



AFRH-WASHINGTON

Veterans Day at AFRH-W

By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs
Photos by Frank Lawrence, Resident

Residents of AFRH-W, were honored to have so many visitors and guests on the campus for Veterans Day. Their day began with WGTS Radio's live broadcast from the Hall of Honors. 91.9 FM interviewed Residents and staff, and handed out gift bags. They also provided a brass band, which serenaded the audience with patriotic tunes.

As if that weren't enough, the Omega Psi Phi fraternity, in conjunction with the Riverdale Lady Crusaders basketball team, played Bingo with Residents. After the winners were announced, and claimed their prizes, they all enjoyed cake and punch in the Community Center.

Col. Jacqueline Chando, Commander of the Public Health Command-Atlantic, of Fort Meade, MD., brought her staff and donated many gifts for Residents to enjoy, which will enhance their recreation therapy. Col. Chando and her staff also enjoyed a tour provided by Resident Dave Pauling.

The wreath laying ceremony began at 11:11 a.m. The posting of the colors was carried out by Howard University Army ROTC. Chaplain Goodloe offered the invocation, and Acting Administrator Sheila Abarr provided a warm welcome and thanks. Residents Russell Smith (CSM-R) and Dr. Linda Hardy (CMDCM-R) shared remarks about their service and the occasion.

Tammi Lambert from the DC Mayor's Office and John Mein from the Office of the City Administrator brought 29 students from the group, Youth Creating Change, who pleased Residents with their thoughtful conversation. They promised to visit again.

Members of Zeta Phi Beta had a karaoke party and ice cream social with Residents after the ceremony concluded. The Knights of Columbus visited the upper levels of care Residents and also brought in ice cream.

We appreciate all of our visitors and the warm sentiments, time and effort you gave to brighten the day of many of our Nation's most heroic men and women.



WGTS FM 91.9, interviewed Resident Norma Rambo (WWII Marine) about her service, live on the air, in the Hall of Honors.



Acting Administrator Sheila Abarr and Residents Russell Smith and Linda Hardy place the ceremonial wreath at the flagpole.



Residents, staff, family and guests gather outside the Scott Building to honor Veterans.

AFRH-GULFPORT

Thank You Veterans – Happy Veterans Day



By Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs
On Veterans Day the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport hosted a ceremony and open house in celebration of our veterans. A very special thank you goes out to all who participated in making this a fantastic event including the Patriot Guard Motorcycles, H.O.G. Pensacola Motorcycles,

Harrison County Sheriff's Helicopter Crew and Department, U.S. Coast Guard, Gulfport High School Band, Picayune High School ROTC, Guest Speaker Brigadier General Joe Spraggins, USAF/USANG Retired, Gulfport Police & Fire Department, Biloxi Police Department, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, NCBC, AMR, Team Fusion Robotics, and Lynn Meadows Musical Tribute – "WINGS". This event could not have been possible without all those who participated to honor our Veterans. Thank you to our acting Administrator, Shaun Servais, Frank Bermudez, Pastor Michael Gibson, the Dining Crew, the Recreation Department and our Lead Recreation Specialist, Sean Campbell, for doing such an exceptional job in putting all this together. It was absolutely a day to remember!

Veterans Day is celebrated each year to honor and to ensure veterans know that we deeply appreciate the sacrifices they have made in their lives to keep our country free.

Although some may think Veterans Day is just a chance to enjoy an extra day off from school or work, remember its true purpose by acknowledging the men and women who have served in our armed forces. This includes the members of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and the Coast Guard.

Over the years people often believe that Memorial Day and Veterans Day are celebrated for the same reason. There is however a slight but important difference between the two. While both honor our military personnel, Memorial Day is a day to remember and pay respect to all the men and women that died serving our country in a war, while Veterans Day is to celebrate and to thank the living veterans for dedicated and loyal service to our country.

This Veterans Day we honor our veterans and express our gratitude to the brave men and women who have sacrificed everything to make this world a safer place for the rest of us. We cannot thank you enough for serving our country and protecting our freedoms.



D.C. Breland wore his patriotic hat and shirt in celebration of Veterans Day.



The US Coast Guard and a Harrison County Sheriff's helicopter landed on the front lawn of AFRH.



Marion Wolke, Mike Swickerath, & Marion Ritchie enjoyed the day.



Anne Whittaker received a card given to Residents by local schools.



Residents and guests attended the ceremony & open house.

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AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988 Web site: www.AFRH.gov Email: sheila.abarr@AFRH.gov

Sheila Abarr - AFRH Public Affairs Officer
Rebecca Newton - AFRH-W Public Affairs
Sherry Lawrence - AFRH-W Public Affairs
Becki Zschiedrich - AFRH-G 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 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 be incapable of earning a livelihood because of 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 incapable of earning a livelihood because of 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, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400. Visit us on the web at: <http://www.AFRH.gov>

ARMY NAVY AIR FORCE MARINE CORPS COAST GUARD

AFRH-Gulfport waiting time for residency is
27-29 months from the date of application approval

AFRH-Washington has no waiting time for residency



The Joint Commission
www.jointcommission.org



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

AFRH-G Veteran Highlight



By Lori Kerns,
AFRH-G Librarian

Ronald Washington was born on July 15, 1947 in St. Louis, MO but was raised in the Robert Taylor Projects, located in the South Side of Chicago, IL. He is the oldest child of thirteen children born to a laborer and nurse's aide (now called CNA). Throughout his mother's career she changed jobs but always stayed in the healthcare field. Ronald enjoyed music as a child and eventually taught himself how to play the saxophone. He attended DuSable High School but did not end up graduating.

However, he went on to attain his GED.

In 1968, he decided to join the Army because he felt that it was the right thing to do. He was sent to Vietnam for eighteen months where he fought as a combat soldier with the 4th Infantry Division. During his time there, he was grazed by a bullet and wounded by shrapnel. For this, he received an Army Commendation with a V. He came back home in 1970 when he began dealing with what is now known as PTSD. He sought treatment from the V. A. that lasted about four to five years.

