



AFRH-WASHINGTON

Skilled trades professionals volunteer at AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH-W Volunteer Coordinator



Back for another day of community service at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, the Helmets 2 Hardhats (H2H) organization and the North America's Building Trades Unions brought a "platoon" of volunteers to beautify the campus inside and out.

"What you all are doing here today, is making sure the residents have a nice place to go and enjoy, whether it's the ponds to look at the ducks, the fish or whatever," said H2H Chief Executive Officer Darrell Roberts. "The work you do here gives them that escape, and we greatly appreciate it."

AFRH-W resident Fred Layman, a resident volunteer who spends countless hours caring for the golf course, greeted volunteers upon arrival and assisted with tasks on the golf course.

"I think this is a great thing that they are doing here," he said when asked about their visit.

After a short brief and orientation by AFRH-W Chief of Resident Services Ron Kartz, the volunteers went straight to work clearing debris from the golf course and apply waterproofing just outside the golf shack. The area around the fishing ponds was neaten up a bit and the old, crumbling duck houses were replaced with new ones built right on site.

Other volunteer work included transporting a massively heavy bookshelf in the assisted living area, assembling two donated benches outside the Hall of Honors, planting fruit and vegetables in the gardens in the health care areas and clearing gutters and debris by the garden plots.

A few volunteers who specialize in plumbing took a look at an underground piping issue at the far end of the campus to evaluate repair work and if it could be done during this visit.

Following a catered box lunch from Panera Bread, the volunteers and their leadership reflected on giving back to the military veterans and how their work impacted the AFRH-W residents' quality of life. Both volunteers and residents were appreciative of each other's service and commitment to AFRH.



AFRH-GULFPORT

Community & Military Volunteer Ceremony

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Thank you to all our community and military volunteers for putting in countless hours at the AFRH-G. In 2018, 60 community badge volunteers gave 1,810 hours, 595 community volunteers gave 1,565 hours and 635 military volunteers gave 2,303 hours. These numbers are just staggering and we cannot thank all of our volunteers enough for giving back to the veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

Thank you also to our awesome Volunteer Coordinator Melodie Menke for the great volunteer program that she has put into place.



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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 Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi

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

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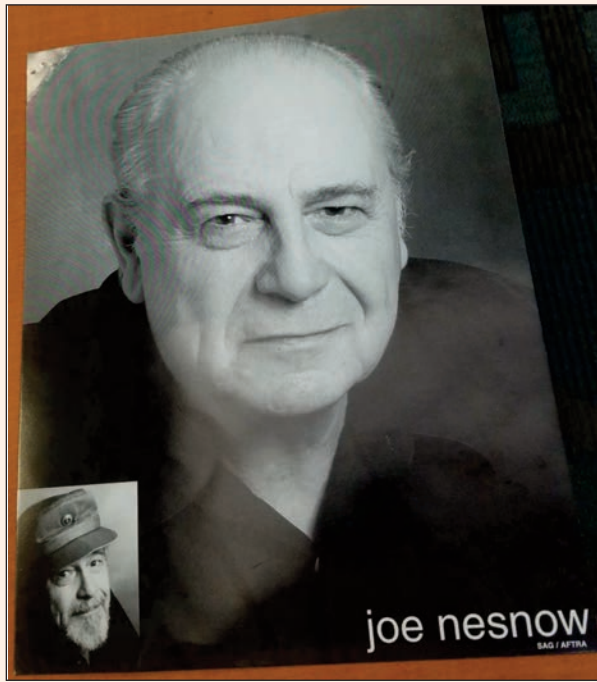
**AFRH-Gulfport and AFRH-Washington
currently have no waiting time for residency.**

A CARF-CCAC Five-Year Term of Accreditation was awarded to the Armed Forces Retirement Home.
<http://www.carf.org>



AFRH-W Resident Highlight – Joe Nesnow

As told to Christine Baldwin | Librarian
Photos by Jack Beck | Resident



Once upon a time...way back in the 1950's (prior to the outbreak of the Korean War), a young Navy man read a notice in the 'Plan of the Day,' that said "BECOME A MEMBER OF A NEW THEATRICAL TROUPE BEING FORMED TO TAKE ALL-NAVY MUSICAL SHOW TO BASES AND SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD!! NO MESS COOKING, NO MIDNIGHT FIRE WATCHES, ETC., WHILE INVOLVED." "Well", thought I, "how can I lose? Get out of work, no nasty special duties..." To make a long story short, I violated the age-old rule of the military man – NEVER volunteer! I worked my tender buns off, putting in more hours than any mess cook; but in the end, "the acting bug didn't bite – it DEVoured!" The original show never made it past the performance point – the Korean War came

along and our casts were depleted as men were taken to crew mothballed ships, as they were made ready for combat. However, as I was transferred from post to ship and back to post – wherever I could I joined a local community theater group to build up my resume: "Mr. Roberts," "Stalag 17," "Plaza Suite," "Once Upon a Mattress" and "Wait Until Dark" were among them.

Once the Korean War was over, I chose to stay in the military, knowing that the "retired" monthly paycheck would come in handy. IT HAS! I retired from the Navy in 1975 and continued in community theater. I was nominated for acting awards for "Bell, Book & Candle" and "My Three Angels" and won for "All My Sons" and "Mr. Roberts." I also appeared in San Diego's famous Old Globe Theater in their production of "That

Championship Season," which swept the Atlas Awards that year.

