



## AFRH-WASHINGTON

# American Armed Forces honored at 2017 Veterans Day Ceremony

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell, AFRH-W Volunteer/Activities Coordinator

Distinguished military veterans both past and present were honored for their bravery, sacrifice and overall contributions to the nation during the 2017 Veterans Day wreath laying Ceremony held at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C.

The event drew about 40 people including residents, family members, the Nam Knights veterans group and representatives from the Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

A four-member detail from the United States Navy Ceremonial Guard marched in to present the national colors at the start of the ceremony, triggering impassioned salutes from many in the attendance.

AFRH-W resident Sheldon Shorthouse led attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance while residents Frank Lawrence (USAF) and Charles Felder (USA, USAF, USMC) spoke about their own military experiences and how veterans are moved to forfeit their own comfort for the safety and security of others.

AFRH-W Protestant Chaplain John Goodloe led the invocation and Public Affairs Officer Christopher Kelly was the Master of Ceremonies for the event.

Following remarks from Ely Ross, director of the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, Ross joined Felder and Lawrence in laying a wreath at the base of the campus flag pole. Each veteran then rendered an honorable salute.

Despite having a full schedule of countless invites to attend ceremonies throughout the nation's capital, District of Columbia Mayor Muriel E. Bowser stopped by to meet and greet veterans and attendees at the ceremony. She thanked veterans for their service and sacrifice and took photos with several residents who were delighted at her presence.



## AFRH-GULFPORT

# AFRH-G celebrates residents with a Veterans Day Open House and Ceremony

Story and Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs



Hundreds of people gathered on a single mission at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport on November 10th for the annual Veterans Day Open House and Ceremony, where we honored those who have served our country and those who are still serving. People from all walks of life turned out to pay tribute. South Mississippi retired astronaut Fred Haise, Jr. of Apollo 13, who is also a veteran and a Biloxi native, took center stage as keynote speaker.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport pulled out all the stops for the celebration. Helicopters from the Harrison County Sheriff's Department, U.S. Coast Guard and Ochsner Hospital's Air Ambulance made dramatic entrances. The campus was filled with military and first responder displays. The Patriot Guard Motorcycles came rumbling through the front gate with American Flags behind their motorcycles.

Gulfport High School's band played pre-ceremony patriotic music and Anniston Elementary first grade students sang their hearts out with patriotic hymns. 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.

Members from all branches of the nation's military came out for this special ceremony and they all agree on one thing: there's a great price to pay for the freedoms that we enjoy today. Patriot Guard Rider Curtis Erickson said: "It's great to be part of the ceremony here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home as there are so many people here who have served our country for so many years. They have a lot of interesting stories to tell. They're such great people. It's really an honor to be with them here."

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.



# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 2  
Resident Highlights

Page 3  
Gulfport Resident Chosen As Keynote Speaker At Marine Ball

Page 4  
AFRH-W Celebrates 242nd Marine Birthday

# 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  
Carolyn Haug - Washington Public Affairs  
Barbara Bradley - Washington Public Affairs

Becki L. Zschiedrich - Gulfport Public Affairs

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

## Serving 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, #584

3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington, DC 20011-8400

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.AFRH.gov>



<http://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>

AFRH-Gulfport waiting time for residency is 24 months from the date of application approval.

AFRH-Washington has no waiting time for residency.



The Joint Commission  
<http://www.jointcommission.org>

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



## AFRH-G Veteran Highlight – William L. “Wild Bill” Allen

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian



“Wild Bill” Allen grew up in St. Joseph, Missouri. His father, an English professor, and mother, a housewife, added to their family of four children by adopting Wild Bill from an orphanage. Growing up, some of his classmates poked fun at him for being adopted. He always gave the same reply to which they never had a comeback, which was, “When you were born, your parents didn’t have a choice but my mother looked down at me in the orphanage and chose me. I am a chosen one.”

The bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred when Wild Bill was a teenager. He was very angry at the situation and asked his father if he could join the military. Because he had always wanted to be a lighthouse keeper, he reasoned that being a sailor was the closest he was going to get. He entered with his adoption papers that stated he was 17 years old (only to find out five years later when he got his original birth certificate that he was a year younger than he always thought). At 16 years old he joined over 1,000 others to become a Houston Volunteer during WWII. He was sent to boot camp in San Diego, California in 1942. He trained to become a radioman, eventually transferring to aviation radioman.

His position brought him to LTA (lighter-than-air), aka blimp, school in Lakehurst, New Jersey to train as a radarman and radioman. He also operated MAD gear equipment to detect enemy submarines deep in the water. He began his hands-on experience when he was sent to an LTA base in Glynco, Georgia. Once his training was complete, he was sent to Brazil where his LTA joined a fleet of blimps to escort convoys of ships, which were usually destroyers. Although the blimps were armed, their primary objective was to find submarines up to 90 miles away by radar. They would report their findings back to the destroyers for them to handle. Once the allied submarine forces in the Atlantic defeated the Germans, Wild Bill was transferred into a new field, HTAs (heavier-than airs), otherwise known as airplanes.

He was sent to aerial gunnery school to become a radioman gunner and graduated as a B-24 tail gunner. To qualify for this position, he had to jump off a 40-foot rig into a 12-foot pool. Since the war was still raging on, his squadron arrived in Miramar, California ready to fly to Tinian to begin dropping bombs. The morning their mission was scheduled, the skipper came out smiling and said, “Fella’, war’s over. You’re going home.” With no questions asked, Wild Bill was sent home.

During his three-year, six-month, 24-day stint in the military, the only skill Wild Bill had picked up was typing because it had been part of his Morse code training. He began working as a civilian contractor for the Army typing up discharges. He was out of the Navy for only five months when he decided he was ready to rejoin. Before long, the U.S. entered another conflict.

However, Wild Bill had an entirely different duty than most forces involved in the Korean War. His mission led to him to Iceland where he was assigned to search for Russian submarines. Wild Bill served 22 years in the Navy. In 1964, he retired as a chief aviation electronics man. He finished his last two years as an aviation electronics instructor at Moffett Field, California. He is very proud that in his 22 years he never had one write-up, which earned him six good conduct medals, in addition to the European, American, and Asiatic Campaign Medals.