After his release from the V. A. around 1975, he decided to rejoin the military but chose the Navy this time around. He was designated as a torpedoman, working as maintenance on weapons. His Navy career started in California. While there, he suffered a heart attack and was put on limited duty. After his recovery, he was sent to Hawaii where he suffered another heart

attack. He only had two more years before he could retire. He was fortunate enough to have two men that were instrumental in helping him finish out his career. LT Washington, now a law professor, and CW-04 Johnny "J.J." Jones both helped him work until his retirement. He still keeps in touch with both men. Finally retiring with 20 years of service, Ronald received a Navy Commendation Medal, a Navy Achievement Medal, an Air Medal, and the Purple Heart (for his wound in Vietnam).

Once he retired, he began working at a law firm as a paralegal. He worked about a year and a half and decided to change careers to work at Neiman Marcus selling suits. When he went in for his interview there, the manager was skeptical at first but upon questioning him about clothing she realized how much he knew. Ronald has always had an affinity for clothing. Unfortunately, he had to leave his job with Neiman Marcus to start selling cars because he began having heart trouble again. Throughout his adult life, he's suffered from many medical issues such as emphysema, congestive heart failure, and parathyroid cancer. He believes these issues are all tied to the Agent Orange he was exposed to during his time in Vietnam. Because of his health concerns, he was told to retire for good.

When he was younger, Ronald had attended Chicago State University where he earned an Associate of Arts in business and began working on his Bachelor of Arts in music. He played the saxophone and clarinet. He eventually joined a band organization called New Horizons. This organization is for musicians over 50 that meet once a week to put on jams and concerts and march in parades. This international program has even put out albums.

Around 1975, Ronald had gotten married. He and his wife had two children, a boy and a girl. Because his wife was a school teacher who wanted tenure, it was too difficult for her to travel with him. The separation was hard on their marriage so they decided to divorce in 1996. His son now

shares his passion for music and has become an accomplished classical musician playing all over the world. He also teaches music to intercity children.

Unsure of how he found out about AFRH, Ronald had been looking to live at the home before Hurricane Katrina. At the time, he really did not want to live in Mississippi. But after Katrina, he decided that Chicago was getting too cold and finally made the move.

When most people at AFRH-G hear Ronald Washington, they immediately think of his creative and colorful paintings. His artwork is displayed throughout the home. It can be found in the Art Gallery, the bank, and even in the guest suites. He was also featured in the newspaper and TV for donating a painting to a boy who went to visit the troops. He never painted before coming to AFRH-G but has found that is relaxing for him. He likes to stay up at night to paint so that he can sleep while he is in the kidney dialysis chair. Besides painting, he enjoys going to the gun range where he shoots pistols and rifles. He also enjoys listening to his iPod that has about 700 songs with a wide variety of music, especially jazz.

When asked what he enjoys about living at AFRH-G, Ronald said, "I'm here living the good life." He said that when he was a child, he didn't want to be old, poor, and sick. So he knew to save money his whole life. Now he has everything he wants, needs, or desires right where he is. We're so glad he enjoys living here since we enjoy his great personality and his beautiful artwork.



Ron displays some of his art work in the Art Display Room at AFRH-G.

AFRH-W Veteran Highlight

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian



Richard Baker (PFC) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania July 16, 1921. He joined the Army August 13, 1942 at 21 years of age and his initial assignment was the 4th Infantry District, 12th Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Company M. He spent the first year and a half in the states training for combat. Most of that time was in Camp Gordon Florida, Camp Wheeler, Georgia and Fort Dix, New Jersey.

He left the port of New York on January 18, 1944 on the transport ship "George Washington", and arrived in Liverpool, England 11 days later. He was later transferred to

Plymouth, England where he spent the next six months training for the invasion.

The invasion of Normandy was supposed to take place on June 5, but the weather was too bad. He landed and arrived at Utah Beach on D-Day (June 6, 1944). The weather was still very bad. Many of the men were sea-sick, cold and wet. Higgins Landing Craft carried 30 men, and the Navy dropped them several miles from where we were supposed to land. Their leader was Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who had decided the war would start right where they had landed.

Their objective was to link up with the 101st Airborne Division, and secure the Port of Cherbourg, so that supplies could be shipped into France. The assault on Utah Beach was relatively easy compared to Omaha Beach. His unit quickly found themselves in a struggle to stay alive with the Germans as they fought

day and night throughout the hedgerows to take the Port of Cherbourg. By the time the port was taken on June 25, the 4th Division lost over 5,000 men (killed or wounded). On June 11th, Richard was one of those of those wounded. He was out of the battle for a couple of weeks, and then sent back to the 4th Division again and wounded for a second time on August 7th.

On August 25th, he was with the first division to enter Paris. The German Army had already retreated except for a few snipers. The men, women, and children showered troops with hand baked goodies, kisses, ribbons, and wine. It was a jubilant day for the men of the 4th division. They spent the night in a park near the Notre Dame Cathedral. The MPs had a hard time keeping all the men in town. The next day, they were on the go again and continued their pursuit for the German Army across France and Belgium.

In November 1944, and into December, they fought in the Hurtgen Forest. Fighting throughout the bloody forest, there was a tree top explosion that created collateral damage. The grounds were frozen so they couldn't dig underground for protection. Snow also covered booby traps and mines so they couldn't tell where they were. Bitter and cold they lacked proper footwear, and they ended up with frostbite on their feet. The 12th Regiment position became known as "Purple Heart Hollow" and "Death Valley" which were derived from the bitter bloody struggle in the gloomy Hurtgen Forest. By December 7, 1944, the 12th Infantry Regiment had accomplished its mission, and cleared its portion of the Hurtgen Forest. They were then sent to a quiet sector in Luxembourg to rest and rebuild their strength.

After Hurtgen, Luxembourg was like heaven. Richard was in a warm and dry house where there were hot showers and good food. The men rested and enjoyed the local Inn, but the rest and relaxation was not destined for long. For the epic defense of Luxembourg, the 12th Infantry Regiment was

awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation.

