



## AFRH-GULFPORT

# Honoring the Grand Old Flag

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services  
Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

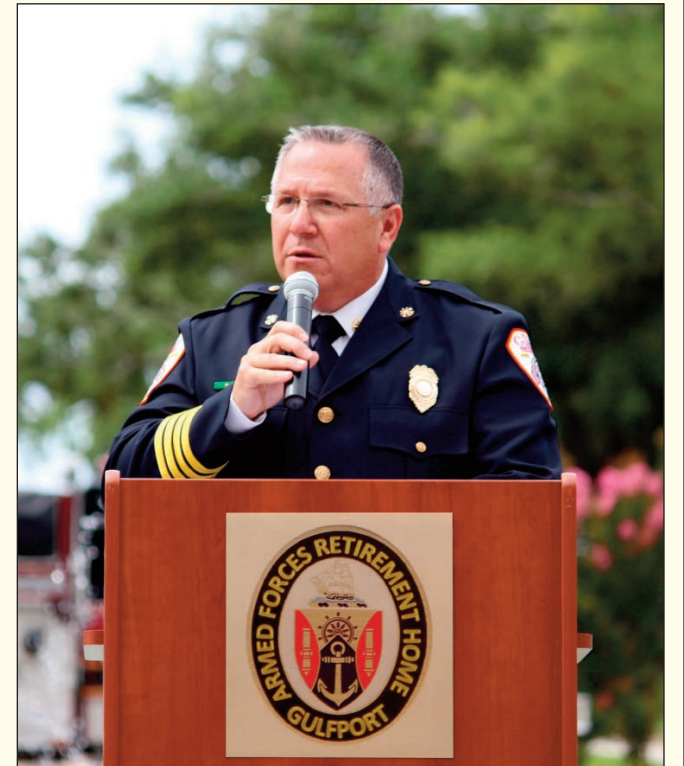


It was a Red, White, and Blue day at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport as AFRH celebrated Flag Day for the first time with a formal ceremony. The Gulfport Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors as well as displayed their large ceremonial flag from the top of its ladder truck. Deputy Chief of Operations for the Gulfport Fire Department and retired Air National Guard veteran Hank

Levins served as guest speaker for the event. The sound of Johnny Cash's "Ragged Old Flag" echoed across the campus to begin the ceremony. An emotional poem entitled "I am the Flag: Old Glory" inspired Residents and guests alike to the tune of America the Beautiful. The Flag Day ceremony is sure to become an annual staple of the formal ceremonies held at AFRH Gulfport.



Tom File and Keith Van Doren appreciated the Flag Day Ceremony on June 14th.



Deputy Chief of Operations for the Gulfport Fire Department, Hank Levins, was the guest speaker.



Residents and special guest, SGM Luther Thomas Jr. during the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.



Resident Services Chief Christopher Alexander was the Master of Ceremonies.



The Gulfport Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors.

## AFRH-WASHINGTON

# AFRH-W Celebrates 241st U.S. Army Birthday

By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist  
Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

On Friday June 10th 2016, AFRH-W celebrated the 241st U.S. Army Birthday in the Scott Hall of Honors. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was the Ombudsmen, Mr. Robb Webb, who provided a delightful presence amongst all Residents and distinguished guests. The event began with the traditional National Anthem followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, in which all that were present, joined together harmoniously with respect and gratitude to all those who served. The program proceeded with Chaplain John Goodloe, who provided a profound invocation, leaving special thoughts and prayers throughout the room.

The highlight of the event was the guest of honor CSM Michael Howard, who the AFRH-W welcomed with open arms. Command Sergeant Major Michael Howard currently serves as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. Throughout his career he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Service Management from Trident University International. He also received numerous awards and decorations such as the Army Commendation Medal, Aircraft Crewman Badge, Air Force Achievement Medal, Bronze Star and the Order of Military Medical Merit, just to name a few. He expressed delight in being part of the celebration and to share his experiences in the Army. His inspiring story and heartfelt message left its mark on all Soldiers and guests present.

The celebration continued with the traditional U.S. Army Cake Cutting Presentation. The guest of honor joined together with the oldest and youngest Soldiers present. The oldest Soldier, Mr. Elgie Clark, happens to be One Hundred and One Years Young!!! Pride and joy was displayed on everyone's face, as Mr. Elgie Clark stood up and joined hands with the youngest Army Soldier present, PFC Daniel Davidson, at twenty-one years old. The ceremony concluded with admiration to all Soldiers across the globe. A special thanks to Command Sergeant Major Michael Howard, Mr. Elgie Clark, and PFC Daniel Davidson, for making the 241st U.S. Army Birthday Celebration a success. Hooah, Go Army!



CSM Howard proclaims that he may one day become a Resident of the AFRH.



Resident Elgie Clark and PFC Davidson cut the ceremonial cake.



Servicemembers from Fort Belvoir Community Hospital also attended the birthday celebration.

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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 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](http://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-W Veteran Highlight - Susan Meckley

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian

Susan Meckley joined the U.S. Navy in 1952. After Basic Training and graduation from Radio School, she went to work in Public Affairs. She served at a number of different duty stations including Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Key West, Gitmo, the Pentagon and Kansas. Once she even participated in a simulated salvage of a submarine laying on the bottom near Key West, FL. The USS Falcon (ASR) sent a diver down to attach a "down haul" cable to the sub. Next the Momsen Diving Bell came down for the simulated rescue. Susan and Chief Hooper were elected to ride the bell to the surface...

"What an experience!" She then took a twenty year break and went civilian. During this time, she got her Captain's License with the U.S. Coast Guard. She decided to rejoin the services and went into the U.S. Army 4 months before she would have been too old. Again it was in Public Affairs. One of her memories was being strapped into a Huey helicopter's safety harness, while standing on the skids and videotaping the National Air Races aircraft at 5,000 ft. Again, "What and experience!"

Retiring from the Army in 1999, Master Sergeant Meckley sold her 46 foot sailboat and bought a Challenger 32 Sailboat to fulfill her life's dream of sailing off into the sunset and cruising the world.... SOLO. Her five children weren't thrilled with the idea. However, she sailed down the U.S. West Coast and all over Mexico, keeping in touch through her SSB radio email. Her kids finally agreed, maybe this Great-Grandma really did know how to sail.