Upon retirement, Wild Bill decided to use his GI Bill to earn a degree in law enforcement. Using his degree, he began security and police work. He eventually became Chief of Police in Loganville, Georgia. He only served one year before he decided to step down from that position. In 1985, he decided to retire completely and move to Florida. He has been an “old, happy, rascal” ever since.

Living in Florida, he joined the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) and became Secretary/Treasurer. One of the members of his branch went to visit the Naval Home in Gulfport and told him about it. In 2001, Wild Bill had just lost his third wife so he decided to try life at the Naval Home. It did not take him very long to get homesick. He moved out and went back to Florida to take back his FRA position. In 2005, he decided to give what was now AFRH-G another try. He was living in the home for less than a year when Hurricane Katrina struck. Instead of relocating to AFRH-W with the most of the other residents, he went back to Florida. He stayed until he received a letter stating that he would be welcomed back to AFRH-G when it reopened but would have to live at AFRH-W until that time came. He was flown back with the other residents for the reopening of their home and has been in Gulfport since.

Wild Bill is the proud father of four children. He has 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. In November of 2016, he decided to tie the knot with his girlfriend, Jamie. Wild Bill cheekily says that he and Jamie “have decided not to have any children.” The couple spends time together at their Biloxi home when he is not living at AFRH-G where he volunteers as a tour guide, sponsor, and library aid. Wild Bill is very quick to tell anyone that he is proud to be a resident at AFRH. He tells every tour group that “this is the closest you or I will ever get to paradise on this earth.” In addition, he feels that the staff at both campuses of AFRH gives residents “an environment that is worthwhile to live in.” As for the nickname “Wild Bill,” good luck trying to find out how he got the moniker. He says it is a heavily-guarded secret.



## AFRH-W Resident Highlight – Benny Easter

By Benny Easter, AFRH-W Resident



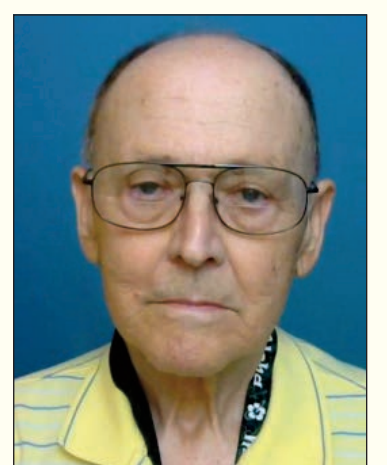
We’ve had many compliments about the article “A Testimony to Excellence” that Benny Easter submitted last month to The Communicator talking about his and his wife’s experiences with retirement communities. So what is his story, I was asked? And here is his answer!

I was born in a small town in the northeast corner of the Texas panhandle. In high school, I played the French horn and developed a love for band music. After high school I joined the U.S. Army in 1957. My first duty assignment was as a French horn player in the Signal School Band at Ft. Gordon, Georgia. While there I met a beautiful telephone operator named Catherine Murphy. The night I met her I told my friends that I had met the girl I was going to marry. Fifteen months later we were married and so far it has lasted 58 years. Cathy presented me with three beautiful children who are the pride of my life.

In 1962 I attended the advanced course at the Naval School of Music at Anacostia in Washington, D.C. Upon graduation, I was appointed as a warrant officer, bandmaster and was assigned as Commander, 101st Airborne Division Band where I obtained my senior parachutist wings. My follow-on band assignments included Command of the 95th Division Band, the 98th Army Band, the 1st Armored Division Band, the 14th Army Band, and the 2nd Infantry Division Band. In 1981 I was selected to be the Director of Training and Doctrine at the school of music, where I was responsible for the development of all aspects of training for Army bands and band personnel. Also, I was responsible, as the band field proponent officer, for the development of the Air/Land Battle 2000 concept. Plus, I served as chief conducting evaluator for bandmaster candidates. I was selected to co-author the leadership and ethics portion of the first Warrant Officer Entry Course, which was being developed as the first course in the new Warrant Officer Training System. While at this school position, I did some research and found that I had served

as bandmaster for more divisions than anyone in the history of the Army. In 1985 I went back to parachute duty as Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division Band. The month of my retirement I was selected to be a Master Warrant Officer, which became CW5 two years later. I had quit smoking, had foot surgery and was rapidly outgrowing the parachutes, so I declined the honor, since it meant no increase in pay or change of insignia. I retired as the senior bandmaster in the Army in 1988. I also made my last parachute jump at the age of 49.

Since retirement I taught school for fourteen years at all grade levels from Kindergarten through Junior College and conducted two fine community bands in Florida and Georgia. About my family, my daughter, Lynn, was first runner-up to Miss Teenage America in 1978, received her degree from Troy University in Alabama and was teaching elementary school at the age of nineteen. She later obtained her master's degree and is now retired and running the day care for her church in Ozark, Alabama. My second child, Chris, attended West Point and is presently CEO of Keen Transport in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Keen is the largest over-the-road hauler of over-sized equipment in the country. My youngest, Keith, obtained his undergraduate degree from Old Dominion University and his master's from James Madison University in Virginia. He is presently teaching at Freedom High School in Woodbridge, Virginia. I have lived at the AFRH-W for six months now.



# Meet our Chief Executive Officer



The AFRH would like to introduce our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Major General (Ret.) Stephen T. Rippe. If you were able to attend the town hall meeting you heard about his history in the military and his post-military career. He will be focusing on strategic planning, new revenue streams to support AFRH in the future, and the morale and welfare of residents and staff.

General Rippe brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his position, including four years as President and CEO of The Army Distaff Foundation (ADF) and the Knollwood Continuing Care Retirement Community in Washington, DC. ADF and Knollwood support retired officers and their families in a setting similar to AFRH.

He also has served as a Trustee on the Norwich University Governing Board since 2006. Additionally, he serves as a Special Adviser to the David Lynch Foundation's Center for Excellence in Military Health.