December 16, 1944 The Battle of the Bulge began, and ended January 25, 1945. Three powerful German armies plunged headlong into the rugged mountains and dense forests of the Ardennes determined to break the American line of defense, and trap the allied forces in Belgium and Luxembourg. They met fierce opposition the minute they engaged the thinly spread American line and paid a heavy price for every inch of the ground gained. The battle raged for three consecutive days until powerful allied reinforcements arrived to join the fighting and keep the Germans from breaking through. The fighting continued for four weeks in bitter cold and snow, and all the Germans could accomplish was to put a small bulge in the line. At the end, the line held firm and the Germans suffered a terrible loss of men, tanks, and planes. 500,000 Germans lost their lives trying to win the war.

The 4th Infantry Division continued to fight relentlessly until the Germans were brought to their knees and the war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945. The eleven months of battle took its toll on the 4th ID. They had 35,545 total casualties both killed and wounded.

Richard is now at AFRH-W.



Richard today at AFRH-W being interviewed on Veterans Day.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”
-Winnie the Pooh

doubt that AFRH will continue to experience success, and I will sincerely miss everyone. As we enter this holiday season, I wish each of you a wonderful time with friends, family and loved ones. Happy Holidays!

Steve McManus

Considering this will be one of my last Communicator articles, I want each of you to know I have enjoyed our time together and the many laughs we have shared. Throughout the past decade, we have worked diligently as an Agency committed to excellence for over one hundred years. It has truly been my honor, and privilege to serve you; the Residents and staff. Even when I am at home, I am thinking of AFRH, and that will never change.

I have recently been reflecting on the many joys and pains we have endured together, over the years. We made it through two natural disasters: 2005’s Hurricane Katrina in Gulfport and 2011’s earthquake

in DC. We stood together to pick up the pieces then, and that remains true even today. Our Agency is stronger now, than it has ever been before.

So much has happened just this year, alone. With our significant loss in fines and forfeitures we have worked hard with the Department of Defense to keep the Trust Fund solvent. To that end, exciting things are on the horizon for AFRH-W, as we continue to press forward with plans for unutilized land on the property. We will soon see, not only economic growth, but will also bridge the gap with residents of the local community.

In Gulfport, we built a new nursing station in the Assisted Living, Allegiance Hall and added a new nursing intercom call system with LED lights to the upper levels of care. We have completed the hiring process for Medical Officer and Wellness Center Manager at both campuses, as well as Chief Medical Officer in DC. Soon we will have a new Administrator in Gulfport, and a new person taking over my role; leading the Agency into its bright future.

My hope is that you will all continue to work with the leadership of this Agency to keep AFRH at the forefront of service to you, America’s greatest heroes. I have no



Creative Minds International Public Charter School held its Ribbon-cutting Ceremony at the AFRH-W North Sherman Building. The school signed a 10-year lease to use a portion of the Sherman building. This is just one of the plans we have to utilize the land on the property in D.C.

Telling Lincoln’s story

By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

Notable author Elizabeth Smith Brownstein recently visited AFRH-W, to share her insight on the life of President Lincoln. Mrs. Brownstein has written two books, “If This House Could Talk: Historic Homes, Extraordinary Americans” and “Lincoln’s other White House: The Untold Story of the Man and His Presidency.” The latter, focuses on President Lincoln’s Cottage, which sits on the AFRH-W campus.

This was not the author’s first visit to the home. She came a decade ago, and enjoyed her time with Residents. She contacted Recreation Supervisor Laura Fogarty to arrange another visit. The audience was wowed by her masterful piano renditions of music from the Lincoln era. She played six pieces; from waltzes to patriotic music.

Residents were extremely appreciative, and moved by this special visit. After the presentation, Mrs. Brownstein took the time to answer questions. Her works can be purchased at President Lincoln’s Cottage. A special thanks to Ray Anderson, who loaned the audio equipment for Mrs. Brownstein and Rick Walk who helped set up for the program.



Elizabeth Smith Brownstein played piano renditions of music from the Lincoln era.



After the presentation, Mrs. Brownstein took the time to answer questions.

Just do it!

By Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs

Rick Eyman was born March 31, 1946 in Gary, Indiana and raised in Lorraine, Ohio. He decided to join the Air Force when he was a young man searching for his destiny (back in the day they called it spinning the wheels). Rick wanted adventure and unlimited opportunity. He said the Air Force taught him tolerance. He believed even during the worst of times, it would get better and it molded you into a person who is resourceful. He never ever heard anyone in the Air Force say “it’s not my job”. Rick expressed, “We were a team in the Air Force. It was my responsibility to identify problems and not just walk away. I think veterans stand in much higher esteem.”

After Rick retired as a Master Sargent E-7 from the Air Force he was hired as a production supervisor, which conducted overhauls on KC135’s and C130 cargo planes for all the services. He worked for this company for ten years and then started as an interior engineer for Continental Airlines. He then went on to be the creator and manager of The Donut Factory in Columbus, MS. This position inspired him to get up at 1:00 in the morning and make donuts for three years.

When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Rick being a single father to two kids, decided to move to Ocean Springs, Mississippi to buy, restore, and re-sell houses. He did this for eight years. He found out about the Armed Forces Retirement Home through a friend while it was still under construction. He put in an application and moved in 2 years after it re-opened.

He likes to work in the wood shop at AFRH and he just restored an old fashioned baby highchair. Because Rick is mechanically inclined he decided to start working in the bike shop in 2013, where he works five days a week. AFRH offers around 20 trikes for Residents to use. Residents can use the bikes, which are located in the east part of the parking garage near the front entrance. There are about 50 Residents that ride the bikes regularly. Besides inspecting, cleaning, lubricating, repairing, and keeping them safe, Rick also puts reflectors and horns on the bicycles. He also started repainting the bikes, yellow, blue, black, and red. The bikes are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

AFRH has taken very good care of him by keeping him safe, healthy, and energized by allowing him to have the opportunity to be involved in so many activities. Rick would like to start painting in the art room if he could only find the time. “I marvel at the creativity of the residents that live here. I was so proud to see their art work hung up at Keesler Hospital”, Rick declared.