When she proposed a solo trip to Hawaii, 74 year old

Susan was the subject of the Puerto Vallarta Yacht Clubs' actually taking bets as to whether or not she would get to Hawaii. About 400 miles out from Mexico, she had to use her 12 gauge pump shotgun to scare off two men who were in a large open boat banging against her boat's hull, at 2 a.m. Another time, sailing close to a Boeing space launch platform and their control ship, Susan tried to make contact with them to coordinate their passing each other. Receiving no answer she raised some ham radio operators in Seattle, who then called Boeing, resulting in the Boeing Space Platform calling her. After spending 36 days and sailing 3,620 miles transiting the Pacific, she arrived at Hilo, Hawaii to a spectacular view of the snow covered Volcanos.

Susan came to AFRH-W in February 2015. She has been very active televising Resident meetings and the meditation room services. On February 12, 2016 (Lincoln's Birthday), she and her friend, Don Jones, operated an Amateur Radio station from the Mary Todd Lincoln's bedroom in the Lincoln Cottage. They contacted over 16 countries on four continents, all with Morse code. Susan and Don are also active with the National Park Service

commemorating the 100th birthday. The Park Service is allowing ham radio operators to operate from various National Parks, contacting fellow ham radio operator's around the world.

On June 18th Susan and Don participated in a "Kids Day" on the White House, using a ham radio to allow the children to talk with other kids around the world.



## AFRH-G Veteran Highlight - Tom Butler

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian



Thomas "Tom" William Butler was born in the farming community of Wheat, TN. Tom, the oldest of ten children, and his family lived here when the government came through and took all surrounding land to build an atomic bomb. The site was perfect because the town was surrounded by mountains and rivers. His father worked where they were building the bomb. The family left Wheat in 1942. After the war, his father decided to open his own barber shop.

Tom has always had a love for airplanes. One of his earliest memories is when he was about five years old. His mother had bought him some little planes. He found a piece of wood and enjoyed letting the planes roll down it. Around the age of fifteen, he noticed a J-5 Cub sitting at the nearby airfield. The pilot of the plane let him take a ride around the countryside in it. The flight scared him so much he vowed that he'd never fly again.

At the age of eighteen, Tom thought "there had to be a better time somewhere" so he decided to join the Navy. His first orders were to Naval Air Station North Island to work with VFA-11 Fighter Squadron, a.k.a. Red Rippers. As part of this squadron he did maintenance work on the flightline for the F8F Bearcats. The squadron was given orders to cruise the western Pacific. Once it was time to return, they ended up cruising around the world instead of going straight back to California and were sent to the Brooklyn Naval Yard for decommissioning. The sailors got off and were given orders to Florida for training. Tom was then transferred out of the squadron and was sent to Jacksonville, FL. While stationed here, his enlistment was up. He agreed to reenlist if the Navy would send him to airframe B school in Millington, TN. While on this duty, he met a girl named Shirley and fell in love. The couple married in 1952. Tom was then transferred to NAS Pensacola. He knew there was a flight school in the area. Going against his vow, he decided to take lessons to earn his pilot license. Next, he decided to buy his first plane, an Aeronca Chief. Tom kept this plane for a year until he got transferred back to San Diego. After about three years of no flying, due to his duty station in Bermuda, he was sent back to Jacksonville. While in Jacksonville, he purchased a Cessna 140 and earned his commercial license. In 1966, he and his wife went to Rockford, IL to see an air show. After seeing all the beautiful planes, he finally made the

decision to build his own plane. He bought the plans for EAA Biplane and built it between the cruises to which he was assigned.

In 1968, Tom left the Navy. This is when he became diligent about finishing the biplane. He completed the project in 1970. Later that year, he decided to go to aeronautical school in Daytona. He was looking for a job in local aviation but realized that the pay wasn't enough. He found a good-paying job with a wholesale air conditioning supply house selling parts. He did this for seventeen years. In 1987, Tom decided to retire for good. He bought an acre lot on a local grass strip airport called Haller Field and built a 40x50 hangar equipped with a full bathroom. Understanding his love for planes, Shirley agreed to move out to the land. Tom found plans for a house and contracted out the work. The couple lived there for 24 years. In those 24 years, Tom continued building planes. He built a replica of a J-3 Cub, which was featured in the magazine *Plane & Pilot*. He flew this plane many times making visits to friends. He came by another kit plane when a Navy chief he knew received orders and couldn't finish the project. Tom bought the plane, an RV-4, and finished it in about five years. Again, he flew this plane to visit friends and family, flying as far as South Carolina and Tennessee. Around 2000, Tom got a call from the widow of one of his friends who had gotten tragically murdered. The widow asked him to finish the plane her husband had been building. Again, this took him about five years to complete. This is the last plane Tom flew. In total, he built four planes. All four are owned by private individuals with three still flying today.

Sadly, Shirley passed away in 2009. This is when he made the decision to move to AFRH-G. For a little while, he served as a tour volunteer for the Home. Today, Tom enjoys spending his retirement by visiting the library, watching movies, reading flying magazines, and socializing with friends. It's always great to have such interesting residents, such as Tom, to share their great stories with us at AFRH-G.





# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



Happy to be here, proud to serve! That continues to be my sincere response to those welcoming me to the AFRH. I tell folks that it seems like I've been here forever because of how welcoming and helpful everyone has been. I have been here a little less than three months and am learning more

Residents and employees have the absolute right to take issues/concerns to any level of their chain of command at any time, and to use the union in an effort to resolve issues of staff concern, I believe it is crucial that we provide our dedicated leaders and managers the opportunity to lead and address matters at the lowest level. In my experience, pro-active and engaged managers tend to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their agency. Managers will only be able to do that if they are made aware of issues and perceptions, and empowered to create a culture of change. I am committed to the continued development of the AFRH, and two of the most critical elements of that development are centered on communication and decision making. Neither of which are easy to develop if people who should be involved in resolving

