



Wreaths Across America

Remember, Honor, Teach

Organization founded to promote Veterans remembrance

By Mary Kay Gominger

For the first time since its inception, the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery was part of the Wreaths Across America program which took place all across the country on Saturday, Dec. 12. David Moshier, Cemetery Superintendent, said a visit this past spring by Wreaths Across America National Director Kathryn Cross resulted in a request for our participation.

"Our meeting was quite by chance but we were nonetheless pleased to be asked to participate in this program,"

Moshier said. "The Wreaths Across America organization found sponsors for us very quickly once we were added to the list. Within a week they had all the wreaths donated, which from what I understand, is faster than usual," he said.

The principal sponsors for the USSAHNC wreaths were Alion Science and Technology of Washington and the Warrant Officer Basic Course, Class 921-10, currently in training at Ft. Lee. A small ceremony took place at the USSAHNC on Dec. 12 with a group of the sponsors.

The USSAHNC is one of only two National Cemeteries administered by the Department of the Army. The earliest gravestone dates back to 1861. Of the 13,894 graves, 4,000 are active duty casualties of the Civil War. The USSAHNC is now solely dedicated for use by veterans of the AFRH.



WO1 Glenn Geary straightens a wreath on a gravestone at the U.S. Soldier's and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, located across the street from the AFRH-Washington. WO1 Geary is a member of the Warrant Officer Basic Course, Class 921-10, from Ft. Lee, one of the sponsors of wreaths at the cemetery.

From Arlington to Across America

Wreaths Across America, a non profit 501-c3 organization, was formed as an extension of the Arlington Wreath Project. The Arlington Wreath program was started by Morrill Worcester (Worcester Wreath) in 1992 with the donation and laying of 5,000 Christmas wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery. This became an annual journey for Mr. Worcester.

It was relatively obscure until 2005 when a photo of the stones adorned with wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet. The project received national attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries spurred the creation of "Wreaths Across America". Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Mr. Worcester conceived the idea of sending seven wreaths (one for each branch of the military as well as POW/MIA). In 2006 with the help of the CAP and other civic organizations, over 150 locations held wreath laying ceremonies simultaneously.

By 2007 the requests for more wreaths grew. The Worcester family established the non-profit group Wreaths Across America to further promote Veterans remembrance. The mission Remember, Honor and Teach characterized the projects goals perfectly.

By 2008 over 300 locations held wreath laying ceremonies in every state, Puerto Rico and 24 over seas cemeteries. Over 100,000 wreaths were placed on veterans graves. Over 60,000 volunteers participated.

The wreath laying is now held annually on the second Saturday of December. December 13, 2008 was unanimously voted by the U.S. Congress as "Wreaths Across America Day."



Ladies Holiday Tea

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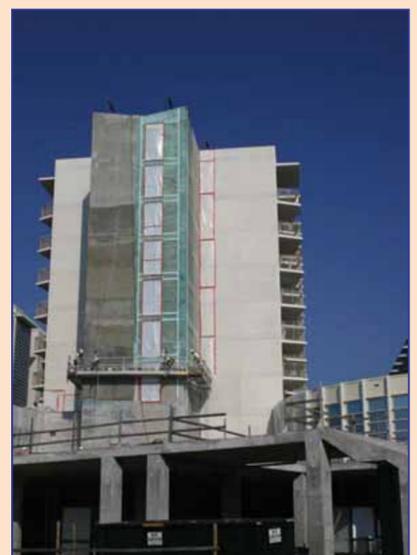
Annual Holiday Dance

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Spreading Holiday Cheer



Santa and his helpers from the American Legion Post 70 hand out candy canes to the children of a DC Charter School located on the AFRH-W grounds.



Gulfport Update

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Notes from the Resident Advisory Council



Well, as much as I hate to say this Navy won the game on the 12th of December. One of these days, rest assured, Army will win. I just hope that it is in my lifetime. And

now for the rest of the information you need to know.

Another year has come and gone and with the year one remembers those we knew who no longer sit at our tables or play games with us. They may not be among us but are remembered in our thoughts.

I need to thank all those who had a part to play in the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. The Army Band Quintet, the Resident Chorus, and we found out that our Resident stringed musical instrument player can also sing. I guess this makes him a Bass Guitarist. Thanks also to all the members of the staff who had parts in the ceremony, everyone contributed to a perfect start to this holiday season.

A resident stopped me the other day and asked that I give you some information that may be of use to all of us. That is how can I receive military records that I do not now have but may need in the future? You may think that it is a highly detailed process that takes months to accomplish. Not so, if you go to this web site:

www.vetrecs.archives.gov you will go to a page that gives you all the information that you need to read in order to request this information. You can do all this on line or if you wish can print out hard copy forms and do it that way.

With the start of a new year we begin anew with both the Gulfport and Scott Focus groups. These groups deal with issues that may arise at both places as we move forward with the new changes that will come about as we relocate the former residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Gulfport to their new home in Gulfport, Mississippi and the rebuild of the Scott Building at the Washington, District of Columbia site. These groups meet on the 3rd (Gulfport) and 4th (Scott) Tuesday of every month starting at 9 a.m., in the Scott Lounge. I encourage each resident to take part in these groups so that we are all marching forward together knowing what is going to happen and when it is going to happen.

