



"Metropolis" and "Gotcha" - two great Barbershop Quartets, harmonize together in the theater for the residents of AFRH-Gulfport.

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Barbershop Quartet Highlight in Gulfport

By Doug LeMere (G)

The residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport and staff received a once in a lifetime treat on Saturday, the 7th of February. Four National Champion Barbershop Quartets came to our theater to entertain - and entertain they did.

Resident Dick Robinson, coordinator for the event was the Master of Ceremonies.

"You folks have no idea what you're in for," said Robinson. And he was right.

The four quartets were here on the coast for a National Championship Competition, amongst fellow Barbershop Quartets from the entire nation and international guests as well. Robinson had heard some of the groups perform and knew there was an opportunity in the making. He found out who the Barbershop Quartet public relations representative was, sold him



"Gotcha" - Silver Medal Barber-shop Quartet Champions, hitting some powerful harmony to the delight of all the residents at AFRH-Gulfport.

on who the residents of the retirement home were, and was able to line up this great event for all.

The four groups were: Heat, 2003 National Barbershop College Quartet Champions; Metropolis, 2003 Bronze

Medalist Quartet Champions; Gotcha, 2003 Silver Medalist Quartet Champions; and Power Play, 2003 International Barbershop Quartet Champions.

As one could read, the quartets were all champions. The two-hour performance brought many standing ovations, loud cheers and some familiar memories to all. The four quartets finished off the afternoon singing collectively, with a few extras from the crowd.

The best part of the event was the turn-out in the theater. When the four quartets arrived at the Home, the seats were filled and the aisles were jammed packed with residents.

Truly, this was a once in a lifetime treat.

AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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The AFRH Communicator is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by The AFRH Communicator staff for journalistic style and length.

Editorial views and opinions expressed in these pages are

not necessarily those of AFRH or the leadership of each Home.

Please be aware that any mistakes in this publication are there for a purpose; we publish something for everyone and some people are always looking for errors.

Throughout the newspaper Gulfport input will be shown as AFRH-G and Washington as AFRH-W.

AFRH-W Editors Column



As we are about to go to press with this February edition, it seems fitting to again point out that this paper could not exist without the efforts of the AFRH Communicator Staff. While they are mentioned in the Publisher's Block, I want to amplify this a bit and express my appreciation for a job well done.

To publish a newspaper is a complex operation. It requires the dedicated support and cooperation of everyone involved in its production. **It is definitely not a one person operation.** This particular issue is the largest edition we have produced (28 pages) since the AFRH Communicator came into being in July 2003. Us young guys and gals are likely to leave at anytime, therefore, we have the AFRH Staff people who make continuity possible. No one person is more important than another in getting the paper out. One thing you can count on – the paper will be published no-matter-what.

When you see any of our staff please thank them for their efforts. I might also add that we do have staff whose names, by their own choice, do not appear in the Publisher's Block at the top of this page. They also serve.

One problem we have around AFRH is that some residents who are dissatisfied complain loudly to anyone who will listen. However, they never bring their grievances to the attention of anyone who can resolve the problem. The AFRH Staff certainly make it very plain that they are interested in solving all the problems that are brought to their attention.

There is another means of letting the "head shed" know what's on your mind. That is by a letter to the editor. Believe me no one is going to knock on the door during the night and spirit you away because you write a letter to the editor. Also, while all letters must be signed, name are withheld upon request.

AFRH Residency

AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement centers are designed for resident 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 either Home.

Veterans are eligible to become a resident of the AFRH if their active duty service in the military was at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer and who are:

- Veterans with 20 or more years of active duty service and are at least 60 years old, or
- Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to a service-connected disability, or
- Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to non service-connected disability, and who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay, or
- Female veterans who served prior to 1948.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the following offices:

In Gulfport, call 1-800-332-3527, or write to Admission Office, AFRH-Gulfport, 1800 Beach Drive, Gulfport, MS 39507-1597.

In Washington, call 1-800-422-9988, or write to Public Affairs Office, AFRH-Washington, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20317.

Visit us on the web at: www.AFRH.gov

Message from the Chief Operating Officer

I'd like to comment on two separate items for this issue of the Communicator:

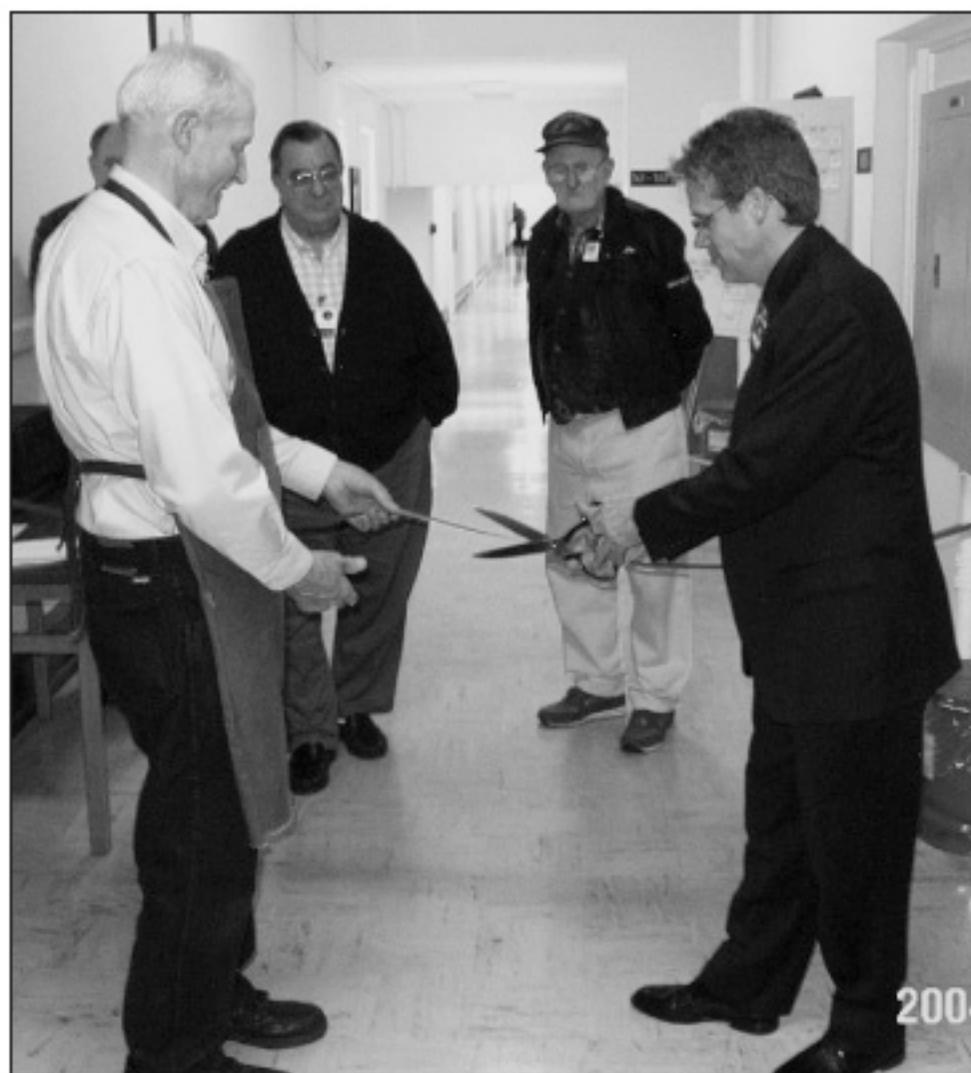
First, in just a few days we will begin to welcome Spring knowing that most of the cold weather, snow storms and cloudy days are behind us. Organizationally we are also looking ahead knowing that a large number of the organizational changes, reductions in force, etc. are behind us. We are now looking forward to reaping the benefits of the changes that have occurred over the past few months. These changes are putting us directly on course to be able to attain efficiencies in programs and services, provide the best services we can deliver to our residents, and gain a positive financial impact for our Agency.

Second, over the past few months I have spoken to many, many residents. One area that concerns me is that some residents dwell on their belief that the Home is really only for

a select group of individuals vice the intent of Congress when they enacted the Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991, as well as subsequently amendments. Instead of residents judging other residents as "potentially unacceptable," I ask that you respect your fellow resident and ask yourself the following questions: (1) Did this individual defend his/her country by serving in the Armed Forces? (2) Does this individual meet at least one of the four legislatively established eligibility criteria? (3) Does it really matter if this person is different from you * i.e., age, gender, status of health, etc. * didn't all of you serve your country when called? My point here is that while we are different there is a common thread that this Home exists for all eligible veterans who have served in the Armed Forces. I ask that you not only tolerate differences between your fellow residents, but that you actually celebrate that you and your fellow residents represent the largest concentration of war heroes from World War II, Korean and Vietnam, etc. which makes this Home truly unique. Each of you is a critical piece of the distinguished military history of the greatest country in the world. Now is the time to recognize and enjoy others who have served with you.

Timothy Cox, Chief Operating Officer

Mr. Clarence Stone studies the roulette board as he gets ready for a big day at the casino. ----->



Art and Hobby Studios Ribbon Cutting – Resident John Paul Bednarz steadies the ribbon as COO Tim Cox cuts the ribbon starting the AFRH-W Art Show. In the background looking on are residents Danny Gallucci and Frank Nelson.



AFRH-G NEWS

Office of the Director



One of the many joys of life is sharing a memorable moment with your neighbor. They occur often without fanfare and become points

of human interest over time. Our youth and adulthood are filled with gracious portions of contributing events that in a large part defines who we are today.

While eating breakfast several days ago with my shipmates (inclusive of soldiers, marines, sailors, airmen and coast guardsmen), each person detailed the day, hour and minute of signing up to serve.

Although this grand meeting took place some 40, 50, 60, or 70 years ago, every one had a story about the day or days they spend with the military service recruiter. The clarity is astounding because the range of recall covers most aspects of the daily living. Among their chronicles, I heard the weather report, the events of the day as they departed to the "swearing in," or the unplanned detour to the station en route to another destination. Some are eloquent about the personal nature of the call to duty compared to the few tales of the processing the masses. Building complexes, single standing structures, office décor or more notably the lack thereof, typewriters, people with distinct characteristics like crew cut, tall, rasp voice, purpose driven, battle

ready, lots of tattoos or "poster looking" portray THAT day.

There were anxious and uncertain feelings in this once in a life time contract; there is no other one like it. Each new service member exited though knowing that they were excited, cautious, thoughtful and more importantly proud. We've all relived that significant morning or afternoon. I truly value your stories about your hometown, family, friends and goals that influenced you to become a member of our military family. Please don't forget to share it with me.

