

A Happy Holiday season at AFRH-Gulfport

By Mary Kay Gominger
AFRH-G Admissions Officer/PAO

It wasn't just the voices of children singing Christmas carols echoing in the hallways of the AFRH-G this month. Nor was it the festive holiday decorations in the community areas, the very well attended Christmas dance or the scrumptious Christmas dinner made to perfection (some residents say it was the best meal yet). It was all that, yet it was something more that made this year's holiday season such a festive occasion. It was an overall feeling you got walking the hallways and talking with the residents. If collectively there was one way to describe the atmosphere here it would be a long deep sigh of contentment.

Next week marks our three month anniversary. Just 90 days since our first residents walked in the front door on October 4. It seems like a lot longer than just a mere three months. Moving in, former residents had first priority and now, for the last two months, we have welcomed veterans new to the AFRH community. They come from all over the country, from as far away as Las Vegas, Hawaii, Oregon, Iowa, California. A few lived within the local area. One veteran grew up just down the road his entire life. We continue to accumulate men and women from all walks of life that have chosen to live at the AFRH. They are a diverse group with different backgrounds, different life experiences, different spiritual beliefs yet they share one thing: service to country. That is the tie that binds them.

That's not to say that since we opened, and even in the months leading up to the opening, we didn't face a few challenges, a tweak here and

there, suggestions from residents and even a few valid complaints. Growing pains, so to speak. We got through it though and we did so with a tremendous amount of help from active duty volunteers in the community. Another bond that veterans share. They truly take care of their own.

Throughout the next 90 days, we will continue to welcome new residents. There are just over 50 independent living rooms left to fill from the established waiting list. More new faces, new stories and new lives to share. In 2011, let's continue to build our community into the Home we want it to be.



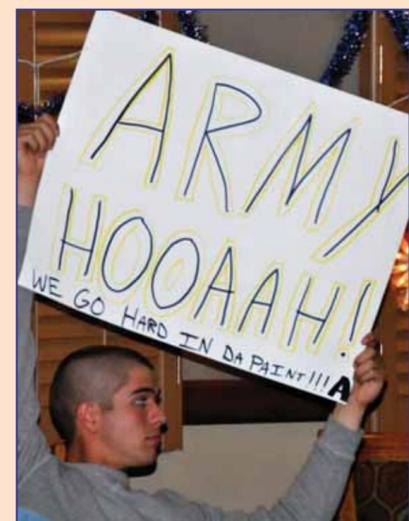
William Call takes a spin on the dance floor with Miss Riverland Jennifer Seymour at the AFRH-G 2010 Christmas Dance.

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Songs of the Unsung

Residents premiered in book then opera based on stories in "Who We Were"

On Thursday, Dec. 9, a culmination of a year's work came true for the residents of AFRH. Bruce Taylor, Director of Education & Community programs and the Washington National Opera took four of the stories that are included in the 1st edition of "Who We Were: Stories From the Veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home" and created an opera from them. Moderating the event was Rear Admiral Robert D. Reilly Jr. (Retired), along with senior enlisted officers from each branch of the services. Among the selections were "Just at the Pancakes" (from Ed Davis about the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941); "She" (from Luis Lopez about the wife he left behind when he went to Vietnam) and

"Present in the Past" (from Don and Jean Egolf's return to the Roer River in 1958, after Don's mission in 1945).

After the performance, Antoinette Ford, Executive Director of the Double Nickels Theatre Company (as well as daughter of resident James F. Taylor) and our own Charles Dickerson, Chief, Resident Services, handed out copies of the book to the residents who had submitted their true tales. From the kickoff in February to the book launching in December, these residents and the dedication of the Double Nickels volunteers made a dream happen to the home.

January 8 will launch the 2nd year of the ongoing project.



Members of the Washington National Opera are set to utilize their powerful voices to bring our residents life stories to the stage.

Photo by: Robert JV McMillian

AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988

Web site: www.AFRH.gov Email: sheila.abarr@AFRH.gov

Sheila Abarr- AFRH Public Affairs Specialist, Marketing
Mary Kay Gominger- AFRH-G Admissions Officer, PAO
Greg Moore - Marketing
Sherry Artis - Marketing

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>

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A CARF-CCAC Five-Year
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Pearl Harbor survivors honored on 69th anniversary

AFRH honored Pearl Harbor survivors in ceremonies at both Homes on December 7th. The survivors now in their late 80s and early 90s told their stories during the time of the attack on December 7, 1941. Some of the survivors were eating breakfast or heading to their duty stations. But each and every one of them answered the call of duty when a nation needed them the most.

Like many of the servicemen in Hawaii that fateful morning Francis Stueve (left) was eating breakfast at Schofield Barracks and Robert Carson (right) was eating a hearty breakfast of steak and eggs onboard the USS Curtis, tied off of Pearl City between two mooring buoys.