There are also other committees that meet during the month of January that concern you, the resident. The Dining Hall committee meets the 2nd Tuesday at 3 p.m. in the Scott Lounge, the Resident Advisory Council meets the 3rd Wednesday at 9 a.m. in the Scott Lounge. The Trip Committee meets the 1st Wednesday of the month also in the Scott Lounge at 9 a.m.

Other meetings that concern you may also be held and you will be able to access the information on the dates of these meetings by going to:

www.rac-afrh.blogspot.com

Here will be information on items that may be of interest to you, the resident. It is my belief that the more information that you have about the workings of the home, the better you feel about what is going on and can assist our new arrivals and other residents in solving problems that they may have.

So fellow residents let us make the coming year the best it can be by trying to make things better for another resident who might need assistance.

And finally, I LOVE THIS PLACE - you can too.

Esker F McConnell

Go to

www.rac-afrh.blogspot.com
for up to date information
from the RAC

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

Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi



AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement communities are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

Eligibility:

Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH.

The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not active commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer), are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home:

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 injuries, disease, or 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 AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH,

PAO/Marketing, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

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

Become a resident today!

Pearl Harbor Day

REMEMBERED

Lest Not We Forget



Pearl Harbor Day celebrations at King Health Center included (from left) - Louis Richardson, Clarence Ruggier, Harris Burcher, and George Mamula (standing).



Cutting the cake at the Pearl Harbor remembrance ceremony held on Dec. 7 in the dining hall are (from left) - Edward Davis, Robert Carson, Thomas Buonfigli and Francis Steve.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



Happy New Year! The countdown to a new year is upon us and this year the event is particularly significant as it is the year that we will reopen our Gulfport facility. We are approximately 10 months away now from reopening the Gulfport facility and there is much to do and that time will go very quickly. During the next few months we will begin executing the plan for the Gulfport Stand Up that we

began two years ago when the foundation for the new building was started.

From a staffing perspective, we will have many of the same type of positions we had in Gulfport prior to closing in 2005. In the next three months we will hire eight new employees in Gulfport to lead the effort. We had a very good response to the recently advertised Director position. We will have a new selection made by mid-January. Once this selection is made, we will fill the other seven senior management positions. During the last two quarters of the fiscal year (2010) we will hire, incrementally, approximately 70 employees during the third quarter (April-June) and then in the July-September timeframe we will bring on approximately 40 more employees. The main focus of staff initially will be to Stand Up the facility and receive residents beginning in October until fully occupied.

An AFRH Chief Operating Officer Fact Sheet, which will be issued in early 2010, identifies the process and timeline for re-occupancy of Gulfport. All Residents at the AFRH-W facility will receive this notice in their mailbox and it will be posted on the AFRH website. Residents returning to Gulfport are asked to read this and become familiar with its content as these guidelines have been established to ensure a safe and smooth transition for everyone.

Categories for prioritized Residents moving back were identified early in the process in Fact Sheet No. 17A/B (see below). Residents transferring from DC, and those with immediate report dates, will be the first group to be allowed access to the facility. Everyone is asked to please respect this limited access requirement as it is for the benefit of our Residents. Access onto the Gulfport site will be closely monitored and strictly enforced. Amenities (such as meals, the Wellness Center, the lounge, etc.) will only be available for individuals with Gulfport resident status. All Independent Living and Assisted Living residential rooms in Gulfport will be completely furnished to include a bed, armoire, nightstand, love seat, end table, tv stand, and dining table with two chairs. Other furnishings include a bedspread, sheets, towels, lamps, window blinds and a refrigerator (see drawing below). Once a Resident takes occupancy of a room the furnishings in the room become his or her responsibility. If a Resident has a specially prescribed medical requirement for their bed, we will work with them to ensure that their needs are met.

Dining Services will provide all meals, but if you would like a microwave in your room there is a space for it in the kitchen area if you choose to supply your own microwave.

Residents will have a choice to have digital service to include phone, internet and wireless (for cellular phones and laptops), or basic analog phone service. More information will be provided about plans and costs as soon as that information is made available to us. You can bring the phone of your choosing, one that is compatible with the service you choose. We are presently working with a service provider for packaged services and rates.

We will have an automated check in service for Residents that will provide state of the art technology for daily check-ins and emergency calls. The safety and well being of our Residents remains a primary focus and this new service is flexible and has the capacity to meet the needs of Residents in all levels of care.

AFRH-G Resident Guides will be available for distribution on May 1. Residents who are identified to transfer from DC to Gulfport will receive a copy in their mailboxes and the Guide will be posted to the AFRH website for easy access for delayed entry and prospective Residents. It is very important that everyone reads the Guide and becomes familiar with the content, as it will identify specific guidelines for residency.

The changes that will be taking place in the New Year offer us all the unique opportunity to be a part of change. Let's continue to work together, through the Resident Advisory Council and the Focus Group meetings, to make this the best chapter yet in AFRH history.

