



AFRH-GULFPORT

Our bell remains a symbol of the former Naval Home

Story & Photos by Dan Ellis | Resident



There are more than a handful of relics that are dispersed about at our AFRH-G compound. Some reflect the early history of the property, while others relate to our Home's military aspect. Some residents may look at the cast bronze bell out front near the chapel and see a bell, while others, with some circumspect, note the inscription that reads "U.S.S. Philadelphia 1890."

However, there's more to the story. Ships' bells have long occupied a place of importance in the U.S. Navy. For centuries, bells have had a long tradition of use in the navies and merchant fleets around the world, performing services from time-keeping, signaling, and sounding alarms to a wide variety of ceremonial uses.

The practice of striking the bell once at the end of the first half-hour of a four-hour watch, twice after the first hour, and so forth until eight bells marked the end of that four-hour watch. The same process was applied for succeeding watches. The phrase "eight bells and all is well" refers to completing a watch with no incident.

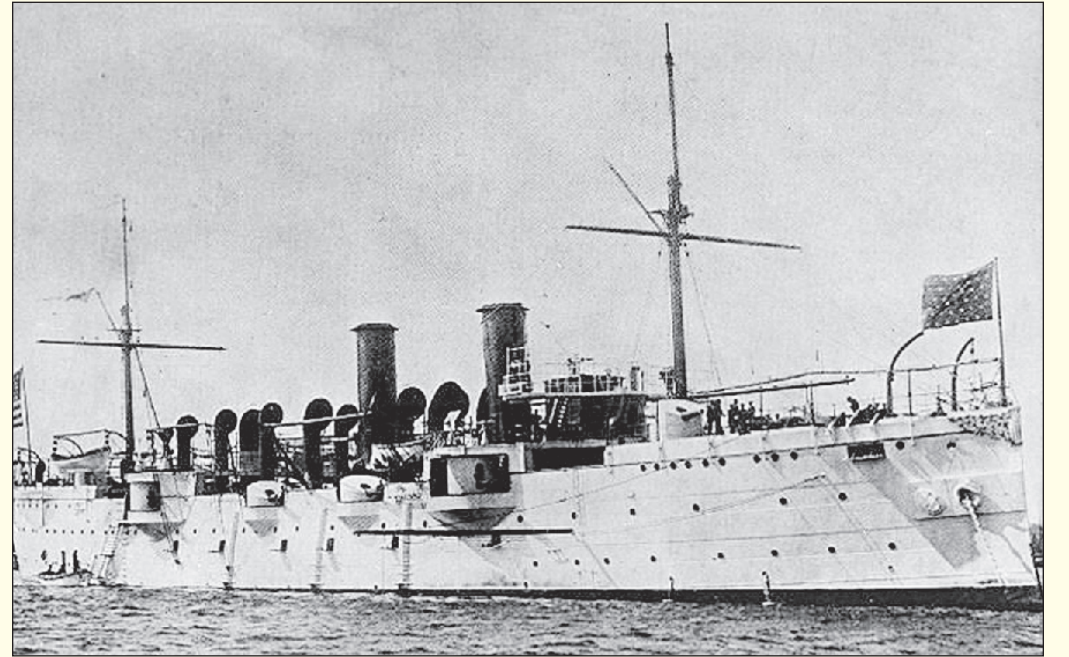
There were six ships bearing the name of U.S.S. Philadelphia, beginning with a gunboat built in 1776, and the last vessel being a submarine that was decommissioned in 2010. Our bell rode the waves aboard the U.S.S. Philadelphia (C-4) which was a cruiser, built in 1889 and commissioned in 1890, ending its service in 1926. After fitting out at the New York Navy Yard, the Philadelphia was designated as flagship for Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi, commanding the North Atlantic Squadron.

On July 9, 1898, she became the flagship of Rear Admiral J.N. Miller, Commander of the Pacific Station. She steamed from San Francisco on July 2, 1898 to participate in the ceremonies attending the assumption of sovereignty, representing the United States Navy at the ceremonies transferring the Hawaiian Islands to the United States. It joined the White Squadron that was named for the group's white-painted hulls, which was the core of the "new Navy" of the 1890s, that was capable of vying with major European powers for supremacy in the Pacific.

The Philadelphia served as flagship of the Pacific Station until February 6, 1900, when Rear Admiral Kautz transferred his flag to the USS Iowa (BB-4). The cruiser continued Pacific operations until 1902, conducting training cruises, drills, target practice, and port visits. Cruiser Philadelphia was then housed over and became a receiving ship at Puget Sound Navy Yard, where she remained in various services until being struck from the Navy List on November 24, 1926.

U.S.S. Philadelphia was sold at a public auction at the Puget Sound Navy Yard in 1927 to Louis Rotherberg.

The bell remains with the ship while she is in service. Currently, once the ship is decommissioned, the bell is turned over to the Department of the Navy for artifact preservation by the Naval History and Heritage Command. The bell was first appropriately placed at the Naval Home in Philadelphia. When the Naval Home was moved to Gulfport in 1976, so was the bell of the U.S.S. Philadelphia, now remaining stalwart as it reminds residents of the history of the Naval Home that extends back to 1834, almost 200 years ago.