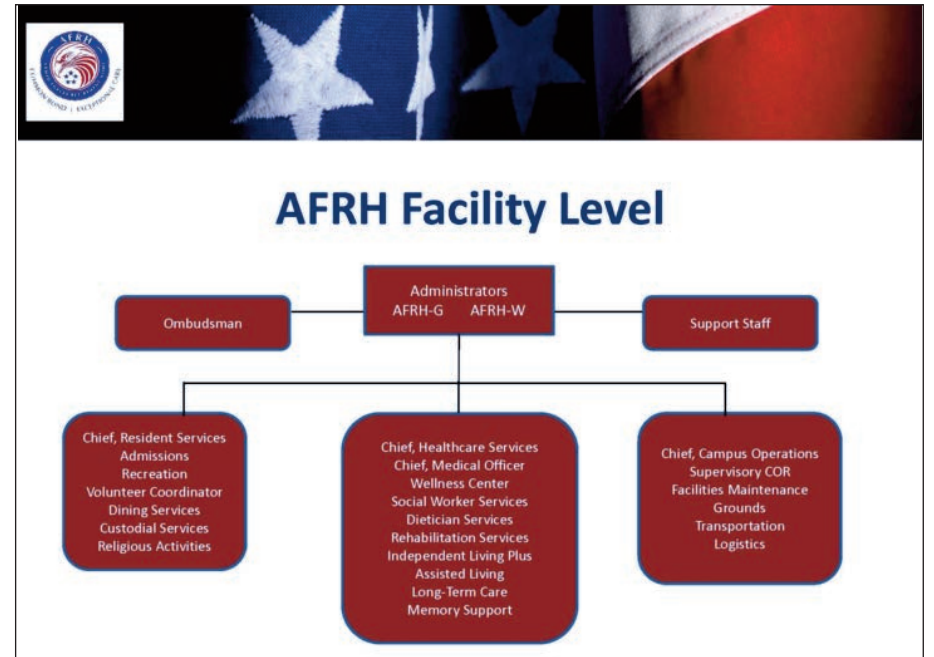
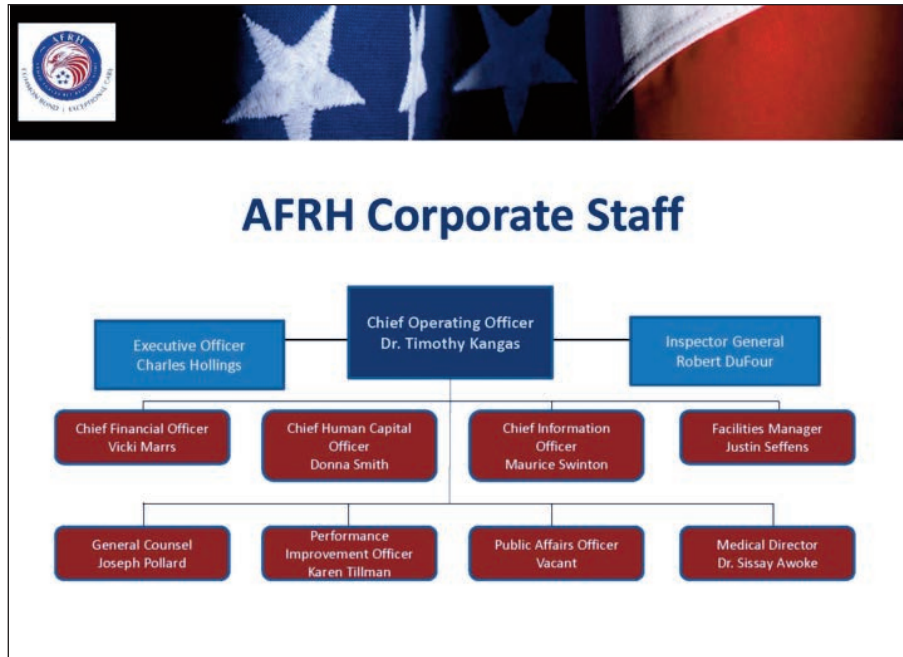
issues and making decisions are removed from the process. I ask for your help as we all work to continually improve this place we call Home.

I am including copies of the AFRH Organizational Charts for the Corporate Staff and Campus level, and request that when you have issues you engage the individuals responsible for your particular area of concern. Again, I welcome the opportunity to meet as many members of the AFRH family as possible. Rest assured that I am committed to making the AFRH a vibrant community in which to live work and thrive!

*Dr. Timothy Kangas*

about the agency, its Residents and employees each and every day. During my relatively short tenure, I have been able to observe a hardworking and dedicated management team and staff committed to the Residents and in making AFRH a premier retirement community. That is not to say that we are without our challenges. Even in my short time here I have had the opportunity to speak with many of you about your suggestions and concerns. These conversations have been invaluable to me from both a professional and personal standpoint. I came here to serve you, and I cannot do that effectively without getting to know both the Residents and the staff.

It is because of these observations that I encourage every member of the AFRH community to utilize their chain-of-command to attempt to resolve issues in a timely and effective manner. While



## Veteran Panel Discussion

*Photos and story by Johanna O'Neill, Secretary, 89th Maintenance Group, Joint Base Andrews*

On May 13, 2016, the 89th Airlift Wing (AW) hosted a "Veteran Panel Discussion" at Joint Base Andrews. Guests included Mr. David Pauling, Ret Marine; Mr. James Kidd, Ret Navy; Dr. Linda Hardy, Ret Navy and Mr. Stan Stewart, Ret Air Force. The idea was conceived by Johanna O'Neill, 89 AW Volunteer Coordinator, after meeting Mr. Pauling at the AFRH's Christmas Gala. Mr. Pauling selected speakers and kept the project on target.

The panelists were chauffeured to Andrews; treated to a working lunch with military personnel; watched a video detailing the 89 AW's mission and toured a C-37 Gulfstream aircraft. After sharing their military careers, the veteran panel answered questions from military and civilian personnel audience. It was a very rewarding experience for everyone involved. In the words of Mr. Pauling on behalf of panel, "we walked away with a lot of pride in what is and will be, our replacements." O'Neill is working to arrange additional veteran panel visits for other military units at Joint Base Andrews in the future.



