives and wish them the best. They will be faced with many major changes over the next two years. The Sheridan renovation and the 80-acre development will soon be upon us and will require communication between the RAC, the staff and agency. I encourage as many residents as possible to get involved in your Resident Advisory Committee.

Finally, I would like to put the rumor to rest that I lost my hair from being the RAC Chairman...It was from calling Bingo on Saturday afternoon. Tough crowd!

Fred Layman

Thank you Fred Layman!

AFRH-Gulfport

AFRH-G Employee of the 3rd Quarter FY22

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Congratulations to our Nurse Educator Donna Iler for exceptional service to The Armed Forces Retirement Home during April, May, and June 2022.

Donna created such a festive atmosphere and did an amazing job organizing, decorating, and leading the annual Nursing Skills Fair on 5/2/22 – 5/4/22. She took an interdisciplinary approach to providing instructors and support for this year's event, including outside community resources to include topics such as suicide prevention, gun locks, dental, and low vision support. Donna collected items throughout the year, ensuring each healthcare staff member received a sombrero and blanket. She also created beautiful gift baskets and wreaths, which were raffled. Donna had piñatas hanging from the ceiling and each time one was broken, a new candy-filled piñata was hung. After the skills fair, Donna donated the decorations, extra sombreros, table runners, tablecloths, peppermints, maracas, flags, and baskets to recreation services to be utilized for the Cinco de Mayo Fiesta Luncheon. Decorations also adorned the Allegiance hallway, Valor dining hall, and the Loyalty dining hall fireplace areas. Healthcare residents could be seen wearing and enjoying their

sombreros at the Fiesta Luncheon. Donna is an intricate member of the healthcare team and directs person-centered care on all levels as a true advocate. Donna's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon herself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Congratulations Donna! Thank you for all you do.

Pet therapy

Story & photo by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Anyone who has ever loved a pet knows the powerful effect that an animal can have on people. Just as physical therapy is beneficial for our bodies, pet therapy has been proven to be a valuable practice especially in older adults. Visitation therapy is what we offer at AFRH-G. This allows residents to experience the joy of being around a pet, but not having the huge responsibility that ownership requires. Pets provide unconditional love, and with that love comes several benefits for our physical and mental well-being. A visit with our furry friends helps us in many ways:

- *Lowers blood pressure
- *Provides mental stimulation
- *Reduces feelings of loneliness
- *Boosts moods
- *Improves motor skills
- *Fights depression
- *Decreases anxiety

Our pets have been evaluated through our Volunteer Coordinator and approved for visits. Check your calendars each month for opportunities to interact with these pups and share some sweet moments with each of them.



American Red Cross donates for "Drum It Up! Drumming!"

Story & photos by Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Board Certified Music Therapist, Recreation Therapy Services

On June 30, 2022, Regional Manager Angela Hage, with Service to the Armed Forces – Red Cross, arrived with an amazing donation. As pictured, the new percussion equipment for the "Drum It Up! Drumming" group just makes you smile!! From a cheerful gathering drum to enticing lollipop drums, the donation also included eight additional mallets, 16 sets of wood claves, a Djembe (African Drum), and a stand for placement at just the right height. These new additions will provide hours of fun, joy and excitement for our healthcare veteran residents and allow us to expand into the future.

You may ask, "Why drumming...What are the health benefits?" Research has shown that drumming strengthens the immune system, increases natural killer (NK) cell activity, reduces burnout, releases stress, and provides an opportunity for self-expression beyond words. It is immediate, inclusive, ignites creativity and is easily accessible in bringing people together for inspiration and hope, too. You may ask, "If I drum, will I feel uplifted or relaxed?" Drumming has been proven to induce alpha waves in the brain and to also release the feel good brain chemicals called endorphins. This results in having an improved mood, a sense of well-being, and feelings of happiness by the end of a group drumming session. Through a study on those who drummed and those who didn't, drumming was found to lower blood pressure, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve social resilience over a six to ten-week time span. Be on the lookout for upcoming pictures of our "Drum It Up! Drumming!" session with the healthcare residents. In the meantime, "Stay Calm and Drum On!"

To learn about Service to the Armed Forces - Red Cross to: <https://www.redcross.org/local/dc-va-md-de/about-us/our-work/service-to-the-armed-forces.html>



AFRH-G residents give monetary donation for school supplies

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs
Photo by Staff Member at Back Bay Elementary

Gulfport residents Von Blunt, Danny Gordon, and Charles Thompson were talking in the dining hall one day and decided they wanted to make a donation to a local school along the Gulf Coast. They all decided to chip in and make a very generous monetary donation to go towards school supplies for the third grade class at Back Bay Elementary. The principal and assistant principal (pictured) were so excited to receive this donation from our residents.

When asked what inspired them to do this, they all agreed that they just wanted to help out people who need help. They chose an elementary school because they wanted to help them with their education by donating money for school supplies. When they left the school after giving the donation they said, "We walked out on cloud nine because we were able to help someone else. Our reward is feeling good about this and benefitting children."



AFRH-G resident turns 100!

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Gulfport resident Howard Bowman was born on June 20, 1922, in Dry Prong, Louisiana. He entered the U.S. Navy in New Orleans in 1940. Mr. Bowman is a WWII and Korean War veteran. After serving in the Navy for 20 years he retired as an E-8 Aviation Electronics Technician Senior Chief Petty Officer (ATCS). AFRH-G celebrated Mr. Bowman's 100th birthday in the Community Center with a cake and ice cream social.

Happy, Happy Birthday Mr. Bowman!



Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



Thank you Mr. Jones for all of your determination and dedication to get the job done as RAC Chair for the last four years. Your service to the AFRH-G was very much appreciated. The RAC election was held on September 15, 2022, and the new RAC Chair will be Pat Smith. Stay tuned for an article from Mr. Smith in the December 31, 2022 edition of the Communicator.

Thank you Art Jones!