CAPT Jerald Ulmer

-30-

Don't Miss the Friendship Oak at University of Southern Mississippi

Submitted by AFRH-G

On the beachfront campus of the University of Southern Mississippi, just 15 minutes west of the AFRH on Highway 90, is a magnificent live oak tree 500-plus years old. The tree is loved by former students of the Gulf Park College, revered by tree lovers, held in fond memory by those whose wedding ceremonies were conducted on the platform within its mighty branches, and viewed daily by tourists. This is the Friendship Oak.

Current measurements show a 50-foot height; diameter of the trunk is 5 feet 9 inches; circumference of the trunk is 18 feet 7 inches; spread of foliage is 156 feet. The average length of the main lateral limbs is 60-66 feet from the trunk; average circumference of the limbs at the trunk is 7 feet; the tree forms almost 16,000 feet of shelter; and lateral roots go out 150 feet.



For a quick trip back into our history, take a drive down Highway 90 to the USM campus. A quote from the Friendship Oak brochure: "I am called the 'Friendship Oak.' Those who enter my shadow are supposed to remain friends through all their lifetime no matter where fate may take them in the after years."

Office of the Deputy Director

Deputy's Corner

Feedback on Suggestions and Town Hall Meeting Comments



Hello again, it's hard to believe a month has gone by since our last article, however, with all of the transition coupled with challenges from harsh weather, we have all been kept very busy and the time has simply

flown by. Our Residents have also been busy with many ideas, suggestions, comments and other communications about changes desired. As a general rule we try to provide individual feedback, however, sometimes time just doesn't permit an individual reply. Therefore, I will provide additional feedback in this article to all concerned. While no names are mentioned, many of you will recognize your suggestions and ideas, hope that you appreciate this feedback to your request.

Suggestion 04-02 asked that bus schedule be made with more realistic times and also be easier to read. We addressed this with a new bus schedule that was put

into effect on Monday, 23 Feb 04. It has realistic times that will be met by Martz Bus services. The new schedule has each run boxed in with lines and printed in a larger font for easier reading. A Town Hall meeting was held on Thursday, 19 Feb, to ensure Residents had a chance to ask questions on the schedule. Hard copies of the new schedule were handed to each new Resident as they exited the meeting. Staff members have been assigned to the lobby area for the first days of the new schedule to offer personal assistance to the Residents. Suggestion 04-07 asked that more wheelchair slots be made available for the Walter Reed run. This was addressed with the transition to Martz, we have 2 wheelchair slots on first 0650 run and up to 7 wheelchair slots on the 0720 morning run. Suggestion 04-13 stated that the 55 passenger bus can't make/reach the stops because of its size. This was addressed with conversion to a smaller, but still two wheelchair capable, 28 passenger bus starting on Monday, 23 Feb 04. The smaller bus is capable of getting in closer to required stops where larger 55 passenger bus could not go.

Suggestion 04-03 asked whether there were plans to move Residents from the Pipes Building to the Scott Building.

The answer is yes that is planned and under design right now. No exact timeframe has been set for completion, but when it is then the information will be put out. Suggestion 04-11 asked for a map and phone listings to assist Residents. This being addressed by Resident Services, they are revising the "Resident's Guide" which will contain useful info such as maps, schedules, needed phone numbers and other pertinent info. A copy of the current one is available in Resident Services, but the information is dated.

Another suggestion was made that Shower Valves get checked at least annually vice waiting until they break. This has been implemented with the new contractor workforce, they will also check room air conditioning units, change the filters, and check the drain pans so that they don't spillover and flood the room below. They will also check for burned out lights and re-lamp fixtures. Several requests have been made to increase handi-cap parking places given our low number of only 51 handi-cap spaces as compared to AFRH * Gulfport with 167 spaces. Although we are constrained by a lack of parking space near our

Continued on Page 17

Grand Opening of the Art and Hobby Studios in Sherman North

By Sheila Abarr (AFRH)

The Washington campus is engulfed by beautiful rolling hills, hundred year old trees and several historical buildings. The Sherman building is just one of the buildings with beauty on the inside as well as outside. Not only for the historic value of the building but what the some residents have contributed to make the inside feel like home. Resident paintings have been displayed throughout hallways of the Sherman South for the past year. Behind each painting is a tremendous story of not only the artwork but the artist as well.

Several resident artists and hobbyist displayed their work during a ribbon cutting ceremony, on January 29th. To mark the studios relocation into the Sherman

North third floor. Paintings, sculptures, miniatures figures, coin collections and even a recording studio were on exhibit during this event. Resident artists and hobbyists such as K.C. Collier, Mimi Rivkin, Lee Corkhill, Warren Helm, Antonio Hedgepeth, Bernice Goldstein and Alice Garrymore delighted guests with their displays

Resident John Paul Bednarz has been a major factor in the success of this spectacular area. His devotion and love of art has brightened the lives of residents who can truly be proud of a place in the Sherman North to call home.

Residents are encouraged to visit the artist, hobbyist and collectors in their new area.



Satisfied artist takes a break and poses for the photographer.

HEALTH NEWS

Visiting Nurse at AFRH-Gulfport

By Doug LeMere (G)

Ms. Tammy Rush, RN, Visiting Nurse from the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) at the Seabee Base, will integrate a Health Promotional Forum with the healthcare services staff and residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport.

"I look forward to meeting and helping the residents," said Rush. "I'm here to help educate and keep them on a healthy life-style."

Starting in March, the program developed will support procedures in place at the retirement home that provides additional healthcare education for the residents who may need healthcare assistance.

The NMCRS visiting nurses are routinely available to provide home visits to community Navy or Marine Corps families

with health education questions or problems. The focus of NMCRS visiting nurse program is health education; it is not designed to meet emergency needs. At the AFRH-Gulfport, the visiting nurse is available for all residents - regardless of military service.

A specific referral must be given to the visiting nurse, stating the diagnosis, the specific problem to be addressed by the visiting nurse, and the desired method of treatment.

The Visiting Nurse program of the Gulf Coast area was in contact with 177 patients in 2003, mostly working with mother's and babies.

The retirement home has over 590 residents; providing educational assistance should be a rewarding experience for all.



Ms. Tammy Rush, RN, Visiting Nurse from the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) at the Seabee Base

Therapeutic Recreational Trips a Highlight for Residents at AFRH-G



(L to R) Residents Hugh Smith and Loren Venable heading out to a lunch at the White Cap restaurant, sponsored by AFRH-G recreation team.



Linda Thompson from Third floor recreation, on a trip with residents to the White Cap restaurant.

RESIDENT CORNER

WELCOME HOME

NEW RESIDENTS AT AFRH-G

Willie H. Brown	USA
Century, FL	
Charles A. Huber	USN
Philadelphia, PA	
Charles J. Martin	USN
Century, PA	
Edwin E. Davis	USN
Rockwell, TX	
Leonard L. Broadston	USA
Steele Cit, NB	
Jimmie Chandler	USA
Commerce, GA	
Joe A. Shuff	USAF
Harrison, LA	
William C. Manning	USA
Bridgeport, AL	
Theodore W. Hukriede	USAF
New Truxton, MO	
Frank E. Lee	USN
Sumrall, MS	
Robert G. Johnson	USA
Englewood, NJ	
John E. Walsh	USAF
Jersey City, NJ	

Census: 590

Note: As of 2/23/04

NEW RESIDENTS AT AFRH-W

Charles E. Burchfield	USA
Spearfish, SD	
Lester F. Scott	USA
Silver Spring, MD	
William B. Pettigrew, Jr.	USN
Charolette Hall, MD	
Leon Swartley	USAF
Steelton, PA	
Joseph C. Prevost	USAF
Aquebogue, NY	
Farris A. Dozier	USA
Palmer Lake, CO	
Norman T. Dent	USA
Roanoke, VA	
Frank Monopoli	USAF
White Plains, NY	
Elmer L. Keene	USAF
CT	
Bruce T. Mundy	USN
Grantsville, SC	

Census: 1010

Note: As of 2/23/04

METRO VIEW

USO World Show Troupe Dazzles the Residents at AFRH-Washington



The Scott Theater was lit up by the smiles of residents during the recent "American Spirit" show performed by the USO World Show Troupe!

Left: USO standout performers Sean Sullivan and Sara Cahill bring down the house with several favorite songs from the past.

Right: Heather Jakeman sports her red, white and blue Mae West outfit during one of the many show stoppers she performed.



By Sheila Abarr (AFRH)

President Franklin D. Roosevelt challenged six private organizations to provide recreation to troops while on leave. These six organizations included the YMCA, the YWCA, National Catholic Community Service, the National Jewish Welfare Board, the Traveler's Air Association and the Salvation Army. These organization met the challenge by establishing the United Service Organizations (USO) which is still going strong after six decades.

The USO World Show Troupe, "American Spirit" made a special tour stop in Washington. Sean Sullivan, Sara Cahill, Heather Jakeman and Christina Hernandez delighted the residents with familiar songs from the 1940s and patriotic songs known throughout the world. This group of entertainers raised the roof-top with their outstanding vocals and perfectly timed, choreographed dance steps.



Sara Cahill touched the lives of many residents during her solo performance. Mr. Montgomery was no exception.



All smiles! Tom Nix gets a special cheek side performance by Heather Jakeman after the show.

HGTV and the National Trust Honor Historic Presidential Site

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Save America's Treasures and Home & Garden Television honored the historic President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument, also known as Lincoln Cottage, as the newest addition to HGTV's public affairs initiative Restore America: A Salute to Preservation. The special public presentation was held at the site located at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in northwest Washington D.C.

To honor Presidents' Day and the Lincoln, Washington D.C. Mayor, Anthony Williams, and the author of the new book Lincoln's Sanctuary Matthew Pinsker, spoke on the importance of preserving the historic cottage, where Lincoln resided when he drafted the Emancipation Proclamation. A military band performed and guests were treated to an exclusive preview of the Restore America: A Salute to Preservation segment featuring Lincoln Cottage.



To honor Presidents' Day and Lincoln, D.C. Mayor, Anthony Williams spoke on the importance of preserving the historic cottage.



Far left: National Trust President Richard Moe, and representatives from HGTV, Save America's Treasures and co-sponsor, Comcast Cable, presented a commemorative plaque and a \$75,000 check to Peter Carmichael (second from right), director of the National Monument, to support the restoration work at this architecturally and historically significant site



Home resident Mimi Rivkin receives a signed copy of "Lincoln's Sanctuary" Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home by author Matthew Pinsker.