I then made the plunge and moved to Hollywood, where I acquired an agent and appeared as mobster Mickey Cohen in "Hollywood's Greatest Mysteries." I worked in many top television shows: "L.A. Law," "Murder, She Wrote" (twice), "Dallas" (twice), "Sisters," "General Hospital" (twice), "Highway to Heaven" (twice), and "Gabriel's Fire." I also played all sorts of vile people in different episodes of "Days of Our Lives." I co-starred or had a featured role in several TV movies: "Down, Out and Dangerous," "I Married a Centerfold," "Celebration Family," "City Killer," and "Starman". Movie appearances included "Romancing the Stone," "Thief of Hearts," and "Welcome Home, Roxy Charmichael". I am also the Admiral in the production of "At Sea" in the U.S. Navy Museum! Recently, AFRH-W showed the first movie I was in "Dogs" at their theater. Unfortunately, I will NOT be seen, at least in the U.S. in the Chinese production of "The Korean War" in which I play General George C. Marshall. I was also active in the local San Diego theatrical scene, where I appeared three times in "The Barbra Streisand Festival" among other productions. I also took a stab at directing to include "The Lion in Winter," "Stalag 17," "Toad of Toad Hall" and "Witch's Brew." Lastly, I have a one-man play "Clarence Darrow – IN DEFENSE OF THE DAMNED", based on the life of the famous lawyer; in which I received many accolades and good reviews. In fact, you may have seen my performance this past two months, as I have broken the play into four parts.

All of these wonderful accomplishments, I couldn't have done if I hadn't auditioned for the U.S. Navy's "Bell Bottoms and Belles" back in the early 1950's!



AFRH-G Resident Highlight - Earl Lee Portrey

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Earl Lee Portrey was born and raised in the center of America's heartland, Falls City, Nebraska. His father was originally a railroader but eventually became a farmer. Growing up as an only child, Earl was relied upon to help with the farming responsibilities. He lived three and a half miles from school and truly walked "uphill" to get there each day. Due to the distance of school and his farm work, he really did not have the time to play sports or be involved in any extracurricular activities.

Around 1950, he and a few friends had decided to join the Navy. They were all signed up and only needed to be sworn in. Earl ended up

being late getting to his bus to be sworn in so his Navy career never came to fruition. However after talking to a friend and seeing that he could possibly have his own boat, Earl decided to join the U.S. Coast Guard.

He was sent to boot camp at Cape May, New Jersey. His first orders were for District 9 located in Ohio. Earl was originally trained to be a gunner's mate and was sent to interesting locations throughout his Coast Guard career. From weather patrol on the East Coast to weather patrol in Hawaii, he enjoyed his career and vowed he would make the same decision to do it all over again.

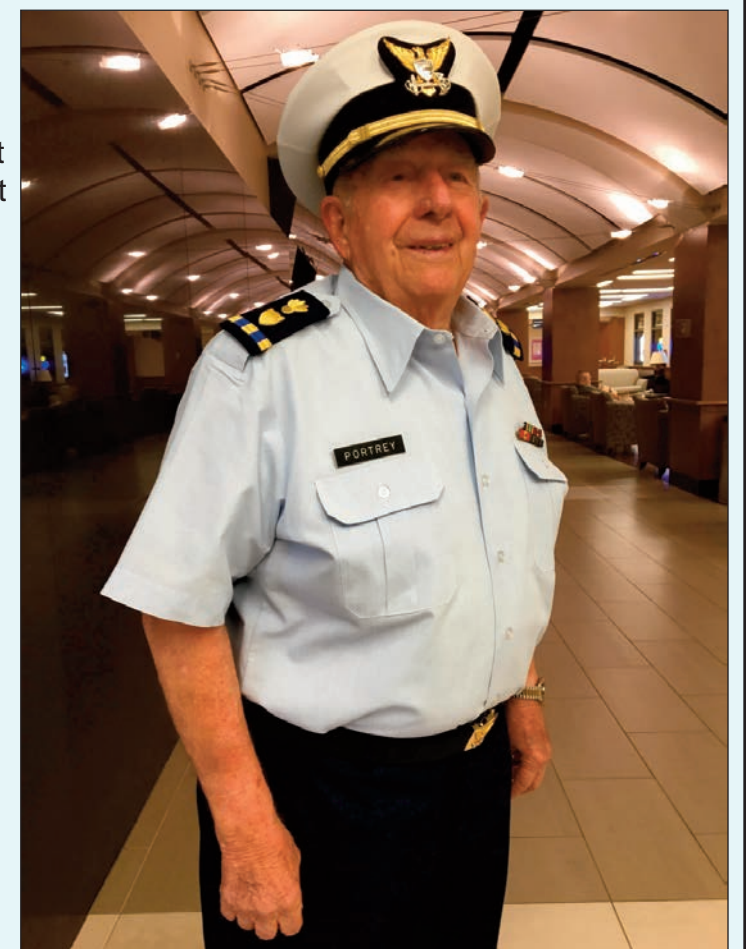
Early on in his career, Earl's friend set him up on a blind date with a young lady named Annabelle. The couple fell in love and married. They had three children, Michelle Renee, William Earl, and John Lee.

When Earl was getting to the end of his career, he had risen to the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3. He was considering trying for W-4 but did not want to have to move his

family to Washington, D.C. He made the decision to retire after 25 years of Coast Guard service. Those 25 years of service gave him some very interesting experiences and stories. Among these experiences are breaking up ice in the Hudson River, having his vessel badly cracked during weather patrol in Hawaii, and serving aboard the USS Nike on the Gulf Coast.

Upon his military retirement, he and his family were living in the New Orleans area. He decided to fix up one of the properties he owned. Before long, he decided that retired life was not for him just yet. He found a job making hydraulic panels at a company in Belle Chasse, Louisiana.