AFRH-G RAC Chair Art Jones at the Hawaiian Luau in the dining hall on August 31, 2022.

AFRH-Washington

AFRH-W resident highlight – Gerald “Ivan” Saucier

By PK Knor | Resident



Gerald 'Ivan' Saucier was born on April 6, 1941, in Topsham, ME. His father and grandfather were farmers and lumbermen. His father built their home, but after one year, by a tragic accident, it burnt to the ground and life became extremely tough. His father constantly tried to improve their living situation with better jobs by moving the family to Lewiston, ME, and Hartford, CT, where they lived for 10 years. Ivan attended public school but was not too keen on reading and writing. He did enjoy woodworking and print setting. In woodshop classes, he made his mother a table lamp that looked like a water pump, a standing ashtray, and a magazine rack. He played basketball with a local parks department league, and they eventually went 12-0. When he turned 17, Ivan left school, raised his hand, and joined the U.S. Navy on April 29, 1958.

After basic training at NTC Great Lakes, he was assigned to the USS Intrepid CVA-11, ported in Norfolk, VA. Upon reporting on board, he was assigned to become a machinist mate striker in the engine room. But after a couple of days, he was reassigned to the ship's galley as a mess cook in the bake shop. (There is a requirement that all non-designated junior enlisted work in the mess for three months after reporting.) After this requirement was completed, he started performing his machinist-mate duties. In the meantime, the ship was underway off of the Atlantic Coast qualifying pilots on how to take off and land on the aircraft carrier.

In January 1959, as an E-2, he was assigned to the USS Boxer LPH-4. But after Christmas leave, he returned to Norfolk to find that the USS Boxer had left port (not his fault)! So he was sent to NOB, Norfolk for 'scullery duty' until the USS Boxer returned, which was in April 1959. He was then assigned to the #4 boiler room, but still being the junior man he was again sent to the mess hall and placed on the serving line. (He could hardly wait until he made 3rd class (E-4) to work in his military occupational specialty, which he did in June 1960.) The USS Boxer was assigned to Amphibious Squadron 10, which made numerous trips to the Caribbean to offload Marines who were training in Puerto Rico. They were also involved in the Cuban Crisis Blockade.

He had met his wife, Donna, in Hartford, CT. She moved to Norfolk, VA, where she set up housekeeping and worked as a part-time hairdresser while he attended his schools (damage control, firefighting, etc.) and during sea duties.

On December 9, 1963, he was assigned to the USS Massey DD-778, homeported out of Newport, RI, as an operator/mechanic, a second class boiler man (E-5), and finally working in the boiler room. The ship traveled from Newport, RI, to the Mediterranean and back again several times. On the last cruise, his daughter, Lisa, was born in Rhode Island.

In February 1965, accompanied by his family, Ivan was sent to welding school in San Diego, CA. Then, in July 1965, as a high-pressure welder and first class (E-6), he was put in charge of the ship's evaporators and was the boiler room technician on the USS Forrestal CVA-59 in Norfolk, VA. (The three evaporators could make 300,000 gallons of fresh water in 24 hours.)

The Navy sent him to Instructor Training School in December 1967, in Norfolk, VA, in preparation for his next assignment as an instructor at the Naval Reserve Training Center, Ft. McHenry in Baltimore, MD. There he taught the operation and repair of boilers to reservists. (During this time his youngest daughter Lori was born.)

In 1970, Ivan was transferred to the pre-commissioning crew of the USS Luce DLG-7, where he was in charge of the boiler room. After refresher training in Cuba, the ship was transferred to operate with the 6th fleet in the Mediterranean. Following this assignment, Ivan was promoted to Chief Petty Officer, (E-7) in October 1973. He is also acknowledged as a "plank owner" from the Luce and received honors when he left the ship for the last time!

Ivan was sent back to Philadelphia to SSC in 1975, where they wrote exams and lesson plans for the instructors at the schools. With the advent of gas turbine technology the boiler rating became extinct and the school shut down. But, because there were still ships operated by boilers, instructors were still needed. In 1976 Ivan was transferred to SSC Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, to be an exam writer for boiler techs, machinist mates, enginemen, and damage control men.

On 16 May 1979, Ivan retired after 22 years in the U.S. Navy as a Senior Chief (E-8). After he had submitted his retirement paperwork he took and passed the test for master chief! Just in case civilian life wasn't what he had hoped for or if he was called back to active duty, he would rejoin the Navy at that rank.

He moved his family to Westerly, Rhode Island, and was immediately hired at Pfizer Chemical. Ivan also chose to attend Thames Valley Technical College of Mechanical Engineering, which helped him to obtain an assistant engineering position at Pfizer. After 14 years he took a buy-out offered by Pfizer and completely retired!

The family then moved to Florida. He joined a 55+ softball league, which allowed for one 50-year-old (which he was), so he was made the designated runner! After several years, a divorce, and rebuilding his home from hurricanes, he decided to move to AFRH-W in 2012. Since his daughters and six grandchildren live in Massachusetts and Connecticut, this was a good fit. He got involved in woodworking (new and restoration) and made all types of items, including his last one, a cedar chest for his grandson's wedding present. (See photo) He enjoys the life he has here and the friends he has made.



Ivan made this cedar chest for his grandson's wedding.



Ivan's daughters Lisa and Lori.

1950 census class

By Leslie Toomey | Librarian

Starting in April of 2022, the 1950 Census became available for the public to search. AFRH (W) residents gathered in the Sheridan Computer Lab in July to practice using genealogy databases to find themselves and family members in the 1950 Census and earlier census records. You can search census records for free at the following websites: <https://1950census.archives.gov/> and <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>. Also, many public libraries, including the D.C. Public Library system, offer free access to www.ancestry.com and other genealogy websites.

Internet basics class

By Leslie Toomey | Librarian

The Sheridan Computer lab is up and running again with regular computer classes. During the August class, residents learned common internet terminology and then practiced finding and searching websites. Resident volunteers, Ed Barrett and Mike Krumlauf, helped residents get one-on-one assistance.