Have a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Timothy Cox

Admission Priority Categories for the Reopening of AFRH-Gulfport

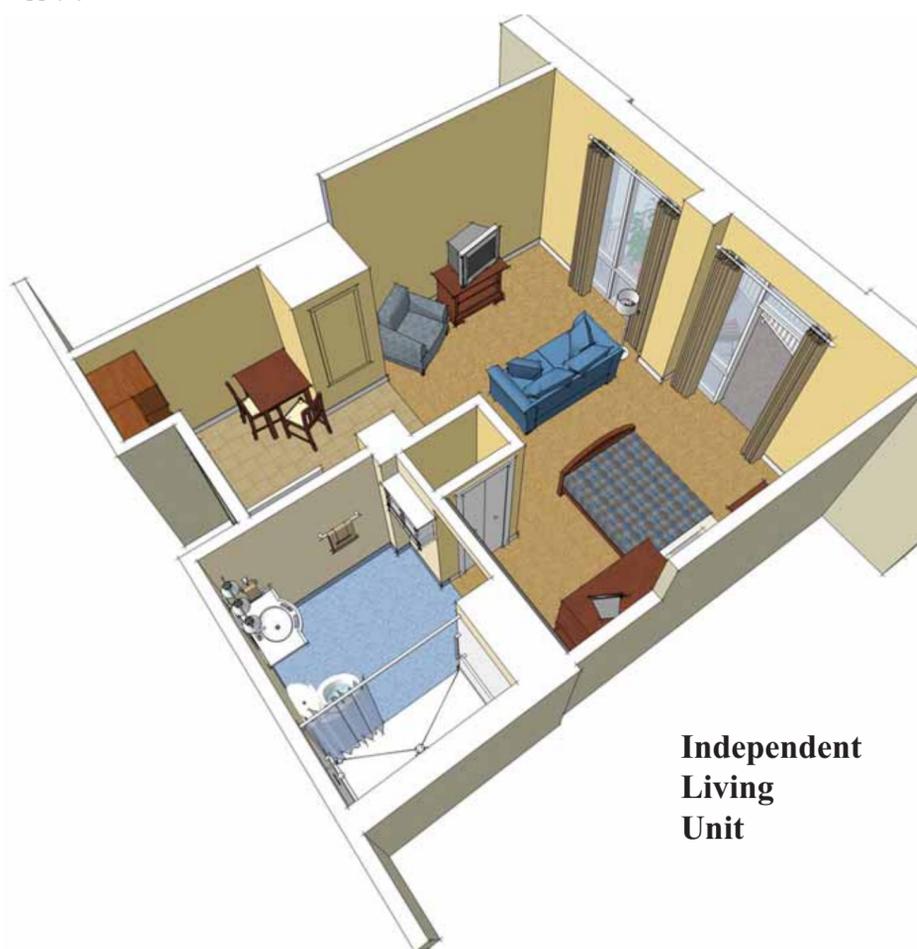
Priority 1A - Former Gulfport residents who have lived continuously at AFRH-Washington since Hurricane Katrina and who have not had any breaks in their residency. Priority 1A residents will be assigned rooms based on the original date when the resident entered AFRH-Gulfport prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Priority 1B - Former Gulfport residents who have had one or more breaks in residency at AFRH-Washington since Hurricane Katrina, but who will reside at AFRH-Washington from January 1, 2009 until Gulfport reopens. Priority 1B residents will be assigned rooms based on the original date the resident entered AFRH-Gulfport prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Priority 2 (Delayed Reentry Status) - Former AFRH-Gulfport residents who, for whatever reason, decided not to reside at the AFRH-Washington facility and were placed on Delayed Reentry Status. Residents in this category are assigned Priority 2 status. Former AFRH-Gulfport Delayed Reentry residents who wish to come to AFRH-Washington to upgrade their priority from Priority 2 to Priority 1 must have done so before January 1, 2009. Priority for delayed reentry into the AFRH-Gulfport is based on the original entry date into Gulfport.

Priority 3 - Residents who reside at AFRH-Washington who had AFRH-Gulfport reporting dates: Residents who made application to AFRH-Gulfport and subsequently decided to reside at AFRH-Washington pending the reopening and who have lived at AFRH-Washington continuously from their original report date.

Priority 4 - AFRH-Gulfport Waiting List: This includes all applicants who applied and were approved both before and after the closure of AFRH-Gulfport. These individuals are assigned Priority 4 status. Priority for these individuals will be based on the date of their application approval. This category also includes AFRH-Washington residents who announced their intention to transfer to AFRH-Gulfport upon reopening. AFRH-Washington residents who request transfer will be placed on the AFRH-Gulfport waiting list based on the date they formally requested the transfer.



Independent Living Unit

A Summary of the AFRH population

Male-955
Female-106
Youngest-42
Oldest-103

Last Branch of Service

US Army-430
US Air Force-333
US Navy-241
US Marine Corps-28
US Coast Guard-4

Eligibility category

1-Retired-774
2-War Theater Service-120
3-Service Connected-112
4-Females prior to 1948-55

Theater Era Service

Vietnam-471
Korea-503
WWII-462
Panama-3
Gulf War-3
Grenada-1

*Service from some residents is in more than one conflict
**Data as of 12-22-2008

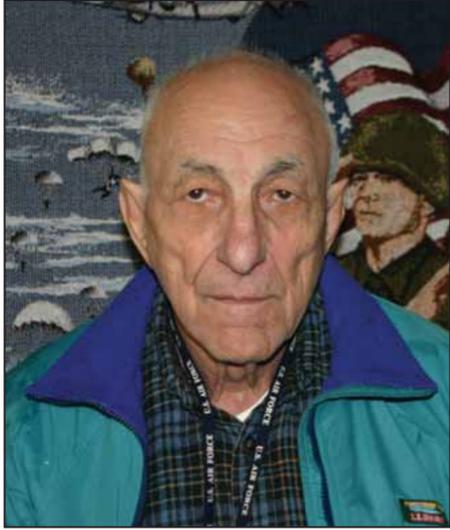
A White Christmas



Walking in a Winter Wonderland

The grounds of the AFRH-Washington blanketed in snow from a winter storm that moved through the area December 19, just in time for the holiday season.

