



**AFRH GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI & WASHINGTON DC**

## Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff holds video conference with AFRH residents *Event to “serve those who served” commemorates MLK Holiday*

By Christopher Kelly | AFRH Public Affairs Officer

Photos by Christopher Kelly and Christopher Alexander | AFRH-G Chief of Resident Services

In honor of the Martin Luther King (MLK) Holiday – and in observing the day as a National Day of Service – a panel of AFRH residents took part in a special video conference with General Mark A. Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and SEAC Ramon Colon-Lopez the Senior Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Milley and SEAC Colon-Lopez reached out to AFRH as part of their commitment to the MLK holiday by “serving those who served.”

AFRH Chief Executive Officer, Major General (retired) Stephen T. Rippe welcomed General Milley and expressed his thanks on behalf of the Home for Department of Defense (DoD)’s commitment to prioritize the health of our residents, particularly over the last month as they received some of the first vaccines in the nation.

Residents participating from AFRH-Washington: Fred Layman (RAC Chair), James Diamond, George Johnson, Norma Rambow and George Wellman.

Residents participating from AFRH-Gulfport: Art Jones (RAC Chair), Dexter Marchman, Sharon Price, James Savage and Tom Ward.

General Milley took time to speak with each of our participating residents and sought their opinion on what DoD can do to further support them in the future. He and SEAC Colon-Lopez also reaffirmed their obligation to current and future residents of the Home.

Thank you, General Milley and SEAC Colon-Lopez for being of service on the MLK Holiday to our residents!

**Thank you,  
General Milley  
and SEAC  
Colon-Lopez  
for being of  
service to  
our residents!**



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# AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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*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 active commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer, are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home:

- who are 60 years of age or over; and were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions after 20 or more years of active service.
- who are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to have a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty in the Armed Forces.
- who served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be suffering from injuries, disease, or disability.
- who served in a women's component of the Armed Forces before June 12, 1948; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be eligible for admission because of compelling personal circumstances.

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

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## AFRH-W Resident Highlight – Neil Ferguson

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Neil Ferguson was born in a rural community in California. He biked three miles to a four-room grammar school, and his love of biking continues today! The Korean War had started when he graduated from high school, so he decided to enlist in the Navy. "You always have three meals a day and a bed to sleep in every night" is the reason given. Neil performed clerical tasks aboard a heavy cruiser, which alternated 10 days in Japan taking on supplies and 30 days off the Korean coast firing 8" shells. In fact, his ship the USS ST PAUL (CA73) is recorded as having fired the last official round before the cease-fire in July of 1953.

While in Japan, Neil met and married his wife. Two of his four children are twins and they were born on July 4. At first, they were tagged "Twin A" and Twin B," but someone put the names "Yankee" and "Doodle" on their basinetts. They are still nicknamed that today!

Next the family was stationed at Norfolk, Virginia, where Neil changed his classification to electronics technician in communications. He went to Great Lakes Naval Training Center for schooling. Since Neil was the only one left in his class for communications he was designated the smartest student in this area. After graduation, Neil became an instructor of basic electronics. He also continued his education with advanced electronics, but since there was a backlog of students in this school, Neil was taken out of class to help with instructing. It just so happened that he was assigned to teach a class that involved calculus, Neil's hardest subject. However, as an instructor, he did learn some calculus himself!

After graduating from the school, Neil was sent to a ship off the coast of Vietnam

that surveyed the depth of the ocean. While waiting for transportation to his ship he was assigned to a barracks in Saigon where there was no hot water and the wrong kind of electricity for his electric razor. He was miserable shaving with a blade razor in cold water, not to mention taking a shower in cold water. When Neil finally reached his ship they had just finished distilling sea-water and the hot distilled water was put into the fresh water tank and now the cold water was hot along with the hot water. Talk about extremes. At this point in his career, Neil was an E-7 chief electronics technician. He liked this position because he could "walk around with a coffee cup in his hand telling his people what to do." He ate the same food as the rest of the crew, but ate in the chief's mess hall and could have as much as he wanted, along with the other chiefs.

After Neil's tour from surveying the coastal waters of Vietnam, he was transferred to Great Lakes Service Schools Command where he was in charge of the electronics school's examination department, where the exams for the classes were prepared and statistics compiled. This duty was one of Neil's favorites.

Neil retired in 1972. He then taught electronics at a community college for a while before going to work maintaining the industrial electronic equipment in a magazine printing plant in Lincoln, Nebraska. After a few years Neil moved to York, Pennsylvania, where he worked for an engineer who designed industrial electronic controls. He became involved in designing electronic circuit boards utilizing microcomputer chips. Neil became quite involved with microcomputers from the early IBM and Apple models, especially the Apple Macintosh, and is still involved with microcomputers to this day.