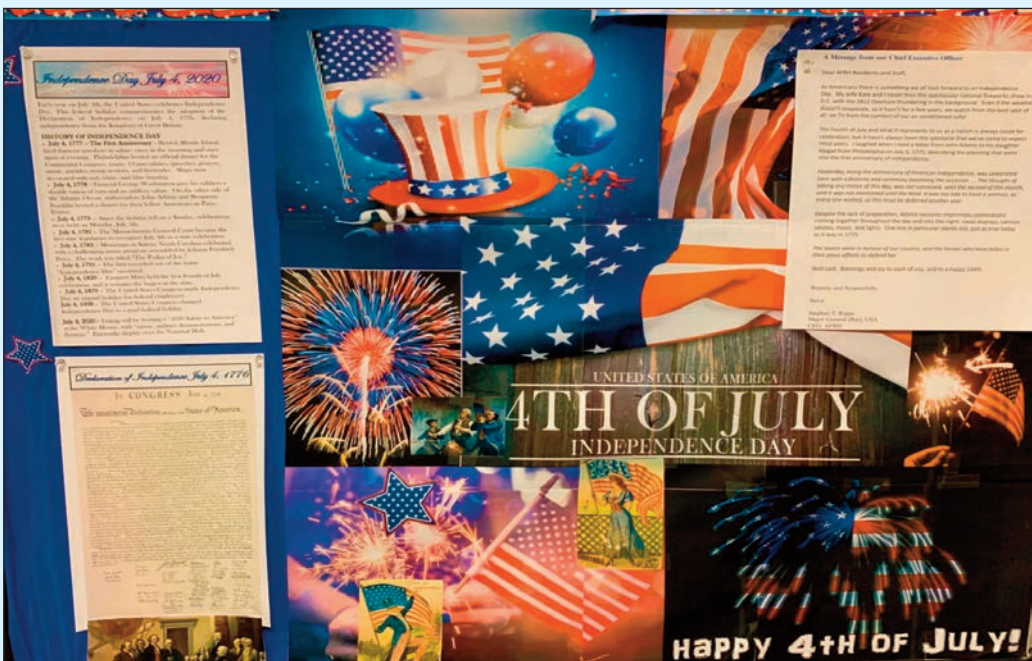


AFRH-WASHINGTON

Star spangled waves

Story & Photos by Marla J McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

The July 4th celebration was not stopped by the virus; Recreation Services showed some red, white, and blue spirit. Residents received flags and buttons showing their pride was still alive in the AFRH-W. A poster board with historical facts was displayed in the hallway, along with a copy of the Declaration of Independence. A TV broadcasted video of 33 residents and staff reciting lines of the Declaration of Independence. (This was also shown on the Official AFRH Facebook page.) The residents enjoyed a "cookout" with burgers and hotdogs. On the night of July 3 you could see the fireworks going off all over the DC area!



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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:
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AFRH-W resident highlight – Lewis Haight

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Lewis Haight was born in New York. An only child he was only four-years-old when his father died. He remembers going to the closet and looking at his dad's Marine Corps uniform. While growing up, Lewis enjoyed nature and became quite good at approaching animals without them knowing. He was also on the varsity football, baseball and wrestling teams.

Lewis always knew he wanted to join the U.S. Marine Corps. The day after he graduated from high school, he went to New York City to enlist. In a roomful of new recruits, Lewis was the only one to raise his hand for the Marine Corps. After basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina, instead of getting into the infantry like he wanted, Lewis ended up in communications. His first duty station was at U.S. Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina. He was with a top-secret unit along with a lieutenant, and had to hand carry certain classified messages back and forth. It was here that Lewis requested Mast from the inspector general because he wanted to go

into combat in Vietnam. He was sent to the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade in California and ended up in Okinawa, Japan. In late 1966, Lewis requested Mast again and this time was sent to Vietnam with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine, Fox Company. He spent six months aboard the USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2). Then he went to Da Nang and became a squad leader and then a temporary platoon sergeant. When there was an opening at the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, Lewis joined them. In 1968, he was wounded a couple of times, once with a shattered knee.

Lewis was sent back to the states to Bethesda Naval Hospital and had two operations. At this point, he was up for Officer Candidate School, but he couldn't pass the physical due to the knee. He was placed on a temporary duty list and decided to go back to get his undergraduate and later his graduate degree. He was shocked when in two years, he was sent a retirement package. Lewis went to a surgeon friend at an Air Force base who said he could fix the knee. But after another surgery, it still wasn't stable. The Air Force offered Lewis a Captain's rank, but he declined it.

After leaving the service, Lewis taught science and coached at a prep school for two years. He then became an assistant football coach at a Division III college. Next, Lewis went into the insurance investment field. In 2015, Lewis came to AFRH-W. With the help of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), who are very active at the Home, he started learning his genealogy. Lewis has one member who was in the Revolutionary War; another who was in two major battles of the Civil War (he has a Congressional Medal of Honor). His father served with the 1st Marine Division in Guadalcanal and was awarded a Purple Heart. Lewis' bench is located near the flag pole and includes his decorations.



Corporal Hershel "Woody" Williams (left) with Sgt. Lewis J. Haight at the Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia on February 22, 2020.

Artisan at work

Story & Photos by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Supervisor of Recreation



Joseph Grant is a man on a mission. Since coming to AFRH-W in August 2018, he has been volunteering to help in the auto shop, hobby shop, bike shop and is president of our Home's American Legion Post. In addition, Joseph can fix and make almost anything. He recently repaired five bicycles for residents to use; two golf carts; and, made two wooden birdhouses, one for each outdoor courtyard. Someone asked why he didn't paint his birdhouses and Joe said because he read that birds don't like the smell of paint and tend not to make homes in those types of houses. Joseph is also thrilled with the variety of animals that scurry and fly around here:

fox, hawks, all sorts of colorful birds and deer. He enjoys watching them and would take them all to his room as pets but management would not like that. So, he is content to watch them outside like everyone else that lives here. Such is life on a summer day at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, DC.