After losing Annabelle in 2009, Earl read in the newspaper about AFRH-G and decided to put his name on the list. It took about two years of being on the waiting list before he was able to move to the Gulfport Home in 2013. He finally decided he was ready for retirement. These days, he enjoys a quieter life at the Home. The greatest perk of his retirement is when he makes trips back to his home state of Nebraska to visit old friends. At the end of this month Earl will celebrate his 87th birthday. Happy Birthday, Mr. Portrey!



Miss DC group entertains AFRH veterans

Story & Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH-W Volunteer Coordinator

Residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington D.C. stood up and cheered after a spectacular volunteer performance production featuring an Italian opera, a Beethoven composition, a soulful saxophone and a breathtaking belly dancer.

"Simply amazing," one resident was heard saying to a performer right after the curtain call in the Scott Theater.

The April 6 performances at AFRH were part of the annual Miss DCs Got Talent Day (formerly Miss DC Serves Day) where local beauty pageant contestants competing to be the newest Miss DC visit veterans throughout the city. They start their day at the Children's National Medical Center and then move on to the VA Medical Center before finishing up at AFRH-W.

Reigning Miss DC 2018 Allison Farris (also a computer programmer and accomplished concert pianist) served as the Mistress of Ceremony. She opened the production by thanking AFRH for hosting the event and showing appreciation to the residents for their sacrifice and service to the country.

After about 10 different musical acts, the ladies held a warm meet-and-greet with the residents posing for photos and signing autographs.



PGA golf pro visits AFRH-W

Story & Photo by Steven Briefs | Supervisory Recreation Specialist

Peter Williamson, who is a PGA professional golfer and has played at a number of tour events including the Arnold Palmer Invitational, visited the D.C. Home on April 18. He currently lives in the Washington, D.C. area and wanted to share his experiences with our golfing residents about life on the professional tour. He answered many of our resident's questions including the best golf balls to use. He explained the difference between the traditional wood shaft and current titanium clubs and demonstrated proper hand grip and posture while swinging the club. He talked about the different types of grass used on golf courses on the professional tour and the importance of adjusting your game to that grass to ensure success. Our residents spoke of the difficulty of playing around goose droppings on our small course. Peter said even on the best courses he's had to watch out for snakes, alligators and crows that sometimes will fly down and snatch your ball off the green.

There was much interaction between our residents and Peter, sharing interesting and funny stories they've each encountered over the years playing a game they all love. Fred Layman invited Peter to play a round of golf with the residents when the course opens up. The golf pro said he would love to share that time with them.



Exercise? I thought you said extra fries

Story & Photos by Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy

Regular exercise can help curb that appetite for fries and cookies, or at the very least ease the guilt of eating the golden delicious crisps. Physical activity doesn't need to be strenuous. With a moderate amount of daily physical activity in the form of walking, biking, and some muscle-strengthening exercises, older adults can obtain significant health benefits. Stronger muscles and better cardiovascular health help reduce the risk of falls, fractured bones, and high blood pressure – in addition to improving the ability to perform routine tasks.

Inactivity increases with age. By age 75, about a third of older adults engage in no physical activity which is directly related to the loss of strength and stamina attributed to aging. By providing regular exercise classes and a 24-hour gym, we encourage

you to seek out and participate in physical activity programs, especially for those who live a sedentary lifestyle. Exercise helps maintain the ability to live independently, reduces the risk of coronary heart disease, colon cancer, and diabetes, reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression, helps control joint swelling and pain associated with arthritis, among many other positive impacts!



Meet AFRH-W Protestant chaplain, John Goodloe

Story & Photo by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs Specialist

Many residents and staff of the Armed Forces Retirement Home benefit from having Chaplain Services available on site. During this Easter Season we would like to introduce our pastors at AFRH-Washington. This issue, we feature our Protestant pastor, Chaplain John Goodloe who has served the pastoral needs of our community since 2005.

Q: Where were you born/raised?

A: I was born and raised in Washington, DC.

Q: What was your home life like as a child?

A: Of the nine (9) children born to Elsie and Robert Goodloe, I was the youngest son of four (4) boys and next to the youngest child. My father died in the summer of the year that I would turn four that October. Mother never re-married, and we in turn saw "faith" lived before us as she raised and taught her children to trust and love God and to love one another. We continue as a family to keep mother's word before us, "Children, put God first and stay together!"

Q: What did you think you were going to be when you grew up?

A: When I was in elementary school, I wanted to be a fireman who drove a hook-and-ladder truck, a mounted policeman, or a motorcycle policeman (with a side car). When I was in high school, I thought I would be a speech pathologist, because of the speech problem that I had. I was a stutterer. My life is a miracle in that I no longer stutter habitually.

Q: What influence did the military have in your life?

A: I took military science in high school. I learned much then, even before I thought about joining the military. My military training prepared me for leadership roles that I would enter into throughout my life. Though I remained in the service for only seven years, the lessons learned then have stayed with me as I continue facets of life.

Q: When and how did you receive your call to take up your vocation?

A: For many years during my childhood, I remember hearing people say to my mother and sometime to me that I was going to be a preacher when I grew up. As children we were taught the things of God at home and in the local church. The call to ministry came clearly to me one Sunday morning when I was in the Navy standing quarterdeck watch while the ship was in dry dock. The message was this, "How long halt you between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him, but if Baal, then follow him..." (1 Kings 18:21) I knew the answer and chose to follow God.

Q: What would people be surprised to learn about you?

A: My speech teacher, Mrs. Small, in elementary school said to me, "John, no one ever stutters when he or she sings. If you would practice speaking in rhythms, as if you were singing your words, you would perhaps speak without stuttering." I began singing in the glee club in elementary school. Even today I enjoy singing and listening to music, especially choral music.

Q: What are your favorite books/spiritual readings?

