



AFRH-GULFPORT

Happy 73rd Birthday United States Air Force

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

The United States Air Force (USAF) turned 73 years-old on September 18. On this day in 1947, Chief Justice Fred Vinson swore in Stuart Symington as the first secretary of the air force, officially founding a new branch of the U.S. military. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz became the USAF's first chief of staff eight days later on September 26, 1947. The Air Force has 328,200 active duty personnel, 69,200 reserve personnel, 106,700 air national guard personnel, and 145,700 civilian personnel. The service flies more than 5,300 manned aircraft. These planes come in the form of some forty different airframes, ranging from the B-2 stealth bomber to the F-35 jet fighter to the VC-25, which is better known as Air Force One. Nineteen airmen have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Happy Birthday USAF!

Due to the coronavirus we were unable to have our annual USAF birthday ceremony. However, videos were created by AFRH-G Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell on POW/MIA Recognition Day and the USAF Birthday. The videos were posted on the AFRH Facebook page and our in-house SR TV.



POW*MIA Recognition Day

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

You Are Not Forgotten – that's the central phrase behind the POW/MIA remembrance movement which honors America's prisoners of war, those who are still missing in action and their families.

Many of our service members suffered as prisoners of war during several decades of varying conflicts. While some of them made it home, tens of thousands more never did. In the United States, National POW/MIA Recognition Day is observed on the third Friday in September. It honors those who were prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action. This day was established by an Act of Congress, and is one of six days that the POW/MIA Flag can be flown.

In order to comprehend the importance of this movement, all you need to do is look at the sheer number of Americans who have been listed as POW/MIAs.

According to a Congressional Research Service report on POWs: 130,201 World War II service members were imprisoned; 14,072 died. 7,140 Korean War service members were imprisoned; 2,701 of them died. 725 Vietnam War service members were imprisoned; 64 of them died. 37 service members were imprisoned during conflicts since 1991, including both Gulf wars; none are still in captivity.

According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, 83,114 Americans who fought in those wars are still missing.

Efforts to find those men, identify them and bring them home are constant. Let us honor those who were prisoners of war and remember those who are still missing in action.



AFRH-WASHINGTON

Korean Defense Veterans Association donates face masks to AFRH-W residents

Story and Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer

Representatives from the Korea Defense Veterans Association (KDVA) stopped by the main gate at AFRH-Washington on August 26, 2020 to donate boxes containing hundreds of face masks made in the Republic of Korea (ROK) to our veteran residents.

Seung Joon "Steve" Lee, KDVA's senior vice president of operations, and Earlene Hollerith, executive assistant to KDVA's chairman and president, presented the face masks. On hand to receive the donation and present a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Lee were AFRH-W Administrator Susan Bryhan, and AFRH-W volunteer coordinator Marine Robbins.

KDVA's mission is to enhance the ROK-U.S. Alliance by advocating for the Alliance and supporting the people who built and serve the Alliance. KDVA helps strengthen the bonds forged between our two nations during the Korean War, honoring not only those who served then, but those who continue to serve today. KDVA's priorities include advocating and educating about the Alliance; recognizing and supporting service members, government civilians and their families who have or are serving in the ROK-U.S. Alliance; providing service and networking opportunities; and honoring and supporting the veterans who defended South Korea during the Korean War.

AFRH is grateful to KDVA for their thoughtfulness, and thanks them for their support!



AFRH-W celebrates the USAF Birthday and remembers POW/MIA Recognition Day

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

The Armed Forces Retirement Home - Washington celebrated the 73rd birthday of the United States Air Force with special pre-recorded remarks from Major General Sherrie L. McCandless who is the Director, Office of Legislative Liaison, National Guard Bureau at the Pentagon. Thank you to the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service for making source material available to us for use through media commons.

Happy 73rd birthday, U.S. Air Force! Also on this day, we remember the 138,000 former American prisoners of war going back to the beginning of

World War II, and the more than 82,000 missing and unaccounted-for Americans who have yet to return home from their wars. Our nation continues to actively pursue the recovery and return of our missing Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and civilians. YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.



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AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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Christopher Kelly - Public Affairs Officer
Carolyn Haug - Washington Public Affairs

Becki L. Zschiedrich - Gulfport Public Affairs

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

Serving America's Veterans

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

Eligibility: Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH. The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not 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 – James Hunnicutt

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



James Hunnicutt was born in Georgia. He graduated from high school and had the choice of going to work or being drafted. Since he had been in the ROTC (and had to wear a tie), at the age of 17, James decided to join the U.S. Navy (whose lower ranks had open neck uniforms). After basic training and A school in San Diego, California, he volunteered for submarines and was sent to submarine school in New London, Connecticut. James wanted to go on nuclear subs on the East Coast, but ended up on the third oldest submarine in Hawaii. One story he tells is when they were on a North Alaska special ops mission and the snorkel valve stayed open. Thirty-one degree salt water started pouring into the engine room and they started sinking stern first. Fortunately, they were able to close the valve. Another episode happened in Hawaii at the Kaho'olawe bomb cliffs. The first class torpedo man wanted to see his work. So after the shot, he was allowed to go to the periscope to watch. But

the "war shot" made a 180 degree turn and James, only 18 at the time, heard the whiz going by and thankfully miss them. James spent his first ten years aboard diesel subs.

After marriage to an Irish woman, James spent less time on subs and more on shore assignments in Japan, Hawaii and his last two years in Scotland. After being told that he was going to shore duty in the states, James decided to retire after 24 years and obtaining the rank of master chief. As a civilian, he went to Hawaii at the submarine training center. But even as a GS-11, it was very expensive to live there, so he went to Pensacola, Florida, bought a new house, and got two degrees; one in accounting and one in management information systems. James then went to work for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. When his wife passed away, James stayed in the home for another five years. He is good friends with resident Warren Pospisil, who told him about AFRH-W, and he came here in 2015. When you look at the Hall of Honors in October, you will see his uniform on display.