Help Heal Veterans donations

Story & Photos by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

Wow! Forty-nine boxes of craft kits arrived in July providing numerous hours of pleasure for the veterans of AFRH-W! "Help Heal Veterans," first established in 1971, provides a wide variety of arts and crafts kits at no cost to veterans. The kits assist in providing veterans with improving their fine motor skills, cognition, stress relief and fun. During the COVID19 pandemic, these kits have given AFRH-W residents a wealth of self-directed leisure activity. The arts and craft kits are mostly developed and packed at their manufacturing facility located in Winchester, California. Some of the categories of kits include woodworking, leatherwork, models, painting, and numerous others. "Help Heal Veterans" has been providing these awesome craft kits to AFRH-W for 20+ years and reaches all levels of care. Residents feel honored to fill out the kits enclosed postcards, which come from all over the United States. This gives the residents the opportunity to thank Help Heal Veterans for their donation and for keeping veterans in their thoughts and hearts.



What are those bells and chimes so many have been hearing?

Courtesy of Petworth News

With quarantine in DC came a bit more quiet during the day. Less cars on the street, less people walking around, less overall noise. You heard the birds much more (even if they're actually singing quieter than normal). In May into June, people started hearing bells chiming during the day, bells they thought they haven't heard before, or heard in a long time.

Those bells are not new, but they were louder than normal for a period of time. The regular chimes that started to be heard around the neighborhood are coming from the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) off of Rock Creek Church Road, as they have been for decades.

Affectionately known as the Old Soldier's Home, the AFRH has been serving retired U.S. military veterans since 1851, before the US Civil War (and before this area was called Petworth). President Abraham Lincoln would use a few of the buildings on the property to get away from downtown DC (one of which, Lincoln's Cottage, is now a wonderful museum and was where Lincoln worked on the Emancipation Proclamation).

In the middle of all the residential buildings on the Home's property is the Sherman building with its bell tower, and it's that bell tower that stirred up a bunch of questions from area residents this summer when they started to hear bells throughout the day. Many asked why they were hearing them now, seemingly all of a sudden.

"I've heard them every day for the past four years, and was surprised by the questions people started asking recently," said Christopher Kelly, the public affairs officer for the Armed Forces Retirement Home. "The Sherman building's clock tower marks the time every hour and half hour between 7am and 9pm daily."

"For the last 20 years, and perhaps much longer, at about 11:45 am daily, the chimes begin playing the Armed Forces Medley, the Service songs for each of the five branches," Kelly said. "When played as a medley, the order is as follows: Army: 'The Army Goes Rolling Along'; the Marine Corps 'The Marine's Hymn'; the Navy's 'Anchors Aweigh'; the Air Force's 'Official US Air Force Song'; and the Coast Guard's 'Semper Paratus.'"

Kelly said that the chimes have gone silent from time to time when they needed to be serviced. Because of the nature of the federal procurement process, the downtime can get protracted as they get the services from a specialized vendor, the Verdin Company, founded in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1842.

"Our understanding is that the Verdin Company may have installed the original bells, and has been repairing the clock and chimes ever since," Kelly said. The Verdin Company removed old, non-functioning bells and replaced the old clock mechanism with a new clock tower audio system about ten years ago. The sound of the bells are now amplified through enormous speakers, while the gear system for the clock is smaller today.

Recently, the bells were repaired, and had not been ringing. Earlier this summer, they started to ring again as they were "tuned" and the amplified volume was higher. Combine the work on the bells with the quieter local environment, and the sound of the chimes traveled further around the neighborhood. That's when people home with the quarantine started to notice the louder-than-usual chimes during the late morning, and throughout the day on the hour. "We typically set the volume at mid-range, once tested, to ensure noise levels that are considerate of our veteran residents and neighbors," Kelly said.

Along with the Friends of the Home, the local neighborhood association that partners with the AFRH, the Home has been hosting seasonal festivals for the community, including the Fall Fest, Spring Fling and the big July 4th gathering on their great lawn, for several years.

"We're sad about not having fireworks this year as well as the other events," Kelly said. "Hopefully things will change in the near future and we can welcome the local community back onto the property to celebrate with our residents."



All things service

By Christopher D. Alexander | Resident Services Chief

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



The last few months we have been facing circumstances that none of us thought we would. With each new day and new changes, resident services has come up with new and creative ways to help the residents have activities and some level of normalcy. This month it was passing out beer/wine at lunch--and even getting it up to those in isolation! Ice cream was also passed out to the residents to help make their day. It can be said that during times like these, even simple things are hard. But it is also true that during times like these, even simple things make a big difference.

In addition to supporting those of us who are isolating at home, you take care of each other at work, the residents, and have stepped up to deliver meals, take temps, and one staff member (who shall remain Dennis) even offered to fill in for the administrator. We are now ALL THINGS SERVICE!!! When you keep the residents as your focus, it is always right. Continue to do just that. We don't know what the ultimate impact of the virus will be. We know that the way we used to do things has changed. We know we will be doing this for a while. Right now the weekly testing is going to continue until we have a 14 day stretch with NO new positives. Every day is a new normal.

Your efforts, here and at home, will help make the difference. At home, limit your activities and follow the state and local guidelines to avoid exposure. At the HOME we must ensure the following:

1. Wear your mask/face covering properly (nose to chin) anytime you speak with someone--if you can't hear them, ask to repeat, don't take your mask down. Maintain social distancing -- at least six-feet in the hallways, in your office... everywhere.
2. Limit your time to less than 15 minutes with someone as much as possible.
3. Keep contact tracing logs of those greater than 15 minutes.
4. Use good hygiene. Wash hands/use sanitizer. Wipe down your work areas. Don't touch your mask all the time. Replace/wash masks routinely.
5. If you don't feel well, don't come to work. Call your supervisor. Not everything you feel is COVID such as allergies, sinus infections, other viruses. But, be safe for the residents, other staff, and your family.
6. Help the residents. Proper wear (nose to chin), always on when out of your room.
7. If a resident's mask needs replacing, help them.