Celebrating the U.S. Coast Guard's 232nd Birthday at AFRH-W

Story and photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH Public Affairs

Residents and staff at the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) in Washington, D.C., came together recently to celebrate the 232nd birthday of the United States Coast Guard. Guest speaker Master Chief Petty Officer Joshua Ewing extended his appreciation to the residents and staff at AFRH for being invited to the ceremony to speak on behalf of his organization.

"It's an honor for me to be here and to stand in front of all of you," he said. "There is nothing more honorable than to be here, to come back and speak to folks that may not know where the Coast Guard is going."

Recognizing this year's theme of "Honoring Our Past, Shaping Our Future," Ewing said the U.S. Coast Guard has successfully upheld its mission to save lives, ensure safety and inspect vessels. And going forward, he said it will keep protecting natural resources, lead in global maritime governance (enforcing the rule of law), and foster great partnerships, both domestically and internationally, to "strengthen the fabric of our homeland security."

Ewing said the U.S. Coast Guard is set announce the start of construction of a new national exhibit that will encourage visitors to actively engage in learning about the history of this branch of the military.

"Later this month, the U.S. Coast Guard will conduct a keel laying ceremony in New London, Connecticut, marking the future site of the official United States Coast Guard Museum," he said. "It will be an interactive time capsule that will make our story, our history and our legacy even more accessible for generations to come."

Following the key note address, Coast Guard veterans Don Stout (92) and Lt. Cmdr. James Toomey (36) cut the ceremonial birthday cake.

Master of Ceremony and AFRH Ombudsman Sam Gitchell, U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. (ret.), presented AFRH administrator coins to both Ewing and Toomey for their participation in the ceremony.

The United States Coast Guard started on August 4, 1790. It serves as both a federal law enforcement agency and a branch of the military under the Department of Homeland Security.



AFRH-Gulfport

AFRH-G resident cuts the cake at Keesler's 81st anniversary

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G resident Larry McAnally, who is a U.S. Air Force Retired Master Sgt., cut the cake at Keesler's 81st Birthday Celebration inside the Levitow Training Support Facility at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi on August 25, 2022. Larry trained at Keesler in 1966, so cutting the cake with the youngest U.S. Air Force Airman Basic Sebastian Ramirez, 335th Training Squadron student had a very special meaning.

U.S. Air Force Col. Jason Allen, 81st Training Wing vice commander, and Keesler's Historian Tyrone D. Scott delivered remarks. The young airmen had quite of few questions for Larry as he spoke about his career in the U.S. Air Force. It was such an honor for him to represent the Armed Forces Retirement Home at this special event, especially since it was the 81st Training Wing's 81st Birthday!

Keesler hasn't forgotten its roots in the local community, and they have been a longtime supporter of AFRH-G. In 2005 when Hurricane Katrina hit, Keesler briefly adapted their mission from training to humanitarian and disaster assistance. They were immediately dispatched to AFRH-G to assist the residents and help with cleaning up the aftermath. Keesler has also supported the AFRH-G the last few years helping out with COVID testing for all residents and employees.

In 81 years, Keesler has evolved into the leading joint training installation and is the single largest employer in South Mississippi. Keesler is the second largest Air Force technical training base graduating more than 28,000 Airmen in over 160 career fields every year.

Happy 81st Birthday Keesler and Thank You for always being there for AFRH-G and our residents.



AFRH-G residents recognized at ship christening

Photos by Joe Lavryk | Resident

On June 11 residents of the AFRH-G attended a ship christening and were recognized during the ceremony of the Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi.

LPD 29 is named in honor of U.S. Navy Capt. Richard M. McCool Jr., a World War II Medal of Honor recipient for his actions during the Battle of Okinawa. On June 11, 1945, McCool aided in the rescue of survivors off a sinking destroyer. When his own ship was later hit by a Japanese kamikaze, McCool suffered severe burns and shrapnel wounds, but continued to lead his crew in firefighting and rescue efforts until help arrived.

The USS McCool will be an important piece in the Marine Corps' and Navy's ongoing efforts to increase integration and continue to protect vital maritime and national security interests.



Keesler Air Force Base 81st LRS flight volunteers at AFRH-G

Story & photos by Rosie Lake | Volunteer Coordinator

AFRH-G would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of The 81st LRS LGRV/LGRDDO flight from Keesler AFB for partnering with The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport on 15 June 2022. We appreciate their community service efforts that provided cleaning services for personal mobility devices, wheelchairs and rollators owned by our Nation's veterans. I would also like to thank Mr. Darren Jones, for allowing me to partner with him on this opportunity and many thanks to our recreation department, the upper levels of care staff, custodial staff and everyone who played a role in making this another successful event for the residents of AFRH-G. We look forward to partnering with the 81st LRS flight in the near future. These opportunities are a very positive way for our military service members to connect with our Nation's Hero's and watching their interactions was truly inspiring. Thanks again! Everyone's efforts are greatly appreciated!



AFRH-G clothing store

Story & photos by Rosie Lake | Volunteer Coordinator

Our clothing store associate, AFRH-G resident volunteer Mr. Robert Brodeur, opened the clothing store an additional day in August. The store received a generous donation of women's clothing and Mr. Brodeur has been working tirelessly in displaying the additional clothing items for our resident's shopping pleasure! Residents of AFRH-G can shop at this store for free clothing every Wednesday. Thanks Mr. Bob for always maintaining a clean and orderly clothing store and thanks to everyone who has donated clothing, dropped in to shop or just say hello. We appreciate you!