Mary Allen representing War II veterans helps lay a wreath in honor of all who served at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



On December 15, 2010, I announced that I was selected for the position of Chief Executive Officer at The Washington Home and Community Hospices in Washington, DC. Since my last day at AFRH will be January 15, 2011, and this will be my last article for the Communicator, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank each Resident and staff member for the professionalism, support and friendship that each of you has shown me during my tenure at the Home.

Together as a team we have accomplished great things since 2002. We have truly transitioned the AFRH from a "Survive" to "Thrive" environment. Early on we implemented our "One Model" plan, reengineering each internal process and program and made some difficult decisions regarding rightsizing our staffing levels. These actions directly contributed to our success in turning around a Home that was quickly spiraling into insolvency to a model organization realizing \$92M in growth in less than 8 years.

In 2005 Hurricane Katrina presented an unforeseen challenge to the AFRH: the need to relocate 351 displaced AFRH-

Gulfport Residents immediately after the disaster, the need to evaluate and devise a plan of action regarding AFRH-Gulfport's recovery and reconstruction; the actual rebuilding efforts; and finally the return of the AFRH-Gulfport Residents back to Gulfport. On November 9, 2010 we celebrated the Grand Reopening of the Gulfport facility – a truly top-notch facility that any veteran would be proud to call "home." I would sincerely like to thank each Resident, staff member and associate who participated in providing input into this effort.

We have also devoted considerable effort in developing an AFRH-Washington Master Plan. And though some parts of the Master Plan are on hold, we are currently postured to move out on the Scott Project which will serve as a multi-function centerpiece for the Washington facility.

I am particularly pleased with our administrative achievements – 6 consecutive "no-finding" audits; one Agency-wide financial system; numerous partnerships with other agencies; our Agency operating under one streamlined set of operating policies; and for the first time in the history of our Agency the alignment of our AFRH Strategic Plan, our Business Plans and each employee's Individual Performance Plan.

I am also proud of the Resident-focused improvements which occurred under my leadership: improved Resident care and services, more comprehensive accreditation of our facilities, the implementation of an AFRH person-centered philosophy; adding an addi-

tional level of care - Independent Living Plus; improved dining service; transitioning to a smoke-free environment for the interior of our buildings; installation of "HomeFree" and "Ciscor" monitoring systems; an improved transportation fleet, and a more robust Wellness Center are just a few of the major improvements Residents now enjoy.

The accomplishments and efforts that have occurred since 2002 now position the AFRH in alignment with private sector Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs). However, the AFRH has some unique differences from other CCRCs: the

AFRH provides its services at a much reduced cost to its Resident that outside CCRCs; the AFRH has services that far exceed outside CCRCs (i.e., bowling alleys, bocce ball courts, a swimming pool; a golf course, etc.); and the AFRH shares a truly unique spirit of camaraderie between its residents as well as the active and retired military communities.

In closing I want to tell you that I will miss all of you, but I leave knowing that we have worked together to make the AFRH the great Home that it is today. Again, thank you.

Timothy Cox



Timothy Cox, (far left) the AFRH Chief Operating Officer since 2003, will be leaving on January 15.

Progress update

Sherman renovation project on track

"...so please...be patient and enjoy the show because there is nothing more entertaining than seeing men trying to control chaos to bring a unique building to life..."

By Justin Seffens
Chief Campus Operation, AFRH-W

The progress on the Sherman North Dining project is on track to be completed before the close of the Scott Dining. We have completed the structural demolition, and we have built the structure for the new knee walls, pony partitions, and room enclosures. There are electricians, plumbers, and HVAC Mechanics inspecting the old installed materials and designing new layouts for the new dining configuration. Once they have finished their evaluation and drawings, they will begin the rough-ins. As expected, we have run into several unforeseen conditions with this old beautiful building. We have had a few instances where we were scratching our heads saying, "Why in the world did they do that?" but I believe we would have been more surprised if we did not encounter something odd. In any case, we are forging ahead.

The new Sherman Elevator is close to finishing. The old elevator shaft has thrown us more code and construction

related issues then was originally anticipated by Schindler Elevator. She has been modified and patched together for years, and it is interesting how we have to modify it and patch it to meet our needs and new codes. The new elevator doors are complete on all floors. The Elevator Cab is built. She even runs up and down the shaft, and it is a pretty smooth ride with the new hydraulic jacks. Schindler only has to button up the inside of the shaft before we can get an inspection. We do not anticipate having an inspector available until the first of January. For those in the artist colony on the 3rd floor, please, forgive us. It was definitely not our intention to delay the original startup of December st. The trench work is almost complete. By the end of month, we should have finished installation of the upper railing system.

During January, we plan to start construction of the pedestrian cover that will run from the North Sheridan Entrance to the Sherman Building. The design calls for a complete enclosure that will have heating, lighting, and venting for summer. People keep asking: "what is it going to look like?" The best picture I can describe is a long canvas and vinyl tent tunnel. I leave you with this small thought. Construction is a whirlwind. Today's plans are tomorrows trash bin fillers. So, please, be patient, and enjoy the show because there is nothing more entertaining than seeing men trying to control chaos to bring a unique building to life.