When Rick moved into AFRH-G his sponsor was Bill Allen. Bill set the stage of how to be a good Resident and take advantage of the opportunities here. Bill Allen’s advice to Rick was, “You can finish your meal and go sit in your room on a chair or you can stay active, the choice is yours.” So Rick started off volunteering to sponsor new Residents. He has sponsored over 30 new Residents and helped them with every aspect of their move. “The most rewarding thing about being a sponsor is that when the new Resident checks in, their transition is smooth, almost flawless, but most importantly they have the best information possible,” Rick revealed.

Rick said his favorite things about AFRH are the happy people and the chili bean soup that is served in the Dining Hall. He said, “AFRH has the best employees I’ve ever seen anywhere. The facility is marvelous and the amenities are great. I’m living in paradise. I stand on my balcony and overlook the Gulf of Mexico.”

He thinks it is important for the Residents to stay active and get out and ride a bike. “Just do it! You’re never too old; it’s never too hot, or too cold. It’s a great form of staying in shape and enjoying the 47 acres on this safe property.” Rick performs repairs on personal bikes owned by the Residents, and also works on walkers. Rick added that his focus in life is performing random acts of kindness and doing for others. “Take the high road and be positive. Dance in the rain. Be all you can be. You go around once in life and if it’s worth doing, then do it right.”



You can find Rick Eyman most days in the bike shop (pictured above) located just outside of the Tower C elevators in the parking garage.

From the AFRH-W Administrator



I hope that all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I have been fortunate over the last 20 years to have spent Thanksgiving holiday in the Washington area. Many times I have actually been on

the Washington campus greeting Residents, family members and staff; and I can honestly say these memories will always have a special place in my heart.

Even with the busy Holiday Season upon us we continue to move forward to continually improve services and activities. We are looking forward to the arrival of our new Chief Medical Officer, Medical Officer and Wellness Center Manager in the very near future. We are currently hiring additional full and part time RNs, LPNs and CNAs in all levels of care. We are also in the process of hiring Administrative Assistants for Healthcare Services, Resident Services and Campus Operations. Over the past few months, staff members in these areas having been tasked with additional duties until all hiring has been completed. I would like to thank all the staff who stepped up and provided additional support. Last week I announced that Laura Fogarty would be the new Safety

Officer. Laura has hit the ground running by participating in her first fire alarm test. I have no doubt she will do a great job in preparing AFRH-W for all required inspections.

As we move further into the Holiday Season our Recreation Team has been working behind the scenes to prepare for the Tree Lighting, Ladies Tea, Holiday Dance and all of the other monthly activities. It takes a team to make sure all these events go off without a hitch. Therefore, I hope we have a record number of Residents attend these special events that we will host during the next several weeks. Residents interested in different types of activities are encouraged to bring suggestions forward to your Resident Advisory Committee members or the Recreation Services Team. This is your Home and you should be proactive in making this a better place to live for yourself and your fellow Residents.

I would like to personally thank each staff member in Campus Operations, Healthcare Services, Resident Services and the Administrative Staff for working so hard to make sure all Residents and staff live and work in a safe and healthy environment. Over the past few weeks you have been very dedicated to the tasks at hand and I know you will in the future as well.

I would like to thank Phil Ford who has served as your Resident Advisory Committee Chair for two years. Phil has

always had the Residents' best interest in mind when bringing suggestions, concerns and complaints forward to the AFRH-W leadership. I wish Phil nothing but the best as he transfers to our Gulfport facility in December.

To all Residents, thank you for making AFRH-W your Home. The high point of my day is walking throughout the facility, especially during breakfast or lunch. I truly listen to each and every one of your suggestions, concerns, complaints and compliments. Without truly listening

to you, the Resident, I could not move forward in making AFRH-W a happier, healthier and safer place to live. I hope and choose to believe we are making a difference in all our Residents' lives every single day.

Sheila Abarr



Acting Administrator Sheila Abarr greets Virginia Secott, the oldest Marine in attendance at the 240th Marine Corps Birthday Celebration.

240th Marine Corps birthday celebration

By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist

On Friday November 6th, 2015, AFRH-W celebrated 240 years of the Marine Corps Birthday in the Scott Hall of Honors. The Ombudsmen, Robb Webb was the Master of Ceremonies for the event, and provided a delightful sense of humor and engaged everyone present!

The celebration was brought to attention with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the National Anthem which incorporated a few active duty Marines. The event continued as Chaplain John Goodloe provided a heartfelt invocation which also consisted of a personalized message to every Marine present. Master Sgt. Craig Harris of Marine Barracks Washington was the Guest of Honor for the event. He was delighted and honored to be a part of the celebration and to share his past and present experiences with all AFRH Residents. Master Sgt. Craig Harris provided an inspiring message that left its mark in the hearts and minds of all Marines present.

The celebration proceeded with the traditional U.S. Marine Corps Cake Cutting, honoring our oldest Marine present, Mrs. Virginia Scotte, along with our second oldest Marine present, Mrs. Phyllis Bradford. The ceremony was concluded with admiration to all the Marines and all Veterans across the globe. A special thanks to Master Sgt. Craig Harris, Mrs. Virginia Scotte, Mrs. Phyllis Bradford, and the RAC Honor Committee for making the 240th Marine Corps Birthday Celebration a success. Happy Birthday Marines and Semper Fidelis!



Marine Master Sgt Craig Harris kneels for a photo with the oldest Marine in attendance, Virginia Secott, and the youngest Marine in attendance.

Notes from the AFRH-W, Chairman, Resident Advisory Committee



I sit here, very pensively, composing my thoughts for this article. Your RAC has worked diligently to ensure that we are serving you, our constituents, in a timely, cordial, and responsible manner. We have strived and taken

great pride in making sure that when there is an issue to be pursued and remedied that we did so in a timely manner (often times in minutes) to help ensure that the AFRH-W is the premier retirement home for Veterans. It has not been the calmest of seas or smoothest of roads as we traveled throughout the facility and make ourselves available. By now most everyone has heard that this will be my last column as RAC Chairman. I spent an agonizing few days deciding what to do when my name came up as 'next' on the waiting list for our home in Gulfport. There are many personal, professional and other factors I pondered and mulled, as I made my list or pros and cons whether to go now or begin the wait anew by going to the bottom of the list. ALL things considered I decided to accept and will be leaving Washington the 18th of December after the movers come and pack and load my 'stuff'. I did not want to look back in time at any point in the future and wonder

"Should I have gone when I had the chance"?