Welcome Aboard



Name: Anthony Contino
Branch of Service: USAF
Entry Date: June 1941
Separation Date: March 1976
Rank: E8
War Theaters: WWII, Korea, Vietnam

Name: Donald Conner
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: October 1956
Separation Date: November 1984
Rank: E9
War Theaters: Vietnam

Name: Johnnie Powell
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: July 1947
Separation Date: July 1967
Rank: E7
War Theaters:

Don't forget to sign up for the
NBC 4 Annual Health & Fitness Expo
 Washington Convention Center
Saturday, January 16

To reserve a seat, sign up by January 12

Laughter is the best medicine...

A humorous Holiday Poem

NOTE: This is a joke in the spirit of fun that a former home member sent to me. We can laugh as we know we have it better than this at the AFRH. Mac McCarty

Christmas at Armed Forces Retirement Home

'Twas the night before Christmas at AFRH,
 and all of us seniors were looking our best.
 Our glasses, how sparkly, our wrinkles, how merry;
 Our punchbowl held prune juice plus three drops of sherry.

A bedsock was taped to each walker, in hope
 That Santa would bring us soft candy and soap.
 We surely were lucky to be there with friends,
 Secure in this residence and in our Depends.

Our grandkids had sent us some Christmasy crafts,
 Like angels in snowsuits and penguins on rafts.
 The dental assistant had borrowed our teeth,
 And from them she'd crafted a holiday wreath.

The bed pans, so shiny, all stood in a row,
 Reflecting our candle's magnificent glow.
 Our supper so festive -- the joy wouldn't stop --
 Was creamy warm oatmeal with sprinkles on top.

Our salad was Jell-O, so jiggly and great,
 Then puree of fruitcake was spooned on each plate.
 The social director then had us play games,
 Like "Where Are You Living?" and "What Are Your Names?"

Old Back Pack Mac was feeling his oats,
 Proclaiming that reindeer were nothing but goats.
 Our resident wand'rer was tied to her chair,
 In hopes that at bedtime she still would be there.

Security lights on the new fallen snow
 Made outdoors seem noon to the old folks below.
 Then out on the porch there arose quite a clatter
 (But we are so deaf that it just didn't matter).

A strange little fellow flew in through the door,
 Then tripped on the sill and fell flat on the floor.
 'Twas just our director, all togged out in red.
 He jiggled and chuckled and patted each head.

We knew from the way that he strutted and jived
 Our social- security checks had arrived.
 We sang -- how we sang -- in our monotone croak,
 Till the clock tinkled out its soft eight-p.m. stroke.

And soon we were snuggling deep in our beds.
 While nurses distributed nocturnal meds.
 And so ends our Christmas at AFRH.
 'fore long you'll be with us, we wish you the best!

JANUARY 2010 RECREATION TRIPS & SPECIAL						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	Please do not scratch your name or anyone else's off any sign up sheet. If you see someone scratching a name off a sheet, please let staff know in the Recreation Office, Sheridan, Bldg room 1010.	The "Same Seat" rule is required and enforced for departing and returning on all trips. Please be considerate of others and take notice of your seat selection when entering the bus. Please return to the home in your same seat.	Emergency cards must be carried with you on every trip, please make sure you have one. The trip caller has these cards if you need one.	Residents may sign up 4 business days prior to trips 6:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Mon-Fri in the Sheridan Bldg across from room 1010. BPV trip sign ups are in the Recreation Office, 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Sign up Mon, Dec 1	Sign up Mon, Dec 2
3	Sign up Mon, Dec 4	Sign up Tues, Dec 5	6	Sign up Thur, Dec 7	8	9
BUNCO @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Lounge	The National Archives, DC DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 11:00 a.m. Movie @ 6:00 p.m. in the Theater	Potomac Mills & Wal-Mart, VA DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m.	Trip Selection Meeting @ 9:00 a.m. in the Scott Lounge	Andrews AFB, MD BPV's Also DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m.		Basic Computer Class begins @ 10:00 a.m. in the Computer Lab. Sign up in Library now Bingo @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Lounge Martial Arts Class @ 2:00 p.m. in the Fitness Center
Sign up Tues, Jan 5th 10	11	Sign up Wed, Jan 6th 12	13	Sign up Fri, Jan 8th 14	15	Sign up Tues, Jan 12th 16
FT. Myer Brunch, VA (PX/ Commissary included) DPT: 10:30 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m.		St. Charles Towne Center & IHOP, MD DPT: 8:00 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m.	Bingo @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Lounge	Forest Glen, MD DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 11:00 a.m.	Ice Cream Social 1:30 p.m. in the Lounge	NBC 4 Annual Health & Fitness Expo Washington Convention Center DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 12:00 noon (VAN)
17	Sign up Tues, Jan 18	Sign up Tues, Jan 12th 19	Sign up Now in 20	Sign up now in Ceramics 21	Sign up Fri, Jan 15th 22	Sign up in Library 23
BUNCO @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Lounge	Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday Holiday Wegmans and Lunch, VA BPV's ALSO DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m.	Bolling AFB, D.C. DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m. Birthday Dinner 4:30 p.m. in the Scott Dining Hall "Archie Edwards Blues" performance @ 6:30 p.m. in the Scott Lounge	AARP Driving class 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Sherman conference room, 2nd floor	Bev's Ceramics Trip (Ceramics Participants only) DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 11:30 a.m.	Red Lobster & Stores, Silver Springs, MD DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m.	New Computer Class: Introduction to Skype 1:30 -3:00 p.m. in the Computer Lab
Sign up Tues, Jan 19th 24	25	Sign up Wed, Jan 26	27	Sign up Fri, Jan 22nd 28	29	30
Arundel Mills Mall & Wal Mart, MD BPV'S Also DPT: 12:30 p.m. RTN: 4:30 p.m.		Fort Meade, MD DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m. Music Program @ 1:30 p.m. in the Scott Music Room.		Washington Auto Show @ D.C. Convention Center Cost: \$8.00 payable at the door DPT: 1:00 p.m. RTN: 4:00 p.m.	Resident/Employee Bowling Social @ 1:30 p.m. in the Bowling Center	Solider Stories Kick Off Event @ 1:30 p.m. in the Library

