



## AFRH-WASHINGTON

# First Family serves residents on Thanksgiving eve

Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs



After President Barack Obama pardoned Tater and Tot, the final two turkeys of his presidency, he had another engagement to attend.

The Obama family, including the First Lady and daughter, Sasha, as well as members of Mrs. Obama's family; arrived at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, where they were greeted by COO, Dr. Tim Kangas and Executive Officer Charles Hollings.

The First Family has a tradition of volunteering. Last year, on Thanksgiving eve, they served homeless veterans. This year, AFRH-W residents (who all served in the military) were humbled by the

Presidential visit during their dinner. Resident Catherine Deitch, who served in the Army during WWII said, "It's such a thrill to see President Obama. I'll relive this memory when I'm alone in my room!"

AFRH-W is home to over four hundred veterans. Staff and residents welcomed the Obamas with warm Thanksgiving greetings. The President rolled up his sleeves, and spent over an hour serving up hearty portions of turkey, and taking the time to thank each resident for their service. Residents also enjoyed sides of dressing and sweet potatoes served by the rest of the family.

After their departure, residents were all a buzz of how gracious they were to have met a sitting president in their lifetime. "It was a once in a lifetime experience!" said Vietnam vet Ernest Janes.



## AFRH-GULFPORT

# AFRH celebrates Veterans Day with an Open House and Ceremony

Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs



Everyone loves freedom but everyone isn't willing to serve our country and fight for it. On November 11th we honored those who have served our country and those who are still serving. There was no better way to celebrate our veterans on this special day than at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. The AFRH-G

started the day out with the Patriot Guard Motorcycles coming through the gate with American flags blowing in the wind behind the motorcycles, trailed by three helicopter landings in front of the building. The Harrison County Sheriff's helicopter landed first. Next, the U.S. Coast Guard's helicopter landed and was followed by Ochsner Hospital's Air Ambulance. The Gulfport High School band played the pre-ceremony patriotic music, and then guest speaker Major General James H. Garner (U.S. Army Retired) talked about the meaning and the importance of Veterans Day. Anniston Elementary 4th Grade students put on a nationalistic and stellar musical performance. There were an abundant number of static displays and presentations on the grounds of the AFRH for everyone to view. Paintings, arts, and crafts made by our many talented resident artists were available for purchase and the community was treated to tours throughout the day given by resident volunteer tour guides.

The AFRH celebrates Veterans Day 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. A very special thank you goes out to all who participated in making this such an extraordinary event.

On Veterans Day we honored our veterans and expressed 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.



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# AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988 Web site: [www.AFRH.gov](http://www.AFRH.gov) Email: [Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov](mailto:Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov)

Christopher Kelly - Public Affairs Officer

Rebecca Newton - Washington Public Affairs

Becki Zschiedrich - Gulfport Public Affairs

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

## Serving 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 & 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, #584  
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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 - Trudy Millward

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian



Trudy Millward was born in Pennsylvania. She attended grade school in a one-room school house and ended up graduating from York Springs High School. There was no money for college, but the Hershey Company was hiring people to make K and C rations for the troops during World War 2. So Trudy got a job there. Unfortunately, due to trouble getting cocoa beans from South America, Hershey started laying off workers. Trudy and several of her friends went to the Middletown Air Base and filled out applications to work for the

Civil Service. She got a job working in a warehouse, building boxes for guns and ammunition to ship overseas and sometimes even went to the flight line to check off the inventory of these boxes. While there, Trudy saw recruiting posters for women to join the services and decided to join the U.S. Navy. She had Boot Camp in the Bronx, NY and lived in apartments taken over by the Navy. Trudy remembers taking the troop train to Oklahoma, where again there were special women's dorms. She had Yeoman training there and was sent to Washington, DC to the Naval Security Station, where she worked in the Photo Lab, developing and printing confiscated Japanese film. Later, Trudy actually typed and decoded Japanese messages! After being discharged at the end of the war, she went to the

Navy Department in the Post-War Planning Office. She then attended Photography School in Philadelphia under the G.I. Bill. After graduation, Trudy went back to Middletown Air Base in the Special Services Office in charge of a newspaper for the GIs stationed there. She lived in Harrisburg and joined the Navy Reserves. Trudy was recalled to active service during the Korean Conflict and her status was changed from Yeoman to Communication Technician. She reported to Washington, DC and when asked to volunteer to go to Hawaii, Trudy said yes. It was here that Trudy learned to teletype and she took a class to recognize the Russian language as a Radio Operator. On duty one Saturday, Trudy got a phone call and a man said "Will you marry me?" "No!" she replied, "I'm not getting married and who are you?" It turns out that this man was always behind her in the inspection line and was very interested in dating her. He was her instructor for the Radio Operator class and 10 months later, she and Blaine were married in a chapel at Schofield Barracks by a Methodist Chaplain. They moved into an unfinished house and shortly after Trudy got a call that her Mother had died. She flew out on the Tiger Line with GI's flying home and half way there the plane had to turn back with mechanical problems. On the second attempt, they got stopped at the end of the runway. Third time was a charm as Trudy flew out with Admirals and Generals! Trudy put in for a transfer back to Washington, DC and while on this bereavement leave, it came through. She checked into WAVES Quarters until her husband could get a transfer. She worked out of Arlington Hall Station. In fact, Trudy had to get

permission to move out of the barracks, when Blaine reported in. Other memories include surviving a typhoon in the Philippines, avoiding being evacuated in the last minutes. When her husband retired from the Navy, they both worked for the National Security Administration. They were stationed in Alaska, where Trudy remembers being in the famous Good Friday earthquake in 1964. When they both retired, they moved to Albuquerque, NM, where they lived for the next 30 years. Trudy has always been an active person. She learned to ice skate and golf in Alaska and square dance in New Mexico. Also, she and her husband kept a dark room in their mobile home in New Mexico for their photography. She took courses in Parliamentary Rules when she was a WAVE and used these skills for many years in different organizations. In fact she was the parliamentarian for the National Association of WAVES for 30 years. She had also written the by-laws for the Booster club. Trudy also became State President of the New Mexico Chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees and was also President of New Mexico Mobile Home Owners. She also belonged to the "Young at Heart" choir. Her most enjoyable non-work trip was to The Holy Land in 1996. Trudy came to AFRH-W in July because it's located near family.