In fact, resident services staff are coming in on the weekends to help residents on isolation get their meals. This also helps the wellness staff so they can attend to medical needs. One Team. Continue to keep focus. Rest up when you are away from work as best you can and come back with a fresh perspective each day. Taking care of yourself allows us to take care of each other. Thank you for all you are doing. It is herculean in nature and it makes a positive difference.



Three art works

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Inspiration can come from going through old thumbnail sketches or a folded copy of a landscape you saw in a magazine and have been saving to do a painting. These two paintings came from a photo of a painting done by our dear volunteer art teacher, Hayden Hall. Both Gerry Gorsky and Ray Eckert have studied art with Hayden and have been painting for about ten years developing their painting skills. I have included Hayden's painting - all three of the same subject. It is always interesting to see how each artist paints with their own unique style.

Thanks Gerry and Ray! Y'all keep painting for all of us who enjoy the "adventure of viewing art."



Art by Gerry Gorsky.



Art by Ray Eckert.

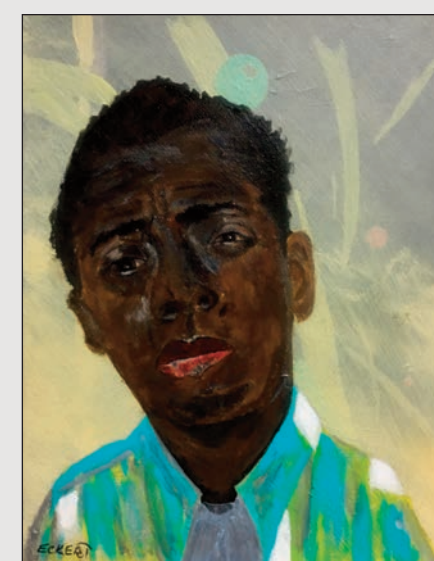


Art by Hayden Hall.

An excellent exercise, portrait by Ray Eckert

Story & Photo by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Ray Eckert has been studying the fine art of portrait painting. As you can see by his painting of author James Baldwin that his labor has not been in vain. He worked on this painting longer than any other I've seen him paint. Ray, keep at it! This is one of your best, and easily could have been first place in any portrait painting competition.



From the AFRH-W Administrator



It's hard to believe we are already in the second half of summer. Time seems to be going by swiftly with all of our attention focused on COVID-19 and how to keep it away from the campus. Lately, the weather makes it feel as though we are in Gulfport, I have to check each day to make sure I am still in DC. Yesterday we hit a heat index of 108 degrees!

We have all kept busy ensuring we are getting a good feel for the health of both residents and staff with weekly random COVID-19 testing. Getting the names together, preparing the list for the lab, obtaining the samples and then driving them to Walter Reed has taken a lot of time for many of us. As always, it is a team effort of both residents and staff and I couldn't ask for a better one.

Even though we were not able to host our normal Independence Day event on campus, we still had quite a show of fireworks and various military aircraft as they flew overhead. I think that anyone who saw would agree with me that the fireworks this year over the Washington Monument were spectacular. The neighbors outside the gate also added their own to ensure we had loud noises well into the night for many days. At times, it sounded like a war zone. Our dining services team did a

great job hosting a special picnic for our residents since they did not get to eat from the usual food trucks. Our recreation team also did a fabulous job filming and editing many of us reading parts of the Declaration of Independence. It is always good to celebrate and remember our heritage.

We held our Employee Appreciation Meal as a lunch this quarter but due to the pandemic, we couldn't get together to celebrate our dedicated staff. The Employee of the Quarter Board was competitive as usual. Those nominated included Karen Williams, Steven Briefs, Lauratu Bah, Margaret Makinde and Sheree Dale. I am happy to say that Sheree Dale was the winner this quarter for her dedication and hard work in the Wellness Center. Congrats, Sheree and to the other nominees!

As this month winds down, I know that many are still concerned about the pandemic that doesn't seem to want to go away. I am glad that I waited to write this as I found out today that our campus-wide testing resulted in zero positive cases of COVID-19. I am so thankful for the teamwork displayed each day as we work through this difficult time. Thanks to our wonderful residents for their patience and to the staff who works so hard!

Susan Bryhan



Administrator Susan Bryhan (right) congratulates the AFRH-W Employee of the Quarter Sheree Dale (left).

Hemingway connection to AFRH-W

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian
Photo by George Wellman | Resident

Agnes Hannah von Kurowsky was raised in Washington, DC and trained as a librarian. She worked in a local public library prior to her 1914 relocation to New York City, where she became a nurse. She joined the Red Cross, and in 1918 was posted to Italy, where one of her severely wounded patients was 19-year-old American Ernest Hemingway. A brief affair occurred, but she broke it off, after meeting someone else. She and Hemingway never met again. Agnes became "famous" when she appeared as "Catherine Barkley" in the novel "A Farewell to Arms." Agnes had applied for burial in the Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, where her grandfather and parents were interred. At first it was refused, but Henry Villard, a retired ambassador, wrote a letter on her behalf, citing her patriotic duty overseas, and the authorities in charge of the cemetery reversed their decision. She is interred in Site 0, Lot 9 of our cemetery.