Holiday Cheer

Annual AFRH Ladies Tea a festive occasion



Santa passes candy canes to the ladies attending the Annual Ladies Tea.

The annual AFRH Christmas Ladies Tea was held on the afternoon of December 10 in the Scott Lounge. Ladies of the AFRH were treated to a nice variety of holiday refreshments while Santa made his way around the room passing out candy canes and holiday wishes. The Christmas Ladies Tea is sponsored by the AFRH Corporate staff.



Donna Smith, with AFRH Corporate office, pours up tea for the ladies.

The Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at AFRH “A Night to Remember”

By Nicole Chappell, Recreation Specialist

On Tuesday December 8th, the residents were treated to a very special Tree Lighting Ceremony in the Scott Theater. The evening began with the Invocation given by Chaplain Goodloe; he reminded us about our holiday blessings.

The U.S. Army Brass Quintet Band played marvelous holiday music and shared some holiday stories with the audience in between the songs which made their performance more personal. In addition, the AFRH Resident/Employee Chorus performed several holiday songs. As a special treat, two soloists Frank Leonard and

Luis Lopez sang inspiring holiday songs. During closing remarks, our Director, David Watkins with just one click of a button lit our beautiful Christmas Tree.

After the program, residents and guest gathered in the Lounge for some hot apple cider and holiday cookies. Everyone enjoyed the refreshments and the live entertainment played by residents Patrick Goldsworthy (Goldy) and Luis Lopez.



Recreation Services would like to thank Campus Operations, Dining Services, Chaplain Goodloe for his inspiring words, our Director David

Roger Davison joins in the fun at the tree lighting ceremony.

Watkins, Christine Baldwin, Jerry Carter, Carolyn Weber, the Band and the Chorus for making this a successful event and a night to remember!



The AFRH Resident/Employee Chorus performs at the annual Tree Lighting ceremony held on Dec. 8.

Friends come together for Annual Holiday Dance



The dance floor was crowded for most of the night.



Above - There was no shortage of dancers wanting to step out on the dance floor.



Left - James Webster and Mimi Rivkin chat at the Holiday Dance.



The Army Blues Combo provided music for the AFRH Holiday Dance.

Naval Home history

First two beneficiaries on rolls 175 years ago

This year we celebrate the 175th anniversary since the opening of the U.S. Naval Asylum (Naval Home) in Philadelphia, Pa., which opened its doors in May 1834. The first two pensioners, Daniel Kleis and William Williams, actually were admitted as inmates of the Navy Asylum in November of 1831, both on the condition that it was to be without expense as the new building was not yet ready for occupancy. By the time the building opened in May 1934, the number rose to four then five. The number increased very slowly over the next four years and by 1838 there were only 20 men on the rolls.

The regulations drawn up by the Secretary of the Navy, in accordance with the requirements of law, were transmitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on May 13, 1831, and forwarded to the Commandant of the Navy yard at Philadelphia. The regulations provided for one commissioned and two warrant officers and the necessary employees, those wounded or incapable of duty to be preferred. The surgeon of the hospital was to officiate for the Asylum.

The Commandant of the Navy yard was to have general superintendence until some captain was appointed in charge of the institution. Applications for admissions were to be granted only by the head of the Navy Department, to be forwarded with the endorsement of the Commandant of the Navy yard nearest the residence of the applicant, with an opinion of its merits.

The qualifications were to be as follows:

The pensioner must be so injured or infirm as to be unable to contribute materially to his own support in order to be eligible.

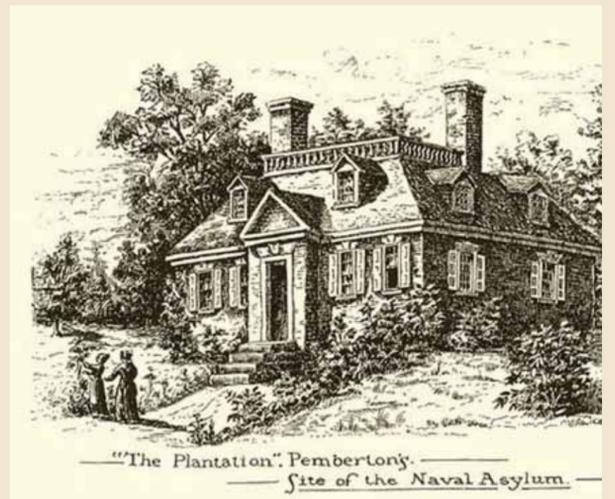
Persons who had served 20 years faithfully and who were incapable of further service from old age or infirmities, not the effect of vice, intemperance, or other misconduct, were eligible.