Following his position as President and CEO at ADF/Knollwood, he served as the Executive Vice President, the de facto CEO, of TrueTandem, a high technology services company.

Previously, General Rippe served as the Vice President, Middle East Operations, for L-3 Communications, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Prior to assuming his role with L-3 Communications, General Rippe served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation in Washington, D.C. The Foundation is the governing body and operating

structure for the Washington National Cathedral, National Cathedral School, St. Albans School, and Beauvoir: National Cathedral Elementary School.

Prior to his position at the Cathedral Foundation, General Rippe enjoyed 29 years of military service. He received a B.S. in Business Administration from Norwich University and was commissioned in infantry as a Distinguished Military Graduate. A graduate of the National War College, he served as a ranger, parachute and aviation-qualified infantry officer. He earned a Master of Military Arts and Science from the Advanced Military Studies Program. The recipient of numerous awards and decorations, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, General Rippe is recognized by membership in both the Honorable Orders of St. Barbara (Artillery) and St. George (Armor).

General Rippe is a resident of the District of Columbia, and he is married to Kate Rice.



CEO Stephen Rippe talks to Gulfport resident Jack Frizzell after the Town Hall meeting on November 16.

# Message from the Acting Chief Operating Officer



From November 1st to November 3rd, I visited the AFRH-Gulfport facility, met with numerous staff, the RAC Chair and Vice Chair to address any questions or concerns that they had regarding the current state of the AFRH.

Phase 3 (the final phase) of the DoD Office of Inspector General (OIG) triennial assessment began on November 14th, with interviews of the Agency staff (human resources, facilities, safety, security, information technology, resident services, estates, and the AFRH IG hotline).

The DoD-OIG will begin interviewing the staff at the D.C. facility that are responsible for the aforementioned program areas from November 27th – 30th, 2017. AFRH leadership is currently awaiting the final reports for the DoD IG assessment of medical (Phase 1),

finance and procurement (Phase 2).

The DoD-OIG anticipates releasing the Phase 1 & 2 reports in December 2017.

The Secretary of Defense announced on November 13th, 2017, the appointment of Major General (Ret.) Stephen T. Rippe, U.S. Army, as the Chief Executive Officer of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. General Rippe is uniquely qualified to serve as the Home's CEO, having served in a similar capacity for the non-profit Army Distaff Foundation, which operates the Knollwood "Life Plan Community" in Washington, D.C., as well as in executive and board roles with several for-profit and non-profit organizations.

In 1991, Congress incorporated the U.S. Naval Home and U.S. Soldiers and Airmen's Home into an independent establishment of the Executive Branch of the Federal

Government named the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH). In 2002, the names of the two homes were officially changed to the Armed Forces Retirement Home – Gulfport and the Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington. The legislation also installed a Chief Operating Officer (COO) as the head of the AFRH who is subject to the direction of the Secretary of Defense, who delegated the oversight authority to the Deputy Chief Management Officer (DCMO).

The DCMO appointed General Rippe as AFRH's CEO. He will serve as the single oversight authority within DoD, and has the responsibility for the strategic planning (including land development and leasing) for the AFRH. The CEO is a DoD employee and reports to the DCMO. The AFRH staff report to the AFRH COO, who in turn reports to the CEO.

Please see his complete biography above!

Respectfully,

**Maurice Swinton**



Maurice Swinton speaks with DC Mayor Muriel Bowser at the Veterans Day ceremony.

## AFRH-G retired Marine chosen as keynote speaker at Marine Ball



Gulfport resident and U.S. Marine Corps retired 1st Sgt. Harry O. Blake, Jr. delivered remarks during the 242nd Marine Corps Birthday Ball at the Golden Nugget Casino on November 10, 2017, in Biloxi, Mississippi.

More than 300 service members and guests attended the Keesler Marine Detachment-hosted event. Mr. Blake was asked by 1st Sgt. Earl E. DeLack II to be the keynote speaker at this prestigious event.

Harry Blake (left) and 1st Sgt. Earl E. DeLack II (right) at the Marine Ball on November 10, 2017.



More than 300 service members and guests enjoyed Mr. Blake at the keynote speaker. U.S. Air Force photo by Kemberly Groue.

## Resident platelet donor reaches milestone

By Christine Baldwin, Librarian

At the end of October, resident Harvey Stackpole reached an amazing milestone: his 100th platelet donation! He started giving blood donations in 1971, after joining the U.S. Army. When he retired, Harvey learned about the Armed Services Blood Program (Apheresis Platelet Program). He became a platelet donor, so that he could help wounded warriors in need. When he arrives in his ASBP apparel, Harvey sits in his favorite collection chair (he was the first donor to use that chair when it was received).

On his 100th donation, the Pentagon Blood Donor Center staff celebrated with a group photo and a Certificate of Appreciation. Before leaving, Harvey made sure to schedule his next platelet donation. To learn more about this life saving donation, go to:

[http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/about\\_platelets.aspx](http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/about_platelets.aspx)



Left to right: Latarsha Nance, AFRH-W Resident Harvey Stackpole, Petty Officer 3rd Class Adan Castro, Petty Officer 3rd Class Joshua Nielsen.

## From the AFRH-W Administrator



On November 11th, 99 years ago, World War I was officially declared over. When "The Great War" ended, the oldest now living resident at the AFRH-W was a 6-month old baby. Ray Colvard was the baby's name and he would grow up to be a distinguished veteran of the U.S. Navy after a thirty-year and one-month career.

Chief Petty Officer Colvard's story is one of the many 370+ Veterans' stories worth celebrating and protecting here at the Home. When Armistice Day was declared a holiday by President Wilson, Chief Colvard was only a toddler. He would not enter the Navy until he was a teenager in 1936. A thirty-year career in any field is an accomplishment let alone meeting the rigors and challenges of serving in the military.

It would not be until 1966 that Chief would retire from active duty service, more than 50 years ago!