AFRH-G resident highlight - Robert "Bob" Sebastian

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Robert "Bob" Sebastian was born in Breathitt, County, Kentucky, then moved to Newport, Kentucky. Around fourth grade he moved, along with his eleven siblings, to Alexandria, Kentucky. When Bob was a junior in high school, he worked at a bowling alley setting pins earning ten cents a game. He realized there were not many job opportunities in Alexandria so he made the decision to leave high school and join the Navy.

At age seventeen, Bob left for boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois. His first duty station after boot camp was aboard the USS Long Beach for two years. He then went back to Great Lakes to begin guided missile launching school. After his training, he was sent to work aboard the USS Cochrane.

With the Navy, Bob served two tours of duty in the Vietnam War from 1965-66. He returned to the States staying in the guided missile field also

teaching A and B schools back at Great Lakes. Bob dedicated 20 years of service to the Navy before retiring and beginning a civilian career.

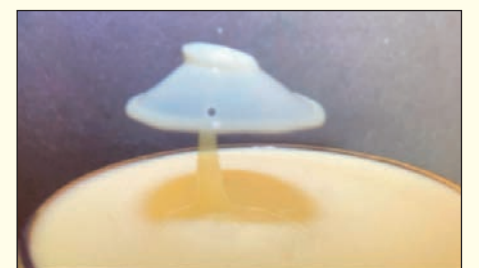
Back when Bob was twelve years old, he met his childhood sweetheart, Donna Sue. The young couple went on to marry in 1963 and have two children, Robert James and Catherine Addie. During Bob's Navy career, he tried to stay stationed in Minnesota so the couple could raise the children in that area. They remained in Minnesota after his retirement while he took jobs in the industries of guided missile launching systems, the diecast industry, and the corrugated industry. Once their children grew up and had families of their own (Bob has two grandsons, two granddaughters, and one great grandson), the retired couple decided to RV around the country.

They operated out of Naples, Florida where each January they would sit down with their son to plan out their road trips that would begin each April. Their trips would last until they returned back to Florida in November. On several of their road trips, the journey would take them down Highway 90 on the Mississippi Gulf Coast passing by AFRH-G. Donna Sue would joke and tell Bob that if he was not a good boy, she would put him out right at

the home to live. The kids would join in on the joke each time they passed on a trip.

Bob lost his Donna Sue on Christmas day in 2016. His son brought up the retirement home they loved to joke about to see if it was somewhere he would be interested in living. They checked out AFRH-G online and printed out the paperwork. Bob moved to the Gulfport campus in early 2018.

He has remained extremely busy and involved in many activities in the Home. Among his many hobbies are doing puzzles, collecting coins and currency, reading, and working to set up an amazing train display for the healthcare residents to enjoy. Most recently, due to COVID restrictions, Bob has turned to photography, especially high-speed photography, to help him through difficult times. He is enjoying taking photos of water drops colliding. He has decided to live a more simple life and focus on his new interest.



This is a photo Bob took of a water drop that hit milk with yellow dye, and then bounced up and hit another drop coming down.



Bob at the AFRH-G Train Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on January 15, 2020.

Letter of appreciation

By Linda Siebert | AFRH-G Resident



Hello, my name is Linda Siebert and I'm a resident at AFRH–Gulfport. Due to the coronavirus, we are privileged to being tested weekly to help identify any possible outbreaks with great care and concern for all at the Home. If a resident tests positive, they are quarantined for fourteen days for everyone's safety. This is my short story.

I want to express my genuine appreciation to each and every volunteer who was thoughtful, caring and giving of their time and energy to deliver food to those of us who were restricted and isolated to our rooms. Isolation can be torturous. I looked forward to a knock on my door along with a cheerful "Good morning Linda, how are you doing?". Even though the door was shut, I could hear the caring heart in their voices, each meal, each day, day after day, and for me week after week - a total of four weeks. Sometimes it was my only communication for hours at a time. Also, I appreciated the Ability Works personnel who picked up my trash. You don't realize how much it accumulates, or smells. Thank you to the medical personnel for checking on me daily; and re-testing me. Oh, I should mention someone picking up my mail and delivering it to my room. Let's not forget about all of the employees in the kitchen who prepare the food early so we were not wondering if we had been forgotten or out-of-sight out-of-mind. It was definitely a team effort from everyone. It was a hardship mentally and physically to be isolated or four weeks to say the least. But kindhearted people pulling together helped in ways that they have no idea! Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Perhaps I should name everyone by name, but they all made up the whole, they know who they are. They did not volunteer for glory, but a blessing to those in need! I forgot to mention residents dropping off goodies and snacks with notes of encouragement. Thank you! There is no "I" in team. Kudos to all!

Admiral Boorda Drive

Story & Photos by Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Admiral Mike Boorda Drive is named for Jeremy Michael Boorda (1939-1996) a United States Navy admiral who served as the 25th Chief of Naval Operations. Boorda was notable as the first American sailor to have risen through the enlisted ranks to become the Chief of Naval Operations, the highest-ranking office in the United States Navy. Following a low ebb in Naval history and after a relatively bumpy period of negative publicity from Tailhook, to a cheating scandal at the U.S. Naval Academy, to an accidental firing on a Turkish destroyer, he worked hard at returning a sense of pride to those serving.

The official website of Naval History and Heritage Command cited Admiral Boorda as a Sailor's Sailor. Within a year, he promoted "Forward . . . From the Sea," which emphasized a post-Cold War Navy focused on a combat credible forward presence that would be borne out consistently in operations. Experienced in manpower and personnel areas, he managed the largest mandated reduction in naval personnel since World War II with sensitivity and careful priorities while driving Navy modernization with the F/A 18E/F Super Hornet aircraft, a new attack submarine, Surface Combatant 21, and theater ballistic missile defense.