COASTAL VIEW

Visual Media Spotlights Working People With Disabilities

By Doug LeMere (G)

The University of Southern Mississippi's Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) and the Armed Forces Retirement Home - Gulfport recently teamed-up to develop a video highlighting the ability of individuals with disabilities in the world of work.

The informational video focused on successful individuals with disabilities in industry and will be included in an informational CD ROM for employers as a method to help improve employment outcomes for adults and youth with disabilities.

"A video of an employee is worth a thousand words," said Hollie Filce, Ph.D., IDS Coordinator. "Using these video clips in our CD ROM can help get past negative perceptions of people with disabilities."

The Institute for Disability Studies was awarded a \$500,000 grant in 2001 from the Department of Labor to provide training and technical assistance to programs funded by the Workforce Investment Act. This grant, Project YES, aimed to strengthen the capacity of programs serving people with disabilities throughout the state and thus enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport has several personnel with disabilities who work in the food services and housekeeping services.

Fred Hornsby, Food Service Program Manager at the retirement home, has 46 personnel employed; the majority of these workers have a disability.

"We employ all people – regardless of their disability," said Hornsby. "We put people in positions where they are happy and encourage them on to other challenging positions."

Ms. Renee Easterling, from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation



Lisa Moss, food services employee AFRH-Gulfport; Fred Hornsby, Food Services Program Manager, AFRH-Gulfport; and Hollie Filce, Ph.D., IDS Coordinator (not shown), USM discuss food preparation in the workplace for video presentation.



Lisa Moss, food services employee at the AFRH-Gulfport prepares desserts for the residents of the retirement home as part of a video presentation for the Institute for Disability Studies at USM.

Services, Job Development Placement Program heard Mr. Fred Hornsby speak about his program at a recent convention in Jackson. "Fred Hornsby was hands down the most effective speaker," said Easterling. Networking with the Institute for Disability Studies and the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, she connected all involved to the retirement home community.

Students with disabilities in Mississippi are less likely than their classmates without disabilities to graduate from high school with a diploma. They are also less likely to receive needed job training attend college, or find meaningful jobs. Without employment, these departing students immediately return to depending on their parents or society.

The Institute for Disability Studies' mission is to increase independence, productivity, and integration of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families into the community, thereby positively affecting their lives.

In concert with the Institute for Disability Studies, The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport is excited about the opportunities this video will offer individuals with disabilities and their employers.

Submitted by Lois Hogan (G)

"The smile on your face is like the light in the window that lets people know you are home."

Submitted by AFRH-G

From the Chapel marquee:

"A pessimist complains about the noise made when opportunity knocks."

Submitted by AFRH-G

It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows -

Epictetus

Gulf Coast Association of Marines

Submitted by AFRH-G

Each month a group of friends gather in the reception room at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport to share a common heritage - the United States Marine Corps. The group, the Gulf Coast Association of Marines was established in August of 2002, here at the AFRH-Gulfport.

Resident John Morash, a retired SSgt, USMC, got together with a few residents of the Home to establish a group of comrades amongst former and community Marines.

"This association grew from a casual conversation to where it is today," said Morash.

The association started with six to eight members to approximately 48 participants today. After several meetings, the association adopted the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society as a charity, and donates at least \$20.00 each month to this 100 year old organization.

"We have raffles and auctions," said Morash. "Sometimes we dig into our own pockets to make up for the donation."

The monthly meetings average 25 to 30 participants, each enjoying lunch at the Home, a prepared meeting schedule, and also a presentation by a guest speaker. Past speakers include: Mayor's Ken Combs from Gulfport and Robert Bass from Long Beach; local Drug Enforcement Agency & Secret Service agents; SSgt Murphy, USMC, a Purple Heart recipient from the War in Iraq; and Mr. Patrick Peterson, Sun Herald military correspondent and embedded reporter during the War in Iraq.

"We meet and enjoy the company of present day service members of the Corps," said Morash.

The meeting of fellow comrades is open to the public.



LtCol VanDyke shares story of service in the White House for the members of the Gulf Coast Association of Marines.



Gulfport Councilman Chuck Teston, pulls raffle ticket at the Gulf Coast Association of Marines January meeting.

HERITAGE

Black History Month Celebrated in February

By Yaw Boateng, Professor of Education,
E Washington University

A full appreciation of the celebration of Black History Month requires a review and a reassessment of the social and academic climate that prevailed in the Western world, and especially in North America before 1926 when Black History Month was established.

It is important to recall that between 1619 and 1926, African Americans and other peoples of African descent were classified as a race that had not made any contribution to human civilization. Within the public and private sector, African Americans and other peoples of African descent were continually dehumanized and relegated to the position of non-citizens and often defined as fractions of humans. It is estimated that between 1890 and 1925, an African American was lynched every two and a half days.

The academic and intellectual community was no different from the bulk of mainstream America. Peoples of African descent were visibly absent in any scholarship or intellectual discourse that dealt with human civilization.

African Americans were so dehumanized and their history so distorted in academia that "slavery, peonage, segregation and lynching" were considered justifiable conditions. In fact, Professor John Burgess, the founder of Columbia University graduate school of Political Science and an important figure in American scholarship defined the African race as "a race of men which has never created any civilization of any kind..."

It was this kind of climate and the sensational, racist scholarship that inspired the talented and brilliant African American scholar, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson to lead the struggle and search for the truth and institutionalize what was then referred to as "Negro History Week". A Harvard trained Ph.D., Dr. Woodson dropped out of mainstream academia to devote his life to

the scientific study of the African experience in America, Africa and throughout the world.

Under Woodson's direction and contributions from other African American and white scholars, the "Negro History Week" was launched on a serious platform in 1926 to neutralize the apparent ignorance and deliberate distortion of Black History. Meetings, exhibitions, lectures and symposia were organized to climax the scientific study of the African experience throughout the year in order to give a more objective and scholarly balance in American and World history.

Today, this national and international observance has been expanded to encompass the entire month of February. The expansion, of course, has increased the number of days for celebration, but its strength and importance lie in the new meaning that has emerged. As Ralph L. Crowder points out in an article in the December 1977 issue of the *Western Journal of Black Studies*, "it is no longer sufficient to devote the entire month to the celebration of great Negro contributions to the American mainstream."

I believe, like Dr. Crowder, that it is necessary to use the occasion to examine the collective ingenuity, creativity, cultural and political experience of the masses of Africans and peoples of African descent. In North America, a variety of programs - including lectures, exhibitions, banquets and a host of cultural activities are presented throughout the month of February to commemorate the occasion. It is not uncommon, during these weeks in February, for African students in the U.S. to receive a number of invitations to speak at gatherings, schools and in community churches.

In Ghana, it is the W.E.B. DuBois Center for Pan African Culture that has been in the forefront of programs developed to mark the observance. The intention of the founders was not and is still not to

initiate a week's or a month's study of the universal African experience. Instead, the observance portrays the climax of a scientific study of the African experience throughout the year.

The month of February is significant and recognized in African American history for the birthdays of great African American pioneers and institutions. These include the birthdays of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Eubie Blake, NAACP and the first Pan African Congress.

Historians may also recall that the first African American Senator, Hiram Revels took the oath of office in February 1870. Black History Month takes on a paramount significance as we approach the 21st century. Civil rights laws and celebrations such as Black History Month have exposed the legal consequences of overt discriminatory practices and racial harassment. The struggles for, and achievement of independence by African countries in the 20th century have shown the strength, the humanity, the ingenuity and the contributions of the African to the human civilization.

However, these revelations have not neutralized the prevalence of prejudicial attitudes which generate discriminatory acts both on a national and in the international arena. Behavior may be controlled by laws, national and international, but attitudes can only change through education and the elimination of ignorance. I believe strongly that Black History Month should be the reaffirmation of struggle and determination to change attitudes and heighten the understanding of the African experience. In the words of Ralph Crowder, "the observance must be a testimony to those African pioneers who struggled to affirm the humanity of African peoples and a challenge to the present generation to protect and preserve...the humanity of all peoples of African descent."

Happy Black History Month!

National Tartan Day!

By John Robert Mallernee (W)

Did you know there is a patriotic holiday observed by both Canada AND the United States?

National Tartan Day, authorized by the United States Senate with Resolution 155 in 1998, is observed in the United States of America and in Canada every year on the sixth day of April.

The Sixth of April was chosen because that was the date in 1320 that the Declaration of Arbroath was signed, which greatly influenced America's own Declaration of Independence.

Almost half the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Scottish descent, as was the first man to walk on the Moon.

Over eleven million Americans claim Scots or Scots-Irish heritage, making them the eighth largest ethnic group in the country.

Celebrations and parades are held in several major American cities, and President Bush publicly stated his endorse-

ment of this event.

Scottish heritage is still being strongly felt today, as American military funerals at Arlington National Cemetery, and elsewhere, frequently include a lone piper solemnly performing in full Highland regalia.

Events and observances are presently being planned for Washington, D.C.

Those wishing to participate or lend their support should contact:

Bart Forbes, Tartan Fest 2004 Chairman, 20 East Linden Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22301 or e-mail: bforbes@tartanday.org and by Telephone: (703) 836-5654.

You can use your computer to learn all about National Tartan Day at this web site: <http://www.tartanday.org/>

You don't actually have to be Scottish to display a tartan.

The United States of America has a national tartan, and there are officially designated tartans for the United States Army, the United States Navy, the United States

Marine Corps, the United States Air Force, and the United States Coast Guard.

The Seventh Cavalry Regiment (Custer's unit) has their own special tartan, and they have a formal pipe and drum band that parades wearing kilts.

"Tartan" refers to the plaid pattern in the cloth.

It originated because in the Highlands of Scotland, the dye pots were too small for coloring cloth, so only the threads were colored, before being woven, which resulted in the plaid appearance.

Over the centuries, the custom gradually evolved of each clan being identified with its own peculiar pattern of plaid.

Indeed, today many clans have more than one tartan, as there are ancient and modern versions, as well as those used for hunting, military, or social occasions.

There is a saying, "A man in a kilt is a man and a half!", and when you gaze upon a true Highlander in full regalia, you'll know it's true, for no uniform in the world looks more impressively military.

Thank you.

Cream

By Ida Simpson (W)

The cream always rises to the top, they say,

But it's oh, so comfortable,
at the bottom of the barrel.