This month, we honored and thanked residents and all military personnel during our Veterans Day ceremony. Attendees braved the cold weather to assemble under the Stars and Stripes at the flag pole. Washington DC's Mayor Bowser was able to share her well wishes and words of thanks for AFRH veterans and guests.

It is my privilege to live and work near so many distinguished service men and women. Of all the experiences the Home offers, hearing the residents' stories is the most enriching. The comradery witnessed between residents is unlike any other retirement community I've visited. I believe this stems from the special bond residents share in their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve.

The Home was honored to host Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Ronald Green

during the Marine Corps Birthday Celebration. SMMC Green is the embodiment of Corps Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment and has been a strong supporter of AFRH for many years.

I'd like to extend a special welcome to our new Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Army Major General (Ret) Steve Rippe. Gen Rippe met with residents and staff during his official meet and greet November 14th. I am looking forward to seeing the benefits and strength in leadership he brings to our agency.

On behalf of the staff, we are very thankful this holiday season to be fulfilling our country's commitment to its veterans through execution and care of the mission. Happy Holidays!

**Shaun Servais**



**Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Ronald Green and Shaun Servais at the Marine Corps Birthday celebration.**

## 242nd Marine Corps Birthday Celebration

*By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist*

On Friday November 3, 2017 AFRH-W celebrated 242 years of the U.S. Marine Corps Birthday in the Scott Hall of Honors. The ombudsmen, 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 proceeded with the Guest of Honor Sergeant Major Ronald Green, who seemed to be some of the Marine residents' favorite guest! Sergeant Major Green assumed his current post as the 18th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps on February 20, 2015. A native of Jackson, Mississippi, he attended recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina, in November 1983. He has been meritoriously promoted to the ranks of private first class, lance corporal, corporal, sergeant and staff sergeant.

Throughout his career, Sergeant Major Green has been assigned numerous duties to include: field artillery cannoneer; field artillery nuclear projectile man; tower operator; drill instructor, senior drill instructor and drill master; battery section chief and battery gunnery sergeant and Assistant Marine Officer Instructor at Southern University and A&M College just to name a few. Sergeant Major Green holds a B.S. in Cybersecurity and a M.S. in Cybersecurity Policy from the University of Maryland College. He 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 progressed with the traditional U.S. Marine Corps cake cutting, honoring Marine veteran recipient Holsey Gillis and the youngest Marine present Sgt. Brendan Schuler. The ceremony was concluded with admiration to all Marines and veterans across the globe. Happy Birthday Marines and Semper Fidelis!



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



Greetings from the RAC Chairman!

This month at AFRH we observed what used to be known as Armistice Day. 11 November 1918 (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month) marked the ending of hostilities in France, thus ending the war to end all wars. But in 1954 President Dwight D. Eisenhower officially changed the name to Veterans Day!

A wreath laying ceremony was conducted at the main flag pole by AFRH-W residents Frank Lawrence U.S. Air Force and Chuck Felder Army, Air Force, and Marines, they both reflected on what Veterans Day means to them. Present at the ceremony were Muriel Bowser, Mayor of Washington, DC and special guest of the RAC Chairman, Ashley Congrains, who served as a sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corp and last year's recipient of the C. Haskell Small award for volunteer service to both the military and civilian communities

presented by the USO. Mayor Bowser visited and took photographs with residents and guests. If you are going on leave this holiday, be safe.

### This Month in History

- December 1, 1955 - The birth of the modern American civil rights movement occurred as Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back section of a municipal bus. Her arrest resulted in a year-long boycott of the city bus system by African Americans and led to legal actions ending racial segregation on municipal buses throughout the South.
- December 2, 1859 - Abolitionist leader John Brown was executed for treason at Charles Town, West Virginia, following his raid on the U.S. Arsenal at Harper's Ferry.
- December 5, 1933 - The 18th Amendment (Prohibition Amendment) to the U.S. Constitution was repealed. For nearly 14 years, since January 29, 1920, it had outlawed the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages in the U.S.
- Birthday December 5, 1839 - George Armstrong Custer was born in New Rumley, Harrison County, Ohio. He graduated from West Point at the bottom of his class in 1861, then became a dashing cavalry officer in the Civil War and fought at Bull Run. He was appointed brigadier general and served gallantly at Gettysburg and in the Virginia campaigns. After the war, he took part in the Western expedition against the Sioux Indians. In June of 1867, Custer and over 200 of his soldiers from the U.S. 7th Cavalry were killed by Sioux warriors at Little Bighorn in Montana.
- December 6, 1865 - The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified abolishing slavery, stating, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, save as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."
- December 7, 1941 - The U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by nearly 200 Japanese aircraft in a raid that lasted just over one hour and left nearly 3,000 Americans dead.
- December 10, 1898 - The Treaty of Paris was signed between American and Spanish representatives following Spain's defeat in the Spanish-American War. Under the treaty, the U.S. gained the Philippine Islands, the islands of Guam and Puerto Rico, and an agreement by Spain to withdraw from Cuba. The treaty passed by a single vote in the U.S. Senate on February 6, 1899, and was signed by President William McKinley four days later.
- December 13, 1862 - During the American Civil War, the Battle of Fredericksburg occurred in Virginia as the Union Army of the Potomac under General Burnside suffered a costly defeat, losing 12,653 men after 14 frontal assaults on well entrenched Rebels on Marye's Heights. "We might as well have tried to take hell," a Union soldier remarked. Confederate losses were 5,309. "It is well that war is so terrible - we should grow too fond of it," stated Confederate General Robert E. Lee during the fighting.
- December 14, 1799 - George Washington died at Mount Vernon.
- Birthday December 14, 1896 - World War II General James Doolittle (1896-1993) was born in Alameda, California. On April 18, 1942, he led a squadron of B-25 bombers launched from the aircraft carrier Hornet to conduct the first American air raid of the war against mainland Japan. He

also headed the Eighth Air Force during the Normandy invasion and was awarded the Medal of Honor.