A: The "Bible" is my favorite book. I have also enjoyed reading the "Left Behind" series; "A Case for Christ" and "A Case for Faith"; "Knowing God"; "Revelation Unveiled"; "I know Why the Caged Bird Sings"; many other books that have as their theme "freedom from oppression and/slavery"; and, from the Harlem Renaissance period. The above are just a few of my favorites!

Q: What has been your greatest joy being on staff at AFRH-W?

A: My greatest joy has been interacting with these senior residents as they face their own specific challenges and elations during these latter years of their lives. Our responsibility as staff members is to provide for the well-being of the whole individual; and part of that "whole" is the spiritual person. I am blessed to have a hand in helping people see their purpose in life, no matter how senior they may be! If we're alive, we still have a reason for being.



From the AFRH-W Administrator



We started the month with an April Fool's joke that said the Lincoln Cottage was renting out rooms. Luckily I was informed about it, but it did garner the attention of some of the community. The rest of the month has been busy with activities. The campus came alive with spectacular blossoms on the trees and the leaves sprouting on the branches. For those fortunate to traverse the campus, there has been a beautiful display of the nature.

We hosted several VIPs this month. First, we had some staff members from the Office of Management and Budget visit our leadership and tour our campus so we could show them our capital improvement needs. Our hope is that we can increase what we can spend to improve our facilities. The SEAC, Command Sergeant Major Troxell, made a return visit and was once again pleased to spend time with residents and see our beautiful campus. And finally, we had a visit by Mr. Thomas Muir, director of Washington Headquarters Services. He was very happy to take time out of his busy day to speak to residents and tour the campus and we look forward to his leadership for us in the Pentagon.

April is also the month when we honor our volunteers for their selfless giving of their time to assist others. Later in the month, we hosted a group of physician residents from Walter Reed for an offsite, which was a great way to support those who support us so well. They had an enjoyable day with their own program which included a team building event. Lincoln Cottage also hosted an event for area party planners to show off the campus facilities that can be rented for weddings and other events.

Finally on the staff side, we were very sad to say good-bye to a fellow staff member, Sherry Lawrence, who tragically passed away due to injuries from a car accident. Sherry had worked here since 1983 and will be dearly missed by many. We also had our Employee Appreciation Breakfast to announce our Employee of the Quarter nominees to include Carol Mitchell, Shunquanna Johnson, Robin Sescoe, Karen Pereira, Tobias Hinnant and Bill Striegel, who was the winner. Congrats to all! We also awarded longevity pins to Sergeant Scott for 25 years of service and Bill Striegel and Anita Jackson for 20 years of service, among others. Finally we had a team working on a plan to improve communication and team building among our staff. As we move into the warmer days of the year, may you find joy in the blessings of our beautiful Home.

Susan Bryan



Congratulations to the D.C. Employee of the Quarter - Bill Striegel.

RIP Sherry Lawrence - 1962-2019

By Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer



We remember Sherry Artis Lawrence, a valued member of the AFRH family, who died on Thursday, April 11 from injuries sustained in a car accident earlier that week.

For 39 years Sherry was a beloved member of the AFRH family, and was close not only to the staff, but also to the residents. She was a warm, loving and caring person who shared her gifts with everyone she knew. Sherry had a way of making everyone feel accepted, acknowledged and appreciated – and took great pride in her appearance!

She joined what was then known as the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington, DC in 1983 a few years after graduating from Coolidge High School. She had many fond memories of working at AFRH, none greater than meeting Dennis A. "Dee" Lawrence, who she married on January 6, 2012. All who worked with Sherry knew that no matter the assignment, she happily accepted and charged ahead to completion.

For many years she worked in what is now resident services (formerly member services) on the resident database and assisted residents with routine daily requests. She also spent much of her career working in the public affairs office, marketing the Home to potential residents and ensuring the timely review and processing of applications. Most recently she worked as a budget analyst with the AFRH agency.

Since 2004 she has been recognized as one of the best purchase cardholders at the Home. In 2011, Sherry traveled to the newly-reopened AFRH-Gulfport to help set up their business center and provide purchase card training.

Sherry's life of excellence and devotion to her faith was recalled in a beautiful funeral service attended by hundreds of family, friends and co-workers at Galilee Baptist Church in Suitland, Md., where she was an active member.

She is survived by her husband, step-daughter, mother and step-father, three brothers and two step-sisters, along with a host of extended family members including loving aunts and uncles, cousins and friends too numerous to mention.

The Ladies Tea Party for Residents at AFRH-Washington was one of her favorite events, and Sherry helped plan it annually since its 2004 inception. In her honor the Home has renamed the event the "Sherry Lawrence Memorial Cherry Blossom Tea Party."

A whimsical dragon display

Story and Photo by Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Paulette "PK" Knorr joined the U.S. Army in 1970 after a career in teaching and later financial management. Her dragon collection started at this time with a plush, green, happy dragon with a pin from her alma mater "Slippery Rock" on it. Since she kept this in the back seat of her car, it became a brown dragon! PK continued with her collecting and is sharing it with residents; just outside the wellness clinic. One of her favorites is the large dragon with many signatures on it (from when she joined to C.I.D.) The flapping wing says it all, "When you can't dazzle 'em with brilliance – "Wing-it!"



Poetry celebration

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian
Photo by Jack Beck | Resident



To celebrate Poetry Month, a group of AFRH-W residents enjoyed refreshing rainbow sherbet, while they listened to a wide range of poetry and recitations. The afternoon started with an upbeat poem titled "The Rainbow" read by Christine Baldwin. This was followed by "The Gift of Life" written by Edgar Guest and read by Norma Rambow. Robert Webb changed things a bit by singing a poem called "Froggie Went A'Courtin'." Next, Linda Bailey read the humorous poem "Saint Peter at the Gate." To go hand in hand with the month of April, Bill Opferman narrated "Casey at the Bat." Emmy Lu Daly then chose her award winning poem "Being a Wave in World War II." Resident PK Knorr followed up with "I'll Catch the Sun" by Rod McKuen. Paul Grimes finished the official program with a heartfelt rendition of the poem "The Cremation of Sam McGee" written by Robert W. Service (a favorite of the gathering). As a follow up, Ernest Janes recited his "Ali Couplets" with the famous boxing bout between Muhammad Ali and Sonny Liston. A special thanks to all of the residents who participated, and to recreation staff members Linda Bailey, Carol Mitchell and Amanda Jensema.