USCG ball caps donated to AFRH-G

Story & photos by Rosie Lake | Volunteer Coordinator



On 14 June we called on our resident USCG veterans to look through and take some unit ball caps that were donated by Ms. Lois Bouton's family. The opportunity was truly a pleasure to watch. One of the residents, Mr. Al McNab, picked up a hat and you could visibly see the memories flooding in. He recalled that the USCGC Blackthorn was the very first vessel he served on. He stated, "The Blackthorn was sunk in Tampa Bay

in 1980. It had a collision with a huge merchant ship, where the anchor from the ship caught onto the Blackthorn, which capsized the ship and resulted in many people losing their lives. It was a sad ending for a good old ship." Mr. McNab was grateful for the ball caps and took several caps that signified ships that he served on. Another resident, Mr. Earl Portrey, stated, "I inspected many of the ships named on these ball caps." It was a pleasure seeing the residents smile and listen to them reminisce about the vessels they served on. One can't help but feel honored every time they share a piece of history!

The U.S. Coast Guard celebrated their 232nd Birthday on August 4. Happy Birthday U.S. Coast Guard!



AFRH-Washington

Art for all

Story & photos by Jenna Kriegel | Art Specialist



Creativity knows no limit! That's the mentality during art programs at the AFRH Washington campus. Researchers have frequently observed a correlation between art-making and improved cognitive function, memory, and dexterity. With that in mind, AFRH-W healthcare residents can now participate in arts and creative programs designed specifically for them.

Assisted Living residents can come and go at their leisure to socialize and color at "Art Outside the Lines," while Long-term-care and Memory Support residents get their own custom guided craft tutorials at "Art Time With Jenna." Seasonal workshops, such as "Creepy Crafts" and "Deck the Halls" offer residents from all levels of care the chance to decorate for holidays. Thanks to generous community donations, residents can experiment with lighted magnifying lenses, adjustable desks, portable drawing boards, large format coloring sheets, and specialty pencil/brush grips to find the right combination of creative accommodations their needs. There is truly something for everybody and every body in the art studios at AFRH-W!



Introducing "Mend-It-Mondays" at AFRH-W!

By Jenna K. Kriegel | Art Specialist

The resident sewing room on the sixth floor of Scott Tower is one of many hidden gems at the AFRH Washington campus. Boasting 13 sewing machines, in addition to countless yards of fabric and creative baubles, this facility is finding new life and greeting new visitors regularly. This summer, AFRH-W premiered its new "Mend-It-Monday" program. Residents are free to drop in or set an appointment with the Art Specialist in the sewing room for one-on-one guidance with basic garment repair and alterations. Designed to promote prolonged independence, the program provides the opportunity for residents to learn a skill and save a few bucks. Some more experienced resident seamstresses have even thrown in their expertise with creative problem solving. So far, nine pairs of pants and four shirts have been repaired by residents, with more on the schedule for the next "Mend-It-Monday."

Lincoln Cottage tour

Story & photos by Leslie Toomey | Librarian



In recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Lincoln Memorial dedication, AFRH-W residents enjoyed Abraham Lincoln trivia, followed by a group tour of President Lincoln's Cottage. During his presidency and the Civil War, Lincoln and his family visited the cottage regularly; Lincoln even developed the Emancipation Proclamation there. AFRH-W is fortunate to have the Lincoln Cottage on its grounds, and residents can visit for free by calling (202) 829-0436 to arrange a tour.



Salty sea stories & beer

Story & photo by Leslie Toomey | Librarian

To celebrate the U.S. Coast Guard's birthday week, LCDR James Toomey visited AFRH-W to share sea stories with residents. AFRH-W volunteer bartender, Sheldon Shorthouse, generously opened up the Defender's Inn, so residents could enjoy drinks while they shared their salty sea stories.



Travel stories

Story & photo by Leslie Toomey | Librarian

After more than two years of Covid restrictions, many AFRH-W residents appreciated traveling this summer to near and faraway places. For the Travel Stories program, residents enjoyed international snacks while sharing their travel stories and photos from Scotland, Massachusetts, nearby museums, etc. The travel group will be meeting again in January and welcomes travel stories from recent and long-ago adventures.



Patriotic sing-along

Story & photo by Leslie Toomey | Librarian

To prepare for the 4th of July, AFRH-W residents gathered in their red, white, and blue to sing patriotic songs together. It was lovely to hear the voices of our veterans sing "America the Beautiful," "My country 'Tis of Thee," and other familiar tunes.



Chess challenge

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapist
Photos by LTC Nursing

Ok, it's been four + long years but I, Carol Mitchell from Recreation Therapy, can finally say I beat resident Jim Hopkins in a game of chess!

Jim has provided me with invaluable knowledge on the benefits of playing chess. Some of the benefits include developing perspective, improving and testing memory, aiding in focusing, improving cognitive skills, exercising logic, and making decisions both visually and analytically.

Throughout the years chess has taught me how to win and lose... generally losing at least against Jim! It has also given me the ability to come back a better and wiser player. Chess is one of the oldest games in the world dating back over 1,500 years. It brings people around the world together from different cultures, ages, and backgrounds. Professional chess players can win up to \$1,000,000 and more!



National Potato Day

Story & photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapy

In honor of National Potato Day on Friday, August 19th, AFRH-W celebrated with a Mashed Potato Bar and games. Residents had a choice between a base of plain or red-skin mashed potatoes, which they were then able to dress up to their liking. Choice of toppings included sour cream, chives, chili, butter, cheese sauce, and bacon.

Potato games were enjoyed by all who attended. The big hit was "Bowling for Spuds." Knocking down pins with a sweet potato was no easy feat as the potato rolled in all directions. Next up was "Test Your Taste Spuds." Residents were given a plate with four different flavored potato chips and they had to figure out what each one was. The final game became a team effort... "Potato Tower." Residents worked together to build a tower out of potatoes. We also had two special guests show up and spend the afternoon mingling. You can't have a Potato Party without Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head! Overall everyone had a great time socializing with friends, and making new friends.