- December 16, 1944 - American big-band leader Glenn Miller disappeared in a small plane over the English Channel and was presumably killed. Best remembered for Moonlight Serenade and In the Mood.
- December 16, 1944 - During World War II in Europe, the Battle of the Bulge began as the Germans launched a big counter-offensive in the Ardennes Forest along a 75-mile front, taking American troops by surprise. Aided by foggy, snowy weather, the Germans penetrated 65 miles into Allied lines by the end of December. The German advance was eventually halted by Montgomery on the Meuse and Patton at Bastogne. As the weather cleared, Allied aircraft attacked German ground forces and supply lines and the counter-offensive failed. There were an estimated 77,000 Allied and 130,000 German casualties.
- December 20, 1989 - The U.S. invaded Panama attempting to capture Manuel Noriega on charges of narcotics trafficking. Operation Just Cause occurred seven months after Noriega had declared unfavorable election results in his country to be null and void. The invasion toppled the Noriega government and resulted in the installation of Guillermo Endara as president. Noriega temporarily eluded capture, but surrendered a few weeks later to U.S. troops. He was then tried, convicted, and imprisoned in the U.S.
- December 21, 1945 - World War II General George Patton died in Germany following a car accident. He had been injured on December 9th near Mannheim and was taken to a hospital in Heidelberg where he died. He was buried in Luxembourg. Nicknamed "Old Blood and Guts," he once stated during the war, "We shall attack and attack until we are exhausted, and then we shall attack again."
- December 25th - Christmas Day, commemorating the birth of Jesus of Nazareth! Although the exact date of his birth is not known, it has been celebrated on December 25th by the Western (Roman Catholic) Church since 336 A.D.
- December 25, 1776 - During the American Revolution, George Washington took 2,400 of his men across the Delaware River. Washington then conducted a surprise raid on 1,500 British-Hessians (German mercenaries) at Trenton, New Jersey. The Hessians surrendered after an hour with nearly 1,000 taken prisoner by Washington who suffered only six wounded (including future president Lt. James Monroe). The victory provided a much needed boost to American morale.
- December 31st - New Year's Eve, the final evening of the Gregorian calendar year, traditionally a night for merry-making to welcome in the New Year!

**Sheldon Shorthouse**



**Sheldon Shorthouse with Mayor Muriel Bowser and special guest Ashley Congrains.**

# From the AFRH-G Administrator



Greetings!

We had an exceptional Veterans Day and Open House celebration on November 10. I would like to thank the recreation and resident services team and everyone else who helped to make this such an unforgettable day. I told my staff I have a new hero in our keynote speaker and former astronaut Fred Haise. To know he is a Mississippian, a Marine, served in the USAF and U.S. Navy, and was the lunar module pilot on Apollo 13 as well as test pilot of the Space Shuttle program is so impressive. Serving in three branches of our military is astonishing and to add astronaut to his resume makes him one of a kind.

We also had a wonderful Thanksgiving feast at the AFRH-G and had over 100 family and friends join the residents for this special meal. I am thankful for all the residents and employees at AFRH-G and I am thankful to work for America's heroes. I hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving holiday.

Our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), US Army Major General (Ret.) Stephen Rippe, was introduced to the AFRH-G along with Travis Smith from DCMO. I believe General Rippe's experience with strategic planning will help us as we go forward dealing with the trust fund solvency plight and the other challenges we will face as a continuing care retirement community. The Department of Defense Inspector General's office will be in Gulfport December 11-15, 2017 and their inspection team will review the follow areas:

1. Security
2. Human Resources
3. Information Technology
4. Facilities
5. Admissions and Eligibility
6. Resident Services
7. Estate Matters

Speaking of inspections and surveys, we submitted our action plan to The Joint Commission this month and our plan was accepted! Congratulations to each member of the AFRH Gulfport team. This is another example of the great work each of you do to make this home great.

Until next month, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! God bless you and God bless America!

Jeff Eads



Jeff Eads represented the AFRH-G at the Veterans Day parade in Biloxi on November 11, 2017.

## Happy 242nd Birthday U.S. Marine Corps



Les Crawshaw, Jeanette Easter, and astronaut Fred Haise cut the Marines birthday cake on November 10.

By Becki Zschiedrich,  
Public Affairs

In conjunction with the Veterans Day ceremony AFRH-G presented a cake on November 10th in honor of the U.S. Marines 242nd birthday. Former Apollo 13 astronaut Fred Haise, helped cut the cake with the AFRH-G oldest Marine Jeanette Easter and youngest Marine Les Crawshaw.

"Semper Fi. Semper Fi," Crawshaw said. "Yes, that's what it means to all of us, and I think there are a lot of Marines that will reflect that also."

## Congratulations Mr. Eads!



Dr. Lee Royce, President of MS College, Jeff Eads and Melanie Fortenberry, Chair for Health Services Administration Degree Program at MS College. Photo by Tracey Harrison, Director of Public Relations Mississippi College.

Congratulations to Gulfport Administrator Jeff Eads for receiving the 2017 Distinguished Alumni award for the Master of Health Services Administration Program at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi.

This award was presented to Mr. Eads for his outstanding achievement in healthcare administration as an administrator serving senior adults in long-term care and continuing care retirement communities for more than 20 years. We all wish you continued success.

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



On November 1, 2017 RAC Vice Chairman Roy Cook, Ombudsman Master Chief Wise and I met with the Deputy Chief Management Officer (DCMO) staff and the acting Chief Operating Officer (COO) Maurice Swinton to discuss issues of importance to residents. The opportunity to have an open and candid discussion led to a refreshing and clearer indication of how DCMO and AFRH, together, plan to move forward. The three primary components driving decisions regarding AFRH are 1.) Solvency, 2.) Self-sustainability and 3.) Long-term viability.

The impression that AFRH is intended to be around for a long, long time was absolutely evident. In what form will it be – that is one of the most fundamental issues currently under study. It is obvious that the revenue stream that has lasted for well over 150 years does not need to be tweaked; it needs to be modified and perhaps just outright changed. Modifications will

take legislative action to change Title 24. It was gratifying to hear that those places that are deemed comparable to the AFRH were done in the context of expenditures and income. In plain language it was found that the expenses of the AFRH are very much in line with the expenses of like continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs). The revenue side of the comparison to like facilities found that the AFRH is absolutely unique in how it is funded to ensure the long-term solvency via a model of self-sustainability.