I have enjoyed my tenure, have no regrets, and hope you feel that I have provided the service you deserve from a RAC Chairman. Has it always been easy – "oh h--- no" (that's heck in case you were wondering). Has it always been worthwhile – that would be pretty hearty and resounding YES. Although impossible to please every resident 100% of the time I think I and the Floor Reps have come pretty close. Are there issues left undone? Yes, and I have no doubt that the current committee chairman will finish what they have begun.

Rapport with Staff, Administration and Management at Agency has been significantly enhanced. Sometimes we agree to disagree but the best interest of the residents has always been first and foremost. My personal feelings, the floor reps personal feelings, have always taken a back seat, as it is 'what is best for the resident and AFRH' that drives us.

I will not make a list (or check it twice) thanking anyone for this or that, as quite simply it would fill the Communicator in its entirety and extend into next month's edition. Those I have worked with know who they are and I can only hope they understand YOU ARE SOOOOO APPRECIATED for all that you do.

I wish you the happiest and healthiest of holiday seasons. I will hope that you will give my successor and his team of Floor Representatives the same high level of respect, courtesy and cooperation as they move forward, on your behalf, individually and collectively, to keep AFRH and AFRH-W the premier retirement facility for veterans that it is,

as you have given me and my RAC team.

Quick updates; The plans for the area generally west of Arnold Drive are moving forward and it is hoped that the Trust for Public Lands will soon have their proposal to the FOSH for CAP review and then submission to the Agency. It is an exciting time as we all wait to see what the area will be transformed into. I am excited about soon coming back and seeing the enhanced Golf Course and Clubhouse amongst the many other new amenities residents (and community) will have available for their use.

There was no RAC meeting in November due to a conflict when the Monthly Memorial Service was rescheduled due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. In respect for our fellow residents who would be remembered, the RAC did not feel it appropriate to hold our regular monthly meeting at the same time as the memorial service was being held. I have spoken with the Chaplain and Resident Services and if the December memorial service is moved all effort will be taken to ensure it is scheduled in a time slot other than the third Wednesday at 10:00 (our regularly scheduled meeting time). Thank you for allowing me to be of service. For the first time I won't end with 'As always, if you have something you would like me

to discuss in this article let's sit and chat or drop me a note'.

As the tears begin to well up and cloud my vision and thoughts, I will end with extending my best wishes to each of you for all the best things life can offer. I'll still be available by e-mail or phone (or snail mail) if you want to keep in touch.

All the best,

Phil Ford



Phil Ford, along with U.S. Navy personnel serve up homemade spaghetti at the popular Italian Luncheon.

From the AFRH-G Administrator



November came and went with more productive action from the Gulfport campus. I want to extend a very warm welcome to the new employees we've brought on board in the nursing department. Several licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants have joined the team. Credit to our director of nursing, Debora Joiner, for filling those crucial openings - thank you Debora!

Other openings that we have, that are at

the forefront of Residents' minds, include the dental hygienist. We are very close to having this position filled by a contractor, like we have done before, to get this important service up and running. Thank you to our healthcare services contract official representative, Stan "Mac" McKenzie for battling for us in this search.

I also want to express my sincere thanks by acknowledging the Residents who started the meal purchase program for active duty service members. There was overwhelming support from the Resident body, with more than 200 meal tickets purchased for those active duty servicemen and women stationed away from their families this Thanksgiving. It made great sense to have extra tickets saved for future holidays and special events.

During this month, our Veterans Day

Ceremony and Open House was a very big success. It took a lot of effort to coordinate so many community resources being here to honor the service and sacrifice of US Armed Forces Veterans. A special thank you to Sean Campbell for coordinating the day. Great job Sean!

This Thanksgiving we all should take the time to reflect and be thankful for all we have: the Home, its Residents and Staff, and our free country in which we live and love. Wishing you and yours a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Shaun Servais



The AFRH-G Acting Administrator, Shaun Servais, speaks at the Veterans Day Ceremony on November 11, 2015.

Residents attend the Christening of Munro (WMSL 755)

Photos submitted by Resident Tony Langdon

On November 14, 2015 several Residents attended the Christening of Munro at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi.

Munro is the only Coast Guardsman to receive the Medal of Honor for his actions on Guadalcanal, September 27, 1942, saving the lives of countless Marines.

Ingalls Shipbuilding was humbled to build this great ship named Munro. Their shipbuilders know that every weld, every bolt, and every cable they touched, serves as a lasting tribute to such a brave war hero.



Charlie Jenkins and Doris Jones attend the Christening.



Gulfport Residents enjoyed the Christening of Munro in Pascagoula, Mississippi.



Residents Tony Langdon and Charlie Jenkins proudly wear their uniform.

Veterans celebrate 240 years of Marine Heritage

By Sean Campbell, Lead Recreation Specialist

AFRH-G veterans of all branches of service filled the community center to celebrate the 240th anniversary of the founding of the United States Marine Corps. AFRH Resident Doris Denton, USMC Retired served as the emcee of the ceremony. The 451st Logistics Battalion, NCBC Gulfport provided the color guard. Retired Marine Corps Residents Nancy Richey (95) and Fredi Van Pelt (92) assisted in the ceremonial cutting of the cake.