You can forget the rigors of ambition,
Never have to face tough competition
at the bottom of the barrel.

The trouble is there's not much to do,
And you have such a limited view
at the bottom of the barrel.

So you might as well
aim for the top,

And though there's always danger
of being a flop,

You just might end up
part of the cream

That reaches the top!

Salute To The Citizen Soldier

Recently the National D-Day Museum paid a special tribute to the 12 remaining World World II veterans still remaining in Congress. The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington did not go unnoticed during this special tribute.

Ms. Claire Jazwick from the Washington, DC Leadership Committee contacted AFRH-W requesting to bring a special gift to the residents. She delivered approximately 1,000 chocolate D-Day Museum medallions for the residents to enjoy right before Valentine's Day.

We would like to thanks all the residents for serving our country.

Right, Resident Ray Smith gets a big hug and a chocolate medallion from Staff Member Sheila .



Above, Ms. Claire Jazwick and daughter Olivia delivered around 1,000 medallions to AFRH. (L-R) Food Svc Supvr , Resident Howard Sweet (Olivia on hi lap) Claire Jazwick, Resident .



AFRH-W ART COLONY OPEN HOUSE



Mike Martinez shows his canvas "DuPont Circle."



N. R. Thompson is busy painting a new landscape to decorate the Home.



Jim Boone shows his sketch of his favorite dog.



A
PLACE
TO
CALL
HOME!!

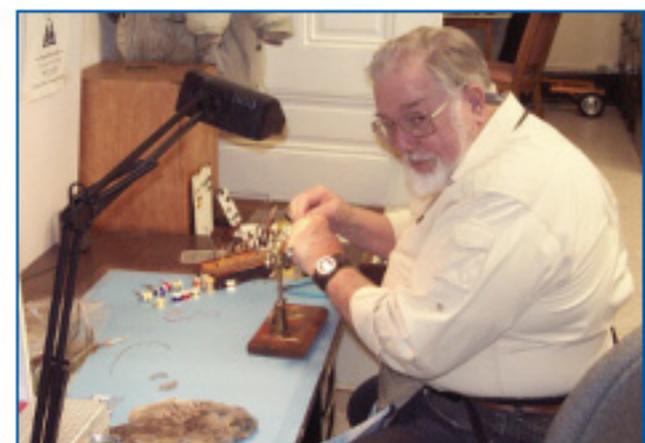
Left: James Fitzpatrick mixes paint for one of his many miniature tanks.
Right: Warren Helm shows some of his most recent still life canvases.



Lee Corkill busy painting another landscape.



Joe Taylor displays some of his many Golf Memorabilia in His Golf Repair Studio.



World Renowned Professional Fly Tier and Home Member John Colburn is busy in his work area creating special flies.

AFRH-G 9th Annual Multi-Cultural Festival Held



Richard Whiteside, Guest Speaker for Multi-Cultural Festival shares authentic Indian dance apparel.



Mariachi Singers entertain the residents and staff at the 9th annual multi-Cultural festival.

By Doug LeMere (G)

The 9th Annual Multi-Cultural Festival was held Tuesday, February 17th, at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport, sharing different cultural heritages; various foods and entertainment for the residents of the retirement community.

Richard "Dick" Whiteside, a Native American and retired Army Major was the keynote speaker, sharing many stories from his past and historical facts pertaining to American Indian cultures and traditions.

Other groups entertaining the residents included: local square dancing; Ms. Elizabeth Campbell on Scottish bag pipes; local high school dancers; Mr. Christopher Moore, soloist; and an area Mariachi Band called Sol-Del-Valle.

The ballroom was filled to capacity with many residents tapping to the beat from the lively entertainers.

Ms. Mary Thornton, staff social worker, coordinated the event which truly was a complete success. The festival lasted a little over two hours.



GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

The Cobra Experience

By C. C. Genter (G)

Kindly permit this story to be an introductory series to a vignette entitled: *The Cobra Experience, AKA Chronicles of the Cobras*, authored by yours truly, "Ole GC." The nonfiction, historical Vietnam vignette adventures seek to captivate reader interest as *Cobra Flight* exploits and combat experiences unfold. Amplification reflects a serious, poignant or satirical vein. In adherence of newspaper publishing constraints, stories will be limited to abridged versions, and longer tales must be omitted.

A brief, informative account of the original *Cobra* history and mission is offered by Colonel Frederick C. Heiss, Officer-In-Charge (OIC), *Cobra Flight*.

In April 1967, the 1041st Security Police Test Unit, "Safeside" was nearing the end of its tour at Phu Cat AB, in Binh Dinh Province, RVN. The success of implying "outside the wire" operations resulted in the decision by 37th SPS leadership, with 7th Air Force concurrence to continue this concept using 37th SPS volunteers. This new unit designated "*Cobra Flight*," consisted of approximately 70 selected volunteers, were formed into a separate flight. *Cobra Flight* assumed responsibility to maintain security of the outer areas of Phu Cat AB, and the adjoining villages in 37th SPS Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR). 7th Air Force, 22nd ARVN Headquarters, and the Binh Dinh Providence Chief endorsed this mission. The mission included daily coordination of not only the 22nd ARVN Headquarters, but also the South Korean Army Division Headquarters (Tiger ROK), since *Cobra* would be conducting joint search and destroy missions with elements of the ROK and AVRN forces.

ALL *Cobra* personnel received individual and small unit training weapons (individual and crew served), patrolling, conducting ambushes, small unit tactics, and blocking force maneuvers. Selected personnel also received training in specialized equipment such as Armored Personnel Carriers (APC), Tactical Surveillance

Security Equipment (TSSE) and 81mm Mortar Crew Operations. (Aside from "Safeside" personnel, I was privileged to be selected as the first Cobra APC Commander/Caliber .50 Machine Gunner in the United States Air Force.)

Cobra Flight took its name from the snake because of the swiftness, silence and deadliness of its strike. The *Cobra Flight* mission was to secure the outer perimeter of Phu Cat AB, RVN and ensure early detection and engagement of hostile forces attempting to penetrate the base or committing acts against the installation, friendly forces or surrounding villages in the 37th TAOR.

Much of the operational doctrine passed on to *Cobra* by *Safeside* is in use today by Air Force Security Forces worldwide. The active defense concept is viable and still successful in protecting Air Force assets worldwide.

Now that you have the background of *Cobra*, are you ready for the vignettes in which *Cobra* flight "WROTE THE BOOK" concerning the active defense concept? As Jackie Gleason would have exclaimed, "And away we go with SHARPSHOOTER SUPREME!"

SHARPSHOOTER SUPREME

On the west side of the Fire Direction Control (FDC) compound was a high revetment to facilitate test firing of weapons. It was NOT A FIRING RANGE, but as stated, used to test firing is really obvious. One would hardly want to deploy and confront any enemy with a weapon that wouldn't fire. Wisdom of providing the revetment from day one was the product of good planning. Like a pilot cannot fly a plane that lacks an engine and you cannot go to war with a weapon that won't fire. Pretty academic stuff I know but I could have a lot of fun with that line of reason. I could go on all day citing examples of what you need, to do whatever.

My expertise with a shoulder or hand held weapon was not always up to par. I can remember as far back as my teenage years when I first fired a weapon, my trusty 20 gauge shotgun, which I used

with my rabbit hunting buddies, e.g., Gilbert Leffel, currently of Baton Rouge, LA. Wilmer E. "Bill" Brubaker of North Manchester, IN and Thom D. Dunlavy, Leesburg, IN, during our Northern Indiana hunts. Unfortunately, there was no big game then but migration of Michigan deer changed the picture until eventually Indiana had a deer season. In the military however, like everyone else, we were taught to shoot by practicing the basics of good sight alignment, achieving a good sight picture, breath control and gradual trigger squeeze. The idea was to bring all these factors into play simultaneously with the certainty of getting a bull's eye every shot.

Somehow it didn't work out that way for me, and perhaps it was just lack of practice. My firing scores were erratic. I never knew whether I'd qualify for marksman, sharpshooter or expert. I believe there was a couple of occasions when I lucked out and qualified for expert. There were times when I even failed to qualify which was disappointing, not to mention embarrassing. I would try again until I qualified in any category. Going to the range therefore was not one of my favorite things. If relaxed, I seemed to do well, but if apprehensive, my score suffered. It was not until I retired from the air force that I learned the Israeli Combat shooting that I found was easier, and my scores showed a slight improvement. The course was taught by a retired Marine Sergeant who said the military technique was all wrong and counter productive. He contended the Israeli method was natural and far superior. He had his own school for Security Officer licensing in Florida and traveled all over the world teaching the Israeli method to the Royal Saudi Guards, police forces in Australia, security forces, etc. Since my basic weapon in RVN was a Cal .50 machine gun, my past firing record never became an issue. Personally, I felt it only took one round to drop Charlie, and at the rate of fire of 400-450 rounds per minute, the enemy didn't have much chance against that kind of heavy, rapid rate of fire, fire power. How could I miss?

The credibility of witnesses in the criminal justice system has always repre-

sented a matter for serious debate. Some people think that if you have a witness to a crime that's as good as gold. Germane factors are whether you have a reliable witness, a hostile witness or an expert witness, all things that both the prosecution and defense seriously considers before going to court. Many defendants have received guilty sentences on the strength of the testimony of the witness's. As a police detective, I learned, contrary to popular belief, that when three to four witnesses are saying the same thing, all concur on significant points, all tell the same story in the same way and in the SAME WORDS. It's an indication that there may be collusion or that witnesses have been talking among themselves and comparing stories. In sincerity therefore, there's the tendency for a witness to give erroneous testimony. In example, they may testify to something they didn't actually see (but think they did) because they heard it from another witness. That's why it's utmost importance to separate on-scene witnesses immediately (to preclude contamination of their minds) and out of earshot of other witnesses who are being questioned. When testimony of wit-

nesses differs somewhat, an interrogator can believe he's probably getting the untarnished truth. Equally important is does the witness accurately interpret what they have actually seen. The foregoing information is pertinent, as you will see in the concluding paragraph*particularly with regards to ACCURACY.