Due to his prominence, national news organizations investigated him over complaints that he had not legitimately earned the right to wear two service ribbons with bronze "V" devices. The "V" devices are by regulation only to be awarded to personnel who performed an act of valor in actual combat, and Boorda had not served in combat. Despite removing the two ribbon devices from his uniform and being generally perceived as having made a good-faith error, Boorda died by suicide following this renewed media pressure.

Dreading a further Navy scandal, Admiral Boorda addressed a note to his sailors at the time of his death that said in part, "I couldn't bear to bring dishonor to you... (i)f you care to do so, you can do something for me. That is to take care of each other. Be honorable. Do what is right. Forgive when it makes sense, punish when you must, but always work to make the latter unnecessary by working to help people be all they really can and should be."

A memorial service held at Arlington National Cemetery on May 21, 1996 featured eulogies from President Bill Clinton, Secretary of Defense William Perry, and Secretary of the Navy John Dalton.

At a ceremony to honor the late chief of naval operations, held at the Naval Home (AFRH-G) on October 21, 1996, officials unveiled a cast bronze street sign for "Admiral Boorda Drive." His family had asked that contributions be sent to the Naval Home in Admiral Boorda's memory. Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Admiral Dan Oliver stated, "It is fitting today that we name the main street to the Naval Home after a man who brought out the best in everyone around him. Today's ceremony will help ensure that all who pass through these doors in the future will remember what he meant to our Navy and our country." Also at the ceremony, the chairman of the Naval Home Resident Advisory Committee read the following proclamation: "On this date, October 21, 1996, we are participating in a ceremony that serves to preserve the memory of Admiral Boorda by commemorating him with a street bearing his name. Many of us had the privilege of knowing him because of his frequent visits to spend time with his father, Skip Boorda, who was a resident here for many years. In the history of the United States Navy since 1775, only one person was elevated through the system in a career that began as a new recruit and rose through the ranks to petty officer, junior officer, senior officer, full admiral, and to the very top, Chief of Naval Operations. From this day forward, as we travel Admiral Boorda Drive, we will always remember that he never forgot what it was like to be an enlisted Sailor and never forgot where he came from. We will always remember his devotion to his family and the Navy, his commitment and pride, and last but not least we will always remember his constant effort to make it better for all people. To you Admiral Boorda, you have made it better for us at the United States Naval Home and may your soul rest in peace." The original Naval Home was designed and constructed to look like the prow of a ship facing out to sea. At that time, no one dreamed that in 1996, Admiral Boorda Drive, with its colorful flowers so beautiful in the sun and its lights shining so bright in the night, would assume its place as the linkage between the United States Naval Home and the sea. Currently a large photo of Admiral Boorda hangs in the Hall of Honors at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi.



A jack-of-all-trades, a master of none

Story & Photo by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Supervisory Recreation Specialist

Joseph Grant is a man of many talents. He is a fixer, a repairer, a builder and an organizer. He is a friend, a father and a grandfather. He is a gentleman and a handyman. Whenever there is a job to do, he volunteers. He is cheerful, he is positive, he is inventive and resourceful. He has a use for everything so nothing gets thrown away. He likes Coca-Cola, and he has never met a meal he didn't like. He is a football fan and loves to see wildlife. He is an all-around nice guy and we are lucky to have him living at AFRH-W.

Three cheers for Joe!



Joseph Grant (above) with the ice chest he built for recreation. Thank you Joe.

Autumn poetry corner

Submitted by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

Pleasant Sounds
By John Clare

The rustling of leaves under the feet in woods and under hedges;
The crumpling of cat-ice and snow down wood-rides, narrow lanes and every street causeway;
Rustling through a wood or rather rushing, while the wind halloos in the oak-toop like thunder;
The rustle of birds' wings startled from their nests or flying unseen into the bushes;
The whizzing of larger birds overhead in a wood, such as crows, puddocks, buzzards;
The trample of robins and woodlarks on the brown leaves. and the patter of squirrels on the green moss;
The fall of an acorn on the ground, the pattering of nuts on the hazel branches as they fall from ripeness;
The flirt of the groundlark's wing from the stubbles – how sweet such pictures on dewy mornings, when the dew flashes from its brown feathers.

From the AFRH-W Administrator



As September rolled in, it initially did not feel much different than August, but as I am writing, there is definitely a change in the air. A few days ago, I heard several people mention that they had to go back and get a jacket before leaving home. Our recent 100% testing resulted in one positive government employee but fortunately, they had minimal exposure to our residents and other staff. Due to this result, we had to continue a few more weeks of 100% testing. The wonderful news is that we still have not had one resident who has been ill from COVID.

We honored quite a few September birthday residents at our monthly birthday meal, they had to listen to some of us sing to them. Sorry about that. For something extra special this month and to thank our residents and staff for the great job during the pandemic, the dining team put on a spectacular special meal that included lobster and other special foods. Well done, all! We had a gathering of many of our World War II veterans who received special silver coins commemorating the end of the War, a photo opportunity that I will not soon forget.

As mentioned last month, we did contract with an architect firm to work on designs to modernize the Sheridan Building. Their early preliminary designs are promising, and should provide much more comfortable living resident living spaces. The other two big projects are now contracted, so the Sheridan roof and elevator replacements will soon be underway which I know is good news for everyone.

We just counted the votes and I am happy to announce that Fred Layman will be our new RAC Chairman. Congratulations, Fred! And a big thank you to Billy White who faithfully served his fellow residents for the past two years. Thanks, Billy! And thanks to those who will be the floor representatives!

As usual, we still know that the community is thinking of us by their generous donations. We were honored to receive masks from two ROK veterans groups – The Korea Defense Veterans Association and The Korea Veterans Association. The Friends of the Old Soldiers Home (FOSH) heard that the residents were short of facial tissues and sent several cases. And Rear Admiral (retired) Earl Gay stopped by several times with his wife to donate much needed items.