Neil came to AFRH-W in 2007. He enjoys biking and helping others. He helps with computer issues and is in the process of doing an audio recording of the recent book on the residents, "Remembering with the Heart."



## AFRH-G resident highlight - Max Noel Harbison

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Max Noel Harbison was born at home in Park County, Indiana in 1934. He was the youngest of five children born to farmers. With his parents' permission, Max joined the Army National Guard at the age of 16. He said he joined because it was "just something we boys done." He graduated high school and stayed around to help on the family's farm until everything was sorted out then decided to join the United States Air Force.

He entered at age 19 and stayed in fuels, later adding loadmaster, for his whole career. Max's first orders brought him overseas to fight in the Korean War. He was brought to Kimpo by LST (landing ship, tank) where he was only given a poncho and sea rations to live and sleep on the deck. Once they landed in Kimpo, the men were given eight-man tents as quarters to live in during the winter. The whole wing moved in 1955 to Chitose Air Base in Japan. While stationed there, he met

Miyako, who Max lovingly refers to as the "finest woman in the world." The couple married and Max was sent back to the States the day after their wedding. The newlyweds called

Lincoln, Nebraska home for a couple of years before getting orders to go back to Japan. While overseas, Max also went to Laos, where he worked with Air America as a loadmaster for de Havilland planes. Max was finally able to move back to the United States when he received orders for Big Spring, Texas to work at the Air Defense Command. Once he made tech sergeant, he was sent back overseas again to Taklii, Thailand to the F-105 base to aid in the fight against Vietnam. He was in charge of the special fuel used by the SR-71 Blackbirds, but also helped fuel the F-105s used in Rolling Thunder. He made it back to Japan again and stayed for a while until moving back to U.S. soil to work in Houston. By this time, Max and Miyako had three teenage children, Janeese, James, and Janet. He began thinking about retirement because he had already put in 20 years. Unfortunately he did not get to file any paperwork before being called to the Philippines where he served as an operations NCO. The move was not easy for the family so Max decided to buy horses for the kids so that they had something to occupy their time.

After giving the U.S. Air Force 26 years of service, Max decided to retire at the rank of E-7. He began working as a civilian at the harbor in Gulfport, Mississippi. He then worked with another company that owned tankers, tugboats, and barges. He stayed with this company until he urgently made the decision to become a full-time caregiver for Miyako, who had just gotten diagnosed with Alzheimer's. The couple lived in Saucier, Mississippi while battling her disease. Miyako lost her battle in 2009 after spending a wonderful weekend surrounded by family. Max did not feel comfortable staying without his wife in their home so he decided to move to AFRH-G. He lived in the home for about three years before he met Barbara at one of the Friday night dances. They dated and then decided to marry in 2015. Max moved out of AFRH to live with Barbara in Gulfport. He then decided to take up residence at AFRH again in 2019, though the couple still remain happily married. Max enjoys his days at AFRH-G by volunteering to help new residents with their checking in process. He also enjoys reading, especially anything by Louis L'Amour!

# The AFRH-G Hall of Honors

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Anyone who has visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi knows that it is a state-of-the-art facility. When this building was being built no corners were cut. In turn, that produced a premier retirement facility for our veterans. Included in the plans was a space dedicated for the Hall of Honors. This museum-like part of the building celebrates our military heritage and honors all who served. In this area you can find memorabilia shown in the glass cases, military uniforms donated from residents, a Medal of Honor in a lighted display case and military photos exhibited of current residents. There is also the timeline of the Armed Forces Retirement Homes in Gulfport, Mississippi and Washington DC demonstrated along the wall and dating back to the 19th century.

The military photos of current residents exhibited are updated monthly. Residents who wish to have their military photo revealed in the Hall of Honors in Gulfport, please see Becki Zschiedrich in room #1313. It can be a very small picture or a large one. A photo of the resident's military picture will be taken and enlarged to an 8 x 10 and displayed in the Hall of Honors.



# The military life of Patrick Martin Smith

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Pat was born to Benjamin and Mary Smith on February 11, 1947 in St. Louis, Missouri, being the second youngest son of five brothers. In pursuit of education, he processed through elementary grades at St. Mark Catholic School and St. Pius X School and completed his secondary grades at River Gardens High School in 1965. Pat began his military career with his enlistment in the U.S. Army in March 1966 and was sent to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri for basic training. He then enrolled in the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California where he learned the Korean language during thirty-seven weeks of course work.