H2O: Just add water

By Anonymous AFRH-W Resident
Photo by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Supervisor of Recreation Services

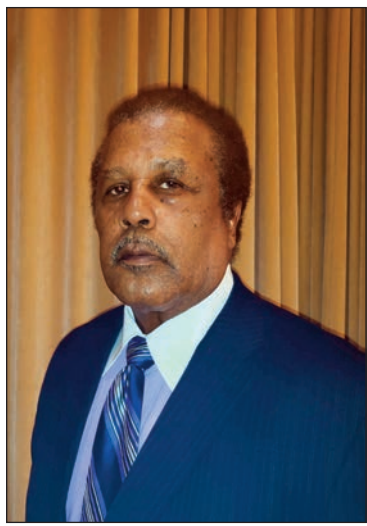
Come with me and see -
Water!
Patiently with care
Fresh vegetables for you
and me
To enjoy gathering and eating

Nature sometimes needs a
Helping hand!
Water, as needed, for
tomato plants
To grow, blossom and produce!



AFRH-W Resident Sherman Flanders waters the flowers.

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman

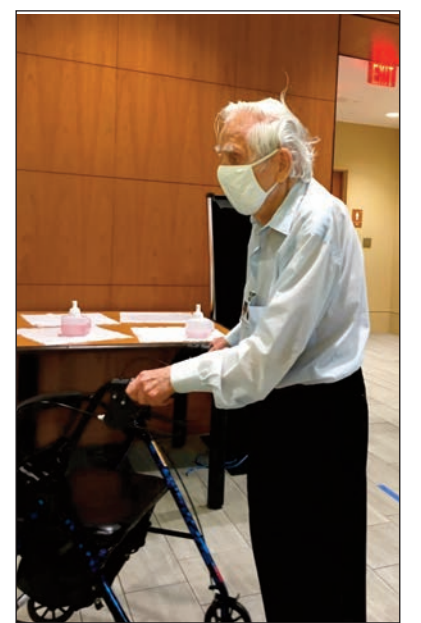


The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington DC has proven to be one of the safest places to be in the world for our residents and staff members. We are going into the fifth month with the pandemic here and all over the world, but we have truly been blessed thanks to the leadership we have here at AFRH.

One of the greatest things to happen around our Home in the last two weeks is residents getting haircuts. Some of our residents were beginning to look like David Bowie, The Beach Boys, The Temptations and many other of the great singing groups. My hair had gotten so long I was beginning to think we had rolled back into the 70s. I was beginning to look like Don King's great nephew!

Let us continue to pray for our children and the challenges they will be facing in the very near future around the world. Give thanks to the recreation staff members for popcorn Monday and beer on thirsty Thursday to keep us going during these challenging times.

Billy Ray White



Get on your bike and ride!

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Gulfport resident Grant Lapointe keeps in great shape by riding his bike. His love for this exercise started back in 1992 when he was living in Germany and he hasn't stopped. Grant tries to ride between 15 – 20 miles a day. He moved to AFRH-G in August of 2018 and has chalked up over 2,900 miles mostly by riding his bike on the boardwalk on the beach. He also likes to power-walk around the walking trail at the Home, in addition to spending time in the fitness room and doing serious stair climbing exercises.

Grant was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 1947 and was raised in the California Bay area. He joined the U.S. Army in 1966 and upon completion of Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT), was awarded the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of Supply and Accountability Specialist. His very first permanent party assignment was at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, then in Giessen, Germany for around a year and a half. He was then deployed to Pleiku, Vietnam where he served fourteen months in the Vietnam War. While serving there, Grant attained the rank of Sergeant (E-5) and his MOS changed to Unit and Organizational Supply Sergeant.

After Vietnam, he got out of the Army under Expired Term of Service (ETS). Grant said he had to stop and think things over after serving in the war. He felt like he had to back up and regroup. During this time, he became a naturalized U.S. citizen. After fourteen months, he re-joined the U.S. Army and was stationed in Kornwestheim, Germany for three years.

For the next few years he was put on an ROTC assignment at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. One of his additional duties was coaching the ROTC rifle team, where small bore .22 caliber rifles were utilized in match competition among the other different ROTC campuses within the University of Wisconsin. He was then transferred back to Germany, serving in Heilbronn. From there he went to Fort Hood, Texas for a couple of years. Then, it was back to Germany. First, he went to Ramstein AFB, Germany and then Pirmasens, Germany. His last stop before retiring, as a sergeant first class (E-7) in 1987, was on reserve component duty at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. After retiring from the military Grant's logistical military experience facilitated him for work in various contractor jobs in support of U.S. Forces in Germany.

Grant is proud to be retired from the U.S. Army. He said his experience taught him order, discipline, and confidence and prepared him for work after he retired. He has two sons: Lance, who lives in Germany and Keith, who lives in the San Francisco Bay Area, California. When asked if he likes living at AFRH-G he said, "I was sold when I rolled up in the parking lot. I saw that bike trail across the street on the beach and that was it. I knew I wanted to live here." Besides biking, Grant's other hobbies include reading, watching boxing and football. Growing up in the Bay Area he is an avid San Francisco 49ers fan. Being that he lives in the South now, when asked if he would consider converting to a Saints fan he responded with: "I'd rather undergo a dozen root canals!" Looks like Grant will be cheering on his beloved 49ers solo because the majority of residents and employees at AFRH-G love the New Orleans Saints. Grant recently celebrated his birthday on July 9. We all wish Mr. Lapointe a very Happy Birthday and many, many more.