Persons who served less than 20 years, who were incapable of further service as provided above, but who had distinguished themselves by gallantry in action or some other highly meritorious conduct in the Naval service, were also eligible.

Desertion from the Navy or conviction of any mutinous or disgraceful conduct was a disqualification.

Pensioners admitted were to be subject to the rules established, and were liable to be dismissed for any offense against the discipline of the institution showing an incorrigible and insubordinate spirit. Suitable clothing was to be furnished to inmates yearly and a Navy ration, omitting spirits and substituting for it tea, tobacco, and pickles. The inmates were to labor as much as they were able in taking care of the establishment, its grounds, and gardens.

Editor's note: Information was extracted from the document "Origin, History, Laws and Regulations of the United States Naval Asylum," Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by Charles H. Stockton, Lieut-Commander, USN, compiled by direction of Commodore David B. Harmony, USN, Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks, Navy Department, dated October 1, 1886.

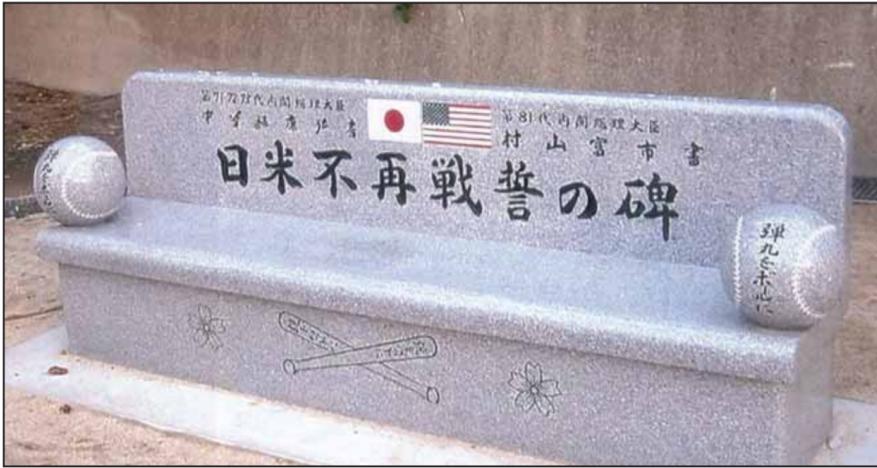


The first two Naval Asylum Pensioners, Daniel Kleis and William Williams, were furnished quarters in the Pemberton House, awaiting the completion of the new residence which was later known as Biddle Hall. The Pemberton House was on a 24 acre tract of land purchased by the commissioners of the hospital fund for the sum of \$16,352.91. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on April 3, 1827, and was completed in 1834 for a cost of \$249,185.60. The Naval Home moved from Pennsylvania to Gulfport in 1976.

Bench dedication in Hiroshima

Several months ago a few Japanese businessmen invited a group of WWII veterans to an all expense paid round trip to Hiroshima, Japan. The purpose of the trip was to play a softball game of friendship, and to entertain the American veterans of WWII. Eight residents of AFRH were selected to go. Stanley Sagara spearheaded the plans by coordinating all the needed information for the Japanese committee to effectively proceed with their quest to finalize the agenda. After all the needed info was completed "Team America" Stanley Sagara, Frank Nelson, Hugh Wingo, Minoru Nagaoka, Jim Dais, Barbara Folk, Dorothy Malone, Marion Ritchie, plus a group from Florida and Hawaii flew to Japan for the trip of a lifetime. The friendship game was played on the Memorial site where the atomic bomb was dropped in WWII.

Recently the Japanese chairman sent a picture of the beautiful granite bench engraved with the names and ages of all the WWII veterans who participated in this game. The bench has been erected on the historic site, as a lasting memorial, and the coming together of two great nations.



History surrounds veterans at AFRH-W

President Lincoln's Profile on a Tree Trunk

By George Wellman

Just when we think we have seen or read everything about President Lincoln during his bicentennial birth year, another item is discovered. This time it's President Lincoln's likeness on a tree trunk near Lincoln's Cottage at the Soldiers' Home.

The tree is located a short distance south of Lincoln's Cottage on the WIMSA (Women in Military Service for America) Trail on the campus of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington (AFRH-W) formerly the Soldiers' Home. According to several residents at AFRH-W, the tree was noticed during the spring of 2009; however, it is not public knowledge.

Additional sites of interest near Lincoln's Cottage are two notable cemeteries. First there's The Soldiers' and Airmen's National Cemetery located on Harewood Road. This cemetery is the burial site of General John A. Logan, the originator of Memorial Day as we know it today. The other is the Rock Creek Church Cemetery, the oldest cemetery in Washington, DC. President Lincoln's personal physician, Dr. Robert King Stone, is buried at the Rock



The tree trunk that has a likeness of Abraham Lincoln.

Creek Church Cemetery.

These sites are located on an historic hilltop just three miles from downtown Washington, DC, near President Lincoln's Cottage at the Soldiers' Home. I have the unique pleasure to call this place my home; I'm an Army veteran at the Soldiers' Home.

I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives.

I like to see a man live so that his place will be proud of him.