(VIP) Very Important Painters

By Jenna Kriegel | Art Specialist

Did you know certain residents at AFRH-W have 24/7 access to the art studios? It's true! Residents with the creative urge can apply for a facility key and their own private workspace within the shared studio! Currently, there are multiple vacancies in the Ceramics Studio. Interested residents must set up a meeting with the Art Specialist to discuss studio policies and safety prior to approval.

Glenna's Book Club resumes

By Leslie Toomey | Librarian



Glenna Orr, long-time community volunteer, has resumed her weekly book club for AFRH-W residents. Glenna provides books for residents to borrow and generously supplies refreshments for each meeting. Fall book titles include the following: *Red Notice* by Bill Browder; *The Book Woman's Daughter* by Kim Richardson; *The Path between the Seas* by David McCullough; *The President and the Freedom Fighter* by Brian Kilmeade; and *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance. Glenna's Book Club meets in the AFRH-W Game Room near the Library on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. New members are welcome to join at any time.

AFRH-Gulfport

AFRH-G art demo classes

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs
 Every Wednesday morning at 0800 our Art Specialist Milton Williams holds an art demo class in the art room at AFRH-G. Milton teaches the secrets to painting and explains mixing different colors and using different paint brushes, and palette knives. It's amazing how everything just falls into place working with brushes and colors. If you are interested in art, you do not want to miss this. Check out the recreation calendar on our web site for more art classes and demo paintings. It's amazing the talent that comes out of our art room.



AFRH-G resident artist John Brazitis ~ sunset painting

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist



Many of John Brazitis' paintings are black, white and grey tones. This sunset painting is one of his latest. The blending of the colors from the cool blues, to the warm oranges, and reds are just at the right proportions. He prefers black and whites, but he does an excellent job with color as well. This painting is in the art display room and it should warm your heart when viewing. Thanks, John for venturing into color landscapes.

Doug Carroll, Photographer

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist
 Doug will be showing a series of photographs that he has taken through the years, most of which, have been enhanced to create an impression or highlight a specific detail in his subjects. He has won many awards in his 60 plus years of capturing nature through the lens of many different cameras. For the past four years he has offered Christmas photos for both staff and residents. Nice to have such a professional photographer offering his services at the Home. Please go by and take the adventure of viewing over a dozen photographs in the Volunteer/Package Room #1021.



An adventure down-under, Koala Bear

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist
 Australia has some of the most interesting creatures and this painting of a Koala Bear by Sandy Joiner is at the top of the list. Sandy has been painting for about six months, and although she has only begun to scratch the surface of her new found talent, her art is leaping off the canvases. Just as the subject is a unique creature so is the technique she used in producing it. Let's begin with a broad brush, a palette knife, sponge and top it off with toothpicks for that extra fine detail. Folks, this is an impressive painting and the number of hairs on this Koala Bear, all painted with a toothpick, would be innumerable. This painting is currently showing in our art display room on the first floor at AFRH-Gulfport. Be sure to look for this Australian masterpiece. Sandy has also created art work of monkeys and raccoons which are hanging in the hallway right outside the art room.



AFRH-G residents paint pelicans

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist
Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs
 Pelicans are a common sight up and down the Mississippi Gulf Coast as well as many of its tributaries. These giant cruisers soar the air currents at great heights and often venture miles inland. The resident artists at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport always enjoy painting pelicans, especially after volunteer artist, Hayden Hall, showed them his technique in a painting class many years ago. He was going to hold another class, but alas, COVID keep him from coming. They decided to paint this unique view of a pelican and they all did a great job. We look forward to seeing you soon Hayden.



Beat the heat with chair exercises

Story & photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs
 Since the heat index was over 100 degrees in South Mississippi during July and August, it's very important to monitor your health and not get overheated or dehydrated. Sometimes exercising outside in extreme conditions is not healthy. AFRH-G holds exercise classes in the exercise room every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 0900. Our Exercise Instructor Carol Davis can help you pave the way in your fitness routine. It's not only fun, but it's also air conditioned. So, don't stay on the couch or the recliner to beat the heat, go to the exercise room or our state-of-the-art gym, which features all Nautilus equipment plus NuStep cross trainer, speed bag, heavy bag, exercise bikes, rowing machine, free weights and treadmills. The hardest thing about exercise is to start doing it. Once you start exercising regularly, the hardest thing is to stop it. Just remember progress takes place outside of your comfort zone. AFRH-G has so much to offer, so get out and enjoy all of our amenities



A Matter of Balance

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant
 Some AFRH-G residents completed the Matter of Balance (MOB) program on 23 June. This is an evidence-based program that is designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels in older adults. This was eight, two-hour classes taught by trained leaders. Resident Jack Horsley, and Recreation Assistant Carol Davis led the classes once a week. Participants learned to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risk at home, and exercise to increase strength and balance. This is a nationally recognized program developed at Boston University. Falls are the leading cause of injuries in older adults. Many people who fall, even if they're not injured, become afraid of falling. This fear may cause a person to reduce everyday activities. When this happens, they become weaker and their chances of falling increases. There are many conditions that may cause a fall, but weak muscles is a very important one that can be controlled. The MOB program teaches exercises to help improve strength and balance. If you are interested in attending our next class, be on the lookout for another start date in the fall of this year. Thanks to the AFRH-G residents who completed the course with us in June!



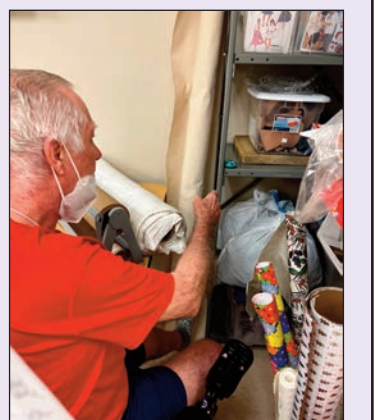
Chit chat

Story & photo by Kimberly Clothier | Recreation
 If you walked down the second floor hallway by Allegiance and heard lots of laughing, it was these ladies enjoying Sunday afternoon tea and cookies...telling stories from the past...hilarious conversations. Big thank you to Claire who provided some new special order teas. We meet a few times a month just to enjoy the chit/chat and some great tea and treats.