He was then assigned to the Army Security Agency in San Francisco, California for a year, and while wearing civvies, performed background security clearances. Remaining with intel service he was sent to Fort Lewis, Washington during which time he evaluated military and civilian personnel for their potential risks to the service. While on compassionate leave in 1968, Pat was assigned to Granite City Army Depot in Illinois performing supply and logistics for the Army National Guard. After which, he was then assigned to the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas where he was raised to E-6 rank and functioned in data gathering and preparation for computerization.

Pat was transferred to Vietnam aboard the USNS Corpus Christi Bay which served as a floating repair depot for helicopters. There were over 12,000 helicopters in Vietnam, so instead of bringing helicopters to the repair facility America brought the repair facility to the helicopters.

Pat left Vietnam in 1971 and was stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado performing as operations NCO for the general support group. He was then sent to Fort Sam Houston Texas for two years where he was reclassified to behavioral sciences. He was then assigned as an instructor of medical personnel at the Academy of Health Sciences (AHS) with the Department of Behavioral Health Science.

In 1976, Pat received a letter announcing his transfer to Fort Riley, Kansas where he was assigned as Division Artillery Operations NCO for one year before a transfer to Battalion Operations NCO. Pat's new three-year tour in 1978 promoted him to E-8 in Nuremberg, Germany where he served as Battalion Operations NCO. In 1981 he was sent to the Presidio in San Francisco, California having a duty assignment as advisor to the Army National Guard and Army Reserves of California and Nevada.

In 1982 Pat was chosen the "Army NCO of the Year" and was honored in Washington D.C. at a dinner with President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan amid other high ranking military officers. Pat's next tour was in 1983, at Bamberg, Germany as battery first sergeant before becoming battalion sergeant major. In 1986 he retired in Germany after having served for twenty years and two months. On becoming a civilian once more he moved his family consisting of wife Christina, son Brian, and daughter Krista to St. Peters, Missouri where he became the superintendent of facilities management of the Francis Howell School District.

He then became employed by the firm of Service Master in Chicago, Illinois where he was in charge of new contracts that provided facilities management for hospitals. Pat went on his own to become the facilities manager of the Saint Xavier University.

His next move was to Houston, Texas to become superintendent of facilities management of the Pasadena School District from 1990 to 1993.

Seeking a turn on his own he studied at the College for Financial Planning and became an independent certified financial planner. He developed clients from the retirement population and the oil and gas industries, and provided them with banking and asset management services. His second marriage was in 1995 with Sandra Arnaud, who became his business associate. He utilized the umbrella benefits of the international firm of Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., that provided a means of tapping its resources and joining with more than eight thousand other financial advisors.

In 2010, he sold this business and went into permanent retirement. When concerned about health issues, his first enrollment into AFRH-G was in 2015, but still at the age of 68, he felt the move was premature. Pat returned to the Home in 2019 and has since settled in. Pat participates on the scholarship committee as co-chair, with oversight of finances. Pat also volunteers with the RAC, serving as chair of the dining facility committee and chair of the wellness center committee.



# AFRH roots

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident

The Armed Forces Retirement Home, as we know it, was derived from two sources – the Philadelphia Naval Home constructed in 1827 and the Soldiers Asylum in 1851.

The Soldiers Asylum came about as a result of creative funding on the part of General Winfield Scott. In 1848, General Scott ended the Mexican-American War and ordered Mexico to pay reparations which were used to pay his soldiers. The balance of \$111,000 was given to U.S. Congress for purposes of a Soldiers' Home.

As a result, a newly created Army Asylum's Board of Commissioners convened in 1851, ordering the purchase of the Riggs property in Washington D.C. having an existing building that would accommodate veterans housing and who were later transferred to the completed Scott Building in 1857.

In addition, branch asylums were also sought by the Board of Commissioners.

New Orleans was chosen as the first Soldiers' Home. On April 30, 1851, a branch asylum was established utilizing the facilities of the "New Orleans Barracks."

During a meeting on May 30, 1851, the board established an allowance of one-dollar-a-month to each resident. General Twiggs, in charge of the New Orleans branch, wrote a blistering letter to the Board of Commissioners on the subject of the "monthly dollar."

He stated in no uncertain terms that as soon as the members in New Orleans got their dollar, all hands, "including a man on crutches," got promptly and thoroughly drunk. Gen. Twiggs said they stayed drunk for a week; whiskey of a sort being then readily available at ten cents a quart!

This "monthly dollar" may well have been the cause of General Twiggs' frustration with the Soldiers Asylum in New Orleans, requesting its closing the following year.



New Orleans Barracks in 1848.



Riggs Property in 1851.



Scott Building, Washington DC in 1857.