“Smile...just because!” National Smile Week is just around the corner

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

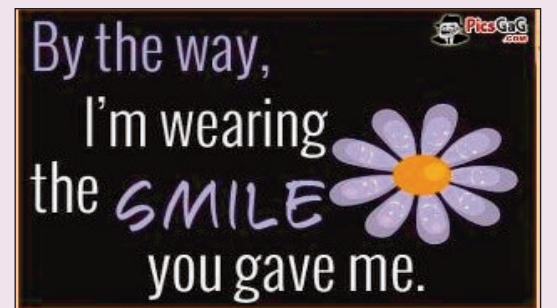
With the new challenges that COVID-19 brings and the feelings of being distanced in our rooms, offices, homes, and from other people, it is important to remember that each one of us still carries a smile wherever we are. Just around the corner and during the second week in August is National Smile Week. Created as a campaign to promote dental health, this led to a chance to reflect on the care of your smile not only for a week but for each day of the year.

As the famous Phyllis Diller once said, "A smile is a curve that sets everything straight." In the article "15 Ways to Celebrate Your Beautiful Smile," author Cheryl Butler described how your face makes over 5,000 expressions with the added help of 44 facial muscles. Did you know that feel-good hormones such as dopamine, endorphins, and serotonin are released each time you smile and when you are feeling happy? Endorphins also serve as your body's own natural pain relievers. Smiling can even induce more happiness on the brain than chocolate. Author Ron Gutman of *Smile: The Astonishing Powers of a Simple Act*, noted that British researchers found that it took 2,000 chocolate bars to generate the same level of brain stimulation as 1 smile. Also, research since the 1980's has shown that even when a smile is forced, your body produces a physiological change to reflect the emotion. This in turn causes changes in your breathing and heart rate. Smiling uplifts your mood; remembering a positive experience makes us smile; and by just deciding to smile, we can create a positive moment. A quote by author Thich Nhat Hanh reminds us that "Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy."

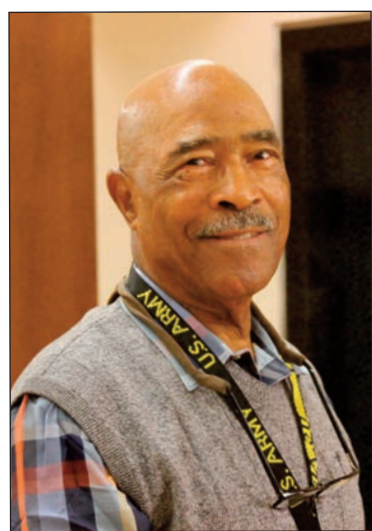
Here are just a few smiling suggestions:

1. Smiles are contagious, challenge yourself to be the first to smile. Remember, the easiest way to get someone else to smile is to smile at them.
2. Write a list of the things that make you smile and pin them up where you look at them often.
3. Have a contest to see who can smile the longest (on Zoom or Skype) or even better, see if you can smile more times each day to beat your daily number and set a new record for yourself.
4. Smile for everything you are grateful for. Count each of your blessings with a smile.
5. Set the tone of your day before you get out of bed with happy thoughts and a smile.
6. Visualize your smiles. This cues your brain for happiness.
7. Practice smiling at yourself in the mirror.
8. Smile and take some deep breaths to intervene in stress. Even if you are not happy, the smile signals your brain that you are feeling happy which relaxes your breathing and heart rate.
9. Brush, floss, and see a dentist to take care of that beautiful smile.
10. Surround yourself with pictures and photographs of your loved ones and you smiling.

In conclusion, even when research subjects were directed to place a pencil between their teeth to force their lips into a smile, they actually felt better. Yes, I can see you starting to smile as you take in the main message that smiling is healthy and happy for you. Especially during each day of the year and National Smile Week (August 3-9, 2020), be the reason someone smiles, even if it is you distanced from others, under a face covering, or in your room! Remember, a little smile goes a long way! Here's a virtual picture of me smiling at you along with a fresh picked bouquet of flowers from our Loyalty patio! Hope these made you smile, too!



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The month started out on a positive note. On July 4 we celebrated Independence Day, the day the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. While maintaining social distancing the residents put together an impromptu parade that proceeded around the first floor of the Home just before lunch. Thanks to all who participated. Until further notice there will be mandatory COVID testing every week. Thank you to Keesler Air Force Base in assisting with the testing. The RAC meeting scheduled for July 14 was instead held on July 11 because of increased questions by residents. We attempted to provide some level of calm and patience among the residents.

The week of July 13 began with another round of COVID testing. It also brought a renewed sense of vulnerability. The number of persons in isolation both on campus and in their homes speaks of just how fragile our defenses can be. We approach each new testing with increased tension and a sigh of relief with a negative outcome. The new normal has arrived.

Each day we read of new hotspots, increased testing, and rising death tolls. All around us towns and cities are reinforcing the basic safeguards of social distancing and wearing of face masks. Let us reaffirm our vigilance in keeping safe, first ourselves then each other.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



RAC Chair Art Jones enjoys a bike ride around the beautiful grounds of AFRH-G.

AFRH-Washington

Riding around the grounds of AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