Going on a rock hunt

Story & photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist
 The residents of Valor Hall and Allegiance Hall painted rocks during the "Summer Camp" week for the purpose of creating a scavenger rock hunt around the campus at AFRH-G. The residents painted unique color schemes and patterns on the rocks to mark each with a personal identifier. The rocks were carefully hidden in popular locations around the campus. With a clue sheet in hand and determination, anyone may have a challenge and fun time hunting down all twelve rocks. Happy Hunting!!



AFRH-G residents tour downtown Gulfport

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant
Photos by Gina Prater and Katie Turner | Chandeaur Brewing Co.
 August 26 was a great day to be a tourist in the city where the residents live. AFRH-G residents loaded the bus for a short ride to downtown Gulfport, Mississippi. They visited the Gulfport Museum, in an old train depot, then walked across the street to get a lesson on how beer is made. Chandeaur Brewing Company's General Manager Gina Prater, and Brewmaster Katie Turner delivered the tour and explained the process. From the initial grain to milling to fermentation to canning could take anywhere from 10 days to two months to brew beer! WOW! After they learned how beer is made, they entered Chandeaur's Tap Room for a sampling of several different types of craft beer. From there the group from AFRH-G dispersed through downtown to have lunch at one the many choices in the area. If you've never been to the local cities on the coast, I'd suggest you take a visit. We have many towns with their own unique personalities. Go explore!



Hawk on AFRH-G light pole

Photo by Pauline Larson | Resident
 You can always catch AFRH-G resident Pauline Larson out and about with her camera. Here is a photo she captured of a hawk on top of the light pole, in front of the building with the flag waving in the background. Thank you Pauline for sharing your talent with us.



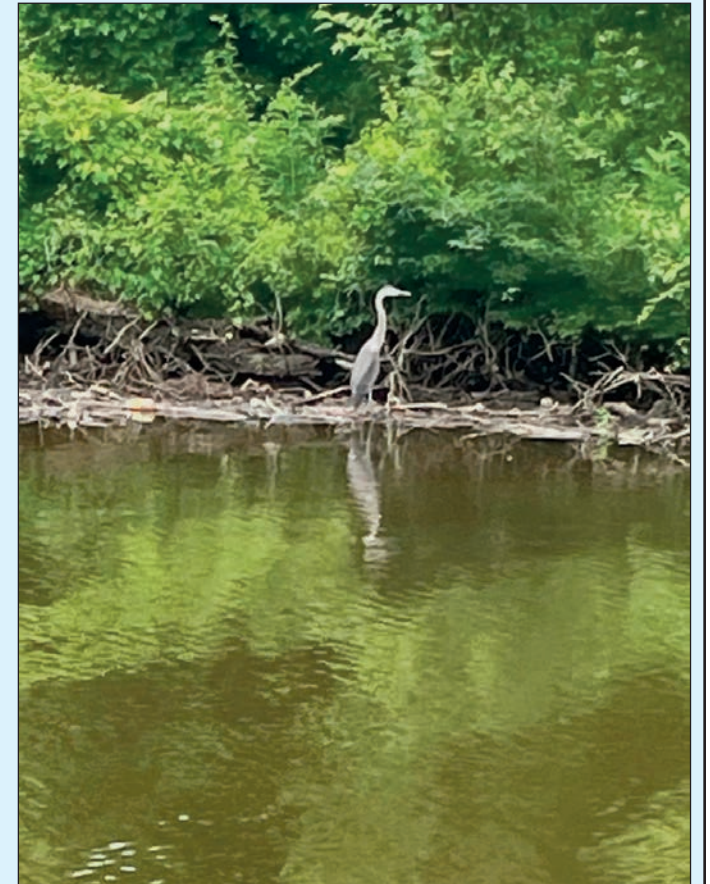
AFRH-Washington

Bladensburg Waterfront Park boat ride

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapist

Photos by Carol Mitchell and Evelyn Chandler | CNA

It started out as a beautiful day for a pontoon ride! The healthcare residents of AFRH-W headed out for a scenic ride along the Anacostia River, one of the most historic waterways in America! The tour is a 45-minute interpretive riverboat tour and Captain Robert did an excellent informative narration. We enjoyed viewing egrets, ducks, turtles, and a plethora of foliage. Upon our return to the dock and unloading, we sat under a pavilion to chow down on delicious bag lunches provided by our food services department. Unfortunately, as we were finishing up our lunch a rainstorm decided to descend upon us! We quickly boarded the bus and headed home, but not before we stopped off at McDonald's where Recreation Therapist Carol Mitchell, and Certified Nursing Assistant Evelyn Chandler picked up a sweet treat of soft serve ice cream. It was still a beautiful and enjoyable day for all!



RT Silent Auction Italian luncheon

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapist

Resident Bill

Jentarra and his special appointed guest resident Carilee McCue were excited to finally reap Bill's winnings from the RT Silent Auction. Bill bid on a homemade Italian luncheon, compliments of the recreation therapy and recreation staff. The meal included spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, salad, fresh fruit, cucumber sandwiches, sparkling ciders, a charcuterie board, and to top it off, gelato!



Fabulous flowers

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapist

Photo by AFRH-W Security Services

Special thanks to Marcia Guzauskas and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, National Officers Club for the gorgeous flowers they donated to the residents of Long Term Care and the Home's Independent Living resident gardeners. Beautiful yellow, orange, pink, and more are bringing smiles to many faces.



It was kind of a big DILL!

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC & Marla McGuinness | Recreation Team Lead

Homemade freezer pickles, kosher dill pickles, sweet gherkins pickles, bread & butter pickles, okra pickles, Kool-Aid pickles, and boozy koolickles all made for a tasty pickle-delicious event.