Will fees rise? Yes, but with an assurance that no current resident will ever be forced to leave AFRH because of their inability to pay. That has always been part of AFRH's core mission and will not change. With an assurance that instituting a fee structure that takes into consideration today's resident (average age 83) with the incoming residents (average age in the sixties) and future residents (average age in the forties) will not be an easy task.

Will it still be based on a percentage of income with a cap, or the cap removed and everyone pay a percentage of income? At this time it appears that fees will be a percentage of income with a cap for the five levels of care (Independent Living, Independent Living Plus, Assisted Living, Long Term Care, and Memory Support).

Will fines and forfeitures and perhaps the .50 deduction "go away" once the way forward to shore up the trust fund is found? Possibly, there may not be a need for this income stream. Creating a different revenue model entails considering all stakeholders: current residents and taxpayers, which includes current active duty personnel.

Will the Armed Forces Retirement Home become a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization? What would change in the AFRH's mission and daily operation if it became a 501(c) 3? There is serious consideration being given to the request that the AFRH become a congressionally chartered non-profit. Volumes (literally) can be written what being a 501(c) 3 would entail presently and into the future.

The following questions raised in last month's column, but not discussed during the November 1st meeting, due to a lack of time, would also fall under the infamous "to be determined" (TBD) category. Will current residents be grandfathered? At what price will the grandfathering occur? Will the AFRH only accept those that can pay their full share of the cost for residency except for a small percentage (perhaps 10-15%) receiving some type of subsidy from the trust fund? Will those veterans eligible for entry be required to divest their assets (aka Medicare/Medicaid) in order to qualify for admission? Will we continue to have twenty-one meals a week or will it be only nineteen (two on weekends), fourteen (two a day)

or seven (one a day) with an option to purchase additional meals? Will those places that are deemed comparable to the AFRH really be comparable in ALL aspects or do they have application fees, buy-in fees, a-la- carte pricing (separate charges for rent, food, medical, etc), allow only officers, admit the surviving spouses of retired enlisted members of all U.S. military branches, allow married couples with only one being a retired enlisted U.S. military member, allow mothers of active duty and retired enlisted U.S. airmen and once again, the list could go on and on. Why TBD? Very simply – the AFRH is basically getting recreated due to solvency issues and while the mission may remain the same, the delivery apparatus will be undergoing significant changes. The Mission: To fulfill our nation's commitment to its veterans by providing a premiere retirement community with exceptional care and extensive support services, remains and will remain.

At the conclusion of the meeting one item is an absolute certainty; more changes will be coming to the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Although it now seems that the road forward may not be as bumpy, and the potholes presenting themselves not as deep as first feared; major changes will be occurring and the way (road) forward may indeed be extremely bumpy and potholes deeper than they appear. A commitment of transparency remains from the COO and DCMO.

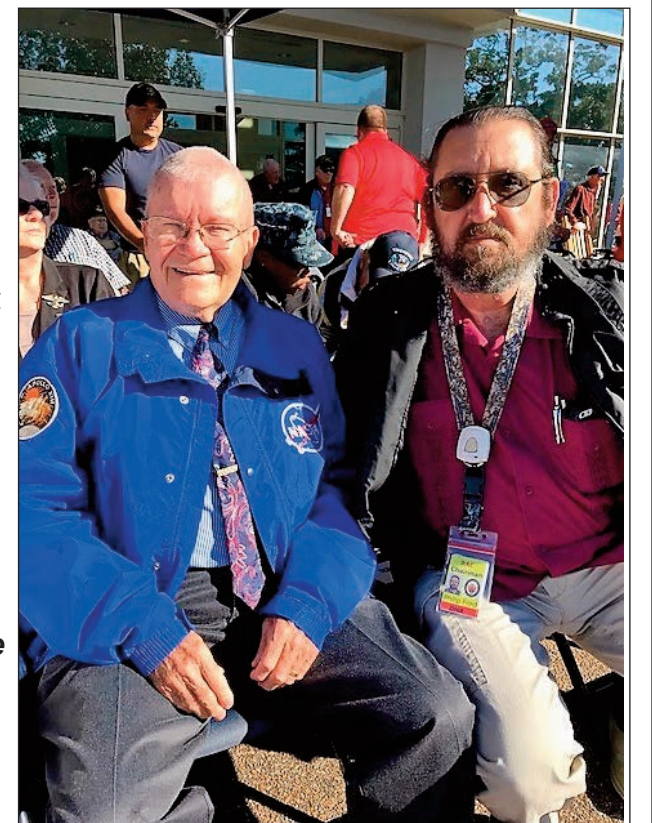
It does appear that those making decisions regarding the future of the AFRH are keeping foremost in their minds that they are dealing with real live flesh and bone veterans with an average age of 83 who consider themselves permanently at the Home. At the same time they are also trying to position and prepare the AFRH for the residents of the future. The DCMO is moving slowly, cautiously and methodically as it works with AFRH leadership paving the way forward to ensure a solvent, self-sustainable and long-term viable retirement community.

As always, I am open to any suggestions of topics you would like me to discuss, or to answer questions in this column that may be of importance to you. If it is on your mind it must be important to you, and chances are it is also of importance, or at least informative, to other residents to know the answer.

Till next month I wish you all the best,

Phil Ford

**P.S. - Yes, there was a RAC meeting held on November 14th. The article needed to be submitted earlier this month due to the holiday. Thus, I am not including highlights here as I usually do. I will be happy to send those minutes to you. Please send request to Racchair@gmail.com**



Phil Ford with former astronaut Fred Haise at the Veterans Day ceremony.