## From the AFRH-W administrator



Happy New Year! I am sure just like me, you were happy to see 2020 end as we began a new year. We were fortunate to get highest priority by the Pentagon for the COVID-19 vaccine and this month, we were able to get our second dose. Fortunately, we had more residents and staff who decided to get their first dose. The more of us vaccinated, the better we can combat the pandemic that has been challenging us for almost a year. Once we see how well the vaccine is working, we should be able to get back to more normal operations here on the campus. We are still receiving great support from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center staff for both the vaccine process and testing. Due to concerns for the safety of everyone in the District of Columbia, we were assisted by the Pentagon security team, who continue to do patrols and assist as needed.

Several of us on both campuses were privileged to do a Zoom call with General Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEAC) Colon-Lopez on Martin Luther King (MLK) Day. It was a great opportunity for the residents to thank them for their support in our vaccination process. Their focus in conjunction with MLK Day was service, so each participant highlighted their military service as well as how they currently serve others. General Milley discussed how all military members take an oath to defend the Constitution, which is why the military should refrain from political involvement while on official duty.

Donations from various groups in the community continue to show up even though our gates are still closed. One of our most generous benefactors, Tyler Stallings, dropped off bags full of useful items for the residents including toiletries and hand sanitizer. He has been assisting our veterans since he was three-years-old and has never stopped. It is always a joy to see him.

It was hard to see the holiday trees and other decorations be put away for another year, but something to look forward to later this year. Our resident services staff has

continued to do programming to keep everyone engaged during this difficult time.

I am very happy to say that our Campus Employee of the Year is Tobias Hinnant, a nurse in the Wellness Center. He was selected from among a very competitive group including Constance Williams, Sheree Dale and Lamont Burton. Most know Tobias well due to his gentle swabbing and skillful vaccinations. He represents all of our unsung staff who worked diligently caring for all of us as they swabbed and vaccinated in addition to the great care they do each day. Congratulations to Tobias and our other nominees! Unfortunately, we had to say good-bye to a dedicated employee, Lamont Burton from the business center, as he moved to a promotion working for the United States Air Force. I know I am not alone in missing him, but wish him all the best in his new position.

We closed out another Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) this month, and I am happy to report that once again, we had some very generous staff and residents contribute which put us over our target. Thanks to Annemarie Wilson and her team of Marine Robbins and Jackie Hailstock for their dedication and creativity during the campaign.

In closing, this year also brings a new chain of command for the Home as well as new leadership for our country. May our country remain strong as we adjust to new leadership and may God continue to bless those that live and work at the Armed Forces Retirement Homes!

Susan Bryan



## AFRH Employee of the Year Runner-Up

Photos by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs



Runner up for Employee of the Year 2020 is AFRH-Washington's Tobias Hinnant, license practical nurse (LPN) from the Wellness Center. His nomination included many praiseworthy comments, some of which are mentioned below:

"Mr. Hinnant displays exceptional Resident Centered Care on a daily basis and is often requested by name by residents. One resident was recently overheard saying, "it's so nice to know that those that care for you really care!"

"The residents frequently seek him out to assist them because he is very gentle, soft spoken, kind, knowledgeable, and thorough while taking care of their needs. He always approaches the residents with respect and humility. He makes every effort to resolve issues or concerns for a resident or involves the appropriate individual until he can get the resident the assistance they need."

"He recently assisted a new employee on how to prioritize tasks and how to document to avoid unnecessary overtime."

"He takes ownership of tasks and shows the leadership of a supervisor. He is self-motivated and always willing to take on additional tasks in the clinic to improve the quality of resident service and care."

"He assumed the task of managing the COVID-19 testing clinic without being directed to do so and assisted in developing an innovative plan."

"He single handedly tested 185 people in one day during a staffing shortage! He never complains, always has a "can do

attitude" to accomplish the mission."

"Mr. Hinnant is the epitome of team player!"

"Everyone loves to work with Mr. 'T,' as he brings 110% every day without fail. His calm demeanor, knowledge, and humor contributes to an amiable work environment. He can consistently be relied upon to assist during staffing challenges by staying over past his shift and is able to float to every nursing care level and function as if it was his permanent assigned unit."

Congratulations to Mr. Tobias Hinnant for a year of outstanding performance!!



**"He single handedly tested 185 people in one day during a staffing shortage! He never complains, always has a "can do attitude" to accomplish the mission. Mr. Hinnant is the epitome of team player!"**

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



We mourn the loss of every resident and their contribution to our country and to this great Home. On December 24, 2020, we lost an incredibly special resident, one who was loved and respected by every resident and staff member at AFRH-W, Miriam C. Rivkin, (who we all knew as Mimi).