At near dusk, we began to become concerned since the Ambush Team had been so late in reporting for duty. Inquiry was made, and I believe they had a transportation problem. We relaxed, awaiting their tardy arrival, knowing they were now in route. At that point, the team should up, but I couldn't tell who the team leader was. Since I had not begun to fire, I figured it would be prudent to retreat from the firing line and get them on the road for deployment. I changed my mind at the last minute and figured I'd pop just one cap, retreat, and give them the line. Usually a short burst of the gun was desirable since the rate of fire might need adjustment. I fired one round as decided. My single shot struck a coke can, and since I was using armor piercing incendiary (API) ammo, it was spectacular because the can glowed and

split, flying in the opposite direction. "WOW, what a shot*did you see that?" one team member exclaimed. I was about to say, "I wasn't even aiming at the darn can*it was just coincidence, but, the team thought otherwise. Another team member replied, "Yeah, I saw it man! I never knew Sgt Genter was such an expert shot!" Another member joined in and said, "I know we'll have nothing to worry about when Sgt. Genter arrived on-scene in a fire-fight." The concluding remark made me decide not to say a word. Let them believe what they saw, exemplified my normal shooting proficiency because I had no doubt my new fame would spread throughout Cobra like wildfire.

*In one lousy (lucky) shot, I had firmly established what would become a long standing reputation: **SERGEANT GENTER IS AN EXPERT SHOT!** With a broad smile of contentment, I turned toward the team and gave them a slight bow and a "thumbs up." They smiled and returned the gesture, knowing they had definitely witnessed a truly spectacular shot!*

Deputy's Corner

Feedback on Suggestions and Town Hall Meeting Comments

Continued from Page 5

buildings, we have studied this issue and will increase handi-cap parking in the near future to just over 80 spaces. Beyond that we'll need to pave new areas which is too expensive right now.

At the Town Hall meeting of 14 Jan 04, a request was made to illuminate the Sherman Clock Tower, that has been completed. A request was made to hold focus groups, especially for the Dental Service. That has been completed. A request was made to fix the hot tables in the Scott Dining hall. This has also been addressed and tables are routinely checked for warmth.

Well, that about wraps it up for now, more to follow in the future. Please remember, we all need to work together to make AFRH the best place it can be. It's truly a team effort!

CAPT (s) Paul Soares



Ms. Corrine Robinson, Tour Guide for AFRH-Gulfport, stops in the bowling alley during tour with members of the Air Force NCO Academy.

HISTORY

“Togetherness”

By Ray Colvard (W)

In 1990 Congress determined that the Naval Home and the Soldiers and Airmen's Home would become the Armed Forces Retirement Home with branches at Gulfport and at Washington. Origins and operations of the branches were different. The Navy Home began as early as 1796 with contributions from Navy men: Pension fund, Hospital Fund and in 1834 the Naval Asylum.

A Military Asylum for aged and decrepit soldiers was first discussed in Congress in 1827, pointing out the Naval Asylum. Some officers, notably Robert Anderson, made establishing the asylum a crusade. It was recommended time and again by Secretaries of War. But not until 1851, Colonel Goode stated in his History of Soldiers Home, "General Winfield Scott, Captain Robert Anderson, and Senator from Mississippi Jefferson Davis pushed through legislation that had failed so many times before."

Not all Navy men, Soldiers, Marines or Airmen were happy with the 1990 merger. Giving Homes' management to political rather than military authority has rankled some former authorities with vested interests. It may be a sop to we older residents coping with the aspects of military life versus ours of the 1930's, 40's, and 50's.

Former enlisted indoctrination, and military history, emphasized the demeaning status of "enlisted", a literary theme from Melville's Billy Budd through World War II. Bill Mauldin's "Joe and Willie" were brothers- in-arms. That the military establishment cherishes enlisted titles for ratings as "petty" must certainly inhibit the enlistment of English majors.

Abraham Lincoln (He was inducted into the service during the Black Hawk War by Captain Jefferson Davis) used the wartime memories of jurors to his advantage. Although Mr. Lincoln as a lawyer of the circuit court preferred to appear for the defense, in one notable case he was required to prosecute. Steven Oates wrote

(paraphrased for brevity) that Lincoln read the indictment, "This is a case of a soldier assaulting an old man," and was loudly interrupted by the defendant shouting, "I am no soldier, I am an officer."

Whatever were the merits of his case, Lincoln wanted to win. He looked at his jury of, in part, war veterans, waited a dramatic length of time before continuing. He bowed to the defendant and said, "Sir, I beg your pardon," and then addressing the jury, "This is the case of an officer, who is no soldier, assaulting an old man."

In 1864 General Grant ordered that any prisoners from Colonel John Mosby's regiment be executed. General Custer in Richmond killed six. He shot a seventeen year old boy who he suspected of wanting to join Mosby. The lad was shot before his mother's eyes-she begged Custer to treat the boy as a prisoner of war. Mosby retaliated. He began to hang Union prisoners. The treatment stopped.

Mosby's prisoners were Union officers. An officer was awakened in his bedroom by an intruder. "Who's there?" he demanded, and the intruder said, "It's Mosby." The officer sat up, "You've got the rascal?", and Mosby said, "No, but he's got you."

The officer-enlisted wedge may be recognized by only the older residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home, and the enmity which was fostered between the services. On September 23, 1947 the Office of Secretary of Defense was established. It may be recognized that enlisted people have more in common with enlisted people in all the Armed Forces than with Commissioned personnel, even of their own branch.

When the city of Washington grew beyond its boundaries to cover all the District of Columbia, housing developments and streets replaced the great open space that had surrounded the Soldiers' Home. By chance, perhaps, the main street entry to the Home's main gate is Upshur Street, named for a former Secretary of the

Navy. Abel P. Upshur who was on board the Navy's first screw steamer Princeton for a demonstration of the Captain's new 12-inch wrought-iron gun, his 'Peacemaker'. After several successful firings the gun exploded, killing eight and wounding nine bystanders. Upshur was among the dead.

When the Naval Home was relocated in Gulfport in 1976 a monument to a former army man, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, was already in place. Not a street, but just a few casinos down the road from the main gate of the Armed Forces Retirement Home- Gulfport is "Beauvoir", a shrine dedicated to the co-founder of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington.

One may also note that another co-founder of the Home in Washington may have short changed the Navy. In 1847 President Polk was impatient with General Zachary Taylor's progress in Mexico. Polk ordered General Winfield Scott to take an army and the Navy's Home Squadron and open a new front at Veracruz. The Navy landed Scott's army of 8,600 men on a beach two miles from Veracruz in less than five hours without the loss of a single life. Navy frigates and sloops bombarded Mexican armies and garrisons, and sent dozens of landing parties ashore to spike enemy guns. The Navy's operation was the model for amphibious warfare.

In Mexico City, Scott collected \$150,000 from the Mexican President in lieu-of-pillage. He used \$100,000 to found the Military Asylum. Whether or not he considered the Navy as part of the Military Asylum is moot.

One recalls that when Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft moved the navy school from the Naval Asylum in 1845 he expanded the "cram" course into a two-year program and established it at Annapolis as the Naval Academy. He moved it into an obsolete Army post, Fort Severn, and converted it into a campus. Winfield Scott had been named General of the Army in 1841. The transfer may not have had his approval. In 1851 Scott may have felt the Navy was still ahead. Fort Severn obviously was worth more than the \$100,000 that he gave to make possible his "Army" Asylum.

VETERAN NEWS

Military Retirees to See Pay Increase

ARLINGTON, Va. (Jan. 27) -- On Feb. 2, an estimated 150,000 military retirees will see an increase in their pay. The National Defense Authorization Act, enacted in November 2003, significantly modified a long-standing law preventing retirees from receiving full retired pay if they also received disability pay from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The new law allows concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability pay for retirees with more than 20 years of service and a disability rating of 50 percent or greater. This restored pay will be phased in over a 10-year period that began on Jan. 1, 2004.

Retirees are not required to take any action to receive the additional pay. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service has already identified eligible retirees and begun making adjustments to their military retired pay.

The first payments are due the first business day of February for the law change that was effective Jan. 1. For retirees who have been receiving special compensation for the severely disabled, the additional funds will be paid on

Feb. 2, 2004 based on entitlement for Jan. 1-31, 2004. The restored pay is paid on the same schedule as current military retired pay. Recurring payments will be made on the first business day of each month based on entitlement for the prior month.

For the majority of military retirees, the additional money is taxable income and subject to federal tax withholding.

One category of military retirees that is eligible for additional funds but will not be paid on Feb. 2, 2004, are those who receive retired pay based on a disability percentage instead of years of service. Further guidance is needed from the Department of Defense to determine how the law will be applied in these cases. Once guidance is received, payments will be made retroactive to Jan. 1, 2004. An estimated 2,800 military retirees fall into this category.

For more details regarding who is eligible for the restored pay and how payments will be made, visit www.dfas.mil and see the topics under "Retired and Annuitant Pay," or visit the myPay Web site at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Fleet Reserve Association Presses Congress to Fund SBP Reform

ALEXANDRIA, VA. - Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) National Executive Secretary Joe Barnes urged all 66 members of the House and Senate Budget Committees to include funding in the FY 2005 Budget Resolution for legislation (S. 1916 and H.R. 3673) that eliminates the drastic reduction in Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities that now adversely impacts survivors of military retirees who are age 62 and older.

"The current program provides 55 percent of SBP covered retired pay for younger spouses - however, the amount decreases to 35 percent of retired pay for survivors age 62 and older," explained Barnes. "Many retirees and their spouses were not fully aware of this reduction when they enrolled in the program in the early 1970s. As a result, many believe they were betrayed by having been asked to sign an irrevocable contract to pay lifetime SBP premiums."

Senator Mary Landrieu (La.) introduced the Military Survivor Benefits Improvement Act of 2003 (S. 1916), which would eliminate the SBP offset over a 10 year period. Companion legislation (H.R. 3673) to do the same was introduced by Representative Jeff Miller (Fla.) in the House. The Association strongly endorses both bills.

FRA was instrumental in the enactment of the military SBP program in 1972, which was designed to improve the Retired Service members Family Protection Plan. Participants were responsible for paying 60 percent of the costs, while the government was to subsidize the remaining 40 percent. But today's SBP program looks nothing like its FRA predecessor, and its intended value has been greatly diminished by the Social Security offset as well as decreased contributions from the federal government.

Today, military retirees pay for more

than 80 percent of SBP costs, while the government only picks up about 19 percent of the costs. By way of comparison, the federal government subsidizes its civilian survivor benefit plans - Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) - at 33 percent and 48 percent, respectively.

Probably the greatest disparity between the two plans is beneficiaries in the federal survivor programs do not experience the same offset incurred by military SBP beneficiaries when they reach the age of 62. It is unconscionable that the men and women of our armed forces and their families, who have given up so much in service to and protection of our country, continue to sacrifice at a time when they are in their greatest need.