Being a Wave in WWII

Story & Photo by Kayla Bennett | Art Specialist

Ms. Emmy Lu Daly won first place in the Personal Experience category at the 2019 American Legion Aux Veterans Creative Arts Show for her poem "Being a WAVE in WWII". She performed her piece at the Art Show in Bowie on March 24th and was present to sign autographs. Her work will be submitted to the National level for further judging.

Being a Wave in World War II

What was I doing?

Why was I boarding a train in St. Paul headed for New York City and Hunter College?

I had joined the WAVES and was on my way to boot camp.

I'd just turned 21, the whole country was immersed in WWII.

Everyone was involved, so why not go along?

No noble patriotism moved me.

I wanted to go to college but didn't have the money.

Knew after only a few days, this was not where I fit.

But fit I did.

Chop your hair, straighten that uniform, march for hours, salute every officer, do as you're told, obey without question.

Spend two years at a supply depot in Clearfield, Utah.

September 1945, the War is over. I am discharged in May 1946.

At last I'm free as a bird.

But I can't complain. I got much more than I gave.

The GI Bill gave me four years of college and a degree.

The Veterans Administration gives me the best medical care available and will do so until I die.

Now I am blessed to be a resident in the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

I didn't know what would come of that train ride,

but I'm glad I got on board.

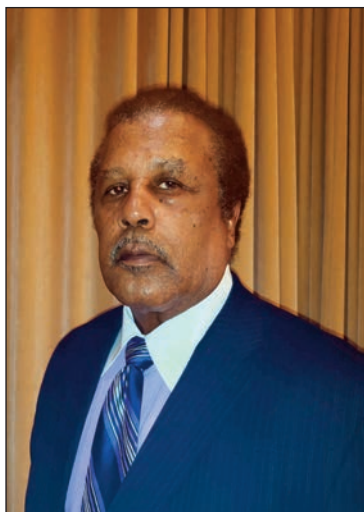
-Emmy Lu Daly

Excerpt from the book:

And Then Again...



Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



On April 1st, Esker McConnell and I paid a visit to Ward 5 in the District of Columbia to meet with city council member Kenyan R. McDuffie. That visit resulted in plans by Councilmember McDuffie and his staff to visit the Armed Forces Retirement Home for the first time. The visit will be a meet-and-greet among the councilmember, the RAC chair and staff, the AFRH-W administrator and the AFRH chief operating officer.

On April 19th, residents Frank Lawrence and Paul Armbruster met with a new veterans' group. They shared information about AFRH and collected feedback from other veterans throughout the local community.

On April 22nd, I sat down with the director of the VA Medical Center in D.C. to talk about veterans' issues and concerns and the role of AFRH in supporting the VA.

Thank you all for what you do to make our Home a safe haven and a place of comfort for our military veteran brothers and sisters.

Billy Ray White



From the AFRH-G Administrator



I hope all residents and employees had a very Happy Easter. This month of April we have been enjoying the cool mornings and warm days along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Spring is definitely here because flowers are blooming, the grass is green and the birds are chirping.

This month we held our Second Quarter Employee All Hands Meeting where a new Employee of the Quarter was announced. I would like to congratulate Kimberly "Lisa" Jimenez for receiving the Employee of the Quarter. Lisa is always looking for new, fun and creative ways to engage both residents and staff in different celebrations such as Christmas and Nurses' Week. Lisa truly lives and walks by her popular phrase "team work makes the dream work." Lisa is also known for her dedication towards trying to decrease residents' anxieties by engaging the residents in relaxing activities such as coloring, painting, singing, dancing, reading to them, and walking with the residents on the Boardwalk. Ms. Jimenez's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon herself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Congratulations also to the employees who received honorable mention awards: Sean Campbell, Hue Snowden, and Natasha Weston.

I have just been astounded at the loyalty, dedication, and enthusiasm, displayed by all of the employees here and I am extremely proud to be a part of the team at AFRH-Gulfport. Thank you to all the residents and employees for making this HOME for so many veterans.

On April 26 we bid farewell to our Volunteer Coordinator Melodie Menke. I would like to personally thank Melodie for her dedication and service to the Gulfport Home and the Washington D.C. Home-she has worked at both. Melodie has been an incredible asset to AFRH and we will miss her tremendously. Enjoy the next chapter in life and your retirement Melodie! Thank you for celebrating all the volunteers who dedicate their time to support the veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport and for recognizing all the resident volunteers who put in countless hours working, even though they are retired. We appreciate all of the resident volunteers and all who come to volunteer from out in the community and in the military. We cannot thank you enough for your time.

I would like to share my appreciation for your cooperation during the full evacuation drill on April 12. It is a huge undertaking, and the staff takes this and all drills seriously because each one is a learning and teaching experience for all of us. This leads me to quote, "Prepare and prevent, instead of repair and repent."

Jeff Eads



Congratulations to the Gulfport Employee of the Quarter - Kimberly "Lisa" Jimenez.

One lucky person!

By Melodie Menke | Volunteer Coordinator AFRH-G

When people find out where I work, many of the reactions are the same, they pull a concerned face and say "I would love to come out and sit with these elderly residents." My response is always the same - "You'll have to find them first- they are a busy group!"