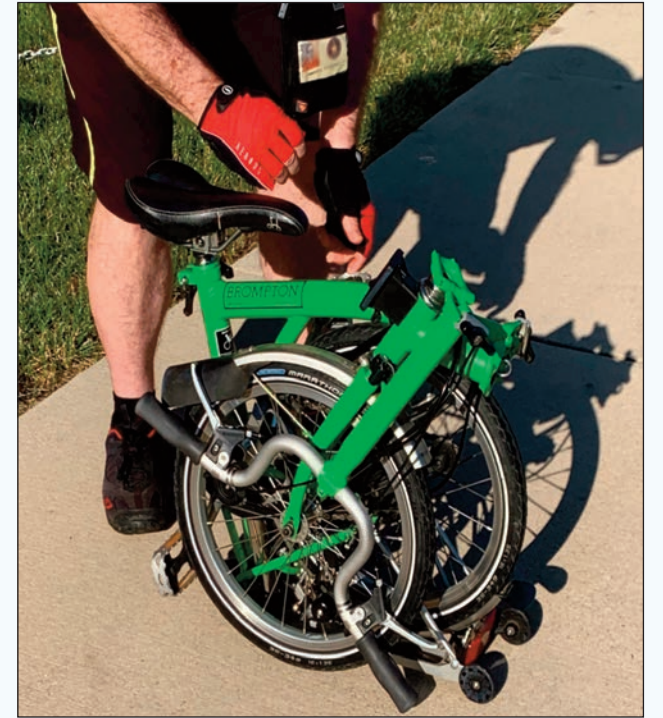
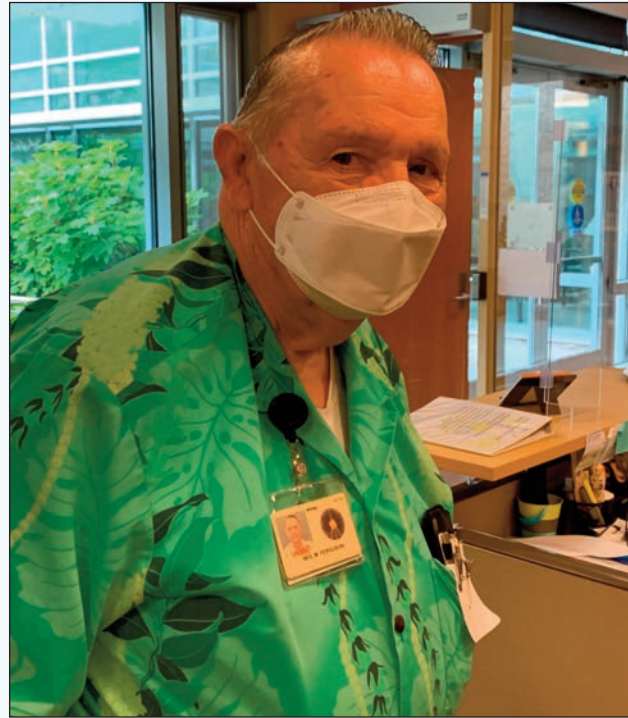
At AFRH-W there are three avid bike riders. They let the wind blow in their hair and enjoy the beautiful scenery that Washington DC and the grounds at the Home have to offer. Harvey Stackpole an AFRH-W resident has found a way to have fun and exercise during the COVID lockdown. He rides a bright green Brompton bike, handmade in London England. This particular bike folds up and he can carry or pull the bike for storage. It weighs about 27 lbs. if one would need to carry it. He has taken it into the bank, restaurants, and shopping. When he was able to leave, Harvey would ride 30 miles a day all around the DC area. He would be gone for hours. Now, he rides all over the beautiful landscape of the Home, which takes him about an hour or more. He has seen foxes, deer, rabbits, and groundhogs during his rides. Harvey said, "Anyone in good health can do this, and it's fun."

Norma Rambo has been riding a bike for over 80 years. She and her husband loved to get on the bikes and ride all day. At AFRH-W Norma rides a three-wheeler made by Miami Sun. She rides the bike to take water and feed to the birds; she makes sure the squirrels do not eat all of the food. She will sit there and watch the wildlife in the area. She has seen a fox and a groundhog. She sees deer everyday. She loves to watch the seasons change with the trees and flowers. Norma says, "Try it you'll like it."

Neil "Fergy" Ferguson owns a 27-speed Iron Horse bicycle. Fergy has been riding a bike since 2005. He joined a bike group for senior citizens. He traveled all around Maryland, Pennsylvania and the DC area. One of his favorite rides was with his daughter-in-law on the bike trail called the "Rail-Trail" in Pennsylvania to Maryland. Once they made it to Maryland, they turned around and came home. While living in DC Fergy has ridden his bike down to the Smithsonian and back. Hills are getting tougher but he sure enjoys being outside. Fergy says, "It's enjoyable to ride a bike."

Therefore, if anyone is feeling adventures and would like to climb back in the saddle, let recreation services know and we will get you going.

The recreation staff are trying to locate the owners of the bicycles in the back lot of the Sheridan building and the back lot of the Scott Building. If you are an owner, or know who owns a bike there, please contact the Recreation Services Department.



Overcoming obstacles to plant once again

By Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation

Photos by Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator

Growing a vegetable garden is the hot new pastime for people in the age of COVID-19. The only thing new about gardening at AFRH-Washington is where our garden is now located, and how much easier it is to garden these days with just a little help from our friends at the Old Soldiers Home Foundation.

The Home constructed a new garden area just out the back door of the Sheridan building, in the area we call the "backyard." With an eight-foot tall fence to keep the deer from grazing, a new water spigot nearby, and woodchip paths that make it easy to move a wheelchair or roll a rollator if needed, this area is much easier to garden than the previous area down closer to the golf driving range. We can thank our Chief of Campus Operations Patrick Benjamin for arranging the new garden area with the needs of our residents in mind.

In order to adapt this area further, the Old Soldiers Home Foundation donated a shed, which takes away the need to drag tools in from inside to garden, a heavy-duty hose reel, and a mobile garden seat. Besides the backyard garden area, we are also growing tomatoes and peppers in the standing gardens in the Scott courtyard. The standing gardens were donated by the Children of the American Revolution. Although it was midway through the summer when we got started, our tomatoes and peppers had been started indoors. The Washington region is in USDA zone 7A, which gives us two gardening seasons, spring/summer and summer/ autumn. Our gardeners Lee Smith, John Baker, John Orr, and Earl Moore, have years of experience planting and tending gardens. We will be adding corn and collards to the garden next to join the tomatoes, peppers, kale, and okra currently planted. Gardening is the perfect social distancing activity. It reduces stress, and besides exercise, you also get tomatoes!