## AFRH-G Veteran Highlight - Helen Cassanova Bieda

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian



Helen Cassanova Bieda was born and raised locally in Biloxi, MS. Her father was one of the earliest automobile painters and her mother was a "very good" housewife. Helen was the first born of three siblings. She attended Biloxi High School, where she enjoyed working on the newspaper staff. After graduation in 1941, she began working with the phone company as an administrative assistant. Some of her friends began talking to her about helping with the war effort. One of the posters she saw really caught her attention. It read, "Be the gal, behind the guy, behind the gun." Her

chief operator at the phone company found out and told her that she would not release Helen because she was essential personnel to the company. To prove her supervisor wrong, that Monday morning she signed up for the Navy as a WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service).

Helen was sent to boot camp in Bronx, NY. Before this, the furthest she had ever travelled was to New Orleans, LA. As part of her training, she was given an aptitude test that suggested she go into meteorology. Wanting to get straight to work and not attend another school, Helen opted instead to work in Cleveland, OH for the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts. She served in the War Bond Issuing Department. Living in the area was a great location for her to visit other big cities during her three-day weekends. An avid music lover, she also took advantage of free tickets to see the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra on Sundays. This was a "big life for a small town girl." After two years, she accrued her allotted points and was discharged from the Navy.

Once home, Helen decided to use the GI Bill to attend Newcomb in New Orleans and pursued a career in leisure services. Upon graduation, she took a job as a recreation director with Occupation Forces in Tokyo working with the 7th Calvary Regiment. It was in Tokyo that she met her first husband, who was a medic. The couple eventually had four children. Her marriage did not work out so as a single mother she returned to Biloxi to work at Keesler Air

Force Base to support her children. She met her second husband, Louis, who also worked on the base. She was so happy to find someone who loved her children enough to treat them as his own. Soon after, the couple added two more children to their family.

Because Louis was in the Air Force, the family had to travel. Helen decided to stay home with the children to raise them and have time to devote to her children's various school and extracurricular activities. Once her children were old enough, she began working as the state coordinator for TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) where she stayed for twenty years. Eventually the couple retired to enjoy their life in Ocean Springs.

One year before Hurricane Katrina, Louis sadly passed away. When the hurricane hit, it destroyed her house and car. Within a year's time, Helen lost her husband, house, and vehicle. Two of her children came to help restore the home. Louis always had thoughts of moving to the Naval Home but Helen always felt as though the rooms were too small. When AFRH-G had its groundbreaking, she was in attendance and got a chance to see how nice the facility was going to be. This is when she decided to put her name on the list to move in. Because Helen had always served on various church councils and choirs, it was ideal that she has volunteered as the cantor for AFRH-G's chapel. She also works in the Lord's Cabin. One of Helen's greatest achievements while living in the home was in 2013 when she and some of the other women in the home were photographed and displayed as Calendar Girls, a project that raised \$20,000 for Feed My Sheep. Presently, she enjoys daily workouts in the fitness center to stay in shape. She is enrolled in My Story, a creative writing class offered to residents by a local editor, for them to work on their life story. Helen says that the class is a blessing and one of the great reasons she enjoys living here at AFRH-G.





# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



November has always been one of my favorite months (more to come) and now it will also be one of my most memorable. AFRH-W was privileged to host the 44th President of the United States, President Barack Obama, the First Lady, Michelle, their daughter Sasha, and other members of their family, Wednesday, 23 November. The First Family served a pre-Thanksgiving dinner to the AFRH-W Residents, while other friends and family of the President built care packages and holiday cards for the troops in the AFRH-W Community Center. The First Family greeted our Residents with gratitude for their service and a magnificent meal made by the Dining Staff. It was certainly a day I won't soon forget.

As I said, November is one of my favorite months; my two favorite holidays occur this month, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. For me, it is a time of reflection, granted, my thinking has evolved over time. I can say I have always appreciated Veterans Day, my father served over 25 years in the National Guard, I have fond memories of him in uniform, and then of course I joined the National Guard as a junior in high school, at the age of 17. My senior year of high school was the first time I ever spoke publicly, to a packed auditorium, as the keynote speaker on Veterans Day. Thanksgiving has always been about family to me, and as a life-long suffering

Detroit Lions fan, the anguish of watching them tormenting me just prior to dad carving the turkey, sometimes with a little too much vigor, after a horrible loss.

Many of you know that I also served as an advisor on a Forward Operating Base in Iraq, it was an experience that made a profound change in my life. War was no longer some abstract concept, but something very real, something tangible and palpable. I learned what service really meant by watching, living and learning from some of the most unassuming and courageous men and women I had ever met. I also learned about the bonds that are built and the feeling of family every bit as thick as blood. So November is really about family to me, by birth, blood, or sweat and tears. It is a time to remember those we served with, and those that supported us so that we could serve. Since returning from Iraq, I have become much more aware and thankful of my wife and children. I served because they allowed me to and supported me. Just as my wife does again, allowing me to serve all of you, as she remains in Michigan taking care of my youngest, and our home. As we celebrate on Veterans Day, let us also remember to be thankful to those who served silently, and without fanfare, in support of us.