## U. S. Coast Guard saved sailor's life during WWII

*Story & Photo by Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs*

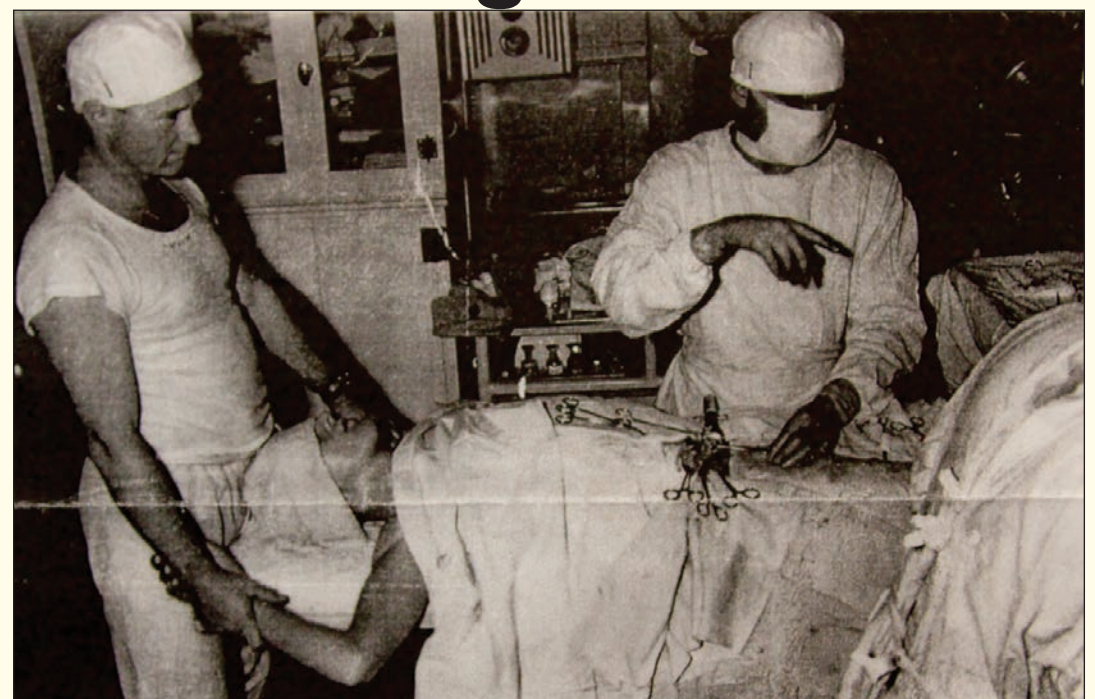
During WWII Norm Nolan, who was an armed guard on board U.S. Armed Merchant Vessel S.S. George Poindexter in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, became extremely sick. On February 17, 1944, with no medical officers on board, the officer in charge of the gun crew decided Norm's condition was serious enough to put a call into the United States Coast Guard. The merchant ship Norm was on at the time of his illness was on its way to Bari, Italy with supplies. The Coast Guard had to send over a whale boat during a very bad storm and then transferred Norm onto the United States Coast Guard Cutter Bibb, where a doctor was on board.

Once on the Bibb, the doctor immediately took Norm into surgery and operated on him and removed his appendix because he was suffering from appendicitis. It was a rough sea so they had to make sure the ship was pointed towards the wind during the emergency operation. "The Coast Guard saved my life. If they were not there in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean on their way to Africa, I would have died. I owe so many people so much of my life, even after the end of the war and to this day. I will never be able to repay all the people but I want to thank all who saved my life. The Coast Guard risked their lives to save me during stormy, rough seas. I was nothing but a spec on the water and they stopped a ship in the middle of WWII to transfer me and keep me alive. I owe the United States Coast Guard so much," Norm said.

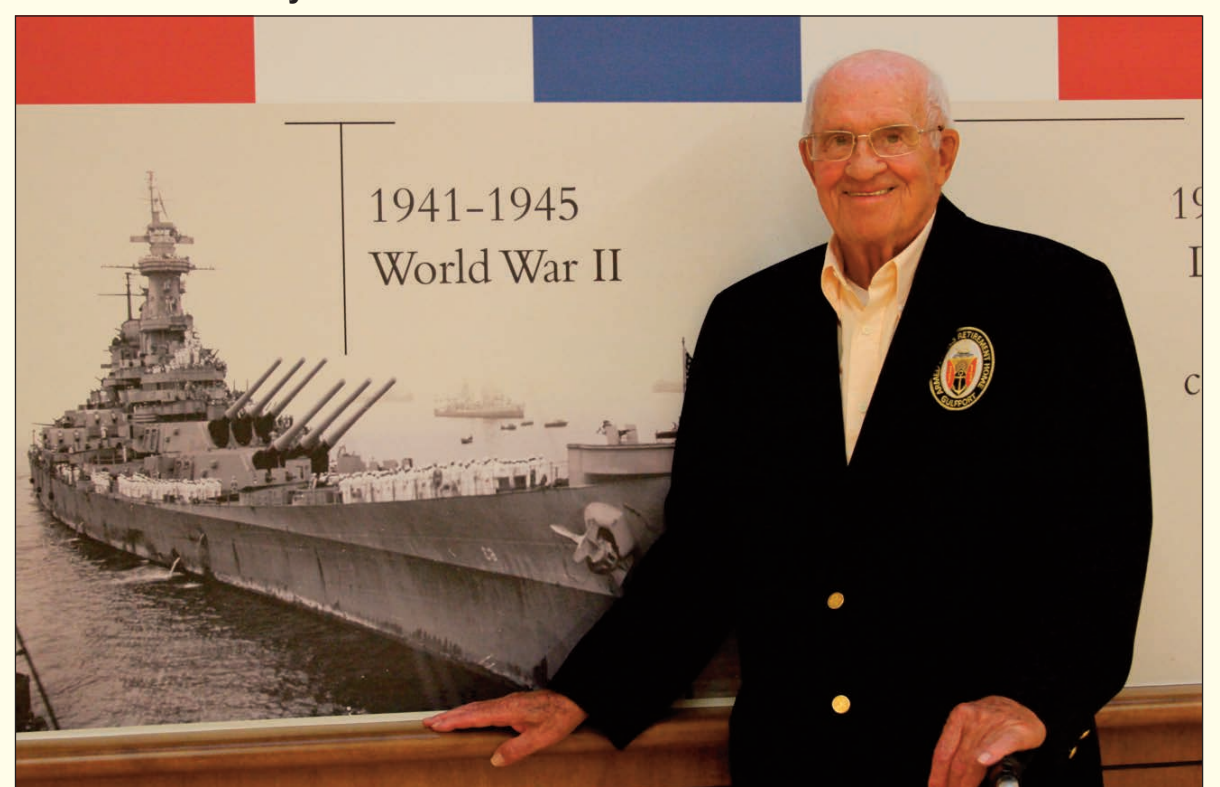
Norm stayed aboard the Bibb for a few weeks after his surgery until they arrived in New York, where he reported back to the Navy. The Navy sent him to DeLand, Florida to recuperate, where "he lived like a king" for three weeks. After that he trained under the Marines and went to Okinawa, Japan for the invasion. He stayed in Japan for a year until the end of WWII. On June 23, 1945 all major combat operations ended on the island of Okinawa. Over the three month battle more than 8 million artillery and mortar rounds were fired, the equivalent of more than 1 round per second. For many soldiers, the silence after the battle was over was almost deafening. In total, more than 12,000 American servicemen were killed and more than 38,000 wounded. The Japanese military lost more than 110,000, but the greatest loss of life was by the Okinawan people. 150,000 of the Okinawans are said to have perished during the battle.

As time went on after the war Norm requested shore duty at Cornell University in New York as an instructor for Naval ROTC programs. He stayed at Cornell for four years. He said, "I loved it!" After Norm retired from the Navy, Cornell University invited him back to work for the university in administration in financial aid and admissions.