Mimi served in the Women's Army Corps and received an honorable discharge on November 28, 1945. She became a resident of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington (AFRH-W) in October of 1997. For 23 years, she displayed her love for this Home in so many ways that, if listed, would fill this entire Communicator.

I only had the pleasure of knowing her for three short years, but enjoyed our golf outings, especially when she also took the time to pass on her love of painting to me. She was a great artist and sold many of her paintings and, being Mimi, gave the proceeds to the

resident fund.

Mimi served two terms as resident advisory committee chair, many more as vice-chair, recorder and floor representative. She chaired or was a member of so many sub-committees I could not list them all, but one I will always remember was I chaired a sub-committee, which Mimi was a member, and she wrote me a long letter about her thoughts. One part that stood out in particular reads, "The cliché old people don't like change does not apply to people whose entire careers are based on dealing with change and adversity. We are not to be considered helpless incompetents for you to overwhelm. We are educated, retired men and woman with distinguished military and civilian careers and extraordinary experiences."

Mimi will always be remembered for her absolute love for the AFRH residents and the staff. Stories will be told about her many contributions and her passion for this Home for many years. If there was a Hall of Fame for residents, she would be right there at the top. She was a superstar to us all.

Fred Layman



# AFRH Employee of the Year

Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



The Employee of the Year 2020 goes to Gulfport's Amanda Herold, RN, SWOC.

Her steadfast leadership in the realm of infection control and prevention guided Healthcare leadership to navigate, and stay ahead of a plethora of complex and challenging issues. She was the force behind developing COVID-19 virus response protocols directly impacting the lives of our residents. From posting educational signage throughout the Home, to authoring and directing resident COVID-19 virus testing procedures, to performing virus specimen collections multiple days a week, she has had a profound impact on mitigating the spread of COVID-19 at AFRH Gulfport.

She ensured that accurate PPE levels were provided to the chain of command, and collaborated in tracking PPE burn-rates to maintain adequate levels based on situational requirements.

She is innovative and develops work processes that not only improve, but increase mission effectiveness. Prior to the COVID pandemic becoming our daily focus, Amanda developed our new Antimicrobial Stewardship monitoring program. She researched and built our Ambulatory Healthcare monitoring program ensuring compliance with the new Joint Commission standard. She single-handedly implemented the Respiratory Protection Program for all staff in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

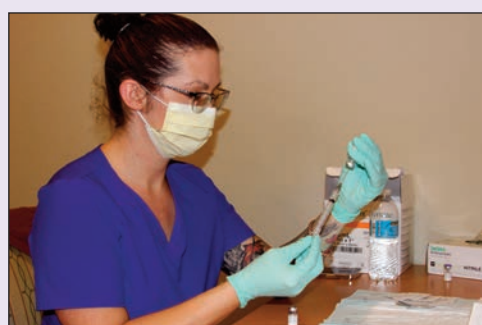
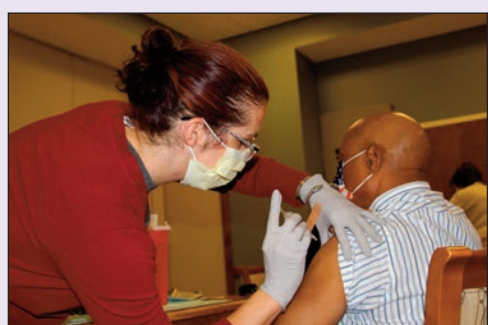
Amanda took the lead and designed and implemented our COVID-19 unit called "Patriot Hall". This unit is critical to our pandemic response and keeps residents and staff safe.

Amanda has brought the Infection Control Program to new heights. She goes wherever needed and never complains. Amanda's infection control and prevention role during this year of the COVID-19 virus pandemic has touched every person that has walked through our campus doors. She is the lynchpin behind our pandemic preparation and response. She has demonstrated exceptional knowledge and brought first-rate experience to make AFRH-Gulfport a safer place for staff to work and the residents to live.

Congratulations Amanda for a job well done!!



*“Amanda's infection control and prevention role during this year of the COVID-19 virus pandemic has touched every person that has walked through our campus doors. She is the lynchpin behind our pandemic preparation and response.”*



# Our finest hour

By Ray Ross | AFRH-G Resident



Our finest hour was one over a silent stealth enemy. Simply put it was a virus from China. Books will be written about this virus, but this article just covers a small group of people in two veteran retirement homes, one in Washington DC and the other in Gulfport, Mississippi. It was not like a regular battle; there were not platoons, companies, divisions, or armies. The participants were known as residents and staff. They fought with the bravery of every battle before us and eventually won their victory.