Dr. Timothy Kangas



President Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, and Dr. Kangas talk to resident Farris Dozier on November 23rd.

## Profiles in courage

By Connie Favret, St. James Elementary Librarian  
Photo by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs



The Veterans Day Program on Tuesday afternoon, November 8, was one of the best events ever enjoyed in our library at St. James Elementary. Our guests of honor were six members from the Armed Forces Retirement Home who shared their memories of military service with 71 third and fourth grade students, their teachers and many parents.

Our guests of honor included Paul Hoffer, and his wife Georgia; James and Rita Ball, Ernest Rousch, and Clifford Smith. We planned this event as our way to thank veterans for their devotion to duty. Their service has safeguarded our essential American freedoms, in times of war and peace. This event, hosted by several sixth grade students, was designed in a "town hall" format and included a lively question and answer session with plenty of opportunity for poignant and humorous stories. Our sixth grade presenters, who did an excellent job, included: Emerson Morris, Luke Harris, London Lafferty, Ainsley Kate Thriffiley, Emma Holter, Thomas Owen, Chad Hilton and Clay Hilton. This event began with a beautiful prayer led by Emerson Morris and concluded with Chad and Clay Hilton presenting the veterans with a specially commissioned cloisonné St. James pin.

Mr. Paul Hoffer, age 95, is a former Marine who served during World War II. Paul served at Ewa, the Palmyra Atoll and at Guadalcanal. Both Paul and Georgia are devout Catholics and currently volunteer at the AFRH chapel. Paul recollected his father's advice to never neglect his faith and said he never missed an opportunity to attend Mass during wartime, even if it meant walking six miles to attend.

James & Rita Ball, both veterans, shared their stories with us. Rita joined at age 18, but James was drafted during the Korean War. He described it as being "dragged kicking and screaming" into military service. He later decided it was a good experience for him and re-enlisted and then served in Vietnam. James & Rita, also lifelong Catholics, pointed out the good behavior of our third & fourth grade students as evidence of a "good Catholic school education."

Ernest Rousch, one of our great friends and library lecturers, spent 30 years in the Navy. He said he always loved reading stories and seeing movies about setting out to sea. As a young man he dreamed of having great adventures around the world aboard ships. He recalled visiting Nagasaki, Japan, only seven years after the United States dropped the atomic bomb there. He remembered seeing the priest's house that survived the destruction. He got to serve aboard a nuclear submarine but prays we never have to use weapons of war like nuclear missiles.

Clifford Smith, another great friend and library lecturer, actually needed his father's signature to enlist for military duty while he was still in high school, at age 17. He said he always wanted to be a Navy man and could assure his place on submarines that way. Mr. Smith said he would do it "all over again" if he could. He is currently a prolific artist and a great contributor to our library.

Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs, brought many works of art created for St. James students by an anonymous Vietnam veteran. These artworks were added to our Veterans Art Show and Sale outside the library. Dozens of items, created by Mr. Clifford Smith and other veterans, were donated as a fundraising vehicle for our library. All proceeds from this sale will directly benefit our library.

## Ambassador for peace

Story and photo by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

Recently, resident Lee Smith was bestowed an "official proclamation" and Ambassador for Peace Medal, by the Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, Republic of Korea. This honor serves as a memento for those who served during the Korean War from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953. Mr. Smith is elated to receive this expression of appreciation.

The sentiment reads:

*It is a great honor and pleasure to express the everlasting gratitude of the Republic of Korea and our people for the service you and your countrymen have performed in restoring and preserving our freedom and democracy.*

*We cherish in our hearts the memory of your boundless sacrifices in helping us reestablish our Free Nation.*

*In grateful recognition of your dedicated contributions, it is our privilege to proclaim you an "AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE" with every good wish people of the Republic of Korea.*

*Let each of us reaffirm our mutual respect and friendship that they may endure for generations to come.*



## A double honor

By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

Honoring our service members, The Salute to the Military, was held at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum where the guest speaker, U.S. Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James, was presented a gift print titled "Gulf Turtle" by artist Gerry Gorsky. Residents Ray Eckert and Ron Washington together with Gerry had several original works of art on display at The Salute to the Military where over a thousand people

attended. Thank you all for your generosity and participation. It was an honor to be able to present such amazing art work for the guest of honor during this event.

Y'all keep looking for those opportunities, for both artist and viewer...Art is an Adventure.



U.S. Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James (right) holding the "Gulf Turtle" print at The Salute to the Military. Photo by Steve Linhoss, courtesy of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce.



## From the AFRH-W Administrator



Dear AFRH-W residents, staff, families and friends, November has been a historic month for all AFRH-W stakeholders! As always, Washington campus employees have remained diligent as we seek to complete our service mission for our veteran residents. In these daylight-shortened days, we still found time to welcome distinguished visitors, check-in with the Advisory Council, and celebrate Thanksgiving AFRH-W style. There are many perks to living in the Nation's Capital. One perk is being close to the legislative and executive headquarters of the United States Government – the U.S. Capitol and White House. Residents were invited to visit both, recently. Then, on November 23rd, the First Family came to visit us!