# AFRH-W Activities

## Fitness news - Breathe

By Jerry Carter, Fitness Specialist

Exercise to help you relax:  
Relaxed breathing- This form of relaxation focuses on deep, relaxed breathing as a way to relieve tension and stress. Before you begin, find a comfortable position. Lie on a bed or couch or sit on a chair. Then do the following:

1. Inhale. With your mouth closed and your shoulders relaxed, inhale slowly and deeply through your nose to the count of six. Allow the air to fill your diaphragm-the muscle between your abdomen and chest-pushing your abdomen out.
2. Pause for a second.
3. Exhale. Slowly release air through your mouth as you count to six.
4. Pause for a second
5. Repeat. Complete this breathing cycle several times.

Being aware of exercises to help you relax, will lead to happiness and vitality as you age.



## Members of House Army Caucus visit AFRH-W

AFRH-Washington hosted six members of the House Army Caucus on November 9 for breakfast with our veteran residents in honor of Veterans Day. Rep. John "Judge" Carter (R-TX), co-chair of the Army Caucus, led the group. He was joined by Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA), Rep. Roger Marshall (R-KS), Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA), and Rep. Randy Weber (R-TX). The delegation received a brief overview of our mission from AFRH-W Administrator Shaun Servais in the Hall of Honors, and then joined the residents in the dining hall to learn more about their experiences. AFRH was delighted to host the delegation, and looks forward to future visits with our residents!



## Army to begin providing medical care to Chem/Bio research volunteers

**ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND, Falls Church, Va.** – The U.S. Army is notifying veterans that they may be eligible to receive medical care if they participated in U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing from 1942 to 1975 and have an injury or disease that they believe was proximately caused by their participation. Recently a class action lawsuit filed by the Vietnam Veterans of America required the U.S. Army to provide medical care to veterans who volunteered to contribute to the advancement of the U.S. biological and chemical programs.

To be eligible for medical care veterans who may fall within this identified class must have:

- A Department of Defense Form 214 or War Department discharge/separation form(s) or the functional equivalent.
- Served as a volunteer medical research subject in a U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing program from 1942 to 1975, including the receipt of medications or vaccines under the U.S. Army investigational drug review.
- A diagnosed medical condition they believe to be a direct result of their participation in a U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing program.

Medical care, to include medications, will be provided at the closest military medical treatment facility that has the capability and capacity. Medical care will be provided on a space available basis for a specific period of time as described in the authorization letter, and is supplemental to the comprehensive medical care a plaintiff is entitled to receive through the VA based on their status as a veteran.

Eligible veterans are encouraged to go to <http://armymedicine.mil/Pages/cbtp.aspx> or call 1-800-984-8523 if they have any questions or need assistance.

## WGTS broadcasts live from AFRH-W

We were so glad to have WGTS broadcasting live on Veterans Day from AFRH-W's Hall of Honors.



## Sailors volunteer during community outreach visit

Sailors assigned to the Defense Information School (DIN-FOS) recently volunteered at AFRH-W during a Phase I CPO 365 community outreach visit. AFRH-W enjoys partnering with servicemembers assigned to DINFOS on a variety of community service and educational programs.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kathryn E. Holm.

## 2017 AFRH-W Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is in full swing now!

By Laura Fogarty, Safety and Occupational Health Officer

This year's campaign season "Show Some Love" began on Oct 2, 2017 and will run through Jan 12, 2018. The Washington Campus held their kick-off event on October 27th. Residents and employees came together to learn about this year's CFC program and its changes.

We were fortunate to have as our guest speaker Curtis Rumbaugh, a local Federal Coordinating Committee Member. In addition, Alan Hay, CFCNCA Associate Director; Iris Roseboro, Loaned Executive; Maurice Swinton, COO and Shaun Servais, Administrator provided their support during this event. Lastly, representatives from the Fisher House Foundation and the Local Community Georgia Avenue Family Support Collaborative spoke on behalf of their organization.

Laura Fogarty, Campaign Manager and the key workers have begun promoting and reaching out to everyone on campus. The following are the key workers for the different departments.

Sherry Lawrence, Campus Operations; Becky Perry, Resident Services; Bill Striegel, Administration; T'auna Derrington, Health Care, Maecell McQueen, Health Care; Robb Webb, Residents and Jason Webb, Agency. Key workers will be reaching out and are available for assistance with pledge giving. This year you can also volunteer time to an organization. Join the campaign this year and share some love by donating to one or several of your favorite organizations. Thank you in advance for your support.



From left to right: Maurice Swinton, COO, Alan Hayes, CFCNCA Associate Director, Iris Roseboro, Loaned Executive, Curtis Rumbaugh, CFCNCA Local Federal Coordinating Committee Member, Laura Fogarty, Campaign Manager and Shaun Servais, Administrator.

Photo by Carolyn Haug, Public Affairs

## Fun, fellowship and food!

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapist

The Lorton Legion Luncheon is a favorite trip for AFRH-W! The Legion invites residents out for a delicious lunch three times a year. This event, thanks to the Legion and Post#162, has been going on strong for 25+ years!

Special thanks to the AFRH nursing staff, recreation, and volunteer services for their continued heartfelt support!



# AFRH-G Activities

## AFRH-G 1st Annual Alzheimer's Walk

By *Shaneika Brinkley, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Supervisor*  
 Photos by *Becki L. Zschiedrich, Public Affairs*

In honor of November being National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, the Armed Forces Retirement Home hosted its inaugural Alzheimer's Awareness Walk on Monday, November 6, 2017. Alzheimer's is a disease that hits close to home and is near and dear to the heart of residents and staff at the Home, as we have several residents affected by this disease. According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are nearly 5.4 million people diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Coming to this realization, it was placed on the heart of two of the AFRH employees, Betty Deloach-Turner and Sirlena McMorris, to partner with many other staff members to coordinate an Alzheimer's Walk at the Gulfport Home to help bring awareness about the disease to our residents and staff. Several staff members, volunteers and residents came out to participate in the walk, including residents from our upper levels of care and memory support unit. Overall, the walk was a great success and everyone is looking forward to continuing it in future years to come.



## A-Plantin' for A-Bloomin' with Beach Garden Society

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



On Wednesday, November 15, 2017, members of the Beach Garden Society brought Holly Fern and Amaryllis bulbs for a morning of gardening. The group quickly went to work weeding, trimming, planting, and visiting with residents. Starting up on the Loyalty Hall patio gardens, a volunteer knelt next to Mary Nelson, watched as the resident lit-up, and listened as she reminisced about her military experience and how she met her husband.