This was not like the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, or Pork Chop Hill in Korea, or the siege of Khe-Sanh in Vietnam, or Desert Storm, but it was a brutal battle just the same. In those historic battles there were loud noises and total destruction. There was the threat from above and the threat from below. There was a constant threat from snipers, however, you could see or hear the enemy. After those battles there was great national rejoice and there were parades, thank you's, and hugs from family members and friends. Of course, there were the grave markers and the tears from the families that lost loved ones which was all visual and comprehensible. Millions of people from around the world lost their lives in those battles. This battle that we are starting to win has also cost us millions of people.

In this battle the victory is by individuals and small groups. There are no parades. There is no welcoming home because we are fighting from our homes. It is a war that is just as evil and frightening as the typical fighting of the frequent wartime battles. This battle has been going on since the beginning of the year in 2020 and we are finally winning the battle in 2021. In the month of January 2021, the Armed Forces Retirement Homes in Washington, DC and Gulfport, Mississippi will have defeated the silent stealth enemy virus with a vaccine for any resident or staff who chooses to get it. There are a lot more actions required, and decisions to be made on

how we go forward, but the victory is ours. How did we win without rifles, mortars, artillery, airplanes, battleships, submarines, or other weapons of war that are so numerous you cannot count them all? With all these fine weapons at our disposal, what were our weapons?

1. **Patience**
2. **Being quarantined for eleven months**
3. **Leadership**

What individual weapons did we have that caused us to defeat this insidious disease? A face mask, six-foot markers on the floor, empty dining room tables, eating out of Styrofoam boxes in our room and support for each other. I can only speak for myself when they called me and said you tested positive and you cannot leave your room for 14 days. I was scared, WHY? The death rate in our age group was in the 60%-70% range. The items I mentioned were the only tools we had to fight back with. One individual in the home spent a whole month in quarantine because she tested positive and had contact with a person who had the virus.

Yes, there are heroes in this war that we won. Yes, there was sacrifice by each one of us. There were tears from family members who could not visit us because of the quarantine for eleven months. There was not one hero, there was not one skirmish there. There was just one victory over this enemy. The victory came to us by the heroes on the outside, in medicine and national leadership. They developed a vaccine in record time. The shot in the arm was not the same as a shot in the stomach from a bullet, the side effects were nothing like losing an arm or leg in battle, the side effects was a sore arm and maybe feeling a little lethargic, however, "this is our finest hour."

Remember where I said there were no parades of people standing along the sidewalks cheering us on, well there will be a parade, there will be a parade of automobiles leaving this Home driving to see their loved ones, going to McDonald's or Wendy's or whatever burger stand. I know when I drive out, I am going to blow my horn as loud as that thing will go and I am going to go get a driver's license because mine expired. I am going to go get a dentist to put my tooth back in, I am going to put my top down on my convertible, I am going to live again, almost like it was before. But now I know I cannot catch the virus or give the virus.

To my fellow warriors both residents and staff I hope this article reflects your feelings as well as mine. We each have experienced in our own way almost 12 months of continuous quarantine. Each of us in our own way contributed to the success that we are experiencing now and in the next month or two. When you walk down the hallway in the next two months the person you pass is a hero. I know it sounds trite, but it is a fact that residents and staff are all heroes.



# Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



We entered the month of January filled with hope and high expectations. Having completed the first phase of the COVID vaccination, we eagerly awaited the second shot to complete the process. New Year's resolutions were made and broken, mine included. I will, I won't and maybe were all promised in good faith then quickly fell by the wayside. High adventures are being planned for the month of March and many conversations began with "the first thing I am going to do....." There is a

lot of predicting as to what date the front gates will open. We may even need a traffic cop out front (smile).

AFRH-G Administrator Jeff Eads has returned after an extended absence - Welcome Home! On the January 18 we celebrated Martin Luther King Day and January 19 we had our January Birthday Lunch. January 22 will signal the completion of the second shot for the COVID vaccination. Earlier I spoke of New Year's resolutions, and of the many I made and failed to keep. There is one, however, that I made and I'm still doing and I invite all of you to join in. To all the staff members and each other I say "Thank You" for keeping us safe these past ten months.



Arthur "Art" W. Jones

# AFRH-Washington

## The Fenwick Foundation

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

AFRH-W has been working hand in hand with the Fenwick Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission focuses on improving quality of life, health and wellbeing of those who might not be able to do it on their own.

Prior to the pandemic, residents took advantage of free transportation and sponsored tickets to a variety of events, such as tickets to the ballet and concerts, and visits to museums and zoos.

During this time, the Fenwick Foundation is providing virtual opportunities to see the world outside their rooms, without truly going off the grounds. Over the holidays, AFRH-W residents took advantage to see the Nutcracker and a magician.