The 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, First Lady, Michelle Obama, and their daughter, Sasha, as well as other family members and friends, visited the campus to spread holiday cheer. For many staff members and residents this was a once in a lifetime event, made possible in part by being close neighbors to the Head of State. The President served turkey in celebration of the Thanksgiving Holiday as a way to give thanks to the veteran residents here at the AFRH-W.

Additionally, the highest ranking enlisted Marine brought his family to the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, to volunteer on Thanksgiving Day. Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Green served beans, carrots and rolls with a hearty greeting for each resident.

Veterans Day was also celebrated in a big way on November 11th. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser addressed veterans during a ceremony here at the Home. Thank you to our Ombudsman Robb Webb for being the master of ceremonies and our Combined Federal Campaign manager. Through Robb's efforts of getting the word out, we

have been able to raise nearly \$12,000 for various charities participating in the CFC. It was very touching to see the significant generosity of the Federal Workforce at AFRH-W who turned out to "Show Some Love."

The Advisory Council convened November 17th to discuss matters important to the home's operation. I had the opportunity to brief the council on the accomplishments achieved during the previous six-months. Most notable is the re-accreditation and initial accreditation of two of our programs. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities re-accredited our continuing care retirement community. Then, the Independent Living Plus program was surveyed and accredited by The Joint Commission. Also during the council meeting, our Resident Advisory Committee Chairman, Sheldon Shorthouse, briefed the Council on matters concerning the residents.

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the residents, employees, contractors, volunteers and other stakeholders for making AFRH-W such a wonderfully vibrant place to work and thrive. We have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season.

Shaun Servais



## 241st Marine Corps Birthday Celebration

By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist



proceeded with the traditional U.S. Marine Corps Cake Cutting, honoring Marine veteran recipient Mrs. Norma Rambow, and the youngest Marine present Lance Cpl. Darius Mick. The ceremony concluded with expressions of admiration to all Marines and all veterans across the globe. A special thanks to 1st Sgt. Richard, Mrs. Norma Rambow, Lance Cpl. Darius Mick and all the participants for making the 241st Marine Corps Birthday celebration a success. Happy Birthday Marines and Semper Fidelis!

On Friday November 4th, 2016, AFRH-W celebrated the 241st Marine Corps Birthday in the Scott Hall of Honors. The Ombudsman, Mr. 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 by 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. The ceremony continued with the guest of honor, 1st Sgt. Jimmy F. Richard Jr. Richard's personal decorations include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with with two gold stars in lieu of third award. In August 2015 1st Sgt. Richard received orders to Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. where he currently serves as the first sergeant for Company A. Richard was delighted and honored to be a part of the celebration and to share his past and present experiences with all AFRH residents. The celebration



## Retiree Appreciation Day

By Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) are designed to be a source of the latest information for retirees, providing an opportunity to hear developments in benefits and services from guest speakers, renew ID cards, get medical checkups, and various other services like the fantastic possibility to live at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. RADs occur from installation to installation throughout the year.

Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs Specialist and residents Frank Lawrence and Patricia Knorr recently visited the RAD at Fort Meade. Between the three, they personally spoke with close to four hundred retirees, answering questions and providing brochures. Plans are in the works to attend more local events, promoting the Home. Stay tuned.



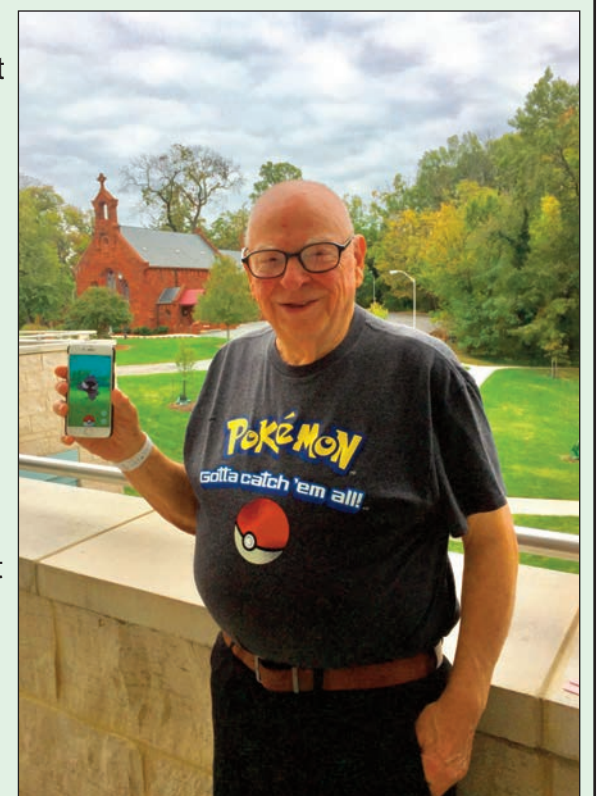
## My Pokémon GO experience

By Joe Frogge, AFRH-W Resident

I first discovered Pokémon GO in July 2016 after seeing it on a news program as the most downloaded game with millions playing it. It didn't take long for me to become obsessed by it. It is not just about finding Pokémon, but has several strategies of what to do when you find them. A mathematical decision must be made with each find. Aside from that, it is a game of visiting poke stops and poke gyms. This requires a lot of walking. I average about 4.5 miles a day visiting poke stops. It is good for health and good for meeting people. Each poke stop has information about the individual stop.

I am far advanced in the game. Of 40 levels, I am currently at level 34. I have caught all 142 of the available Pokémon. Now it is about powering up for gym fighting. I may be the first 75-year-old to catch all 142. My personal goal is to be the first to complete all the levels.

Pokémon Go is a free reality game developed by Niantic that uses location-based technology for iOS, Android, and Apple Watch devices.