The AFRH-G is a premier retirement oasis on the Gulf of Mexico. The enlisted veterans that choose to live here are a lively group of intelligent individuals that are enjoying the camaraderie and fellowship of their well-earned retirements.

They demand a high quality of services and over-the-top customer service for what they pay for, but they also are willing to lend a hand to volunteer to ensure that all runs smoothly. I have had the honor to work at AFRH-Gulfport and Washington DC as their volunteer coordinator for over seven years. I truly am one lucky person.

As I leave for my own retirement in North Carolina, I carry their hard-earned words of wisdom they have graciously passed on to me through the years. "Don't neglect your family- hug them daily"; "Work harder and play harder"; "A negative attitude is easy- try harder - be the one with a positive attitude"; and, my favorite considering my job "Never volunteer for anything!"

It has been my privilege to work for these veteran men and women who wore the cloth of our nation. It has been an honor to call them friends.

Fair Winds and Following Seas to all.

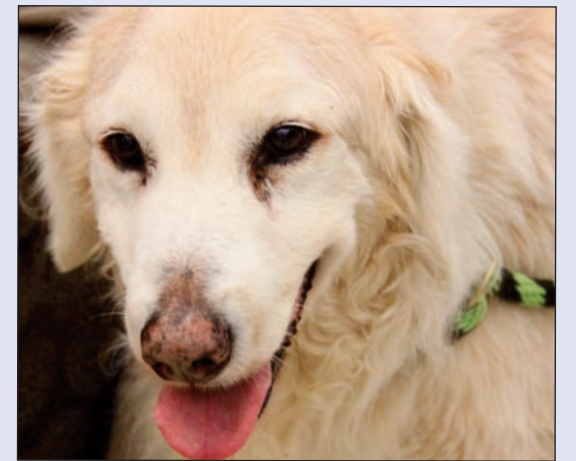


Pet therapy

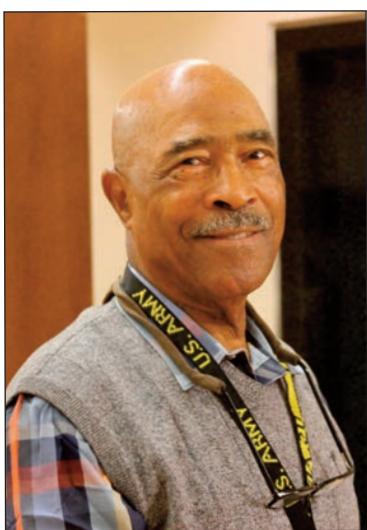
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Thank you to Dick Stanford and his pet therapy dog, Mickey Mouse, for always visiting the AFRH-G and for bringing so many smiles. We always look forward to your visits and we love you and Mickey!

"A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself."- Josh Billings



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



April is a very busy month. Every day is a holiday of something. Beginning with April Fool's Day on the 1st to National Military Brats Day on the 30th. There is also National Tax Day that occurs on the 15th. This is the day that all Americans are called upon to pay their fair share of the cost of the freedoms and liberties we enjoy and take for granted here in this great country. The privilege to indulge in these freedoms was won and secured by our indomitable military many times over. The men and women in the Armed Forces Retirement Home are part of the continuing legacy of freedom fighters that represent this country around the world. We, the residents of the Gulfport

Home, are proud to be a part of that enduring heritage.

April is also the month in which we recognize volunteerism. People who see a need and fill the gap. When you think about it, we are all volunteers. At some time in the past, Uncle Sam called and we answered. Over the past couple of months I have written about what is needed to enjoy our stay here at Armed Forces Retirement Home. We are ideally suited to help in the recruitment of new residents because no one knows the home better than us who live here.

When we visit friends and relatives in communities across the country or just exchange

greetings with other veterans, we should include information about the home and the benefits of living here. We carry the information that many veterans need to make a decision about where they choose to reside in the future. Let's all do our part to help.

Remember the word of the day is "POPULATION."

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-Washington

Greenbelt Dog Training Show

Story & Photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist



Some residents have said that the Armed Forces Retirement Home has "gone to the dogs"! When the members of the Greenbelt Dog Training came to the Scott Community Center you would have thought that too. There were dogs of all sizes, colors and breeds. In total there were ten dogs, and of course their owners, who were here to put on a show for the residents. It began with a demonstration of their agility course and training. They had to go up and down a ramp and walk across a balance beam, run through a tunnel, leap through a hoop, and do zig-zags through poles. After that we were taught the secrets of how to train your dog. The secret is that you must train the owner first to listen to commands. Once they know the commands then they can begin to train their dogs to know the commands. They ended the program with what they call "freestyle dog dancing" where the owner and their pooch dance. It was quite interesting to watch. The dogs were rolling over, jumping through their owners' arms, going between their legs, and even doing the conga! It was a sight to see for those who attended. Alli Lee is the owner and trainer and has over 35 years of teaching experience. The residents of AFRH look forward to when they return!