Abraham Lincoln

COMPUTER CLASSES - just right for residents to learn

From basics to advanced, get the most from your computer

Basic computer classes are held Saturday mornings and are perfectly tailored to fit residents' learning needs. Each resident who attends gets hands-on experience at one of the 10 computers in the lab and receives a handout of computer tips.

The class topics have been developed and improved over the course of the last year and are a direct result of residents' specific questions and recommendations -- there were about 20 one-hour classes held in 2009. The classes provide residents with an introduction to the internet and Microsoft Windows computers. The topics include mouse button functions, visibility improvements for text and mouse pointers, how to open, type, and

save a Word document, how to navigate the internet, email basics, computer security, and much more. Also, examples of fun things to do on a computer are demonstrated, as residents follow along at their own pace. These include Google searches, Google Street View, Google Maps, listening to far-away radio stations, looking at your favorite old movie clip, and looking at free web-cams from around the world.

Classes meet with volunteer instructor Tom Oristian on four consecutive Saturday mornings in the Sheridan computer lab from 10 - 11 a.m.

The next class starts on Saturday, January 9th and continues on January 16th, 23rd, and 30th.

NOTE:

**Intro to Skype on
January 23
1:30-3 p.m.**



Betty Lakatos (seated) types on the keyboard as (from left) Mary Tickner, George Wellman, Paul Manno look on. The AFRH computer lab is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Winterize your car

Don't forget to prepare the electrical system

By Henri Gibson

Hobby Shop Volunteer

MORE NOTES FROM THE AUTO HOBBY SHOP!!

This morning as I was walking in back of the Sheridan building and watching two men jump starting a car. I realized I had forgotten one of the most important systems in an automobile. The electrical system.

Winter weather can take a huge toll on a car's battery.



Don't forget battery maintenance when you start to winterize your vehicle. Winter weather can take a huge toll on the battery.

Cold engines require more juice (amps, volts, etc.) to turn over. And in cold weather a vehicle that sits a lot without being started occasionally will not have the charge necessary to turn over the engine. Remember last month I talked about the need to run your auto for at least 20 minutes once or twice a week. Well besides keeping the engine lubricated it keeps the battery charged. If your battery is over three years old a battery check and or charge is in order. The Auto Hobby Shop has the equipment necessary for you to do this service or you can go to a battery retailer such as NTB or Auto Zone.

Now lets talk about Battery Maintenance. Remember 'maintenance free' batteries are not really maintenance free - they all require some work to keep them in good order. Corrosion around the positive terminal can and will cause a drop in voltage going to the starter. If this green corrosion is visible on the positive terminal or cable it needs to be cleaned off with a steel brush and terminal cleaner. After cleaning apply a coat of petroleum jelly, this will help prevent corrosion from reforming. If your battery allows, check the water level in each cell and add distilled water if low. If your battery voltage is really low (motor won't turn over, no or weak lights) and you get a jumpstart, just running the engine for a few minutes will not charge the battery enough. You need to go to the Hobby Shop and put the battery on a slow charge, or go on a long long drive.

Before I go, let me relate one of the lessons I learned

the hard way. My 1994 Honda Civic has 184,000 miles, and I pride myself on good preventive maintenance. However one winter when a replacement battery was only three years old I had trouble starting it. After getting a jump and a battery charge I noticed that the battery would not hold a charge. Checking I found corrosion on the terminal and cable (positive terminals are usually covered with a red cover). When I tried to clean the cable I found that the corrosion had eaten almost through the copper cable. When this happens voltage drops and the alternator cannot charge the battery properly. Needless to say when I replaced the positive cable (no easy task) and charged the battery again everything worked fine. Now I check for corrosion once a month and clean and lubricate as needed.

Well almost time to go but before I do, I would like to ask for volunteers to help at the Auto Hobby Shop. You don't have to know anything about cars just a desire to help. Volunteers do not do the work, we are just there to sign out tools, guide vehicles in and out, and make sure residents clean up after they use the facility and return the tool they use. So instead of sitting around all day doing nothing, volunteer a few hours a week doing nothing. You might find it fulfilling and if you want, you could get paid for your time.

For more information contact Carolyn Weber, Volunteer Coordinator.

Old Guard Trumpeters Performs at the KHC

By Steven Briefs

Supervisor of Recreation Therapy

Members of the Old Guard Trumpeters from Fort



Myers visited our residents at the KHC on Tuesday, December 8th as we lit our Christmas tree. Dr. Sissay gave our opening remarks and reminded us how blessed we were to enjoy our freedoms and have a measure of peace in our country. He also encouraged us to remember our soldiers serving around the world and those recovering from wounds sustained in battle.

Mr. Watkins seconded Dr. Sissay's words and commended those residents and staff who were taking part in the KHC Chorus. He wished each of us a happy Christmas season.

Father Dixon gave the opening convocation, Twila Smith from Rehabilitation Services played "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" on the bells and our own AFRH chorus, made up of residents and staff, sang a variety of holiday songs that helped remind us of good days gone-by.

After we all enjoyed refreshments of Apple Cider and Christmas cookies.

Left - Four members of the Old Guard Trumpeters from Ft. Myers perform at King Health Center on Dec. 8.

Right - The residents are treated to a Christmas bells performance.