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



The Marine Corps 241st birthday was on the 10th of November. On the 4th of the month, AFRH-W celebrated in the Hall of Honors. The guest of honor was 1st Sgt. Jimmy F. Richard, Jr., USMC. A short ceremony was followed by a cake cutting and the awards of AFRH Challenge Coins to the oldest and youngest Marines present. A birthday celebration was later held in the Defenders Inn.

Veterans Day observance included the traditional wreath laying at the flagpole, by Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, and residents James Kidd and David Kaetzel. Other festivities included an ice cream social and karaoke at the Defenders Inn with volunteers from Zeta Phi Beta sorority. On November 18th, residents were entertained by the U.S. Navy "Country Current" Band at our RT Dance and Social.

The dance was sponsored in part by the Capital Chapter of the Nam Knights of America. Turnout was among the best we've had at any event.

AFRH-W will hold its annual Christmas tree lighting on December 6th, and our Christmas party will be held on the 16th of December. Watch the weekly bulletin for more information on both these events.

-On November 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln delivered his now famous Gettysburg Address at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, PA.

-On November 11, 1885, General George S Patton was born in San Gabriel, CA.

-On November 11, 1918, at 11:11 the armistice was signed that ended World War I.

-On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese forces, forcing the United States to declare war on Japan, thus beginning our involvement in World War II.

-On November 4, 1979, about 500 young Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran, and took 90 hostages, including 52 Americans who were subsequently held for the next 444 days.

-On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall was opened after 28 years as a symbol ending the Cold War.



DC Mayor Muriel Bowser and Sheldon Shorthouse at the Veterans Day Observance Ceremony.

Sheldon Shorthouse



# From the AFRH-G Administrator



Greetings to all,  
I am still as excited today as I was when I first toured the Armed Forces Retirement Home the Friday after Thanksgiving last year. The excitement stems from getting to serve our residents, who served our country to protect the many freedoms we enjoy today. Another part of the excitement comes from the thrill I had to emcee our Veteran's Day celebration on campus, which is also the day we conduct our annual open house. Little did I know the very next day, I would have the honor to represent AFRH-G in the Gulf Coast's Veteran's Day parade. I went to the pre-parade reception that morning to represent the Home and found out through Chuck Pinney, a resident of the Home and member of the Corvette Club, that I was riding in the parade in his Corvette. It's not every day a poor boy from South Carolina gets to ride in a Corvette and a convertible at that! Words cannot describe how proud I was to participate in the same parade that one of our very own, Tom Adams, was the Co-Grand Marshal. The parade itself was awesome as we drove past numerous thankful and patriotic Americans.

Another highlight: I had the pleasure to emcee the Marines 241st birthday celebration. The event was well attended even though we have less than two dozen Marines residing here. The Marine Corps has always been an elite fighting force, but with the limited number we have at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, I guess that is a perfect example of their slogan, "The few. The proud. The Marines."

Another Thanksgiving Day has come and gone and with each passing year I have

more reasons to be thankful. Every day I am surrounded by terrific residents and employees who love our residents and love their jobs. What a blessing it is to come to a place where residents recognize they have a wonderful place to call home and are loved by the staff. I have often heard we should count our blessings but for me that would be impossible. The blessings are continuous.

Jeff Eads



Jeff Eads purchased a beautiful piece of artwork from resident artist, Gerry Gorsky.



Jeff Eads with guest speaker Major General James H. Garner (U.S. Army Retired), at the Veterans Day Open House.

## Happy 241st Birthday U.S. Marine Corps

Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

The AFRH-G held a 241st birthday ceremony on November 10th in honor of the U.S. Marines. The USMC official birthday message video was shown. Administrator Jeff Eads welcomed everyone to the ceremony.

After an invocation by Pastor Michael Gibson, guest speaker General William L. Nyland, USMC Retired spoke to the residents and visitors.

Guest speaker General Nyland, the oldest AFRH Marine resident Paul Hoffer, and the youngest active duty Marine in attendance cut the cake.



## Keesler Retiree Day

By Christopher Alexander, Chief Resident Services

On November 4th, AFRH-Gulfport Public Affairs and Admissions staff participated in the Keesler Air Force Base Retiree Appreciation Day. The morning was dedicated to providing valuable information to retirees and their family in the area. Over 100 attendees were able to learn about health resources in the area and skills to stay healthy. While most retirees were aware of the Home, there were many questions answered about eligibility, cost, and services. This was the third consecutive year the Home has participated and this year shared information about the Veterans Day Open House. What a great chance to let the residents of the Gulf Coast know about both Homes!



Residents from the Gulfport Home even stopped by for a visit.

## Volunteers with wagging tails

By Melodie Menke, Volunteer Coordinator

On any given day you can spot one of our four-legged community volunteers wagging their tails and trotting down the hallways. Lucy, Sassy, Eve, Mickey, Bella, Prince, Charlie, Riley and our newest addition, Chewy, visit the Residents and staff at different times during the month. Many of the dogs have been visiting for years and lead the way on each floor, stopping to visit and greet old friends and make new ones. Pet Therapy is known to have a positive influence on one's health with improved energy levels, reduced anxiety and lowered blood pressure. For staff and Residents, the jingles of the collars are just happy sounds that our extended fur-family is visiting at AFRH-G.



Volunteer, Chewy the dog, and his owner Julie Rachie.

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



A simple definition of communication: the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else.

A simple definition of Advocacy: the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal.