We are planning on many more opportunities in the future hopefully off campus, but until then we are utilizing all of our assets to “see” the world outside these gates. By doing this we hope to reduce the isolation and loneliness and offer a better quality of life.



This photo was taken before the pandemic when the residents could leave the facility and see shows offered by The Fenwick Foundation.

## Historic waters

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Tiber Creek, which before 1790 was known as Goose Creek, drained an area from the “Old Soldier’s Home” to the U.S. Capitol. John F. Duhamel (1923) credits us with “a small stream that feeds the lake at the west side of the Soldier’s Home grounds and near the Park Road gate and may be regarded as the headwaters of this historic stream.” The creek became part of the Washington City Canal (completed in 1815) and at the time, people fished in it. There is still evidence of the stream beside the sidewalk along Rock Creek Church Road NW, especially if there has been a large rainfall. (Much of this information came from Park View, DC “Hidden Washington: Tiber Creek”.)



Tiber Creek and the straightened creek that became the Washington City Canal (c. 1860)

## Resident coin display

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Daniel Gallucci started his coin collection when he was six years old. He used the money from his paper route to buy the coins. After his father passed away, Daniel inherited his collection as well, and is still collecting today. Come by the window near the Wellness Clinic to see his display of Barber, Mercury, and Roosevelt dimes from 1892 – 1967.