Norm went on to say, "I loved that life, living in the Navy. I am somebody because of the Navy. I had good peers and great support and I owe so many people so much for what they did for me. I am so glad I made the Navy my career. They made me who I am. What I received from the Coast Guard was very precious, and that was my life. I am so grateful to them for what I am today. To the Navy, Coast Guard, and Cornell University, I owe a debt of gratitude."



Norm Nolan on the operating table aboard the USCG Cutter Bibb. Photo courtesy of the USCG.



Norm Nolan pictured here in the Hall of Honor at the AFRH-G.



## From the AFRH-W Administrator



Summer is already in full swing here in Washington and the campus looks beautiful. This month, we hosted several tours of the Home, played our season opener on the softball field, celebrated the US Army's 241st Birthday, and continued planning for the Fourth of July Celebration! Lastly, the staff's period of performance came to an end June 30th, marking another successful year of service to the Residents.

When the campus hosts visitors and provides tours to outsiders there is always a common theme; how impressive the campus and its facilities are. People are amazed to see the numerous amenities featured which enable Residents to pursue their interests during retirement. The tour often begins in the Scott Building featuring the Home's legacy in the Hall of Honors. The visitor is then escorted to the library overlooking the grounds and a view of the National Monument. The library has an abundance

of natural light for reading and the perfect place to check out a book. Tours often feature stops at the Artist Colony, bowling alley, wood shop, and modern Wellness Center. I encourage any prospective Residents to come out for a tour; they will be glad they did!

The grounds crew worked quickly to make the field ready for the softball season opener on June 8th. Residents of all ages played with staff, and some came out just to watch the action. It was a great team-building event led by Ron Kartz, our Chief of Resident Services. Afterwards, beer and hotdogs capped off the cool summer evening.

Friday, June 10th, we celebrated the US Army's 241st Birthday. The event was well attended and our guest speaker was Command Sergeant Major Michael Howard from Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. As a special token of our appreciation, Administrator Coins were given to the eldest Army veteran, youngest Army enlisted man present, and CSM Howard. Speaking of birthdays, this July 4th marks the birth of the United States and its adoption of

the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The Washington Campus will have its gates open to the public for picnicking, fostering a sense of community. The Friends of the Soldiers Home (FOSH) will coordinate and organize the event which will include live music, beer and food sales. I hope to see many Residents, Family and Friends here to celebrate the day with America's heroes, the Residents of AFRH!

As much care and acknowledgment the Residents receive (including a drop-in by tourists from Korea), the Home would not be what it is without the sincerely dedicated staff, who work long hours to maintain operations. Many of the staff members are veterans themselves and I am grateful for each and every person who contributes to making the

Home all that it can be.

Congratulations to those who went above and beyond this review period -- your service is truly appreciated, and keep up the good work! The Home is a beautiful place, made better by the outstanding people who live, work, and thrive within. See you on the 4th!

**Shaun Servais**



Resident Richard Robinson and Shaun Servais take a break in the Hall of Honors.

## Special visit for Korean War veterans

*Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs*

Wi Man Kim, Senior Pastor of Thanksgiving Evangelical Church of Washington in Fairfax, VA recently visited the Residents of AFRH-W. Their purpose was to extend their gratitude to those who served during the Korean War.

Pastor Seung Jae Won, along with four women representing a Christian church in Busan, South Korea, chose to express their respect to Korean War Veterans through music and gifts. They bowed and saluted residents. They also bestowed gifts upon them in the Scott Theater, where they sang several songs of blessings in Korean and English.

Some of the gifts included socks, scarves and lapel pins. They also shared stories and photos taken during the Korean War. Resident Linda Hardy, who studies the language, even shared some laughs in Korean, with the visitors.

The day was fitting for a celebration, and the benefit was reciprocal for both the visitors, and the Residents alike.



Bill Shahda received a pair of Korean socks.



Residents admire their gifts.



Pastor Won and his special guests express their thanks to the Residents.

## Message from the Chief of Healthcare Services



On Thursday, June 16, the Healthcare Services staff took the opportunity to go out after work with our psychiatry support team from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. The primary purpose was to thank Dr. Shannon Ford (Major, U.S. Army), for her dedicated service and support to our Residents. Also on hand was her leader, Dr. Aniceto Navarro (Lt. Col., U.S. Army), who has also been a tremendous source of psychological support for our Residents. Both of these superb physicians have additionally been a tremendous support for our staff, assisting with ensuring that we are providing the highest level of person-centered care for our Residents. Dr. Ford will be missed, by all of us, and we wish her well in her new assignment as the Chief of Inpatient Psychiatry at William Beaumont Army Medical Center in Fort Bliss, Texas. Dr. Navarro will continue to provide service to the home on Tuesdays. Dr. Ford will be around for another week or two, so please wish her well as she embarks on her new journey.

**Michael Bayles**



Thank you Dr. Shannon Ford for your dedication to our veterans.

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



Before I begin, I want to take time to wish a belated Happy Father's Day to all fathers at both AFRH-W and AFRH-G. What happened? We raised our blinds and there was this bright, fiery thing in the sky. "Hello Sunshine ...

summer is here"!!! Many of us will be taking to the highways and by-ways to vacation or visit friends and relatives. Please enjoy yourself but remember to stay alert and return safely. The Wellness Clinic is constantly seeking new and better ways to serve the Residents of the

AFRH-W. With Mr. Ben Phillips, our new Pharmacy Technician, Residents are receiving the best of care at the Pharmacy Window. Medications are being delivered daily and in a timely manner. We are grateful to have Mr. Phillips on board. Beginning the first of July, the Podiatrist, Dr. Sanford will see our Residents on a "walk-in" basis - no appointment required. These two changes in the care provided by the Wellness Center are a "win-win" situation for us all.

The post office established new hours of operation on the first of June. To date, this change in service has not proven to be unsatisfactory to Residents. The mail is still being distributed in a timely manner.

The recent Resident vs. Staff softball game was enjoyed by both players and Resident "fans" alike. Many turned out and cheered for their favorite team and fun was had by all. The final score was ... "Too many to Too

Few." There will be more activities such as this (like the Fishing Rodeo at the Ponds), throughout the summer. Come join the fun and cheer on your favorite team. Be sure to watch the calendars for a listing of upcoming activities and be sure to join in the fun.

**SMOKERS - Please smoke in "Designated Smoking Areas" ONLY!!** In advance, "Happy Fourth of July."

Historical Events During the month of June:

1782 - The United States Congress accepted the design for the Great Seal of the United States. It was created by Charles Thompson.

1872 - Susan B. Anthony was fined for voting in the Presidential Election.