How in the world am I going to tie that together you ask? One of the most often heard questions I and the Floor Representatives receive is, "What do you do?" One of the key tasks we perform daily is listening; whether it is in the dining hall line, while eating, while walking down a hallway, while enjoying a moment of respite outside, or in numerous other places we find ourselves with other residents. We strive to hear what is on your mind and then become your voice to the administration

and agency.

Last month I wrote that your voice absolutely matters. While we strive to keep a feel for the pulse of the campus and gather an understanding of issues of importance to us, the residents, we cannot do it without you doing your part. To tell us "I do not want to be involved," "I don't go to meetings," and then say "I have no idea what's going on around here," seems pretty contradictory.

Communication is a two way street. I can honestly say I do not have time to tell 500 plus residents everything going on via a personal daily briefing. Behind the scenes your Floor Representatives and I are hearing and acting. We meet with the appropriate staff to discuss issues of importance to you individually or collectively. We hope we can find a common ground that will satisfy you. When you feel you are not getting an answer or a result acceptable to you we are available to assist. We are not a panacea that solves everyone's issues but we do try to make sure our home is, and remains, a premiere

retirement facility.

Thoughtful dialogue goes a long way. We want to hear what is on your mind and ask that you listen and hear the reply. It may not be the reply you wanted but we will be honest and do what we can for you. Often, an answer is not immediate. Your patience is appreciated while we wait for a reply. If it is critical we can escalate an issue. Seldom is any issue so critical that an immediate reply or action is needed. We understand the urgency to you and hope you understand that there are over 500 residents who feel their issue is urgent as well. Please work with us as we work for you advocating ideas, suggestions, recommendations and representation to AFRH management for the improvement of operations that affect your morale, safety or health. I wish you a safe, happy and healthy holiday season.

Phil Ford



Command Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas, Jr., Senior Enlisted Advisor, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs was on the premises Monday, November 21, 2016. He held an open, sometimes spirited, forum for the RAC and Residents. The residents are grateful for the interest our senior enlisted of all services have, as it concerns their welfare, morale, safety, health, ideas, suggestions, recommendations and representation to AFRH Administration.



# AFRH-W Activities

## Joint Services National Military Family Volunteer Day

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS

This is the 12th year that the AFRH-W has hosted the Joint Services National Military Family Volunteer Day. Every year we bring in 150+ volunteers of all ages, and this year was no exception. The volunteers are split into groups that complete multiple service projects around the Home. It starts with an opening ceremony every year where all the volunteers and residents gather in the Community Center. This year our Ombudsman, Robb Webb, welcomed the volunteers, and for the third year in a row, Amanda Jensema sang the National Anthem. Administrator Shaun Servais presented an Administrator coin to the servicemembers representing each branch. What made this year's opening different, was an Honor Salute. Once the ceremony was over the volunteers were whisked off to their service stations. This year's projects included a wheelchair wash, cleaning the dining room chairs on the Healthcare units, autumn decorating the Sheridan lobby and Scott Community Center, raking leaves, winterizing the ponds and gardens, dusting and organizing the library shelves in Scott and Sheridan, visiting Healthcare residents, and for the kids: they made cards. All service projects were completed in record time this year because we had so many volunteers! I would like to thank staff members Adrienne Dawkins, Matthews Roberts, Jerry Carter, Christine Baldwin, Steven Briefs, and residents Sheldon Shorthouse, David Kaetzel, and Bill Stephens who all were project leads this year. Thank you for all your help and I look forward to next year!



Volunteers gathered in the Community Center to receive their assignment for the day.

## Leisure World Chorale visits AFRH-Washington

By Steven Briefs, Supervisor of Recreation Therapy

It was a great afternoon for AFRH residents when the Chorale singers from Leisure World in Silver Spring, Maryland came down to our Home and performed a wonderful variety of songs from such composers as, Irving Berlin, Paul Simon, Rogers and Hammerstein and many others. This was the fourth year in a row they have shared their talents with us, and each year gets better than the previous one.

Afterwards, members of the group came and greeted our residents, thanking them for their service to our country. It was very moving to see the camaraderie between them and our residents.

We are already looking forward to next year!



## Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps serves residents on Thanksgiving Day

Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

In the spirit of the season, the highest ranking enlisted Marine brought his family to the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, to volunteer on Thanksgiving Day. Ronald L. Green has served in his current role since 2015, and has visited both campuses of AFRH on many occasions.

Sgt. Maj. Green served up beans, carrots and rolls with a greeting and a smile for each resident.



## A Presidential autograph

Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs



When resident Harry Fossett was presented the 2013 Commemorative Presidential Print as a "thank you" for his support of the President's second term, he didn't expect what would occur a few years after that. Only the "best supporters" receive the prestigious artwork. For Harry's efforts shuttling voters to the polls in 2012, the President and Democratic National Committee expressed their appreciation.

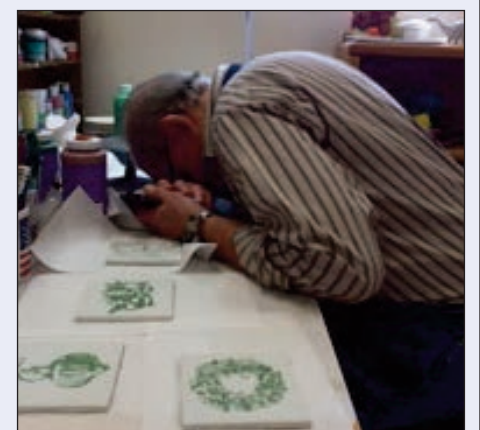
This year, on Thanksgiving eve, President Obama and the First Family came to AFRH-W to serve a Thanksgiving dinner to the residents. Harry brought his print with him. President Obama, who has been gracious to citizens throughout his presidency by acknowledging service and volunteerism, autographed the print: To Harry – Best wishes! Barack Obama.