Serving as guest speaker for the ceremony was Colonel Derek Donovan, USMC Retired. Col. Donovan currently serves as the Vice President of the Fisher House Foundation after dedicating 26 years of military service. His military assignments included mission support on the Presidential helicopter mission support as the Commanding Officer of the Marine Corps Air Facility, Quantico, Virginia. Military bloodlines run deep in Col. Donovan's family as Derek's father was a 30-year Veteran of the United States Air Force and his mother served in the Army Nurse Corps. His wife Kathryn is an active duty Captain in the United States Navy currently serving at Naval Facilities Headquarters in Washington, DC. Their daughter, Emily, is a Seabee assigned to Naval Construction Group 2 stationed in Gulfport, Mississippi, their son Morris is an Army and Navy Veteran currently working for BNSF Railroad in Colorado.

Ronald Reagan once said, "Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world, but the Marines don't have that problem." Happy 240th Birthday to the Marine Corps! Semper Fidelis.



From left to right Doris Denton, Shaun Servais, the youngest Marine present, Fredi Van Pelt, Col. Derek Donovan and Nancy Richey assist in the ceremonial cutting of the cake.

Notes from the AFRH-G, Chairman, Resident Advisory Committee



Hello to all my readers, this has been a very unusual month, meetings upon meetings, and visitors galore. Before when I was just a Floor Rep, members of the RAC and I had time to go on trips and participate in a lot of the recreational activities that are offered. However, now being the RAC Chairman takes up so much of my time that I can't do much of anything else. Don't get me wrong I have a great bunch of folks working with me and they take some of the burden off my shoulders but there is a lot to do. Here are some of the items we (the RAC) are working on:

Our "Invite a Service Member to Dine" program is looking like an overwhelming success. This was the idea of Floor Rep Doris Denton, who wanted to invite some junior enlisted from each local military facility to dine with us on Thanksgiving and Christmas. As we could not use our RAC funds to pay for this we asked the residents to step up and pay for

the meal tickets, and they did. Even some of the staff also bought tickets, even though they were not asked to. Two hundred and forty meal tickets were purchased. This shows that our residents like to give back and pay it forward. A few residents did not like the idea of inviting anyone. Making comments like "Let them eat in their own dining room" or "it's too crowded now". These comments came from only a very few who are always grumbling about something. Well I'm glad to see that cooler heads prevailed and I thank the majority who thought so much of the idea that they opened up their wallets and purses.

Looks like our "Memorial Brick" project is dead in the water. There is just too much red tape and other interferences to allow it to proceed at this time. I was hoping that some resolution could be found so the RAC could benefit financially from the sale of the bricks, but now we will have to look at some other avenues of earning money for the Resident Fund. Speaking of the Resident Fund, our fund at AFRH-G is in great shape. We currently have \$1,130,000 in our fund. We spend about \$110,000 per year on resident activities. This might seem like we have a lot of money but actually it's not. We need some additional ways to grow our fund so that it will last longer than 10 years. Two

ways that the residents can help are (1.) Residents can take out a monthly allotment for five or ten dollars a month made payable to the AFRH-G Resident Fund and (2.) Consider leaving something in your Will to our Resident Fund and/or to the Home's trust fund in general. The business office can help you set up an allotment.

I can't go without saying this: If you listen to a rumor, that is what you'll get, just a rumor. Go right to the source for your answers, not a naysayer or rumor monger. Don't waste your precious energy on gossip, energy vampires, issues of the past, negative thoughts or things you cannot control. Instead invest your energy in the positive present moment. I encourage all of you to attend our Town Hall and RAC Meetings to get the straight dope on what's going on here in our Home.

Lastly, I am writing this column before Thanksgiving and after Veteran's Day so I think by the time you read this both holidays will be over. I hope everyone had a very nice and safe Thanksgiving and Veteran's Day. You know that these holidays are meant as a way of showing our thanks for all that we have and all that was done for us. It's not just a meal or a parade, it's a thought, an idea that we as American's have so much to be grateful for. We live

in the greatest country in the world and as Veterans we helped to keep it safe and free. Yes, we gave a lot, but others gave so much more and we should be grateful to them. So, I reserve Thanksgiving and Veteran's Day as my special days to give thanks in my prayers to all those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and allowed me to enjoy the freedoms this country has. To you and yours I wish you health and happiness for the rest of your days.

Henri D. Gibson



Henri serves wine at the November Birthday dinner.

AFRH-W Activities

AFRH-W November Birthday Dinner

By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eye'd,
Such seems your beauty still.
~ William Shakespeare

To celebrate November birthdays, the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington Residents enjoyed a feast fit for a king. They were served prime rib with demi-glace, baked potato with sour cream, salmon with hollandaise sauce, brussels sprouts and dinner rolls. The icing on the cake was, literally, cake.

Recreation Specialists Nicole Chappell and Constance Maziel served sweet wine while Ombudsman Robb Webb provided well wishes to the birthday folks. Ron Kartz, Chief of Resident Services greeted and assisted Residents while wearing his musical piano tie. Everyone enjoyed the food and friendship of the evening. Happy birthday!



Ron Kartz, Chief of Resident Services talks with Residents Robert Carey and Marvin Archer during the November birthday dinner.

National Family Volunteer Day

Courtesy article by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Pedro A. Rodriguez, NDW Public Affairs

Photos by Master Sgt. David Eichaker

Military members and their families throughout the National Capital Region gathered to volunteer at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington D.C. in celebration of National Family Volunteer Day, Nov. 14.

Family Volunteer Day is a day of service that demonstrates and celebrates the power of families who volunteer together, supporting their neighborhoods, communities and the world. The volunteer organization Points of Light created the day 24 years ago to showcase the benefits of family volunteering and provide opportunities for families to help communities create supportive environments for their children and each other.

Volunteers participated in various activities including clean-up of the retirement home grounds, interior fall and holiday decoration, and arts and crafts for the children such as designing holiday appreciation cards for the residents. The Armed Forces Retirement Home is an independent agency in the executive branch of the U.S. government that provides residents and related services for certain retired and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

"Anything that has to do with giving back to our veterans specifically, is my favorite kind of event to volunteer," said Chief Boatswain's Mate Denise Domingo, Naval Support Activity Washington volunteer coordinator. "Coming to the Armed Forces Retirement Home, the Honor Flights especially for our Korean War and World War II Veterans, because we're losing them and they're pretty much walking history. Just having the chance to give back to the people who gave so much already is very important to me."