FRA will reference the importance of SBP reform in testimony before Congress.

To send a prewritten e-mail letter of support to your congressional representatives, visit the Association's Action Center at <http://www.fra.org/action/index.html>, and click on "Urge Your Elected Official to Support Funding for SBP Reform Legislation."

The federally chartered FRA is celebrating its 80th anniversary as the oldest and largest professional military association representing the concerns of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel. FRA is the premier watchdog organization for safeguarding and enhancing military pay, health care and benefits by representing the concerns of its 130,000 members before Congress and appropriate federal agencies. For more information about FRA, visit the Association's web site at www.fra.org.

PERSONAL PROFILES

Pearl Harbor Survivor Calls AFRH-W Home

By Wilfred "Mac" McCarty (W)

What began as a tranquil breakfast came to a screeching halt for AFRH-W resident, Francis Stueve, when a bullet penetrated the mess hall, scattering butter dishes on a nearby table. The location: Schofield Barracks on the island of Hawaii. The time and date: 0715 hours, 7 December 1941. Some of the dining soldiers wondered if the firing was a mishap related to the upcoming "Red and Blue" army training maneuvers scheduled by the Hawaii 298th and 299th National Guard organizations.

Along with two buddies, Francis ran out of the mess hall and saw Japanese planes coming from all directions while spraying bullets indiscriminately on the ground below. The soldier to the left of Francis was shot in the jaw, while the other soldier on Francis' right was wounded in the leg. Francis, remarkably, was untouched.

According to another AFRH-W witness to this historical event (there are no less than four at the home), one of the

enemy planes came in so low that the pilot was observed waving to the Americans below. To defend themselves, there were only 16 handguns and four rifles for Francis' entire unit, along with two clips of "ammo" for each person. One officer emptied his "45" at the planes while shouting, "We must fire back!"

The local warehouse in which World War 1 weapons were stored provided very little in the way of useful firepower. Some of the rifles had no bolts, and some had either warped barrels or no barrels at all. Compounding the situation, all of the items were coated with a greasy paste, called "Cosmolean," necessitating the use of gasoline for its removal.

Some one hundred minutes later, the havoc and carnage came to an uneasy end. While Francis and others were surveying the devastation, an officer ordered an enlisted man to "sound the charge." Probably as relief from the built up tension, many of the troops chuckled on hearing the "Calvary" melody - - the order was issued a little late, inasmuch as all the enemy

planes had left.

Now, at the age of 86, Francis still has "plenty of fuel left in the tank" despite a lifetime of pluses and minuses. He was born to German immigrant farmers in Dyersville, Iowa. After his parents lost their farm during the Great Depression, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934. Francis then enlisted in the army four years later, returning to the U.S. in 1946. His subsequent tours of hazardous duty include Guadalcanal, New Georgia, the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. Once, when his weight nose dive to 118 pounds, he was spirited to New Zealand for R&R.

Francis eventually joined the Air Force, and served in the 1948-1949 Berlin Airlift. The German language he learned from his now deceased parents came in handy when the U.S. military was temporarily short of translators.

In February 1969, Francis completed 20 years of military service and moved to his current home ... here at the AFRH-W.

Security Officer on Duty

Submitted by AFRH-W

Most of you on the Washington campus might not know Officer Tyrone Savoy but he knows you. A large number of employees are greeted by Savoy during the morning when they enter the North Capitol gate and head to their respective jobs..

Savoy served in the U.S. Army for eight years, three years in the DC National Guard and, three years in the Air National Guard. While serving in the Army he was wounded on his second tour in Vietnam and shipped back to Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital for treatment. While on active duty he received two Army Commendation Medals for his service. Savoy's most rewarding military job was while assigned as the first patient liaison

Sergeant to the Medical Holding Company. Savoy's job was to make sure the wounded soldiers needs were taken care of while in WRAMC. This included financial issues, clothing or helping them write home to family members.

Savoy's time in the DC National Guard was spent with the Military Police division. One of his most memorable assignments was being called to duty during President Jimmy Carter's inauguration. As if his career to date wasn't enough he decided to serve in the DC Air Guard as an ammunition specialist. His command's primary duty was to arm planes.

Savoy came to the AFRH-W in 1990 working in the custodial department where he was assigned to the Grant building (now

closed). He admits upon his arrival at the Home there was always a lot of work to be completed on a daily basis in the custodial department. During his tenure in the custodial department he received several awards for outstanding performance. Residents took an instant liking to Savoy and never wanted to mess up the marble floors in the entry way of the building. Savoy just chuckles now and adds, "most of the time the floors were not wet just shinny clean". Savoy recalls meeting congressmen, senators and top military personnel who would visit the residents in the Grant Building on several different occasions.

After working several years in the custodial department Savoy became the first african american civil service employee to be hired into the AFRH-W Security and Investigation department at the Home.

Continued on page 22

Honest Freddie

By Doug LeMere (G)

Resident Frederick Douglass is assigned as the recycled paper man, picking up used newspapers around the Home. On one of his retrievals, he spotted an envelope on the 8th floor. At first he thought it was trash, but after close inspection, he discovered several hundred dollar bills were inside.

"My first thought was - this is a lot of money for someone to lose," said Douglass.

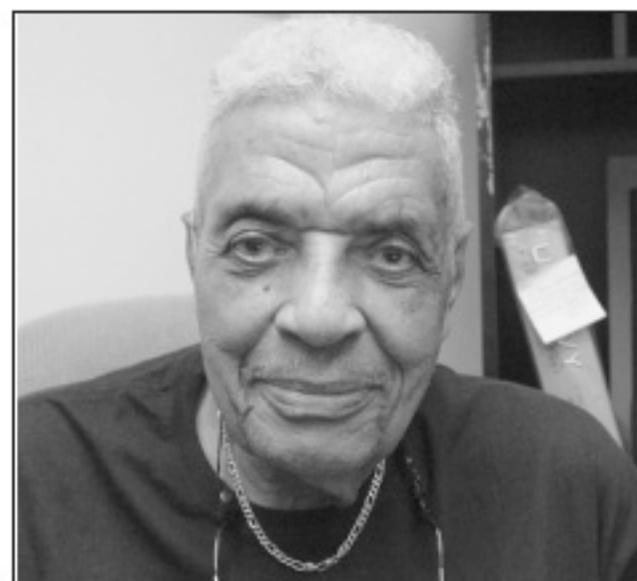
The envelope had no markings to determine its owner; Fred pondered what to

do. After a day of listening to others to learn if someone had put out a call for help, he turned the envelope in to Lt. Col. Van Dyke.

After spreading the word throughout, one call came from a lucky resident. The following is a note given to Honest Freddie:

Thank you for returning my lost envelope. Your honesty and integrity overwhelms me. I am very grateful. Please accept the enclosed for my appreciation.

It's nice to hear stories like this. We hope you enjoyed it as well. Thanks Fred.



Frederick Douglass, found an envelope and was rewarded for his integrity and honesty at AFRH-Gulfport.

Submarine Group Recognizes One of its Own

By Doug LeMere (G)

The U. S. Submarine Veterans Inc. and Sub Vets WWII organizations, met at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport on Friday, 6 February, to recognize resident Charles Diehl and present a poster to the home.

Mr. Diehl received the Holland Award, for 50 years of dedicated service to Naval Submarines; the poster was presented to Captain Jerald Ulmer, AFRH-Director, and then placed in the museum on the home's tenth floor.

Over 30 residents and guests attended the ceremony, held in the reception room and later in the museum on the 10th floor of the home. Residents Pat Patteson and Jim Davis ensured a suitable spot was made available for the framed poster, which now is placed in a special section for all submariners to enjoy.

A humbled Charles Diehl accepted his award and spoke to all with great pride, using humor in his acceptance speech.

"I don't know how I done it, but I'm thankful for this," said Charles. This brought many smiles and applause from the seated guests.

Resident Robert Spide and a host of others coordinated the event.

Right, Robert Spide, Senior Chief Electronics Technician, USN, ret., presents "Up Periscope" poster to Captain Ulmer, Director, AFRH-G at submariner reception.

Bottom, U. S. Submarine Veterans Inc. and SubVets WWII, gather in the museum at the AFRH-Gulfport to hang "Up Periscope" poster.



Charles Harvey, Cmdr., Tullibee Base, U. S. Submarine Veterans Inc., presents Holland Award to resident Charles Diehl at AFRH-Gulfport.



A MUST READ

Protecting Yourself on the Internet

By John Robert Mallernee (W)

Today, I was sitting at the computer in the library checking my e-mail, and at the computer next to me, a fellow Armed Forces Retirement Home resident was soliciting my advice, as he was trying to create an account on E-Bay.

During the course of step-by-step instruction, he blurted out his password, as he was somewhat confused about the differences between a "password", a "user name", and an "e-mail address".

I told him he should NEVER tell anyone what his password is, but he didn't seem too concerned.

Well, folks, now that I know his password, I can order that brand new four wheel drive pickup truck, with everything on it, and have him pay for it.

Even worse, I can use his e-mail account or his e-bay account to download kiddie porn and snuff films (home movies of actual murder), which will not only get him sentenced to many years in a federal prison, but have him spend the rest of his life identified as a sex offender.

I can use his password and e-mail account to threaten the President of the United States, and the Secret Service will be going after him, not me.

In fact, I could probably sell his identity to some Arab terrorists, who would pay me a lot of money for the name, e-mail account, and password of a legitimate United States military retiree.

Are you starting to get the picture?

Do you see the danger?

Treat your computer password with the same security you treat the PIN for your ATM card.

NEVER give that information to anybody, ever!!!

I do, however, suggest one possible caveat.

You probably SHOULD write down your computer password and your bank account PIN on a piece of paper, seal it in an envelope, and place these with a copy of your Will.

That will enable the executor of your estate, or a family member, to access your accounts and properly conclude all transactions when you are unable to, and even to e-mail notification to everyone in your computer's address book.

Over and over, I see routine computer maintenance and software updates ignored and neglected, not only by residents, but also by the staff and management here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

When you purchase your brand new computer, you must remember that a lot of time has passed since the computer was placed on the market, and during that time lapse, the software is already out of date.

So, as soon as you connect your computer to the Internet, the very FIRST thing you should do is begin downloading and installing all the latest updates to your software.

This is absolutely necessary in order to protect your computer from Internet viruses or hackers who would steal your identity.