Garden terraces produces!

Story & Photos by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

Holy Moly! The terrace gardens are really growing! Long Term Care and Memory Support have been able to reap on what they have grown. The first remote cooking session was a tasty pesto dipping sauce, plus fresh basil and Italian bread. Of course, the basil was picked straight from the gardens and served to the residents....deliziosa! Some of the other dishes included herb roasted squash and tomatoes with parmesan cheese, appetizing fresh vegetable salads, and the good old tomato sandwiches.



Recreation Therapy goes "live"

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS, & Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapist

Photo by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

If you are in DC, we are coming to you on Channel 4 with a variety of broadcasts. Every Saturday and Wednesday at 9:00 a.m., Carol Mitchell and Amanda Jensema bring you extended weather reports, good vibe stories, jokes to make you laugh or groan, resident and staff highlights, and anything that may or may not be noteworthy.

For your further enjoyment, stay tuned for "Cooking with Chef Carol" at 10:00 a.m. as she brings you mouthwatering recipes with fresh herbs and vegetables from the Terrace Gardens. Chef Carol prepares culinary works of art for our Channel 4 fans. Some may say you can smell the aromas wafting through your TVs. Residents are provided a taste following the filming. There will many delicious and healthy recipes made, but we are looking forward to our freezer pickles, that have become our annual staple around Labor Day.

If you have any ideas for the broadcasts, see the stars of the show Carol or Amanda. You can even ask for an autograph!



The picturesque landscape at AFRH-G

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi is located right off Highway 90 on top the service road at 1800 Beach Drive. The three eight-story towers are nestled among the spectacular landscape and deep-rooted oak trees spanning over 40-acres of prime water-front land across the street from the Mississippi Sound. The AFRH-G public access pedestrian overpass leads directly to the beach, which makes it super easy for the veterans and the people in the community to cross over Highway 90 without having to worry about traffic. There is a walking/biking path that goes all around the property that is a little less than a mile. The beautifully well-maintained landscape is enjoyed by everyone, including the 400+ veterans, who call this their front yard. When coming through the gate one can't help but notice the strikingly picturesque appearance the grounds have. Every day residents are out and about riding their bikes or walking the trail.



"Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle!" Scout Earns Wings with AFRH-G Bocce Court Project

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

On Tuesday, July 21, 2020, Ryan Bergman along with DJ Gunnarson, Antony Lewis, and Jeremy Wright of Boy Scout Troop 201, earned their wings to become Eagle Scouts. Troop Leader Skip Wright and Assistant Troop Leader Len Van Sittert led the Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony, featuring script writer and master of ceremonies, Timothy Bergman and Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Charter Organization Representative Edwin Wright of First United Methodist Church. AFRH's Father Joseph Uko delivered the invocation at a socially-distanced, faced-covered outdoor event with only 20 people in attendance at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Gulfport, Miss. Through the BSA organization, the Eagle Scout rank is the highest attainable achievement. Youth often start as Cub Scouts (kindergarten through 5th grade), and cross over to the Boy Scouts once they have completed the 5th grade and are at least 10 years of age. Scouts work their way through seven time-in-rank requirements (Scout – four months, Tenderfoot – 30 day fitness plan, Second Class, First Class, Star – four months, Life – six months, & Eagle – six months), complete an Eagle Scout Service Project that demonstrates leadership of others while benefiting religious, school, or community, and successfully complete an Eagle Scout Board of Review no later than three months after they turn 18. To make Eagle, a scout must complete at least 21 merit badges of which 13 are Eagle required. Scouts live by ideals recited in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Outdoor Code, the Scout slogan, "Do a good turn daily," and scout motto "Be Prepared."

Since BSA's founding in 1910, only 4% of scouts earn Eagle Scout rank due to the in-depth review process, and only 2.5 million youth have acquired Eagle since its rank establishment in 1911. Although Franklin D. Roosevelt and Lyndon B. Johnson were active Scout leaders, John F. Kennedy was the first official Boy Scout to become President and the first and only Eagle Scout to become President was Gerald Ford. Added in 2019 and requiring at least 24 months for rank advancements, the first class of female Eagle Scouts will be recognized in a 2020 historic ceremony at the end of this year.

The benefiting Eagle Project included four bocce ball stands and four bean bag stands located in the AFRH-G Bocce Center. The inspiration for the stands came when AFRH-G recreation staff member Carol Davis said, "It would be cool if we had stands so that the residents wouldn't have to bend over to pick up bocce balls on the floor." Involved in his own local Scout Troop 211, AFRH recreation specialist Dennis Crabtree provided guidance and the idea to add stands for the bean bags. In January 2020, blueprints were drawn up, a prototype was tested, and the final six matching wooden stands along with eight improved table top holders were created. On February 23, Scout Master Skip Wright along with his sons Jeremy and Eddie Wright assisted Ryan Bergman and his father, Timothy Bergman, with the final installation onto the wooden bocce court base beams. "Doing a good turn daily" by enhancing the quality of life for the veterans of AFRH-G, we truly thank Boy Scout Troop 201 and congratulate Ryan Bergman on earning his wings as an Eagle Scout. I wonder how many Boy Scouts, Eagle Scouts, Girl Scouts and Gold Awards we have here at AFRH-G and AFRH-W. Over the years, these scouts have volunteered for various events such as helping residents input their annual surveys into the computers, providing cello music during the holidays, assisting with bowling, and appearing in various school music concerts in the community center. As they say, "Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle!"