Our DoD Inspector General review is still ongoing and this month we also had a mock survey review to prepare us for our next Joint Commission accreditation survey which could begin very soon. The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) also kicked off this month and will continue into January. I always like to support CFC since it is an easy way to donate to some of my favorite causes.

As I close this month I know we are all still concerned about the pandemic, I sure never thought we would still be where we are a few months ago. Masks are now the norm, waiting in line is how we enter places and our children are once again having to learn from home. Keep in contact with those you love as best as you can and let's keep positive that we have weathered this storm as well as we have. Thanks to our wonderful residents for their patience and to the staff who works so hard!

Susan Bryhan



A gathering of WWII residents who received silver coins.



Susan Bryhan accepts a donation from RDML (Ret) Earl Gay.

History of the Grant Building

By Christine Baldwin | AFRH-W Librarian



Above: By November 1908, most of the structure was complete. Manual cranes on each corner were operated by "pony engines" at the bottom to carry stone and supplies to the roof. Right: Horses pull steel beams to the construction site.



In Feb 1901, the idea of a new "state-of-the-art" building was brought up. The estimated cost was \$710,000. The building would be in the Renaissance Revival style and was covered in white marble. It would have electric lighting throughout the building, power ventilation and five elevators. It was designed as a dormitory and mess hall; patterned after the Cadets' Mess at West

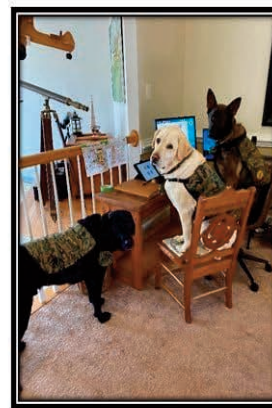
Point. The hall could seat 2,400 residents. They sat on unpadded stools at long tables. When it was opened to residents in 1912, the cost was \$1.7 million. In 1954, the mess hall was moved to the new Scott Building and the dining area became a fitness center with exercise equipment, a shuffleboard, a handball cage, golf swing cages, a basketball area, a six-lane bowling alley and a lighted tennis court. The Grant Building closed in 1995, when it became uneconomical to continue operations. This information comes from "The Bugler" (April 1995) and the "AFRH Communicator" (July 2003).

The WRB Facility Dog Program

The Walter Reed Bethesda Facility Dog Program would like to thank the residents and staff of the Armed Forces Retirement Home for your service! Pictured on left sitting in the chair is HM2 Sully who served former President George H. W. Bush during the last six months of the President's life and laid by his casket in the Capitol rotunda.

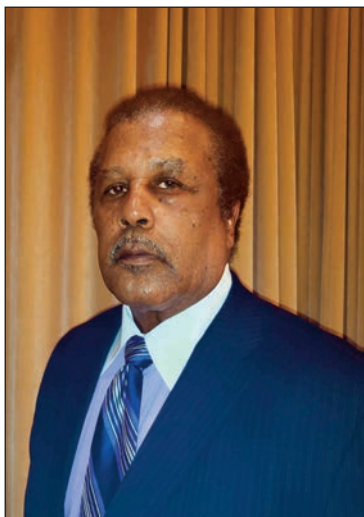


Armed Forced Retirement Home
Thank You for Your Service!
The WRB Facility Dog Program



We Are Walter Reed Bethesda.

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



I want to thank all the residents who played a part in making AFRH a better place for all of us to live in the last two years by working together as a team. I pray that we will continue to work together to keep our Home safe during the pandemic. We are all in this together as one. If we feed our faith, I doubt we will starve to death. Remember it's not the load that breaks us down, it's the way we carry it. Of all the things we wear, our expressions are the most important. Kindness is a language deaf people can hear and blind can see. I want to give thanks to one of the most wonderful couples I've met in my lifetime, RADM U. S. Navy (RET) Earl L Gay and his lovely wife for stopping by to deliver gifts for the residents at AFRH in Washington D.C. The administration department at all levels, and the residents

here would like to say thank you for taking care of us during these very challenging times.



From the AFRH-G Administrator



I appreciate everyone's cooperation during this pandemic! I know it has been a struggle and this has been tough on us all. We have to continue practicing our good habits. Wash your hands and wash them often. Continue to sanitize your hands. We have more than 230 hand sanitizers throughout the home, please use them when you walk by one. Social Distancing is vital to stop the spread of the virus. Please continue to remain at least six feet from each other. Properly worn face coverings, over your nose and mouth, are required when outside of your room.

We still have a closed campus and the exceptions are: family members of those residents on hospice, and durable medical equipment companies and contractors performing required services.

When requesting leave, you need to see me or Chief of Resident Services Chris Alexander. If approved for leave, you will be issued a signed authorization form and you will turn it in to security when you depart. When you return from leave you will be on isolation in your room for 14 days. Two new residents have checked in and a few more are scheduled. To move in they must show proof of a negative COVID test and will be re-tested here. The new residents are on isolation for 14 days.

We have COVID supplies on hand (hand sanitizer, wipes, masks, gloves, gowns, etc). We are now able to order through a DoD supply system which has been very helpful. Since our last town hall, Dr. Ray Erato joined us and has been very helpful to residents and staff. We also hired 2 LPNs: Jana Bennet and Tomeka Bland, and 3 CNAs: Koret Henry-Trautman, Michelene Bailey and Lakenya Coleman. Staff meetings are conducted via telecon to avoid groups anything and everything related to COVID-19. Staff temperatures are checked seven days a week. The kiosks with the large monitors by the elevators are used by each employee. If someone tests with a high temperature an email is sent to me, Mrs. Joiner, Frank Bermudez, and others so we know who it is.

For those of you living in Independent Living, headquarters has decided the max fee percentage will remain at 46.7% and the max fee will stay \$1,990.00 for 2021 for those of you who moved in before 2020. Also, remember to bring your 2019 tax documents to the business center. For those of you in Assisted Living and Long Term Care please gather your information and let us know when you're ready. We will come get it from you. In the Plan of the Week we now have a chart on the front page displaying the COVID test results. The chart lists residents, employees, and contractors. It also shows current and new positives.