## Arts and crafts updates

By Lori Thompson, Art Specialist

Well folks, it's that time of year again: when the elves are working hard around the clock, in preparation for the Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair (as well as creating our National Creative Veterans Festival entries)! This year the Fair will be held on Tuesday, December 6th from 12:00-2:00 and 4:00-6:30 PM, in front of the Scott Community Center. We have many unique items for your holiday gift list! You may also want to mark your calendars for our annual Holiday Card Making Social on Tuesday, the 13th @ 1:30 PM in Ceramics.

Additionally, we have a new volunteer in the arts and crafts shop: Virginia Dietrich. Virginia is a long-time crafter and has recently gleaned new ideas from area workshops. She is sharing her new techniques with residents (and myself)! In Virginia's first workshop on November 29th we created mosaic glass jewelry. This was an exciting new method. Virginia is also assisting with our Ceramic Pouring classes. Thank you Virginia for sharing your enthusiasm for the arts with us!



## RT Halloween Happy Hour and Poker Run

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapist and Sarah Kenan, Recreation Assistant

On Tuesday, October 25th the AFRH-W Recreation Therapy Department hosted the "RT Halloween Happy Hour & Poker Run" in the Scott Community Center. The event kicks-off the Halloween season! Approximately seventy-five Healthcare and Independent Living residents attended. Special thanks to the thirty volunteers from Nam Knights, Friends of the Soldiers Home, Chevy Chase DAR Chapter, Navy, and other community volunteers.

Residents and staff came out in a variety of costumes including, witches, clowns, an Indian, vampire, king, ladybug, 50's wear, skeleton, cow, Elvis, and more. One of the exciting activities held at the event included a Poker Run. Residents went to the first station table and registered their first card picked with resident Bill Jentarra a.k.a "Skelton Man" then proceeded to the next three stations to pick up their next cards. They returned to "Skelton Man's" station for their fifth and final card. The best poker hand was won by resident Bill Veasey with a Poker Hand of four Kings Ace High! Another activity held at the event was Guess the Number of Candies in the Tub and Guess the Weight of the Pumpkins. The resident guessing the closest number of candies was resident Jane

Cornell. Her guess was 535 pieces and the actual number of pieces was 529. The combined weight of the pumpkins was 39.4 pounds. The Resident coming closest to the actual weight of the pumpkins was Vere Hotchkiss with a guess of 37 pounds. Chief of Resident Services, Ron Kartz graciously donated the pumpkins from his gardens. All the stations passed out candy.

Resident Ray Anderson, one of our Home DJ's played a nice selection of music starting off with a great variety of Halloween music. Food Services provided appetizing munchies to include assorted fresh fruit, cheese and crackers, chicken wings, and potstickers. To top off the event, the Nam Knights provided an "open bar" keeping everyone happy and "hydrated!"

Many residents, staff, and volunteers thought it was a wonderful program and look forward to next year.... BOO!





# AFRH-G Activities

## Exceptional Cello and Piano Recital

**By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Therapy Services**

On Wednesday, November 2, 2016, residents enjoyed a classical music recital in the Community Center hosted by The Piatigorsky Foundation. Cellist, Evan Drachman, the Founder and Artistic Director of The Piatigorsky Foundation performed with pianist, Victor Asuncion. The foundation's mission is to provide classical music to underserved communities throughout the United States and was named after Mr. Drachman's famous grandfather, cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. His grandfather was a member of the famed "Million Dollar Trio" which also included pianist Arthur Rubenstein and violinist Jascha Heifetz.

All played by the cellist's memory, the program began with three of Robert Schumann's Fantasy Pieces followed by three movements of the Edvard Grieg Cello Sonata in A minor. The concert concluded with the Largo movement of the Frederic Chopin Cello Sonata. After the music finished, Evan Drachman spent time answering audience questions and explained how he prefers to let the music dictate if he performs for memory or by music. Thus, the program this day was all by memory. He and the pianist also described their start in music at the age of 11, how Evan acquired his cello, and how the instrument is well over 200 years old. When leaving the community center, resident's commented, "That was the most beautiful thing I have ever heard in my entire life." Thank you to The Piatigorsky Foundation for including the AFRH-G as one of their concert stops!



## Resident creates a handmade model boat

**By Milton Williams, Art Specialist**



When Gene Bright said he wanted to join the woodshop so he could make a model boat, he was serious. This handmade model boat with all wooden beams, planks and yard arms is all cut, planed, sanded and glued by hand. He had made a smaller version from a model and wanted one larger. So from his experience with the kit he decided to draw up his own plans and start from scratch. You would see him in the wood shop for hours on end. His

estimate from start to finish was about nine months. He is working on a sister model boat and soon there will be a fleet. Hmm! I would say he qualifies as a "Master Model Boat Builder" for sure. Thanks Gene, looking forward to seeing you in the woodshop, aka "Boat Yard", with your next piece.



## A Happy Hour we will never forget

**By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant**

On Wednesday November 2, 2016, the Coast Guard Chiefs being indoctrinated spent part of their day volunteering with our residents on Valor Hall, Loyalty Hall and Allegiance Hall. The group of twenty-one volunteered during the resident's Happy Hour. Music, by our very own and talented Susan Bergman, was played while the group sang along to songs associated with Veterans Day. Susan played songs such as America the Beautiful, The Marines Hymn, God Bless America, You're a Grand Ole Flag and This Land is Your Land, just to name a few. But the most memorable song she played that day was the Coast Guard's theme song, "Semper Paratus." As the music from the song began, all twenty-one Coast Guard volunteers quickly stood and sang proudly touching the hearts of all in the room. As this group of Coast Guard indoctrinated Chiefs, return to duty stations in Florida, Mississippi and Alabama, we, here at AFRH-G, will always remember that day. A special thank you to all.