Freezer pickles are a homemade dish cooked up by the residents of Scott 2. They planted the cucumbers in April (to become yummy pickles) and with lots of "green thumb" care, by June there were plenty of cucumbers ready for picking and mixing.

The recipe selected by the residents provided a sweet, tangy, and crunchy side dish. Recipe ingredients included:

Thinly sliced cucumbers, bell peppers, onions, kosher salt, pepper, granulated sugar (lots!), apple cider vinegar, mustard seed, celery seed, and Mrs. Dash's. Freezer pickles can be added to just about anything you'd like... burgers, hot dogs, chicken salad, egg salad, and more. The only thing I might not like it with is on top of ice cream, but who knows some people might like it that way!

On August 26th residents were able to stroll by various tables to enjoy pickle tasting, pickle history and trivia, pickle pics, the resident homemade pickle table, and a southern treat of Kool-aid pickles and boozy koolickles originating from the birthplace of Mississippi.

All in all the residents had a Pickle of a Day and look forward to future Scott 2 vegetable garden dishes to try!



Voices of Vets, Inc.

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC & Steven Briefs, CTRS | Recreation Supervisor

On August 15, 2022 Voices of Vets (VoV) treated the residents of AFRH-W to a wonderful performance. Voices of Vets is a 501c(3) non-profit organization that provides exceptional performances with live music of all genres. The engaging performance for our Vets included classic music from the 1940's through the 1970's. Kassie Sandacz is not only the creator of VoV, she is the Chief Operating Officer. Kassie is a hard working entrepreneur and currently her day job is with a biotech firm, where she leads the learning and development program. Kassie's goal is to visit every veteran home in the United States to show appreciation for the great sacrifices our military veterans made for our country. VoV wants the veterans to know that they are not forgotten. During the program, each veteran is provided with small gifts to include flags and flowers. The entertainers interact and make a connection with every veteran in attendance. COVID has been challenging to provide live entertainment, but Kassie has persevered and provided themed performances by CD to AFRH-W.

After three years, Kassie, who had previously been coming to the Home annually, was able to come back. The residents truly appreciated the uplifting music by the awesome and talented entertainers. VoV entertainers for this event included Dave Phenicie (bass), Todd Simon (piano), Lauren Waller (singer/cello), Don Wolcott (guitar), and of course the kind-hearted and spectacular Kassie Sandacz. The program included songs to bring back fond memories like Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue, Route 66, Sittin' on the Dock of The Bay, Chattanooga Choo Choo, Let Me Call You Sweetheart, The Star Spangled Banner, America The Beautiful, Sweet Caroline, and many more tunes to get your toes tapping. AFRH-W residents look forward to another future performance!



AFRH-Gulfport

Tie dying during summer camp

Story & Photos by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist

During the AFRH-G summer camp event, residents made and created their own tie dye t-shirts. The residents started by using rubber bands to tie up their t-shirts in many shapes and forms. With paint everywhere, the dying began. Residents chose the colors they wanted, and soon the white t-shirts were a thing of the past. After a day of soaking in a plastic bag, the t-shirts were rinsed and hung to dry. After hanging to dry a couple of days, the shirts were washed then worn, and that's when the compliments started... a unique and fun creation for all that participated.



Week of summer camp at AFRH-G

Story & Photos by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapist

Residents spent the week of June 13-17 in camp... "Summer Camp" a way to start the summer off with fun, laughter, socializing, games and new experiences but inside as the heat in south Mississippi was moving up fast.

The weekly events involved axe throwing, s'mores, target shooting, crafts, rowing, rock painting, fishing, tie dye shirts, nature and ice cream.. The games, of course, were modified to a way unlike any other... leaving residents to wonder what to expect each day.

At the week's end, awards were presented to the winners: Rita Ball axe throwing, Robert Rolak and Marty Pendleton target shooting, George Wallace rowing and Mr. Virgil Vintila fishing. A week of fun to remember.



Dulcimers & more music time with banjo, too!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services

Photos by Lee Corban | Recreation Supervisor

On September 1, 2022, healthcare residents gathered in the Valor Piano Lounge for the monthly Dulcimers & More Music Time. In addition to the Appalachian dulcimer that is played on the lap, a banjo was added as multiple residents requested "Oh Susannah"...and for Susan to play a banjo on her knee.

Beginning with the Appalachian dulcimer, also known as Mountain dulcimer, various familiar folk tunes were played along with the historical backgrounds of each songs origins. As a part of the zither family (an instrument with strings stretched across a box from end to end), the Appalachian dulcimer rests on the lap, has 3-4 strings with a fretted fingerboard, and is played by strumming the strings with the right hand while the left hands picks out the chords or melodies. The word dulcimer means "sweet song," early versions of the instrument were known throughout the Middle East along with cultures stretching from Greece to Mongolia and was called a Santur. The instrument was depicted in a Danish fresco dating back to 1560 and gained roots in America in the early eighteenth century through Scottish and Irish settlers.

The banjo has been known to North America and the Caribbean since the seventeenth century when enslaved people from West and Central Africa brought the instrument with them. Early African influenced banjos were built with a wooden stick neck and a gourd as the body. The earliest picture (1785-1795) shows a four-stringed banjo with the fourth string shorter than the others. In the 1820's, Joel Walker Sweeney was credited for adding a fifth string and replaced the gourd body with a sound box made of wood covered in a skin. Sweeney's original design led to the modern five-string banjo with fretted fingerboard and tuning pegs we see today.

A stroll down memory lane, familiar songs, and sweet tunes rounded out one of many mornings filled with music, history, friends, and more!