Some of the residents at the retirement home also volunteered as project coordinators for the different tasks planned for the event to give residents and volunteers a chance to interact with each other and share stories and their experiences during their time of service.

"I enjoy when people come here and volunteer, it keeps me busy, I get to meet a lot of people and it keeps us, the residents, in contact with the outside world," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class William Stephens (ret), an Armed Forces Retirement Home resident. "Most of the volunteer groups are very small anywhere from five to 20 people, this one is more than a hundred, it is very nice, a group this size we may get two or three a year."

A total of 117 volunteers participated in the event which was coordinated by Naval District Washington's community service office.

"We need more people besides just the volunteers, some of our residents are getting up there in age and more contact with people from the outside would really help us," said Stephens.



Attendees stand for the National Anthem.



Volunteers from Naval District Washington's community service office in front of the historic Sherman building.



Small, but a mighty volunteer carries a full bag of leaves out of the campus garden.

"Across the Generations" with Glenna Orr

By Christine Baldwin, Librarian

Glenna C. Orr, a Reading Specialist with 2 Masters Degrees, is the founder of The Kind Kids Organization. She has taught school in 5 states and in the Department of Defense School systems in Germany and Panama. On Tuesday, November 17, Ms. Orr shared her story and the five books that she had written on Intergenerational Programs with several interested residents. She then donated and autographed copies of these books to the Residents. Ms. Orr has been a volunteer at AFRH in the 1990's and worked on Intergenerational programs between residents and schools.



Residents Linda Hardy and Norma Rambo discuss Glenna Orr's collection with the author.

Hail and Farewell

By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

Dozens of AFRH-W Residents gathered in the foyer of the Scott building to bid farewell to a dear friend. Robert A. Brown, Korea and Vietnam veteran, and Retired Army Sergeant Major; lived at the Home for many years before he departed early in November.

In traditional military fashion, Residents and staff gathered in a flank formation, and saluted, while SGM Brown returned the gesture of respect to his fellow comrades. Escorted by his son, SGM Brown returned home to the Evergreen State: Washington; to be closer to family and friends. This momentous celebration of admiration is one none of us will soon forget.



Residents and staff lined up in flank formation, saluted and bid farewell to Korea & Vietnam veteran Robert A. Brown.

AFRH-G Activities

AFRH-G fabulous Biloxi Visitor Center & picnic in the park!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Therapy Services

On Friday, October 23, 2015, healthcare residents enjoyed a Recreation Therapy outing to Biloxi Visitor Center and Lighthouse Park for a picnic lunch. AFRH-G Resident, Community, and Military (Navy, Air Force & Seabee) volunteers paired up with residents to assist and escort individuals through the Biloxi Visitor Center. The morning began with a visit to the 2nd floor movie theater to watch two videos named Katrina & Biloxi and We Are Biloxi. After reminiscing and sharing Katrina stories about the former home, residents toured the downstairs museum about the history of Biloxi, the oyster industry, and story of the survival and restoration of the Biloxi Lighthouse. Residents gathered in the main lobby, visited and expressed amazement in the wood carvings and art displays throughout the center, too. Ready for fresh air and beautiful skies, residents moved next door to the new Lighthouse Park. Residents enjoyed a fabulous picnic lunch provided by dining service, watched children on the playground, visited, and strolled through the new park boardwalk. The wooden trail wrapped around a marsh area and highlighted flowers and trees native to the area. An enormous thank you to our many volunteers who helped in making this outing a shining success for all!



Joseph O'Carroll takes in a marvelous view of the Biloxi Lighthouse.



OJ Ferrington enjoys the movies at the Biloxi Visitor Center.



Residents have a fabulous picnic in the park!

Doris Hopper's Pyrographic Art

By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

Pyrographic is a form of producing an image on a wooden panel using a hand held wood burning stylus. It may not be one of the newest mediums but it is one of the hottest, literally. The tips can get up over a 1000 F degrees. The Dragon Fly and a scene from Psalm 137 of the Bible are two of Doris's recent works. She has just started and these are beautiful. Thanks Doris, we look forward to more of your sizzling works of art.

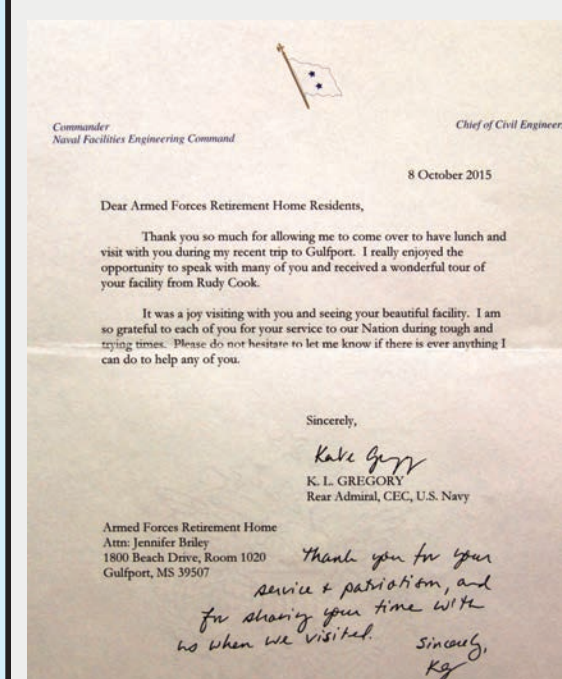


Doris stands next to the display case in the Art Display Room where her art work is displayed.

A memorable visit

By Jennifer L. Briley, Volunteer Coordinator

On September 25th Commander Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Katherine (Combat Kate) Gregory visited the AFRH-G for a few hours and had a very memorable lunch with our Residents as well as having a brief tour of our home conducted by Resident Roy Cook. She sent a thank you note to us and in her note she said, "I am so grateful to each of you for your service to our Nation during tough and trying times. Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is ever anything I can do to help any of you."



for your service to our Nation during tough and trying times." I would like to share her Thank you note with everyone.