Bowling Column

By Ed Crump

Buron Noel won his second bowler of the month honors this year in November when he accumulated 15 points by having a first, second and third place finish in the bowling shootout for the month. He also had high series handicap for the month with a 717 series. It's the third time this year he's had a 700 series with handicap. Nobody else has more than one. Going back to the final week in October, Mr. Noel has finished in the top four on four different occasions in which he's averaged 162 for 15 games. He currently stands in second place for the most top four finishes for the year with 13 trailing only Charlie Gammon who has 16. He also currently stands in third place for bowler of the year honors points with one month left. Ralph Wineland continues to lead for bowler of the year honors with 62 points while Charlie Gammon is second with 54 points.

First place winners besides Mr. Noel last month were Eugene Allison, myself and Steve Kostick. High game scratch for the month went to Smokey Prussman with a 212, high game handicap went to Nick Zaimes with a 267 while high series scratch went to Eugene Allison who had a 558.

A real oddity occurred on the final

week of last month in the shootout when Steve Kostick was the only one who bowled his average out of 12 bowlers that participated that final week. It's the first time ever that has happened in the shootout since we changed the handicap to 100% from 200 in October of 2008. The first place score of 614 is also the lowest since the new handicap has been used. It was not one of the better days in the shootout for sure. Everyone walked out in dismay never believing something like this would happen. That may be one record that may never be broken.

A new singles handicap league was formed last month which bowls on Tuesday nights. A total of 10 bowlers joined the league. It will last a total of 10 weeks with everyone bowling against each other one time and then a position round will be held on the final week in which the first place bowler will meet the 2nd place bowler and so forth. Whoever you are bowling against each week you add your handicap to your scratch score and your opponent does the same. Whoever has the highest score wins that particular game. Every game you win is worth two points. You also bowl each game on a different pair of lanes. Cash prizes will be given out on the final week. If this league proves to be successful, another league will be formed sometime in February. Details will be announced shortly after the first league is complete.

After the first four weeks in the newly

formed singles handicap league, Smokey Prussman stands in first place with a total of 20 points while Ralph Wineland is next with 16 points while Buron Noel is in third place with 14 points.

As another year draws to a close I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope 2010 will be a successful year

for all. I look forward to continuing to do this column. It has been an enjoyable experience to write this column for the last two years. I hope to see some new faces this coming year at the shootout. We all have a great time each week which is what it's all about.

See you all next year.



On Friday, December 4, 2009, 100 soldiers from E Co, 169th BN, Ft. Belvoir, VA visit the AFRH. After touring the facility which included lunch with the residents, the group enjoyed friendly games of bowling at the AFRH Bowling Center.

Gulfport Update

By Steven C. Smith, GSA

So much progress has been made considering the amount of time that has passed. Finishes are being installed as building systems are being tested. The highlight this month was the return of the restored Stained Glass Windows to the Chapel.

Looking Back - GSA issued Notice to Proceed January 3, 2008. As of Christmas (December 25th, 2009) 722 days have passed. Looking Forward -October 1, 2010, 280 days remain

Detail Progress - Main Facility

Total Completed and Stored 82.0%

Design

Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment procurement packages final

Design – Swimming Pool 100% Complete (Modification to Base Contract)

Construction: Estimated Construction Completion - July 2010

Site

Remaining concrete is exterior to the building (on-going)

Exterior Stairs, loading dock complete, electrical platform

Sidewalks, concrete paving, hardscape, signage

Architectural

Temporary dehumidification of: Areas of Level 1 and

Resident Pavilions to allow installation of drywall and finishes.

Framing, interior and exterior metal studs (99% Complete - On Going)

Exterior waterproofing (100% Complete)

Balcony Waterproofing and Railings Continues

Exterior Doors/Curtain Wall (97%)

Painting walls throughout (65%)

Balcony Handrails 85% Complete

Green roof plant deliveries

Flood testing at green roofs ongoing

Green Roof Installation ongoing

Installing ceiling grid Level 1 Common Areas A - C and Pavilion D

Installing ceramic tile in Public baths at Level 1

Installing sheet vinyl in resident units Pavilion A. (Kitchen and Bath)

Cut Carpet at Pavilion A Resident units

Floor Prep at Level 1, Pavilion A and Pavilion B Level 2

Installing Cabinets at resident unit kitchenettes at Pavilion A and B

Elevators:

Installing Elevators 1- 6 (Towers 65%)

Temporary use of elevators 1-2

Installing Elevators 7-12 (Lobby, Loading Docks, Pavilion D 55%)

Other

Site utilities for lighting, electrical, plumbing, storm 75%

Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing/Fire Protection

MEP Infrastructure (On Going)

Testing of Components (On-Going)

Main Electrical Switch Gear Energized (on Permanent Power)

Beach Access (Pedestrian Overpass)

GSA Modification to W. G. Yates for Design/Build Services

Design 95% Complete

Estimated Construction Completion: April 2010

Chapel: Notice to Proceed June 8, 2009

Total Completed and Stored 77%

Drywall and metal framing (100%)

Board and Batten (wall finish) 80% complete

Painting, ceramic tile for bathrooms underway

MEP Infrastructure 85% (on-Going)

Stained Glass Complete (Willet Hauser)

Exterior painted w/ Gutters being installed

Landscaping started

Estimated Construction Completion:

March/April 2010

Overall Project Safety:

Zero accidents and one incident



Work being done east of the Chapel.



A balcony view from Tower A, 4th floor east.



The stained glass windows in the Chapel have been restored and put back into place.



A balcony view from Tower A, 3rd floor west.



An Independent Living resident room.



Diesel tanks and generators are located behind the building.