After beautifying the Loyalty patio area, the group then moved down to the Valor Hall patio and were joined again by Marion Wolke and Marvin Heth. The Beach Garden group initially planted six years ago on the Valor patio in November of 2011 and upon return, noticed their Amaryllis bulbs still growing and now spread amongst the Loyalty patio, too. The new red Amaryllis bulbs were planted again this November in order to be ready for blooming in time for Easter. Thank you for a-plantin' so that we will be a-bloomin' soon.



## AFRH-G Fall Carnival and Games kick-off

Photos by *Becki L. Zschiedrich, Public Affairs*

On Monday, October 23rd the Recreation Department put on a festive and very entertaining Fall Carnival in the Community Center. This was a celebration for the start of the Fall Games, which were held from October 23 through November 7. Thank you to our amazing resident, community and Coast Guard volunteers.



## Profiles in Courage

By *Connie Favret, Librarian St. James School*

The Veterans Day Program on Tuesday afternoon, November 7, was one of the best events ever enjoyed in our library at Saint James Catholic Elementary School. Our guests of honor included Mr. William "Milkshake" Allen and Mr. Clifford Smith, who represented our neighbors at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. These gentlemen shared their memories of military service with 29 third grade students and their teachers, Ms. Stacie Barrient and Ms. Carmen Peters. This event is our way to thank veterans for their devotion to duty and for safeguarding our essential American freedoms, in times of war and peace.

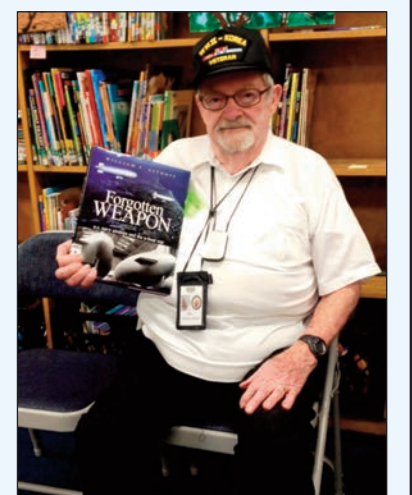
Mr. William Allen, signed up for the Navy's lighter-than-air duty aboard blimps in 1942. Blimps were used to detect German submarines along coastlines, approaching harbors and when escorting ships. Blimps were capable of finding subs in water up to 300 feet deep with highly sophisticated and top secret equipment. Blimps escorted over 89,000 ships and only lost one tanker, the Persephone, to enemy attack. Mr. Allen also explained the origin of his nickname, "Milkshake" to our audience. Mr. Allen was assigned to escort a famous movie actress, back then known as a "hot patootie", who adorned him with this colorful nickname.

Mr. Clifford "Smitty" Smith served in the Navy for 20 years aboard four different submarines. Mr. Smith needed his father's signature to enlist for military duty as he was still in high school at that time, at age 17. He said he would do it all over again if he could. Mr. Smith is a prolific artist and great contributor to our library. Be sure to see the many works of art created by Mr. Smith which are on exhibit and available for purchase. All proceeds from this sale directly benefit our library and you can peruse the set of military books for young readers purchased with the income from last year's Veterans Day program.

Our program concluded with some light refreshments and 1940s music and with the presentation of a specially commissioned cloisonné St. James pin to each of our veterans. We all agreed to do this again next year.



Clifford "Smitty" Smith



Wild Bill Allen

## Army residents receive achievement plaque from The Peoples Bank

Armed Forces Retirement Home Gulfport residents, Roy Cook and Tony Langdon received an achievement plaque from The Peoples Bank Senior Vice President Ann Guice for their effort to raise money to help a good cause, the American Heart Association. There was competition from the five military services to be number one in contributions. The U.S. Army won in contributions.



## Employee picnic

On Saturday November 4, 2017 several employees and their family members met at Hiller Park in Biloxi for fellowship, food, fun and games. Thank you to Darren Jones for coordinating this event.



# GULFPORT

## Fabulous fun-filled fall

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

A picture collage speaks more than words and shows highlighted events from the month of October falling into the month of November 2017 for residents on Valor, Allegiance and Loyalty Halls. The fabulous fun-filled fall events began with the October 20th trip to Red Lobster with James Brogan and Ramon Coeey digging into crab claws, lobster, fish, and more. The Fall Game Poker Walk on Halloween brought smiles with Jackie Haslam and Minion escort along with Kitty Gill picking a winning card to place. On November 1, residents were treated again to the Piatigorsky Foundation with a live classical concert with a phenomenal Tenor and Pianist. On November 3, residents went on a shopping and lunch outing to Keesler Air Force Base followed by visit to Lighthouse Park in Biloxi. Tom and daughter, Susan Torguson visited with pet volunteer, Mickey Mouse on November 7 leading up to the Veteran's Day Open House and Marine's Birthday Ceremony at the front entrance. On Thursday, November 16, Father Uko led the Thanksgiving Service in the morning while Ruth Surratt and residents enjoyed a piano social in the afternoon. The month will conclude with the annual USM History visit to decorate holiday stockings, Drum It Up! Drumming group, and Lynn Meadows WINGS Performing Arts for the AFRH Tree Lighting Ceremony on November 30. All this and more – hope you had a fabulous fun-filled fall, too!



# WASHINGTON

## Seafood fest

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy  
Photos by Carolyn Haug and Jack Beck

Residents enjoyed a Seafood Fest complete with demonstrations on oyster shucking by Master Shucker Bill Striegel, crab picking by Amanda Jensema and lobster cracking by Carol Mitchell. A tremendous thank you to Mr. Snow, Greg and Liz in Food Services for an appetizing event! Residents sampled lobster homemade oyster stew, oysters on the half shell, crab and shrimp spring rolls. The afternoon event was topped off with seafood trivia and history, plus great tunes by resident DJ Billy White.