A win for Loyalty Hall

By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant

Valor Hall and Loyalty Hall ended their Fall Games with the Poker Walk on Friday morning, October 30, 2015. The Residents made their way to five designated locations around the home to pick a card at each stop. After completing the five stops, Frank Roberts, escorted by Tia Hall knew they had something with two pairs. Hoping the two pairs were enough to take home the win, Frank and Tia waited patiently for the results. The results confirmed Frank Roberts placed third in his age bracket to take home a win for Loyalty Hall.



Everyone had a good time during the Poker Walk.

Christmas shopping here we come!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Therapy Services

On Friday, November 13, 2015 Residents from Valor, Loyalty & Allegiance Hall enjoyed a day of shopping. The trip began with a stop to the Dollar Tree for bargains and then onto Edgewater Mall for more shopping treasures. Residents enjoyed window shopping, strolling, and visiting with AFRH community volunteers, resident volunteers, and military volunteers from KAFB Medical Pharmacy and KAFB 338th TRS Dark Knights. With a chance to take a shopping break, residents chose a variety of treats from the food court and continued to visit over lunch. After being refueled, residents again hit the mall to find the last items on their lists. We thank our amazing volunteers for a wonderful outing and we look forward to a bright holiday season!



Christmas shopping here we come!

A humble group of kids

By Jennifer L. Briley, Volunteer Coordinator

On November 9th 2015, the day before Veteran's Day, Captain Andrew Eichner from Keesler AFB Legal Department hand delivered over 100 handmade cards, letters, and drawings from the kids at Marguerite E. Small Elementary School in West Yarmouh, Massachusetts. His mother is the Principal of the school and she wrote us a letter. The letter says:

Dear Honorable Veterans,

Please enjoy these cards and drawings as our way of saying "Thank you for your Service." Our school is a humble elementary school on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. We educate beautiful children from Pre-school through Grade 3. Our connection with you is through my son, Capt. Andrew Eichner USAF, who is currently stationed at Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi. On Tuesday, November 10th, we will be honoring you and all living Veterans in our annual Veterans' Day ceremony. We will be singing songs like, My Country Tis of Thee, This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land, When Johnny (and Jane) Come Marching Home and America the Beautiful. We take this opportunity every November to remind the students of the sacrifices men and women have made throughout the history of our country in the name of freedom and democracy. While we will be respectfully bowing our heads and holding moments of silence and remembrance in our Memorial Day ceremony; this Tuesday we joyfully sing our thanks to YOU and all

living Veterans who will be joining us in person for the assembly. Happy Veterans' Day! Most sincerely, Carole A. Eichner, Principal Marguerite E. Small Elementary School

I would love to give a great big "Shout Out" to all the Staff, Teachers and especially the kids at Marguerite E. Small Elementary School for thinking of us and all Veteran's during this time. We will always remember the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th Month; and now so will they!

WASHINGTON

Recreation Therapy Halloween Happy Hour & Poker Run

By Carol Mitchell & Sarah Kenan, Recreation Therapy

On Tuesday, October 27th Recreation Therapy kicked off their annual Halloween festivities. The event was a smashing success with 65 residents attending this exciting themed night of fun. Some of the events held in the "Scary" Scott Community Center included a Poker Run, Guess The Combined Weight of The Pumpkins, Appetizers, Music by Resident "Raving" Ray Anderson, Good & Bad Jokes, beer & other fine spirits.

The "Poker Run" winner was Catherine McCarthy with 5 card straight... king high. The winner of the "Guess The Weight of The Pumpkins" was Chester Mahaffey, he estimated the combined weight at 27 pounds. The pumpkins, which were homegrown by AFRH-W Chief of Resident Services, Ron Kartz actually weighed in at 29.3 pounds.

Resident DJ Ray Anderson continues to provide great music for a variety of resident programs. The Halloween music kept everyone's toes tapping.

Long-time Resident Bill Jentarra had been insisting that the Recreation Therapy's Poker Run would not run smoothly without resident Skeleton Bill Jentarra. Bill has assisted with the Annual Halloween poker run for many years!

The Residents enjoyed a variety of appetizers provided by our very own Food Service staff. The menu included: deadly drum sticks, Frankenstein Fried Pickles, Creepy Cheese & crackers, and Frightening Fruit.

We would like to thank Pete "Sleeper" Rauner, President of the Nam Knights of the American Capital Chapter and fellow members for their continued support of beverage donations and for volunteering monthly at the Recreation Therapy AFRH-W Happy Hour. The Residents truly appreciated their camaraderie and their time.



Recreation Therapist Carol Mitchell (2nd from left) poses for a picture with the NAM Knights.



Carol Mitchell, Pete Rauner (President of the Nam Knights) and Amanda Jensema were dressed to impress.



The Nam Knights volunteer monthly at AFRH-W.

GULFPORT

Masquerade Ball

By Jennifer Briley, Volunteer Coordinator

All Hallows' Eve, better known as Halloween was a night filled with ghouls and goblins. A night to honor and remember the dead; and that we did! On Friday, October 30th 2015, AFRH threw the yearly Masquerade Ball and danced the night away. With delicious eats from the Dining Hall and a spirited Costume Contest, our Residents and guests enjoyed live music and voted for their favorite spooks. Even Fiddler's Green got in on the festivities and gave away a \$50 bar tab. What a fun time it was for me to work that event! Thank you all for allowing me to enjoy my most favorite day of the year with you.



Ms. Marion Wolke won first place as the Witch.



Ms. Doris Denton won third place as Ms. Money Bags.

A howlin' good time

By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant

Residents from Valor Hall and Loyalty Hall joined the "Howlin'" good time at the Masquerade Ball held in the community center on October 30, 2015. A hollywood cowboy, a good witch and a devil were just a few of the costumes that the Resident's donned to join in the fun during the Ball. Music, food, friends, laughter, photos and memories was the night all summed up during that Howlin' October 30th night.



Janet H. and Frances Scott enjoy the Halloween Festivities.



Maynard Howard and Edward Farrell having a devilish good time.