Finally, we had a DoD Inspector General inspection of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to see a draft of their report in October and the final product should be published in January. We always welcome those from outside our organization to take a look at our operation to offer suggestions for improvement. We also had a two-day virtual meeting with a group of surveyors to assist us as we prepare for our triannual inspection from The Joint Commission later this year.

In closing, I appreciate you for your service to our country and for choosing to make the Armed Forces Retirement Home your home. Thanks to all of you for your cooperation during this pandemic.

God bless you and we will get through this!

Jeff Eads



Mr. Eads receives his weekly COVID test from Amanda Herold, RN.

The military career of Von Leroy Blunt

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Von was born to Clyde and Olive Blunt on July 11, 1937 in Everly, Iowa. His early life was on the Blunt farm where crops consisted primarily of corn and oats. He attended a one-room schoolhouse for grades one and two and not having electricity, cold days were warmed by a pot-bellied stove. The family moved to Terril, Iowa and another farm. Von attended classes at Terril Consolidated School until graduation in 1955. Besides home and farm chores for pocket money, Von worked part-time setting pins at a bowling alley. After attending two years at the University of Iowa in Iowa City majoring in media broadcasting, Von took a break and worked at a lodging facility renting out weekly cabins in Yellowstone Park.

Von enlisted with the U.S. Air Force on October 15, 1958 and took basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas before being transferred to McConnell AFB, Kansas. He was then transferred to Ankara, Turkey during the summer of 1960 as a service club manager; and then transferred to Miles City AFS, Montana in 1961 where he was raised to sergeant grade. Many of his duty tours had to do with his classification in recreation and service club management. Von re-enlisted in October 1962 and in 1963, was enrolled in an Army operated Radio/TV Broadcasting School in New York which started him in a new classification path. He was then transferred to Kunsan AB, Korea in March 1964 where he was the radio broadcasting station manager. He was then transferred to Germany for three years working at the Armed Forces Radio and Television network in Wiesbaden, Germany and was reassigned to the Armed Forces Television headquarters in Hollywood, California becoming a global media programming director.

In 1969, he went to Thailand and worked as a radio/television station manager and spent a year there at U-Tapao AB and Ubon AB before returning in 1970, to Great Falls, Montana in Public Affairs with the 24th Air Division. In 1971, he applied for the recruiting school in Lackland, Texas, and was sent to Des Moines, Iowa as head of advertising and publicity for recruiting services for the state of Iowa. There he was raised to the rank of master sergeant. With the phasing out of the Des Moines detachment, Von was transferred to Waterloo, Iowa in 1976

as a recruiter/supervisor and in 1978, he took his retirement from the Air Force and continued to live outside of Denver, Iowa.

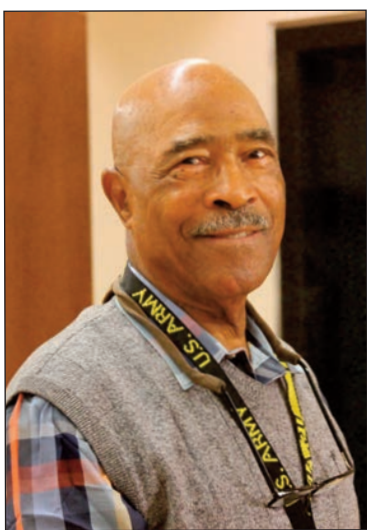
After service departure Von worked for the Iowa state liquor department for a couple years, got his pilot's license and then joined the Schumacher Elevator Company as salesman and pilot in 1981 and then retired in 1999. He also served as an EMT for eight years and then became a Medicare Counselor for Waverly Health Center in Waverly, Iowa.

Von's first marriage in 1959 produced a daughter, Vicky. While living in Des Moines, Von married a second time to a Korean woman named Sue who had two boys. One of his stepsons lives in Hawaii and the other in Waverly, Iowa. Sue passed away in 2017. Von is a grandfather to six grandchildren.

Von moved to AFRH-G on October 15, 2018, and has never stopped working. He holds a number of volunteer positions including: meal ticket sales, security desk back-up, administrative desk clerk, and new resident sponsor.



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



September signals the end of summer. We celebrated the first Monday as Labor Day. Hurricane Sally made landfall on September 16. In preparation for the storm we moved 72 essential personnel on campus. While we prepared for at least a glancing blow, Sally adjusted her track eastward just before landfall to the area around Gulf Shores, Alabama. We have become very proficient at storm preparation. September 16 brought cheers all around as the restrictions for all on campus activities were lifted. Residents can once again enjoy the many avenues available to reduce the strain of mental fatigue and physical immobility, while

at the same time practicing social distancing and wearing face masks. On September 18 we celebrated The Air Force 73rd Birthday. To all Air Force retirees here at the Home and around the world "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"

On September 14, we completed the bi-annual elections of The Resident Advisory Committee. The newly elected committee consist of Art Jones, RAC Chairman, Floor Representatives: Susan Meckley, Doris Denton, Von Blunt, Kelsey Farrell, Michael Nabors, and Diana Dopp plus the upper-levels-of-care Ombudsman Chip Wall. Congratulations to all.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



Art Jones talks to U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith on September 3, 2020.



Congratulations to RAC Chair Art W. Jones!

AFRH-Washington

On the September Calendar: National Rehabilitation Awareness Week

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs Specialist
Photos by Virginia Shingleton | Public Affairs

National Rehabilitation Awareness Week occurs each September to honor therapists and therapy assistants. The Armed Forces Retirement Home provides rehabilitation services to our residents to maintain a high level of physical health. It takes a team of therapists to provide this high-quality care. Two instrumental members of our team at AFRH-Washington are Director of Rehabilitation Services Lynn Holt and Therapy Assistant Adrienne Dawkins. Together, they have a combined 69 years of experience providing healthcare to our residents.