1944 - "D-DAY"!!! Allied Forces landed in

Normandy on Northern coast of France.  
1971 - The New York Times began publishing the "Pentagon Papers."  
1983 - Dr. Sally Ride became the first American woman in space.

**Marvin Archer**



Marvin greets a Soldier visiting the Home.



# From the AFRH-G Administrator



This month has been a very exciting time for me at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. I had the honor of emceeding the Home's celebration of the 241st Birthday of the United States Army. Earlier that day we also had our first Flag Day

Ceremony since we opened the new AFRH. Our recreation staff did a wonderful job putting both of these events together. I have and always will be a fan of our red, white, and blue symbol of freedom. My family can tell you I have always stopped to enjoy watching our beautiful flag fly wherever we are and whatever time of day it is. I enjoy looking at beautiful things, but to me it is hard to beat watching the flag of the United States of America flying atop a flag pole against the backdrop of a gorgeous, cloudless, blue sky. The colors of the stripes and the 50 stars representing

each state in the union always remind me of how blessed I am to live in a country that affords me the freedoms to live the wonderful life I lead. I encourage all Residents to participate in The Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey on July 11th through July 15th. Resident Services will also be passing out the updated Resident Guides at the exit of the Dining Hall on these dates and Residents can pick up the information to fill out the survey online. There will also be volunteers in the Computer Lab to help Residents who do not have a computer. Please take the time to fill out this survey

because your input means a lot to us. Whether you are totally satisfied or have suggestions, we want your input. We would like a panoramic view. Congratulations to all the Residents who participated in the Spring Games. I really had a great time at the Award Ceremony and I am proud of all of you who participated in these events. With the heat wave going on in South Mississippi consider taking a dip in our beautiful salt water pool. Thank each of you, our defenders of freedom, for serving our country!

Jeff Eads



Congratulations to 1st Place Winner in the Ladies Division, Doris Denton.



Congratulations to 1st Place Winner in the Men's 80 & Over Division, Ernie Fowler



Congratulations to 1st Place Winner in the Men's 79 & Under Division, Mike Longwell.



Thank you Recreation for putting on such a special Flag Day Ceremony, Army Birthday Celebration & Spring Game Awards Ceremony.

## 241st Army Birthday Celebration Always There Always Ready

Photos and Story by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On Tuesday, June 14, 2016 the AFRH-G held a 241st Army Birthday Celebration. A special video presentation, "U.S. Army: Prepared for Anything" was shown. The AFRH-G Administrator Jeff Eads welcome and introduction was followed by the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance. Birthday videos were also shown with messages from SMA Daniel A. Dailey and Hon. Patrick J. Murphy, Under Secretary of the Army.

Administrator Jeff Eads introduced guest speaker SFC John P. Necaie, United States Army. The cake was then cut by the oldest AFRH-G Army Resident Frances Scott and SFC John P. Necaie. The ceremony concluded with the "U.S. Army Song" followed by cake and refreshments.



AFRH wants to hear your military stories. Please contact the Public Affairs Office.

AFRH-G  
228-897-4429

AFRH-W  
202-541-7551

## Resident's artwork on display at the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs

Three Gulfport Resident artists were invited to meet the Director, Jamie Miller, and Chief Operations Officer, Joe Spraggins at the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR). Artwork by Residents Gerry Gorsky, Ray Eckert and Barbara Folk are displayed throughout the beautiful office at MDMR, which overlooks the Back Bay of Biloxi. It all came about when COO Joe Spraggins, who served 34 years in the military and attained the rank of brigadier general, was the guest speaker on Veterans Day at AFRH-G. He took a tour of the Home and saw how talented our Residents are and had an idea. He asked our Art Director, Milt Williams, if professional photographer Steve White could take photos of some of the coastal themed artwork generated by the Residents and have them printed on canvas.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is a state agency of Mississippi headquartered in the Eldon Bolton State Office building in Biloxi, Mississippi. It was created by the legislature as a new state agency in 1994 to manage Mississippi's coastal resources through the authority of the Commission on Marine Resources (CMR). The MDMR is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving the marine interests of Mississippi for present and future generations.

It was very impressive to get off the elevator at the MDMR and the first thing you see is a huge painting created by Residents of the AFRH. The canvasses that were made from photographs were taken in high digital format and actually look like the originals. The works of art are displayed throughout the hallways and in the conference room at the MDMR. Director Jamie Miller said it really means a lot to have artwork by veterans hanging in the conference room. Mr. Miller and Mr. Spraggins met with Gerry Gorsky, Ray Eckert and Barbara Folk in the conference room and discussed with them their time in the military.

COO Joe Spraggins said, "The best thing about having artwork from Residents of the AFRH-G is to be able to display their work at MDMR. Just to have the artwork of veterans who served our country is amazing and to know that this came from a veteran is fantastic. This is a great way to honor our veterans at the MDMR. Their artwork of coastal scenes is amazing. I saw their talent when I visited the AFRH on Veterans Day when I was the guest speaker. We still need to honor our veterans even after they are out of the military and I feel the MDMR is honoring them by displaying their art work."

The Residents were flattered to be invited by the Director and COO of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and were excited to see their work exhibited in such a picturesque way.



Ray Eckert, MDMR Director Jamie Miller, Barbara Folk, and Gerry Gorsky at the Mississippi Dept. of Marine Resources in Biloxi.

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



Vice RAC Chair, I will be the interim RAC Chairman until October 1, 2016, when a new RAC Chair is voted in.

As interim RAC Chair I was asked to host SGM Luther Thomas, who is the Senior Listed Advisor for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, during his visit on June 14th. This was a

I would like start this article off by thanking Henri Gibson for serving as our RAC Chair for the last 20 months. On behalf of the Residents at the AFRH-G, we appreciate Henri for his dedication in this tough job. Since I am the

great day for SGM Thomas to visit the Home because we had a delightful Flag Day Ceremony and also celebrated the 241st Army Birthday. SGM Thomas was very happy to meet Frances Scott, who is the oldest female Army veteran and also cut the cake at the Army Birthday Celebration. I had lunch with SGM Thomas and we had discussions that dealt with Resident issues, and he was introduced to many Residents.

At our Town Hall Meeting this month I was pleased to recognize and present the awards for Contract Employees of the Quarter. The Ability Works Property Management Ground Crew – Scott Necaie, Tony Williams, Danny Ellzey, Marlon Estrella, Carolyn Paymon and Carl Clements received the Contract Employees of the Quarter for keeping the entire grounds looking more like a resort on the Gulf Coast. They do such an extraordinary job keeping this

property perfectly manicured. Ability Works employee, Cortez Simms, also received this award for his outstanding service during the night crew. Cortez earned the nickname "Multi-tasker" for being able to accomplish multiple jobs at one time. Also, receiving a Contract Employee of the Quarter award is Cheyenne Frazer, who works for Global Connections to Employment Inc. (GCE), in the Dining Hall, for her ability to provide superb service to the Residents in the Dining Hall. Congratulations to all of you. These awards are very well deserved.