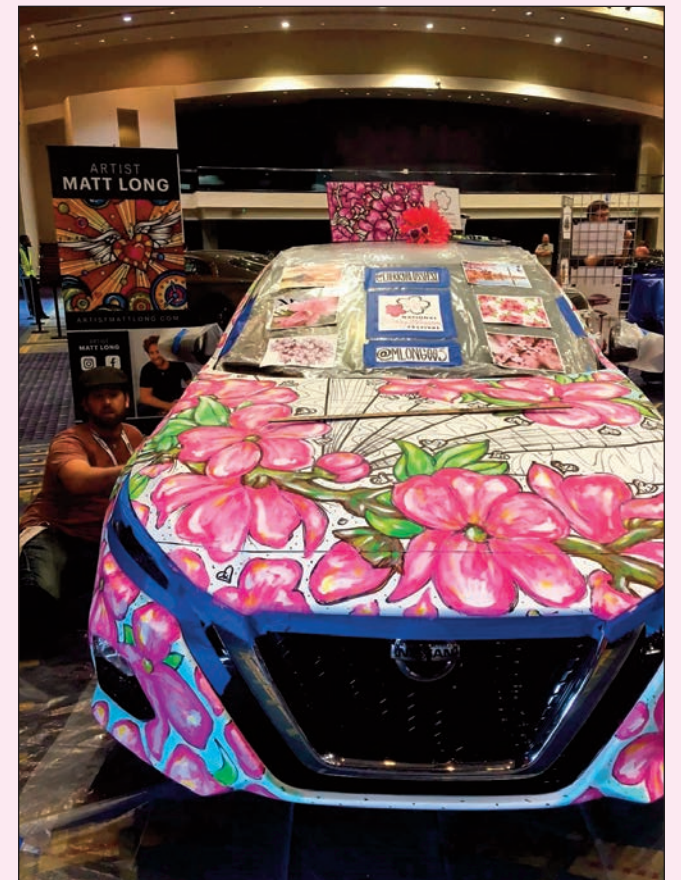
DC Auto Show

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

Photos by Amanda Jensema & Carol Mitchell | Recreation

AFRH-W residents attended the 2019 Washington Auto Show at the D.C. Convention Center on April 10. Tickets were donated by the Fenwick Foundation. This is an event that the residents look forward to every year. We ate lunch first before perusing through all the cars. First up were the American-made cars. We were all surprised when we first entered as we saw many vehicles painted an interesting shade of neon green, aptly named "Shock." There was a life-sized Chevy Silverado that was made completely out of Legos! That was a sight to see! We are also able to walk through a Metro Bus which was inside and afterwards spin a wheel for prizes such as cup cozies, flip flops, flash lights, and more. Once seeing all the Fords, GMCs, Rams, Chevrolets, and other brands we ventured to the luxury floor where we saw Lamborghinis, Ferraris, Maseratis, Rolls Royces, as well as cars as art. There was one artist painting a vehicle to prepare it for the Cherry Blossom Parade. It was about 75% complete and it looked amazing. Once we finished there we went to the large room where they had the international cars, as well as two tracks. A few employees and residents took a ride in a Land Rover to see how it handles on the off-road track, as well as the Jaguar's handling ability to go from zero to and 60 and vice versa. And also how it smoothly took

curves. I did not ride in the cars, but I was told the Jaguar was a smooth ride. We would like to once again thank the Fenwick Foundation for donating the tickets for the auto show and we look forward to attending again next year!



SawStop

Story & Photo by Kayla Bennett | Art Specialist



The AFRH-W Wood Shop has a new piece of safety equipment that is being used to produce beautiful pieces of art. For the year of 2019 AFRH-W's art department has made a commitment to making all art studios more safe and secure for all residents.

A SawStop safety table saw was purchased in November of 2018 and it is finally up and running for our residents to use. According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, there is a table saw injury every nine minutes, and ten amputations every day in the United States. Even the most safety-conscious woodworkers are at risk of an accident. When an accident happens, the consequences are life-changing. SawStop saws have saved thousands of fingers. This piece of equipment is making our hobby areas safer and more efficient. Resident Jim Diamond has graciously provided the wood shop with the funding to produce an outfeed table created by Renato Julian to accompany our new saw. These pieces of equipment are helping make our spaces more effective and safe.

Craft Month

Story & Photos by Kayla Bennett | Art Specialist

On March 22, 2019 staff members Linda Bailey and Kayla Bennett kicked off craft month with a leather working pop up craft class. The residents created key rings, badge holders and coin purses. Residents learned how to use a variety of tools including punches, hammers, metal stamps and rivet setters. To enhance the beauty of our leather projects residents used metal Crafftool stamps. These were used to create original designs and embellishing for each piece. We used a wood or rawhide mallet head to strike the top of the stamp to obtain its impression in the leather then stained the natural leather for a nice finish. Each resident left the class with a leather piece to take home.



RT National Library Month Booth

By Carol Mitchell | AFRH-W Recreation Therapy

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident



Recreation Therapy Assistant Marine Robbins our (a technology wizard), brochures/pamphlets, and to top it off, book-reading excerpts from residents Paul Ambruster and Paulette Knor. Stop by your local AFRH-W Library today!

AFRH-W has a beautiful full-service library which is maintained by our very own Librarian Christine Baldwin. Recreation Therapy and Christine, in honor of National Library Month, hosted an educational booth for the residents of the Home. The event was held in the Scott Community Center lobby area on April 3rd and had a variety of areas to help promote the benefits of the library. Some of the areas included: a free book and talking books table, a demonstration by Christine on the usage of a reader machine to enlarge print on books, papers, and magazines, a computer and cell phone demonstration by



AFRH-Gulfport

The AFRH-G walking and biking track – a path to your enjoyment and health

Story & Photos by Jack Horsley | Resident



Get out and smell the roses! AFRH-G has a walking/biking circular track of 9/10 of a mile that goes around the 45-acre property. Since we have 24/7 security it is safe to walk at all hours of the day and night. It is beautifully lit up at night until the sun comes up the next morning. It is so much more than a path for walkers, runners, bikers and personal mobility devices. It contains an eclectic environment that will enchant you with every foot you travel and has an osmosis effect on all your senses. Enjoy all you hear, see, smell and feel. Experience the cycle of the seasons throughout the year with all that nature has to offer. Admire the flowers, trees, grass and the magnificently landscaped property. Just the beauty of the colors on the grounds of AFRH-G makes it worth it to take a walk or a ride on one of our three-wheel bicycles – which are available to all residents.