Q. What is your role within Rehabilitation Services at AFRH?

LH: I am responsible for ensuring residents receive occupational, physical, speech, and restorative therapy services. I work closely with the medical providers and other healthcare team members to ensure AFRH veterans receive a holistic approach to their care and promote an overall wellness lifestyle in which residents perform at their highest level of independence.

AD: My role is to provide restorative therapy services to residents after they are discharged from physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. I carry out treatment programs set up by the licensed therapist, and enable residents to maintain their functional strength, endurance, performance in activities of daily living, communication skills and cognitive skills.

Q. How long have you worked for AFRH? LH. 35 years AD. 34 years

Q. In what ways has the service you provide changed and/or stayed the same?

LH. The types of therapy and therapeutic techniques have remained the same overall. There are many times due to our unique older American population that we have to be creative and think of ways that are appealing to our veteran population. This encourages them to use adaptive equipment and various technology that is on the market today to enable them to still perform tasks at an independent or minimal assist level of functioning. Also, the use of contract therapists has been a change over the last 15/16 years. Residents get attached to the therapist and it takes them a while to adjust to the new therapist.

AD. We are doing some of the same services as when I first started but we are doing more massage therapy and performing self-care treatments on the units, in resident's rooms, to help them be able to participate as much as possible in their ADL activities.

Q. What motivated you to pursue your career path?

LH. I knew at an early age I wanted to go into the medical field to help improve people's lives. And especially after watching an episode of 60 Minutes, and seeing an occupational therapist teach a little boy who was born without arms how to do everything for himself using his feet and adaptive equipment. I knew then that I wanted to help people overcome their challenges and reach their goals of independence as much as possible despite whatever limitations they faced. I absolutely LOVE what I do!

AD. I enjoyed working with veterans as a CAN, and when the opportunity became available in the rehabilitation department I knew this would be a challenge for me. This was something different that I welcomed and was glad I was selected.

Q. What do you like most about working with our veterans?

LH. Learning first hand military/war history from the veterans who served this country so proudly. Also when I see residents who are 93, 96, and 100 years of age still enjoying life to the fullest and living an Active Lifestyle that motivates me!

AD. They are very pleasant and caring people. They also have good stories and conversation and are also very comical.

Q. What advice would you give young professionals in your field or staff who work at the Armed Forces Retirement Home?

LH. This is a very rewarding career, you have to be very compassionate, caring and have a lot of patience. You have to be creative and think outside the box as well as be a strong advocate for your client when others may not see the potential you see. You don't do this job just for the money; your heart has to really be in it!

AD. You have to really like what you do in order to work in this field, also be professional when performing your job at all times.

We would like to thank Lynn Holt, Adrienne Dawkins and our Rehabilitation Services team for their commitment and service to our residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home! Special congratulations to Adrienne Dawkins who will retire the end of this month.



Chicken fried rice demo

By Marla J. McGuinness & Linda Bailey | Recreation Services
Photos by Annemarie Wilson & Neil Ferguson



Marla McGuinness and Linda Bailey from Recreation Services created a cooking demonstration with flavors from the orient. Residents helped with the prep work. Warren Pospisil chopped the cooked chicken. Neil Ferguson "Fergy" chopped onions, John Baker scabbled the eggs, Chris Engle opened the cans and Adeline Overchuck-Murray cut up the green onions while others sat back and watched the event unfold. Linda Bailey

spoke of different leftover recipes we use, while Marla McGuinness talked about the chicken fried rice mixture. Once everything was cooked, everyone received a bowl and enjoyed talking with others who were there. They said how nice it was to enjoy the different flavors and aroma from the ingredients used in the chicken fried rice recipe.



Good things in life are fermented: Beer, Bread.... and Kimchi!

By Annemarie Wilson | Recreation Therapy Supervisor
Photo by Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator

Kimchi is a traditional food in Korea eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Famous for its all-day consumption and its pungent odor, appreciation for it is controversial: some people love it and others don't care for it at all. So what is kimchi, what are its origins and what are the health benefits? There are hundreds of varieties of kimchi but the most well-known recipe consists of napa cabbage, daikon radish, spring onions, lots of garlic, ginger, Korean red chili peppers, salt, shrimp paste and fish sauce. The original name for this indigenous food, chaejeo, is derived from Chinese characters which translate to 'fermented vegetable'. The practice of vegetable fermentation was first introduced in Korea as a means of survival through the long, cold, and harsh winters some 3000 years ago. Kimchi was buried in the ground in large clay pots to ferment through the cold winters which provided natural refrigeration.

There are many health benefits to kimchi. Not only is its caloric content low, but it is packed with vitamin C, carotene, and probiotics. According to an article from Hanyang University, the low-calorie aspect of kimchi contributes to clearing the blood vessels, leading to a better circulation of blood. It is also useful in reducing health risks associated with obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.

Some residents at AFRH-W absolutely LOVE kimchi and have been asking for it since it was part of RT's International Food Tasting over a year ago. So, what better way to get a small group together during these trying times to wake up our olfactory senses and taste buds! With safety precautions set in place, Warren Pospisil, Jim Hunnicutt, Jonathan Hess, Bill Jentarra, Lillian Miller, Christine Engle, and our very own Chief of Resident Services Ron Kartz, gathered in the community center for a cooking class. For some, this was a first-time experience and it was certainly a process!

Of course, the finished product was sampled on the day it was made, but for proper flavor and gut-helping probiotic growth, it was sealed and set to do its fermenting magic for about one month in our cool and dark storage room. On September 15, a container of kimchi and a container of rice to go along with it was given out during lunch time. Some residents declined but we had over 40 residents who tried it and absolutely loved it! It was a success and may become a yearly tradition for AFRH-W!