Anytime you download and install updates or new software, you should do basic maintenance, which involves cleaning out your browser cache, clearing your history, dumping your recycle bin, cleaning your hard drive, scanning your hard drive, and defragmenting your hard drive, followed by a reboot.

By the way, almost all new computers include a self-tutorial program for novice users, so please DON'T throw your money away purchasing something advertised on television (i.e., "Video Professor", et cetera), since you can easily learn everything you need to know, step-by-step, merely by using what's already in your computer.

When you purchase a computer, be certain you get the software which was used to load the programs, because the software is more valuable than the computer.

You'll use that software over and over, but without the software, the comput-

er is just an expensive paperweight.

Yes, when I first got my computer, I was thoroughly intimidated, for I was overwhelmed by all the stuff on the screen, none of which I understood.

I was given books, but couldn't make sense out of them, either.

So, I did what a kid would do.

Kids ain't scared of computers or high tech; only adults are intimidated and worried that if they push the wrong button, something terrible will happen.

What does a kid do when he sees a brand new high tech device?

Well, that's what I did, and I recommend you do the same thing.

Just start pushing buttons and having fun!

That's how I learned, not by college courses, not by technical manuals, but "by guess and by gosh!", pushing them buttons and making lots of goofs.

Remember, computers are "user friendly", and equipped with redundant access to everything, so you're ALLOWED to make mistakes.

Boy, oh boy, ain't the Internet wonderful?

Have fun, y'all!

Savoy

Continued from page 14

There is no slowing down this dis-able veteran anytime in the near future. He spends his off time from the Home as a security guard at Reagan National airport and has since 1996.

When asked about his future plans he stated, "If it's Gods will, to retire from AFRH-W and expand my carpet cleaning business."

This native from Mitchelville, Md is very proud of his military service to his country, his African-American heritage and his continued service to the veterans of the Home.

“My Watch Was Five Minutes Slow!”

by M. R. Relbub

Dedicated to my Comrades who shared the adventures of those early days in the missile field.

“Which will it be?”

THIS?



A beautiful sight to a missile-man. Each missile battery has 3 launching sections. Each section 3 underground missile magazines, and 3 missile elevators.

or THIS?



In May 1958 there was an accidental explosion of seven missiles at the Leonardo NJ Nike Site. As a result several persons were killed.

It was a typical Michigan winter storm, with a howling blizzard coming in over Lake Saint Claire. My wife, Gloria, our two babies and I were warm and comfy in our beds. Except for the sound of the wind whistling off the lake, it was a quiet night. However, that was about to change.

The phone rang somewhere around 0245, which in itself was not unusual. I answered it on the first ring. It was one of my sergeants on duty in the missile launching area. “Sir, we need you to get out here right away, he said, “I can’t tell you why, but we need you here as soon as possible.” This man was very reliable, so I knew it wasn’t a false alarm. About the only time the phone rang at that hour was when someone thought something was going to blow up ... and they wanted help. As I dressed, I thought of the raging winter storm and the six miles I had to drive over treacherous Dike Road to the site. Outside, I cleaned a foot of snow off my car and started the motor. The car slipped and slid as I made my way to the launching area.

Coming up along-side of the Launcher Control Trailer, Sergeant Sullivan came running up to the car and jumped into the passenger seat. “Drive down to the launcher area, Sir, and I’ll tell you about it on the way,” he said. He then advised me that a call was received from the Detroit Police department -- they had picked up a guy and, while he was being interrogated, he informed them that a bomb had been planted in one of our magazines. We had many magazines in the defense complex, for both guns and missiles. There was nothing to do but search all of them.

The on-duty launcher crew had already started the magazine search, but suspected particular missiles because there had been civilian maintenance men working around them that day. They figured I was the best one to find the bomb. The Detroit Police said the guy had told them that the bomb was set to go off at 0330. This was not a real great way to begin the day. It was already about 0315.

A crew of six men was waiting topside at the underground magazine. Each magazine contained around 14 tons of high explosives as well as other hazardous toxic fuels and chemicals. No one was anxious to go down into the underground site. We climbed down into the magazine, and we were all scared as hell. Allowing a five minute safety factor for evacuation, we had ten minutes to find the bomb. We surmised that it was most likely the aft warhead on the suspect missile that would have been booby-trapped. Therefore, we knew we had to remove 90 screws to gain access to the compartment. The men proceeded to remove the screws while I watched the time.

It seemed like it took forever to get those damn screws out. Finally, they were removed, enabling a view of the warhead compartment. I ordered the men to place the missile on the elevator and raise it topside to prevent a detonation from triggering the rest of the missiles in the magazine. “Let’s get out of here,” I hollered while leading the way up the emergency escape ladder. Topside, we all piled into my car. As we went through the area gate I instructed the guard to keep his eyes on the missile and “hit the dirt” if anything happened, knowing that he would see the explosion before the sound or blast reached him.

We then drove to our maintenance building to wait. While there, we assumed we had a few of minutes left before the 0330 “zero hour.” When the operator announced the correct time, I realized that my watch was five minutes slow! Fortunately, the bomb was found and removed before it could detonate.

Returning home around 0400, my wife and children were still asleep. They didn’t even know I had been away. As I looked at them sleeping so peacefully, a soft feeling came over me. And, for the first time in my many years of service, I knew at last what my mission was really about.

RESIDENT'S DESK

Bulla Boys and Kava-Kava

The Ole Salt (G)

It was early 1942; we were leaving Bremerton Naval Ship Yard after a major repair and make over. It was odd but many of the parts installed on us were marked for installation on various other ships. If you don't think that caused a lot of confusion and rumor, you should have been there. After we took on ammunition we headed north. We were to protect the Aleutian Islands from invasion. By the time we got there, Dutch Harbor had been bombed and Japanese troops were on Attu and Kiska. The powers that be decided that we were not needed up north and ordered us in the opposite direction. (At least we got to experience days that don't end. It was light all day and all night. It was quite an odd feeling to stand a mid-watch in broad daylight.) We steamed for days on end without seeing the enemy or anyone else for that matter. We refueled and received provisions for the ship at Pearl Harbor. We weren't allowed to go ashore and as soon as we re-supplied, we got underway. This time we steamed in Condition Two, which meant that half of the battle stations were manned at all times. We crossed the equator without ceremony, but the ship's yeoman did note the event in all our service records. After we crossed the equator, seemingly a short time, we reached our destination - Fiji. What a beautiful sight!

We anchored in a lagoon which was open on one side and were surprised by the activity around the ship. About fifty yards away, the locals were rigging anti-submarine nets. This was my first sight of a Fijian. I saw huge black men with afro-hair styles to end all afros. Most of the men had black hair but a few had red hair. I thought some of my Irish folks had found Fiji some time ago, but I was wrong. The locals washed their hair in slacked lime water which turned it red. The red hair denoted some kind of social status. I never found

what that status was. As the work went on around the ship, we noticed that while the Fijians worked, they communicated in a monotone - which frequently contained the word bula and bula-bula. We started referring to them as "Bula Boys". The name stuck. The Fijians didn't seem to mind the name although the British colonials took exception to us naming their subjects. Oh well...

A fourth of the crew was granted liberty during the day but there was a curfew at 1700. We got to meet a few British in the two pubs that were in Lautoka. The pubs were okay, if you liked hot beer, gin tonic or gin squash...never figured out what that was. Oh yes, no women were allowed in the pubs. We got to do a lot of walking around seeing the sights. We found many small shops all run by Indians. It seemed that the only people who engaged in business were from India; the Indian silver-smiths did some of the finest work I have ever seen.

Since we had to be back on board before sunset, there was nothing to do but try to stay cool - this meant staying topside as long as possible. A little before sunset on deck, you could hear singing coming from the islands. The voices were just beautiful, harmony a "Barber Shop Quartet" would die for. We didn't know all of the hymns they were singing but the blending of voices demanded rapt attention. It got to the point that when everyone who was not on watch was topside to listen to vespers. Someone arranged for a group of singers to come on board to sing for us. During the War I got to see two USO shows. They were good but didn't hold a candle to the group of Fijian gentlemen who entertained for the crew. They sang hymns in English at first and then began to sing in their native language. That was when we realized that what we had been hearing in the evening were familiar hymns sung in their lan-

guage. They were able to embellish the songs with booming basses and lilting tenors while singing in Fijian that was not possible when singing in English.

After the singing was over, we had the privilege of meeting some of the singers. That is when I first learned what a warm hearted people the Fijians were. One of them invited a shipmate of mine and me to a Kava ceremony. We asked our Division Officer if we could accept the invitation. He said yes - as long as we could get back to the ship on time.

We of course accepted the invitation; had no idea what a Kava ceremony was. We soon found out...At 1300 two days after we were invited, a native type boat picked us up and we sailed to a small island not far off Viti Levu. There was one long thatched hut on the island with fourteen Fijians and six sailors for the ceremony. It could have been a little frightening if the Fijians weren't so friendly. We were taken into the hut and seated in a semi-circle on nepa mats. Each sailor had a Fijian on each side of him. One of the Fijians, appearing to be the oldest, took a seat on a mat that seemed a bit elevated and faced us. The rest of the men were busy preparing the Kava. The man facing us referred to it as kava-kava. Soon the senior man was given a bowl which he held up and spoke over. He then took a drink from the bowl and it was passed to the first Fijian. He took a swig and handed it to the sailor next to him who took a swig and handed it on. By the time it got to me, nine people had drunk from it which caused some concern. That was nothing compared to the concern I had when I smelled the stuff. Not wanting to let the good old Navy down, I took a swig. It wasn't too bad - until I tried to talk. My tongue wouldn't work. I think I had two more swigs, but I really don't remember. We must have made it back to the ship on time - I'm not too sure about that either.

The World's Greatest Woodworker

By Ludwig Olson (W)

There are so many skilled woodworkers in the world that it's very difficult to name one as the greatest or best. To many others, and me Alvin Linden, nicknamed Al, was the greatest in that field. He is best known to sportsmen for the high quality of his rifle stocks, but he is also famous for superb woodwork on interiors of luxurious Pullman railway coaches.

Linden was born June 28, 1886 in Motala, Sweden. His father was a skilled cabinetmaker and boat builder, and it likely had an influence on Al's career. After Al graduated from public school, he completed a three-year course of manual training under the Naas system. His instructor was a strict taskmaster who insisted on perfection.

While still very young, Al got a pocketknife and hatchet for Christmas. According to Al, "My father told me how to chop my fingers, not how to avoid it. So being bullheaded, I didn't chop my fingers, and haven't done so since."