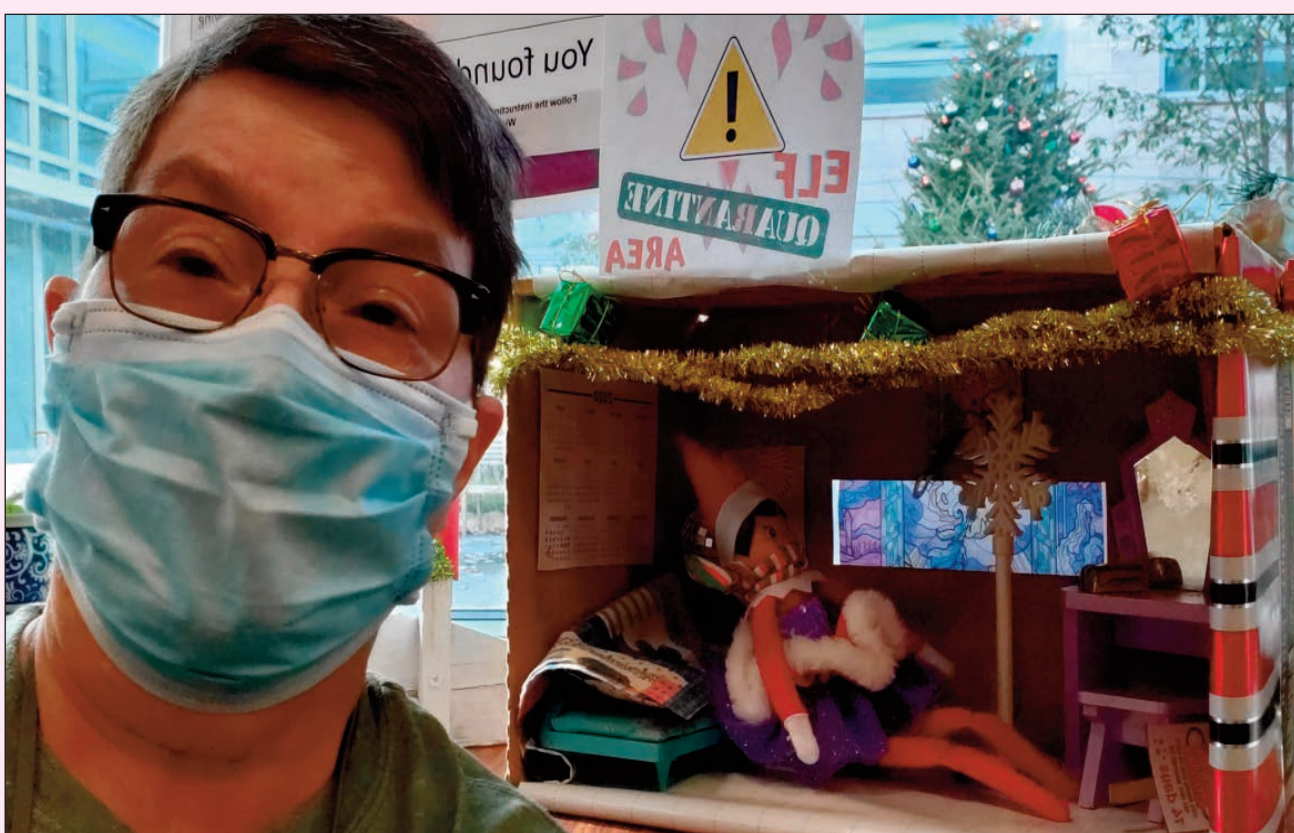


## Mischievous elf winner at AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

AFRH-W had a week-long of looking for the mischievous elf and seeing what she was up to next. It started out she was playing Twister and then she was caught playing bingo in the community center. She quarantined in her apartment inside the recreation office. Then she decided to make snow angels outside the recreation office. She was everywhere within the home. She went up to the library to read a book. I guess she decided to bring Frosty in the house and he melted; all that was left was a carrot and coal. However, when she went sledding down the stairs she knew she was in trouble. It was time for her to decorate the tree and again back in the recreation office.

Every time anyone found her they notified the recreation staff, and their name was put in for the grand prize drawing. At Noon on December 23, everyone waited to see if they were the lucky winners. Nevertheless, congratulations to the grand prize- winner Fred Ebner! He and his wife Sophie both enjoyed the basket of goodies.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## Round two

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

The week of January 11, 2021 AFRH-G started the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for residents and employees. For this vaccine to be effective it requires two shots, 21 days apart.

The first shot was administered before Christmas. There is a sense of excitement in the air while everyone awaits COVID testing for the next month to ensure the vaccine is working.

Thank you to our healthcare team for working diligently to vaccinate those who wanted to be vaccinated and for taking care of all of us.



## Happy Birthday Elvis!

**By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services**  
**Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant**

On Friday, January 8, 2021, the halls were filled with “Well-a... thank you... a thank you very much” as residents lit up with surprise visits to learn it was Elvis’s Birthday. Elvis Aaron Presley, was born on January 8, 1935 in Tupelo, Mississippi, was known as the “King of Rock & Roll” and said, “I’m not trying to be sexy. It’s just my way of expressing myself when I move around.” Residents asked, “How old are you Elvis?” Elvis replied, “Well... I am 86... of course I would be 86 today if I hadn’t left the building back on August 16, 1977 in Graceland, Memphis, Tennessee.” Elvis even made an appearance in the main dining hall, avoided his famous peanut butter & banana sandwiches, and the paparazzi snapped some pictures near the salad bar along with Recreation’s Frozen Friday ice cream treat stand. Other Elvis quotes: “I never expected to be anybody important.” “Some people tap their feet, some people snap their fingers, and some people sway back and forth. I just sorta do ‘em all together, I guess.” “Rock and roll music, if you like it, if you feel it, you can’t help but move to it. That’s what happens to me. I can’t help it.” And take it from Elvis, “Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it ain’t goin’ away.” “Until we meet again, may God bless you as he has blessed me.”



## Random acts of kindness

**By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant**



The week of February 15 – 21, 2021 is National Random Acts of Kindness Week. Sometimes all it takes is a simple greeting, a smile or a compliment to turn someone’s day completely around. Spreading kindness doesn’t just make others feel better, but it also boosts the giver’s health and happiness. Sounds like a win-win situation!

I know what you’re saying – “But I can’t get out and do something for someone while I’m quarantined in this building.” You’re right. You can’t. But you can do something for someone INSIDE this building. We are all struggling through this pandemic, and even though there is hope on the horizon, we still have some hills to climb.

It doesn’t take much. There are simple ways to lift someone’s spirits: leave a note on someone’s door letting them know they’re appreciated; introduce yourself to someone you don’t know; offer to deliver someone’s meal/mail if you know they aren’t feeling up to it; help someone order something they need if you have access to the internet and they don’t; grab something at the Exchange that you know someone likes and leave it at their door. These are just a few examples of ways to bring a smile to someone’s face during this rough time that we are all experiencing. Keep your heads up. There’s light at the end of the tunnel!

## “ABRACADABRA” magic mirror Skype tablet visits continue!

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

Throughout the holiday season and into the New Year, “ABRACADABRA” magic mirror Skype tablet visits have continued to bring comfort and smiles to bridge the distance between veteran residents and their loved ones! Pictured is “99” years young, Ernest Pain connecting with his three children across various time zones during their regular Skype visits. Also, soon to be “101,” Lois Hogan connecting with her daughter, Kimberly for a tour of her home in Maryland. Ear buds, magnifying glasses, Wi-Fi hot spots, and other adaptive equipment now allow residents to visit in the comfort of their rooms, hallways, and even outside in the fresh air. We want to send another shout out to The Old Soldiers Home Foundation for their generous donation. “ABRACADABRA” the tablets continue to bring joy, relief, happiness, and a sense of the connection we are all striving for during these challenging times while we await for in-person visits to brighten our lives one again.