AFRH-Gulfport

U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith visits AFRH-G

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On September 3, 2020 U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith along with Andrew Hinkebein from U.S. Senator's Roger Wicker's office, Harrison County Supervisor & Board President Connie Rockco and Harrison County Veteran Services Officer Julia Encalade visited AFRH-G to see what they could do to support our veterans during this pandemic. Residents brought up great questions pertaining to the restrictions that are currently in place and the need for rapid test kits. Cindy Hyde-Smith is the first woman elected to represent Mississippi in Washington, D.C. Thank you all for taking the time to support the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi.



It's Papae, Happy Birthday Papae!

Story and Photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant

On August 31, 2020 my eyes teared up, sniffles erupted and heartfelt feelings exploded all over me as I witnessed resident Ernest Pain FaceTime with his family on his 99th birthday. "This is the best birthday I ever had," stated Mr. Pain. "I can see everyone, everyone is so beautiful to me," he added as numerous kids, grandchildren and great grandchildren all said their "happy birthdays" in group FaceTime calls. "I don't need to celebrate anymore, that topped it all," he said. Mr. Ernie Pain shared his birthday with his many, many family members but in a new way... for the times... no streamers, or cake or a group of singing people for his birthday but an I-Pad.. an I-Pad filled with family members' faces and conversations of expressed love. From their homes to his...the best present for a birthday: family. A special Happy Birthday for Mr. Ernie Pain.

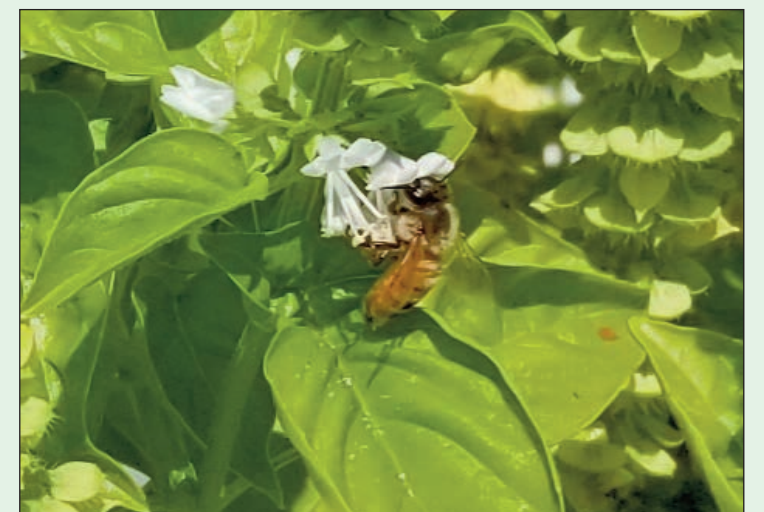


Bee basil happy!

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



On September 10, 2020 the bees were in abundance busily buzzing around the flowering basil plant up on the Loyalty patio garden. Back in the spring, resident and volunteer Jack Horsley started his basil plants from seeds on his outdoor patio. He shared several of the small plants to the Valor and Loyalty patio gardens, and they have now thrived. Bees prefer the same fragrances as we do such as rosemary, oregano and mint and they are attracted to many of the flowering herbs such as basil. As a member of the mint family, basil is an irresistible lure to pollinators. A source of magnesium, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids, basil leaves are a great source of iron, manganese, and vitamin K, A & C. Often enjoyed when added to spaghetti sauce, tomato soup, and tomato sandwiches, basil leaves provide a fragrant scent and a delicious taste. Not only for eating, basil oils are often extracted for use as an essential oil to heal cuts, skin infections and wounds. Take it from these busy bees and "Bee Basil Happy!"



How to get a hurricane to flee to another area

Story & Photo by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Meet our government's most recent specialized COVID/Hurricane warrior. Yes folks some of you know him as the sports coach, others refer to him as referee and the inventor of "Game Of Chairs," some know him as Mr. Fix It, but for those of us in recreation services we know him as DENNIS Crabtree and when you call on him for help he's always right there!

However, he has kept his other talents reserved for this latest hurricane event and as you can see, he came prepared. Dennis, we aren't quite sure why that storm seemed to fall apart and flee to our neighboring state but if word gets out that you are a member of an elite team of Hurricane Busters, you might be called upon to face the next one...



Ed Summers's painting ~ Flowers on a Table

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Once again it is amazing how artists get inspired to paint something and end up with a masterpiece. It is equally interesting to find out just what medium the artist used. Now techniques are often a bit more guarded and seldom revealed but just to know the materials used, makes this painting an outstanding accomplishment. You ready folks? Wait, before I reveal that, may I submit to y'all, that at some point each of us has "expressed" a bit of artistic flare with these very same, shall I say, "Ingredients."

Yes, maybe you have guessed it, Ed used our everyday table kitchen condiments; ketchup, mustard, salt, pepper, other INGREDIENTS such as peanut butter, strawberry jam, coffee and more to "paint" this work of art. "Looks so good you could eat it" takes on a whole new meaning. Hmm! We used to call the Creative Arts Center here at the Home, "The School of Arts and Science" and thanks to Ed we can add "Culinary Delights!"

Alright folks, this masterpiece can be viewed, but not sampled, in the Art Display Room, so go take an Art Adventure.

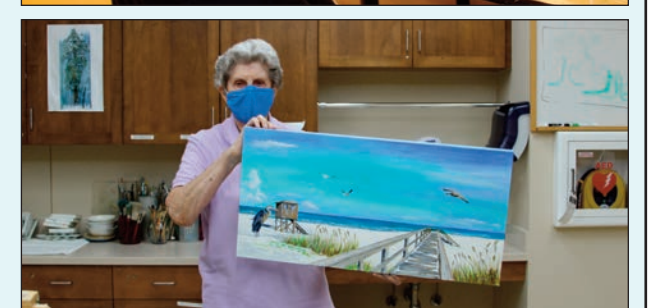
Thanks Ed Summers!