I am proud to be serving as your Interim RAC Chair for the next four months.

Please contact me if I can be of any assistance to you. I am here for you, the Residents of the AFRH-G.

Roy Cook



From left Roy Cook, SGM Luther Thomas, SFC John P. Necaie, and Administrator Jeff Eads at the Army Birthday.



# AFRH-W Activities

## National Park Service gives talk about places that commemorate the Civil War

By Christine Baldwin, Librarian

Photo by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

AFRH-W invited the National Park Service to give a talk to Residents about the monuments, statues and special places that commemorate the Civil War. A National Parks Ranger came with his slide show of the areas. With his in-depth knowledge, this Ranger shared the many places that the Park Service maintains for visitors. This includes areas little known to the average tourist, such as Scott Circle (along with a sculpture named for General Winfield Scott), which was erected in 1874 and is located in Northwest DC. After taking questions from Residents, Ranger O'Brian promised to come again and talk about other National Park places.



## Another Great Year with Norwood!

By Sarah Kenan & Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

Monday, May 16th ended our Intergenerational Bowling League with the 8th grade students of Norwood Middle School. Residents and Students had a blast bowling together and learning to adapt to each other's needs. AFRH-W Healthcare looks forward to next year and a new group of students to bowl with throughout the school year.



Recreation Therapy continually provides interesting activities like this one for Healthcare Residents.

## A one man band

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

James Quakenbush has a true musical gift. A Marine Corps veteran, he volunteers with Bugles Across America. This non-profit group provides free "live" music. James began playing trumpet at age 12, and hasn't looked back since. After leaving the Marine Corps in 1991, he continues to play music, professionally, as a studio musician, in symphonies, teaching and traveling on his solo gig, "JQ's One Man Band."

Residents in the Upper Levels of care were pleased to be serenaded by JQ, who played a mix of traditional songs and Big Band tunes. There were more than fifty residents on the Scott Terrace enjoying great music and temperatures in the mild 80's.

Our Residents thoroughly enjoyed JQ's visit and would be honored to host another visit again, soon!



## Author visits AFRH-W

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian

Photo by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

Thomas Ryan came to AFRH-W in late May to give a talk on his newest book *Spies, Scouts and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign*. The reason he came was that in February, his brother-in-law, Resident Victor Mosesso, gave him a tour of the facility. While at the library, he talked with the librarian about his book and said he would love to return and present a book talk. Mr. Ryan's program was very informative, with detailed Power Point slides demonstrating the movements of the intelligence operations for both sides. Many Residents stayed and talked with him and his wife about the book's topic, while enjoying cookies and iced tea. The couple live in Delaware, so it is easy to come visit here. Mr. Ryan graciously donated a signed copy of his book, along with another, *Essays on Delaware During the Civil War* to the library.



## 4th of July Celebration in Washington D.C.

5th Annual  
**JULY 4th CELEBRATION**  
Monday, July 4, 2016 4 - 9:30pm  
Armed Forces Retirement Home, DC  
(Center at Back Creek Church Rd. & Randolph St NW)

**Fireworks from National Mall visible**

- KIDS - Trout Fishing - 4:00-7:00 [bring own poles] - Kickball - 4:30  
Capture the Flag - 5:30 - Parachute Game - 6:30  
Judging kids who come with most patriotic bike/outfit - 7:30
- TRUCKS - Captain Cookie, Peruvian Chicken, and more!
- BEER - Anheuser Busch Beer truck
- MUSIC - Resident DJ Billy White - One-Man-Band Resident Waymon Lucas  
The Music Messiahs

Parking for \$10 dollar donation.

For More Info:  
friendsofsoldiers.org • Twitter: @friendsoldiers • Facebook: friendsofsoldiers

A Special Thanks to our Sponsors  
Anheuser-Busch DC:ICX AFRH

AFRH is a Federal Property and visitors may be required to submit to search of property and person.



# AFRH-G Activities

## Memorable moments

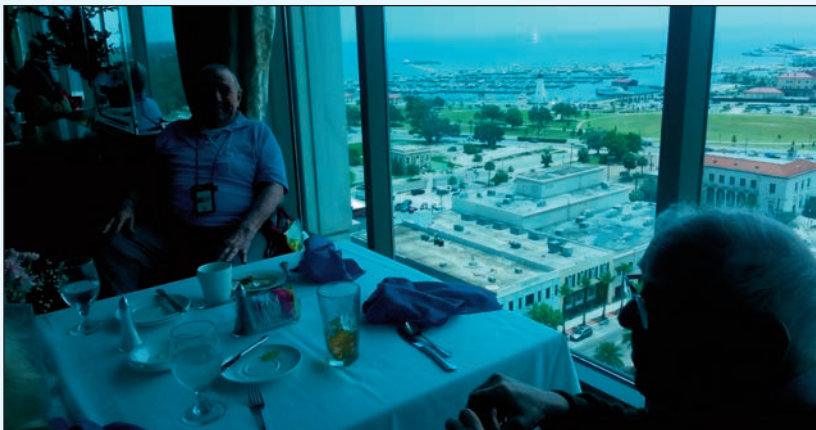
By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

Last month, the 255th Air Control Squadron assisted with the ice cream socials as arranged by LtCol David A. Kendrick, Commander and SMSgt John D. Turner, Support Systems Supervisor. Military members of the group escorted healthcare Residents to the community center, served ice cream and toppings, and another part of the group visited with Residents on Loyalty Hall for their ice cream social. Residents were all smiles, shared memories, and expressed how nice it was to reminisce with other members of the military.

Residents enjoyed a shopping trip to Wal-Mart followed by a view to remember lunch at the Great Southern Club located on the 15th floor of the Hancock Bank building in downtown Gulfport. The staff were very attentive, the view was fantastic, and the attention to detail was impeccable. We look forward to visiting again in the future.



Phil Ford takes in the panoramic view of the City of Gulfport from the Great Southern Club atop the Hancock Bank Building.



Maynard Howard & Harry Williamson enjoy lunch with a view!



Robert Royce visits with a comrade.



Hobert Wood is all smiles over ice cream.