Let's not forget the creatures of all kinds (mostly good and beneficial): birds, squirrels, butterflies, lizards, ladybugs, etc. There are plenty of benches and a couple of covered swings that face the Gulf of Mexico that you can sit on and enjoy the sea-breeze and life.

You can hear chirps, whistles, trains and the ocean. The smell of spring is in the air along with the ocean breeze. When you go out to enjoy the walking/biking path, don't forget to wave to our guard gate as you pass by.



Fruit picking on the grounds of AFRH-G

Story & Photo by LaRoy Brisco | Facilities Contracting Officer Representative

Fruit picking is a seasonal activity that occurs during the spring at AFRH-G with fruit growing wild or being cultivated on the grounds. This year's harvest did not disappoint. Carl Hardy and Alan Kosalko made time to pick Japanese Plums (Loquats) for Ms. Evelyn A. Whittaker who planted the tree upon her return from Washington D.C. in 2010, after Hurricane Katrina.



Right up our alley

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant
Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

From gutter balls to turkeys, our "Spare Time Bowling" group has it all. Come join this fun bunch on Tuesdays at 1330 in the Bowling Center at AFRH-G. Who knows? You may even sneak in a little exercise!



Armor Bearers "Battle of the Forces" & Celebrity Softball Clash

Story & Photos by Jack Horsley | Resident

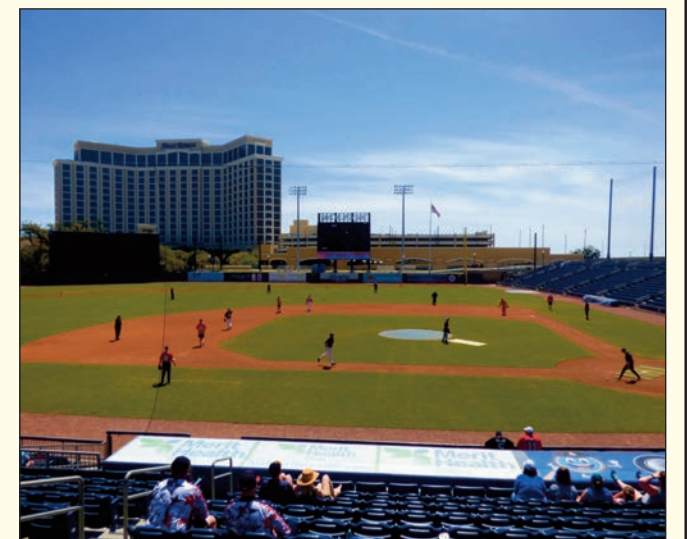


Gulfport residents enjoyed a trip to MGM Park in Biloxi, Mississippi to see a series of slow pitch softball games which were played by all branches of the military and first responders. The purpose of these games was to support and help low income active duty and disabled veterans get housing. This local event was held specifically to help a local veteran, who lost his house due to a fire.

The main event consisted of cheers, jeers and many laughable shenanigans. The participants were a mix of veterans, well-known retired sports celebrities and local personalities.

The big story here was a community came together to help a veteran. It's like Mickey and Judy organizing a barn dance to save the farm or Lassie saving the day, etc. No matter how you say it, the outcome was the same...."Game On!" Let's do something to help this veteran get a house. Allow me to say "Celebrity Softball Clash" sent the ball out of the park, BIG TIME!

Oh, the final score – 100% for the veteran; the only score that mattered.



Home Tweet Home

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

With spring spreading it's warmth in the south it was a perfect time for Lois Hogan to provide our dear feathered friends with three beautiful, unique and fun bird houses. A few months back the family gave these to Lois to paint. With a steady hand, a song in her heart and two months of painting time, she has been quite productive. Like all her art works, each painting is a delight to view and enjoy. If you look closely you can almost see the "house wren" peeking out their front door.

Ms. Lois started painting when she was in her 90's and has been painting for over seven years. What an amazing art adventure she has been on. Thank you Ms. Lois for sharing your art with us. Your artwork puts a smile on all who get to see them.



GULFPORT

Easter brings “hoppy” memories!

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

On April 17, 2019, the Easter Bunny brought “hoppy” memories with visits to each resident in healthcare to deliver spring treat bags. “Here Comes Peter Cottontail” created smiles, grins, and photo opportunities to capture the moment. On Thursday, April 18, residents participated in the annual Easter Service with the Chaplains in the Valor Piano Lounge. Pastor Gibson and Father Uko shared bible verses, inspirational words, and the meaning of the season. Sending “Hoppy Memories” to all for a blessed and blooming spring season.



WASHINGTON

Girl Scouts brighten AFRH-W with cookies and smiles

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH-W Volunteer Coordinator

Armed with an assortment of America’s favorite and most popular sweet treats, a local Girl Scout troop stopped by the Armed Forces Retirement Home spreading smiles, cheer and happiness.

Ten girls decked out in their colorful uniforms greeted AFRH residents as they walked in and out of the Scott dining facility offering boxes of Samoas, Tagalongs, Thin Mints and Lemon Smiles, just to name a few.

“I think this is a great way to give back to our veterans. It’s good for the girls,” one troop leader commented.

Residents were delighted at the variety of cookies on display and took their time making their selections.

The Girl Scout volunteers were star struck at the arrival of Miss DC 2018 Allison Farris who showed up for the annual Miss DCs Got Talent at AFRH. Farris jumped at the opportunity to assist the girls in serving AFRH residents the cookie treats of their choice.

In a nice showing of team spirit and appreciation for military veterans, the scouts, leaders and the Miss DC group all posed for photos with AFRH residents.