Bouncing back!

Story & Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Woohoooo! Things are coming back to life at AFRH-G! Several recreation areas have opened again including the fitness center and the pool area. We barely got the doors open before we had residents using the facilities. Please continue to use social distancing, wear your masks, and sanitize the equipment in the fitness center before and after every use. If you want to use the pool, there is a sign-up sheet in recreation services. Get outside while you can before winter arrives. The weather has been beautiful minus the hurricanes and tropical storms in the Gulf!



WASHINGTON

Pickled pickle power

By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy & Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation
Photos by Mike Hoth, Carol Mitchell & Marla McGuinness

A pickled cucumber (commonly known as a PICKLE in the United States and Canada, and a GHERKIN in Britain, Ireland, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand) is a cucumber that has been pickled in a brine, vinegar, or other solution. They are then left to ferment for a period by either immersing the cucumbers in an acidic solution or through souring by lacto-fermentation. There are many varieties of pickles...Genuine Dill, Kosher dill, Hungarian, Sweet, Polish, Bread-and-Butter, Gherkin, and the good old AFRH-W Freezer Pickle! On September 4 residents were treated to homemade freezer pickles to kick off the Labor Day Weekend.

It has become an annual tradition at AFRH-W to serve up these tasty pickles at the Labor Day Cookout. RT Garden Terraces grows an abundance of cucumbers with residents enjoying a variety of dishes to include cucumber sandwiches, cucumber pasta, cucumber and tomato salad, and of course freezer pickles. Who knew you could make pickles from cucumbers in the freezer? I didn't! One day I was pondering what to do with our plethora of cucumbers when Recreation Team Lead Linda Bailey said, "Why don't you make freezer pickles?" and a tradition was born.

The following recipe creates the sweetest, most delicious pickles I have ever tasted. The following recipe serves only 24... We made enough to serve all the residents!

21 cups thinly sliced pickling cucumbers
5-6 yellow or sweet onions - peeled and thinly sliced
2 large red onions - peeled and thinly sliced
6 tbsp. kosher salt
6 cups granulated sugar
3 cups apple cider vinegar
3 tbsp. mustard seed
3 tbsp. celery seed

Put it all together and refrigerate for 24 hours then put in the freezer for a month.

Residents were able to watch the "Cooking with Chef Carol Show" which demonstrated how the pickles were made on the Home's Channel 4 Senior Television station a month prior to the Labor Day event. Once they had a taste of the freezer pickles, rave reviews came into the recreation department.

Due to the pandemic, recreation therapy and recreation improvised the Labor Day Cookout pickle booth and created a "Roving Pickle Cart" and a "Pass by Pick-up Pickle stand." The challenge was on... Recreation's Marla McGuinness and Recreation Therapy's Carol Mitchell decided to see who could be the most creative in designing their pickle distribution carts. It was fun for the residents bringing a smile to their faces when Marla had residents taking pickle photo pictures. Carol went roaming the healthcare units with a giant pickle, and of course freezer pickles to sample!



GULFPORT

National Teddy Bear Day & the Birthday of the Hot Dog, 1884

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services
Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant & Selena Holder | LPN

National Teddy Bear Day was held on September 9 honoring the history of the beloved childhood toy! In 1902, when Theodore Roosevelt refused to shoot a bear cub while hunting in Mississippi, the story made national news. After the incident, Clifford Berryman published a cartoon in the Washington Post on November 16, 1902 and his drawing became a classic. New York store owner Morris Michtom became inspired from the cartoon, created a new toy, and asked President Roosevelt permission for the name, "Teddy Bear." September 9 also commemorated the 134th birthday of the invention of the hot dog! Pair these two together and you have a bear-ry special monthly healthcare cook-in filled with surprises, laughter, food and fun. Healthcare residents enjoyed hot dogs, hamburgers, coconut shrimp, chocolate cake, cheesecake with strawberries, and many more items to feel stuffed as a bear. Recreation therapy provided a variety of drinks along with costume visits. Of course who couldn't resist laughing at Susan riding on the shoulders of a bear trying to get to her hot dog hat? You could hear giggles coming from IL resident Ed Summers when she turned, saying, "Look, look, she has a teddy bear on her back and a tail!...I laugh every time she grabs his neck so it looks like she won't fall off his shoulders...oh, that is great...tell everyone 'Hi' up in healthcare, we sure miss seeing all the residents down here" in Independent Living. On the previous day, residents received their weekly themed comedic handout, this one on the history of National Teddy Bear Day along with pictures of giant stuffed teddy bears and other amusements. Allegiance resident, Jim Brogan, stated, "I sure get a kick out of these...I really look forward to them each week" as he recalled the need for humor and laughter to make it through these challenging times. On Valor Hall, Gerald Masterson brightened, "I really liked these" receiving an extra copy to send to his family. On Loyalty Hall, Lois Hogan showcased her teddy bear handout along with Wayne Wolski's wooden bear project positioned on her rollator as she traveled throughout the week. She said, "I just love my teddy bear!"

As for the history of the hot dog, the words "hot dog" appeared in the Evansville, Indiana Daily Courier on September 14, 1884. There are several possible origins with one naming a German immigrant from Frankfurt who pioneered the "frankfurter" practice of making a sausage of pork and beef in the American Midwest with his wife suggesting the use of a bun in 1880 so that people on the streets of St. Louis, Missouri would not burn their hands when handling the sausage dog. At one time, gloves were provided to customers to protect their hands however, this became costly when they were not returned and instead kept as souvenirs. Another story has Charles Feltman's 1867 cart made with a stove to boil hot dogs and house fresh buns at Coney Island in New York City.

Other themes this month included Grandparent's Day (9/13), National Dog Week (9/20-9/27), and World Alzheimer's Day, Gratitude Day, and the 39th Anniversary of International Day of Peace on September 21. As we hibernate, keep looking ahead for those "Bear-ry Good Days!"