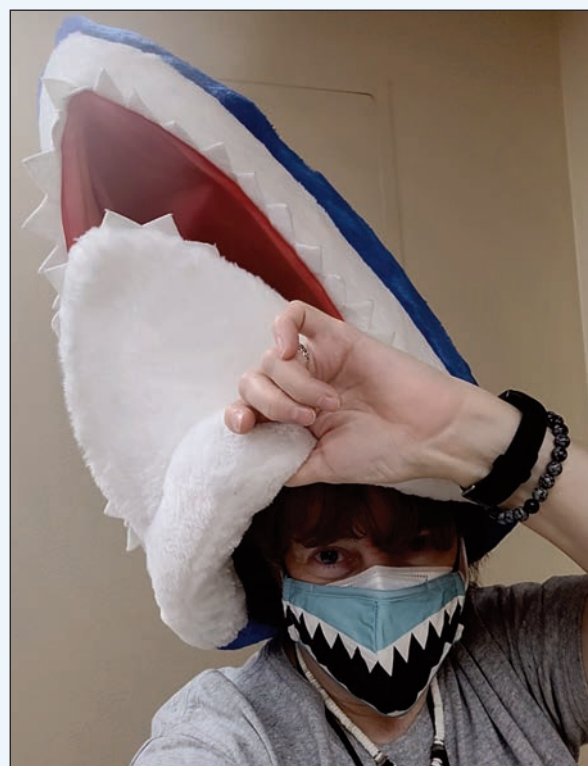
Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water...Nooo!...Shark Week!!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services

Photos by Selena Brewer | LPN & Nicholas Trueman | Resident Services

Did you know that Shark Awareness Day falls on July 14th each year and that several species of sharks are threatened with extinction as a result of human action? Sharks are key to helping maintain the balance and are an important piece in the ecosystem of marine life. Premiered on July 17, 1988, Shark Week on the Discovery Channel is a week-long block of TV programs featuring the ocean's apex predators. Have no fear, the annual shark week usually held in July or August returns to Discovery on July 24, 2022.

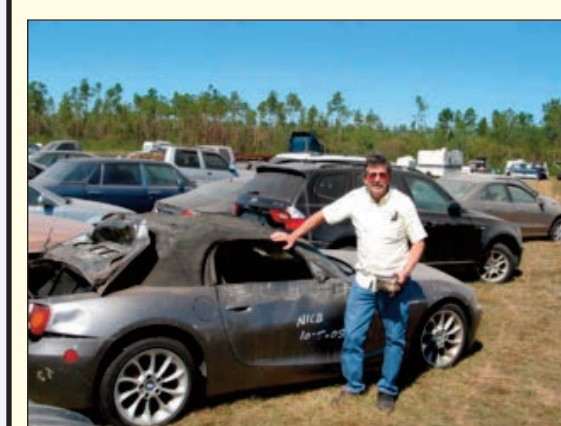
On Wednesday, July 13, 2022 in the Valor and Loyalty Dining Halls, healthcare residents enjoyed a socially-distanced summer filled cook-in. Everyone raved stating, "They make the best hamburgers here...yummy shrimp...oooooh...awhh...banana pudding, too!" Residents also got a surprise shark visit with recalling the phrase, "Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water...noooo!" Last July was the Delta variant of COVID and now we face the 5th variant of the Omicron strain. In perfect timing, the 2nd booster or 4th shot of the vaccine arrived at AFRH-Gulfport and was delivered into arms by nursing staff. Loyalty residents were all smiles as the shark (AKA Susan Bergman) was a great distraction during shot giving! Residents even joked, "I need my shark record now!" (Instead of shot record) and "I'm glad I got the shot...it was much better than a shark bite." The shark circled the building rounding up for those interested in getting their booster shots, too. No shark bait here...boost up and stay safe everyone!



17 years later

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

August 29 is a day that we really would rather forget. However, it's been 17 years since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. These are just a few photos of the destruction at AFRH-G. It took five years to clean up, implode the old building, and build a new state-of-the-art facility for our veterans. The new AFRH-Gulfport reopened in October of 2010.



AFRH-Gulfport

Hawaiian Luau Luncheon at AFRH-G

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Aloha! AFRH-G held a Hawaiian Luau Luncheon on August 31 in the main dining hall and in the upper levels of care. Lots of residents and employees wore colorful Hawaiian-style clothing. The dining hall served Hawaiian curried soup, Aloha mac salad, Honolulu coleslaw, coconut shrimp with sweet chili sauce, pineapple pepper chicken, island fried rice, Hawaiian shrimp salad, and so much more. The desserts served were coconut cake, raspberry cheesecake, French silk pie, million dollar delight, chocolate cake, and cheesecake with fresh strawberries. Everything was absolutely AMAZING! Mahalo to the dining hall and recreation for such a festive and delicious luncheon.



AFRH-G Ice Cream Social

Story & photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

What is there to do when it's hot, humid, muggy, and raining in South Mississippi? Well, at AFRH-G we had an awesome Ice Cream Social with a variety of flavors, including sugar free, plus a plethora of all kinds of toppings. The residents stayed cool and dry in the Community Center while enjoying a cold treat and a lot of awesome company. Thank you to our Recreation Team for always making the socials fun.



Don't forget to change your clocks back on November 6, 2022



AFRH-Washington

WOW! What a game!

Story & photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

On September 1, 2022, the Washington Nationals took on the Oakland Athletics and what a game it was! Washington took the lead in the first inning but by the eighth inning, the game was tied 3-3. The game then took a turn, and sadly the Nats went down 5-3 in the 10th inning. Nats player Ruiz singled to the right and Hernandez scored making it 5-4. Then in the bottom of the 10th, Joey Meneses hit a game winning three-run homer to cap his first four-hit game as the Washington Nationals rallied to beat the Oakland Athletics 7-5! Sadly, the Nats season is not going so well this year, but for this game the residents had a fantastic time and enjoyed great weather, an exciting game, and fun fan support for our Home team, the Washington Nationals. Of course the beer, wine and hot dogs during the game topped it all off. Special thanks to the Fenwick Foundation for donating the tickets for the veterans of AFRH-W.