## Blue Star Salute

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services

On May 21st, 2016 several AFRH Residents journeyed to Battleship Park in Mobile, Alabama to participate in a moving ceremony celebrating Armed Forces Day. The annual event draws military veterans from the entire southeast region. As part of the ceremony a re-enactment of the raising of the flag at Iwo-Jima was performed as well as a rescue demonstration by the Coast Guard off the bow of the USS Alabama. The traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall was on display as veterans paid homage to the fallen during the Vietnam War. Following the ceremony, the group enjoyed a meal at the nearby Ralph and Kacoo's Cajun Seafood Restaurant before traveling back home to the AFRH.



## Sounds by the Sea

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services

The annual tradition of the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra performing patriotic music at Jones Park in Gulfport was continued this year as they hosted a bus full of AFRH veterans for the annual concert. The AFRH Veteran's arrival was announced over the PA system as a standing ovation from the crowd ushered them in. Residents enjoyed complimentary snacks and refreshments during the show from the VIP seating. Following the concert the sky lit up with fireworks to celebrate Memorial Day.



## Fabulous fidget quilts

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

Rene Armbruster, daughter of Independent Living Resident, Ron Persing, donated twelve lap activity quilts to Recreation Therapy for Residents living on Loyalty Hall. The "Fidget Quilts" were made especially for the memory support area to help keep hands busy and laps warm.

Several Residents were thrilled to meet Rene and lit up with smiles when presented with a special quilt of their own. It was a small world when Ron Persing reminisced with and about his 1961, Kansas City, C124 Flight Engineer instructor who now lives on Loyalty Hall. Ron said, "He was the best teacher I ever had." We greatly appreciate the time, creativity, and thoughtfulness brought to our veteran Residents through three months dedicated to creating one lap quilt a week before coming to visit her father at the AFRH.

Thank you so much Rene!



Naomi Pointer was thrilled showing off her new quilt!



Susan Bergman, Rene Armbruster & father, Ron Persing with Fabulous "Fidget Quilts."

## Troop 5308 donates Girl Scout cookies

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist

Troop 5308 donated Girl Scout Cookies to the AFRH-Gulfport Home. On May 27th Troop 5308 arrived right before dinner time and found the Residents lined up for dinner. The Residents were eyeing those cookies before the girl scouts could get them out. They knew when there are girl scouts there would be cookies. The girl scouts gave out the cookies to any Resident that they could find. When it was all over there was not even a crumb of a cookie that could be found.





## WASHINGTON

### Margaritaville at AFRH-W

By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist

In lieu of Cinco de Mayo, Residents at AFRH-W joined together on Friday May 6th for the Margaritaville Social! Red, green and white traditional colors covered the Defender's Inn Bar and some Residents dressed in traditional colors as well! Mr. Sheldon Shorthouse was the bartender for the event and Mr. Brian Dowd assisted with serving. Residents enjoyed pretzels, peanuts, tortilla chips, and salsa along with their favorite margarita! The fiesta had a variety of margarita flavors including, strawberry, lemon, lime, mango, and peach. Some enjoyed one or two tasty flavors while others indulged in every flavor available! DJ Billy White played a variety of classic tunes along with a few cultural records, which set the perfect tone for dancing. Residents rejoiced and sang along to the music as they danced to the hits. A few even attempted some Merinque and Salsa dance moves! The social concluded with residents on the dance floor, toasting to the jubilant event. Muchas Gracias to Brian Dowd, Billy White, and Sheldon Shorthouse for making the Margaritaville Social muy bueno!!!



Sheldon Shorthouse aka "The Mixologist" pours margaritas.



Bob Crann and Johnnie Powell enjoy drinks during the Margarita Social.



Sheldon Shorthouse not only mixes and pours, he also serves.



Richard Walk, Chuck Felder, and Keith VanDoren enjoy the flavored margaritas.

## GULFPORT

### Crawfish Festival concert

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services

The Mississippi Coast Coliseum played host to over 30 AFRH Veterans this summer at the Annual Crawfish Festival held on the grounds of the Mississippi Coast Coliseum. Residents were treated to reserved seating for national country artists Neal McCoy and Travis Tritt. Thousands in attendance enjoyed the classic sounds of country music and the delicious smells of crawfish in the nighttime air.



### "Bra-Veau" for our Veterans!

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services

On June 27th the veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home were honored as part of a military appreciation event at the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino. Special discounts were given to AFRH Residents to see the musical circus presentation of "Bra- Veau".

Residents were recognized prior to the show and given special priority seating. The AFRH veterans were highlighted as part of the evening and various informational facts were announced regarding the Gulfport AFRH facility. Special Thanks to the Beau Rivage staff for extending this offer to our veterans.



### The Royal Paws, A very special experience

Story & Photos by Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant



Brian Mason and TJ Mareno are very special volunteers who bring happiness, smiles, comfort, excitement and good health to all the Residents here at AFRH-G through the pet therapy program. Brian and TJ own and have shared their dogs on each second and fourth Saturday of every month for the last 4.5 years. They began their pet visits with Prince and Charlie, two of their four Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. Patch, a male Lab/Afghan mix, was added to the visits but has since retired. Now, their four Cavalier King Charles Spaniels:

Prince, Charlie, Riley and Bella, make their way down the halls of the health care floors. "It's all about watching the Veterans' faces light up," says Brian Mason. "We are honored and blessed for what the Veterans have done for us, this is little compared to that," adds TJ Mareno.

The "Royal Pet Visit" begins as soon as the elevator doors open. The dogs "walk slowly" to the independent living Residents who wait for them in the lobby to arrive promptly at 1400. Don Johnston is there each visit with plenty of treats for the "Royal Paws" to begin their adventures into the heart of our Veterans. John Marine and Kitty Gill are more Independent Living Residents who share in the experience of the visit. "You are a fine little girl, says Kitty Gill to Bella. Bella is the newest addition to the pet visits. She is an eleven month old girl, the only girl besides TJ in the Mason/Mareno household. Bella easily crawls up into everyone's heart.

After a visit with the Independent Living Residents, the "Royal Paws" head up to Allegiance Hall, Valor Hall and Loyalty Hall. "Seeing these dogs keeps me going," says Edward Clark. "I love seeing these dogs," he adds. "They just make my day," says John Deming. The visits on the upper levels of care consist of a special time with the animals, a non-interrupted special moment with the pets and the Resident. The dogs lead, while Brian and TJ hold on to the leashes, down each hallway on the C-Tower second floor and the D-Tower to ensure all the Residents have had an opportunity to enjoy what no man can do. We thank you, Brian, TJ and the many paws for providing a special experience to our Veterans here at AFRH-G. You two are very special people.