After the Linden family immigrated to America during the 1890's, the Pullman Palace Car Co. in Pullman, Illinois, near Chicago, employed Al and his father. Al spent almost five years working on interiors of sleeping, dining, and private cars.

Many kinds of rare woods were used in Pullman cars. Al recalls having worked with kokko, mahogany, satinwood, rosewood, white and red and tonquin. Most difficult to work was tonquin, a hard, dark green wood filled with sand. It was grown in Southeast Asia, but Al claimed it must have originated in hell.

The cranky inspector at Pullman had especially sensitive fingers. Producing work to suit him wasn't easy, but evidently Al did very well.



Linden was famous for his unorthodox method of roughing out a stock. All he depended on was a razor-edged hatchet, a keen eye – and a lifetime of experience.
Drawing by the late Dave LeGate

While still in his teens, Al was among the workers on the prize dining car exhibited at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Al moved to northern Wisconsin where he worked many winters as a sawyer and saw filer in logging camps. He earned the reputation as being the best in the business.

About 1907, he backed into the stub of a tree limb and injured his spine. It caused him difficulty in walking and impaired the use of his left arm..

Al started making gunstocks about 1920. At that time, he lived with his sister and brother-in-law on a small farm near

Bryant, Wisconsin. Al's small frame shop, covered with tarpaper, was behind the log house. Although the place was far from fancy, it was destined to become a Mecca for hunters and target shooters, especially those with a weakness for fine, beautifully stocked sporting rifles.

Meticulous persons would have been horrified by the cluttered interior of Al's shop. There were heaps of tools on his workbench, but he could find what he wanted in an instant. He made many of his own tools, which often proved better than those purchased.

Although physically handicapped, Al managed to make fine stocks. Most of his strength was concentrated in his right arm. He had a very strong grip and will.

The lines of Al's stocks embodied conservatism with elegance and good taste. He had an eye for beauty, and claimed that anyone who appreciated the lines of a pretty girl was qualified to lay out and model curves required on a stock. No doubt he would have disliked the exaggerated baroque lines of many sporting rifle stocks produced today.

Al's stocks were made from mahogany, maple, cherry, and myrtle,

Al died of an apparent heart attack on July 4, 1946. He was only 60. Rifles with his stocks are now prized collector items. Many of today's stock makers are carrying on the tradition of high quality Al established. However, the mystique of the old master remains. It can be said that he was to gun stocks what Antonio Stradivarius was to violins.

IN REVIEW

How to Win at Wordsmanship

Submitted by Fred Fayerweather (W)

After years of hacking through etymological thickets at the U.S. Public Health Service, a 63-year-old official named Philip Broughton hit upon a sure-fire method for converting frustration into fulfillment (jargon wise). Euphemistically called the Systematic Buzz Phrase Projector, Broughton's system employs a lexicon of 30 carefully chosen "buzzwords:"

COLUMN 1

0. integrated
1. total
2. systematized
3. parallel
4. functional
5. responsive
6. optional
7. synchronized
8. compatible
9. balanced

COLUMN 2

0. management
1. organizational
2. monitored
3. reciprocal
4. digital
5. logistical
6. transitional
7. incremental
8. third-generation
9. policy

COLUMN 3

0. options
1. flexibility
2. capability
3. mobility
4. programming
5. concept
6. time-phase
7. projection
8. hardware
9. contingency

The procedure is simple. Think of any three-digit number, then select the corresponding buzzword from each column. For instance, number 257 produces "systematized logistical projection," a phrase that can be dropped into virtually any report, with that ring of decisive, knowledgeable authority. "No one will have the remotest idea of what you're talking about," says Broughton, "but the important thing is that they're not about to admit it."

Resident William Abernathy Recognized for Fifty-five Years Service to Freemasonry.



(L-R) Past Master Howard J. Sweet, Secretary; Past Grand master Ted Kahn; Master Mason William Abernathy; Past Grand Master Robert H. Starr; and Master Rowland O. Beckley.

William (Abbey) Abernathy, Drill Sergeant, is a 30+ year Marine Corps Retiree. Abernathy is a resident of Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington. He is 90 years of age and walks 4-7 miles every day.

Photograph by William D. Means, Grand Lodge Photographer

Cogitation in the Golden Years

By C. C. Genter (G)

In your limited life, everything you've seen or experienced is totally different than your original conception. Even when two things or ideas appear similar in nature, they may not be static; hence our beliefs may be inaccurate due to the ever-changing world in which we live. New experiences and acquisitions of new found knowledge can alter your previously held notions or philosophy drastically, or at the very least, modify those ideas.

Many things remain an enigma in the world, and life by and large, provides many mysteries. Despite awesome, rapid technological advances and an in-flux environment, the unknown still persists. The learning process should continue, even to our ultimate demise, for one can never learn or absorb everything.

Whatever you have read is ultimately a matter of personal interpretation. Nobody can solicit your feelings or opinions, regardless how dogmatic, and conclude you are right or wrong, ignorant of the facts or respond with unfounded criticism. Accept humbly however, sincere criticism, but do not take it to heart or permit it to destroy your spirit. Similarly, don't let it interfere for you to quench your thirst for knowledge or to suppress creative thinking.

Insofar as generosity and friendship were the impetus that generated this article, kindly contemplate the poignant words of an unknown author who once said, "Love is a flower*. friendship is a sheltering tree."

SPECIAL TRIPS

Ship Island Excursion's A Coast Tradition

Ship Island's Gulf Side Beach is modified by weather this Spring, photo: 17 May 2003.



Submitted by AFRH-G

Relaxation, recreation and history - these are the gifts offered to you on Ship Island. Here in the northern Gulf of Mexico, 12 miles off the Mississippi Coast lies Ship Island, right out our front window of the AFRH-Gulfport. Ship Island, with wonderful natural resources and its long history, is a real jewel of the National Park Service, and it's waiting for you.

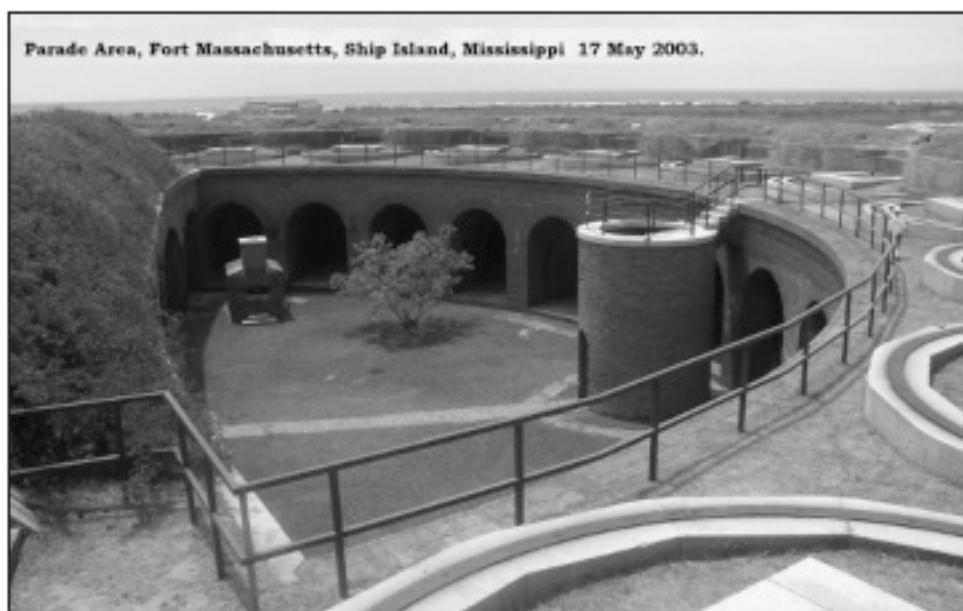
Discover the best kept secret in Mississippi. An excursion to Ship Island is consistently rated by locals and visitors as the coast's premier waterborne experience. Travel by boat to a place of exceptional beauty, home of historic Fort Massachusetts, long secluded stretches of beach, and sparkling clean, gulf water.

2004 Ship Island Tours start up again in March; run through October. The one-way cruise takes about an hour. For information: call 864-1014. On the web: mshipisland.com.

Pictures Submitted By: Robert McCormick



Ship Island Excursions arrive at pier, West Ship Island, Mississippi



Parade Area, Fort Massachusetts, Ship Island, Mississippi 17 May 2003.

AFRH Gulfport Celebrates 10th Annual Mardi Gras Ball



(L to R) Captain and Ms. Ulmer, two Air Force guests and Ms. Jones stop for a quick snapshot prior to the ball.



Silver City entertain the residents of AFRH-Gulfport at the 2004 Mardi Gras Ball, Krewe of NAMACS.

By Doug LeMere (G)

Over two hundred seventy-one residents and guests celebrated this year's ball, which was organized and coordinated by the Krewe of NAMACS.

The Krewe's name, NAMACS, is an acronym for the military services represented by the residents of the home: Navy, Army, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard.

The King and Queen entered the ballroom accompanied by the Krewe of NAMACS and led by Captain Alvie Sumalbag, USAF, with several active-duty uniformed military personnel from Keesler Air Force Base.

Resident Nancy Littrup was selected as Queen Stella X. She wore a beautiful full-length black velvet dress, covered by a stylish oriental overcoat. Resident Emery Campbell was selected as King Maris X. He wore fine gray suit, gray pants with a white shirt, gold



Ms. Nancy Littrup, Queen Stella X and Emery Campbell, King Maris X, prepare to become King and Queen.



Don Cross zooms in on a target of opportunity while throwing beads at Mardi Gras Ball 2004.

cummerbund with a gold bow tie.

Captain Jerald Ulmer, Director of AFRH-Gulfport, introduced former Queens and Kings. They were: Naomi Groger, 1991; Edythe "Edie" Jackman, 1992; Loise Hogan, 2000; Virginia Keenan 2001, Alberta Jones, 2002; Ida "Tip" Thompson, 2003, Charlie Diehl, 1997; Hal Evans, 2002 and Odell Williams, 2003.

The royalty and guests were entertained by: Silver City and a "Surprise" Guest, Tim Miller, former staff member and long time friend of all. He was dressed as a Native American Indian, danced for the crowd and dashed off to enjoy the rest of the party. Fred Hornsby and the dining staff prepared a wonderful buffet dinner.

Irene Smith, Krewe Captain, was mistress of ceremonies. Over forty residents of the Mardi Gras crew, pulled together in making this year - an occasion to remember.