## A winning experience with KAFB 81st Medical Diagnostic

**Submitted by Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services**

On Thursday, November 17, 2016, residents from Valor, Loyalty and Allegiance Hall joined together for a winning bingo with KAFB 81st MDOS. As part of their teambuilding and training day, Keesler Air Force Base 81st Medical Diagnostic Squadron Cardiopulmonary Department decided to visit the veteran residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. They joined in with residents to double their odds of winning bingo, reminisced, and brought smiles to all for an afternoon of fun. KAFB has two main training days, a Warrior Day in the spring and a Dragon Day in the fall. The military volunteers stated how they thoroughly enjoyed the chance to spend time with residents as they often treat many residents of the Home at the hospital.

We look forward to a return visit as it was a winning experience for all involved.



Thank you to the 81st MDOS Bingo volunteers.



It was a winning day!

## Made by a caring heart

**By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant**

Jeanette Easter is sharing her talents each year by crocheting quilts, blankets and shawls for the residents on Valor Hall, Loyalty Hall and Allegiance Hall. For the last three years, the handmade creations were made in various colors, sizes and lengths and then given out to the residents for Christmas. "It gives me something to do for the year," stated Ms. Easter. "I enjoy doing them," she added. We sincerely appreciate her generosity and time for our residents.





## GULFPORT

# Residents experience flight of a lifetime

By Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On October 31, 2016 AFRH-G Veterans experienced a flight of a lifetime through the Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation (AADF). The AADF is a non-profit organization established and dedicated to honoring seniors and United States military veterans. Its mission is to "Give Back to Those Who Have Given" so much toward the freedoms we enjoy today.

Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation President Darryl Fisher restored the Foundation's airplane, a 1940's Boeing Stearman, with the goal of recognizing veterans living in retirement communities around the United States. Through its many donors, the foundation provides memorable Dream Flights in the Stearman biplane - the same aircraft used to train many US military aviators in the late thirties and early forties. The pilot for this plane was retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Tim Newton who said, "We do this because it's the right thing to do and we love doing it."

Residents Gordon Wegener, Doris Jones, Thomas Adams, and Jack Oyster all got to experience this flight of a lifetime thanks to the AADF. Air Force World War II Prisoner of War Jack Oyster said, "I haven't been in an open cockpit plane for I don't know how many years. I'm looking forward to doing it again."

"It was the perfect day, we had beautiful weather, everybody flew, and had a blast", said Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell. "It was an extreme pleasure to participate with them. The Ageless Aviation group and the Million Air folks along with the Supercuts girls, who were sponsors of the foundation, were so helpful and made the experience great for our veterans," Campbell said.

The AFRH veterans look forward to doing this again next year. The Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation gave each veteran a signed hat and memories that will last a lifetime. Thank you AADF for giving back to the men and women who sacrificed so much for us.



Thomas Adams, Gordon Wegener, Doris Jones, and Jack Oyster experienced the flight of a lifetime thanks to pilot and retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Tim Newton (center).



## WASHINGTON

# Veterans Day at AFRH-W

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS



To our veterans here at AFRH-W, I would first like to say THANK YOU!

We should thank our veterans every day, but especially on November 11th. Over the years traditions have been kept in how we honor our veterans who live here at the Home. The day began with Recreational Therapy Bingo, which is hosted by the Lambda Gamma Gamma military chapter or Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. They have been hosting Bingo for the past eight years and plan to continue this tradition for many years to come. Every year they bring cake and punch for the residents, and also provide the prizes and gift cards. The Riverdale Baptist High School boys basketball team also joined them this year.

After Bingo, residents were invited to attend the Wreath Laying Ceremony. This year our emcee was

Ombudsman, Robb Webb. Mayor Muriel Bowser was one of our honored guests, and she also spoke. She made remarks about the number of veterans who live in Washington, D.C. and what the District offers veterans. She also talked about how much AFRH means to her.

Residents David Kaetzel and James Kidd were also honored guests. Kidd wanted to remind everyone that there were also veterans from the wars that were fought prior to World War I, which is when the holiday started. Kaetzel spoke about his time in the Navy, and his family history within the military. Afterwards, the Mayor, Kidd, and Kaetzel together placed the wreath in front of the flagpole. One thing that made this year's ceremony unique was a flyover by a military helicopter. It was definitely a sight to see!

In the afternoon we had two groups who come every year for our veterans. The Knights of Columbus have been coming, bringing cake and ginger ale, to visit the Healthcare and Assisted Living residents for over fifteen years. We also had the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority sponsor an Ice Cream and Karaoke Social. This was the third year that they have sponsored this event, and as always it was a hit!

Residents all enjoyed coming out for ice cream and camaraderie, but they also enjoyed listening to their fellow residents, staff, and guests sing songs with the karaoke machine. There were a wide range of genres, generations, and artists. This has truly become a fun way to end the day the United States has set aside to honor our veterans.



Mayor Bowser greets resident Catherine Deitch.



Attendees stand for the National Anthem.



Mayor Muriel Bowser with residents James Kidd and Dave Kaetzel after placing a commemorative wreath at the flagpole.



Resident Phillip Burge is interviewed by ABC 7 news.