Concrete workers are filling in the base layer on the above ground tunnel area which will be the main connection between the Sheridan and Sherman building.

Resident relocation completed

Chuck Dickerson, Chief Resident Services, AFRH-W

AFRH-W
Independent and Independent Plus Residents are now all in one building. The almost seamless move from the Scott to the Sheridan building of over 100 Residents was completed in record time and right on schedule. A lot of campus-wide cooperation went into the move and those involved deserve recognition for the parts they played in the process.



Campus Operation employee Keven Green moving resident items out of the Scott building.

As soon as residents vacated Sheridan rooms to move to Gulfport, CMI began the huge undertaking of cleaning and painting rooms. Logistics for the moves, including waiting lists, showing and assigning rooms, and scheduling moves with Campus Ops were handled by the Contact Representative in the Admissions Office. Social Workers handled some of the moves as well, and assisted those Residents needing help in getting settled in their new rooms. Volunteers were also recruited to assist a few residents in unpacking and the Independent Plus team worked closely with Residents in their program. On top of the "hands on" work, the moves required an intensive amount of data entry by the Contact Representative and much updating of lists by other departments.

Special recognition belongs to all of the Washington Residents, both those who moved and those who were already Sheridan residents. Those who moved did an excellent job of getting ready for moving, and in some cases, handling the move themselves. Many were eager to move, some were very reluctant to leave the rooms they had called home for as many as 30 years, but did so without complaint. Residents already living in the Sheridan patiently put up with the constant hubbub of

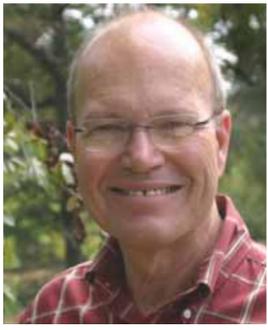


Henry "Hank" Smith is the last resident to vacate the Scott building and head to his new room in the Sheridan.

room turnover, furniture being pushed from one place to another, moving staff and carts of belongings, and a stream of cable installers as their fellow residents rooms were made ready and occupied.

Now, due to the hard work and the spirit of cooperation by everyone involved, all AFRH members living in the upper campus are now housed in one building. Congratulations to all on a spirit of cooperation and service.

From the AFRH-W Director



A third grade class from King Elementary School in Woodbridge, Virginia made cards and sent them to some of our residents for Veterans' Day in November. They arrived to the

Agency and I had a few minutes to look over them before they were delivered. The children had drawn patriotic pictures and written a message like only third graders can do! One of the cards read poignantly, "I hope I can be as brave as you".

A definition of bravery is the human condition to confront pain and fear. It can also mean the ability to stand up for what is right in difficult situations. I am grateful to be a part of the Armed Forces Retirement Home as many of you were people who bravely served our country. I, too, hope I can be as brave as you.

Two weeks ago, I attended an appreciation banquet by the South Korean Embassy with ten of AFRH-W residents who fought in the Korean War from 1950 through 1953. The evening literally blew me away. I don't remember ever being to an event that spoke so powerfully to the bravery of so many U.S. Veterans. The Korean President wrote the script for an impressive video made for the

U.S. Veterans who participated in the conflict. It was stunning because the message spoke of how thankful and appreciative the nation is for America. The host for the evening was Brigadier General Koo-Khan Kim and he too, like the President, shared how the entire country is grateful to America and the Veteran's. According to data from the Department of Defense the United States had suffered 33,686 battle deaths.

I sat at the table with General Kim and two of our residents, Jim Webster and Walter Cronin. Jim Webster was to my left and to my right sat an 87 year old man who was the commanding General for the Hungnam Evacuation. During the Hungnam evacuation, about 193 shiploads of UN Command forces and materiel (approximately 105,000 soldiers, 98,000 civilians, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of supplies) were evacuated to Pusan. The evening was made special for me to hear Webster who served on the USS Missouri and this Commanding General talk about the evacuation. It came to life for me.

In addition to the Embassy Staff there were also about 20 Korean Veterans who served during the war. The evening oozed with gratitude, recognition and praise for our Residents.

There are few people who have such a great job as I do. Thank you, Brave Ones, for this great honor.

David Watkins

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Council



Well, all residents have finally moved from the Scott Building to the Sheridan. Action is now starting on moving of staff offices into the Sheridan. These movements are just the start of the actions that

are going to be taken in the next several months as we settle into the new settings that will be with us for the next (at last count) two years. And if you think that everything has been simple, just look at the PX area. This is just another thing that we have to get used to. But soon, after the construction things will start returning to normal. Just remember that what you see today may not be in the same place tomorrow.

The movement has also seen a return of certain issues having to do with the resident floors. For some reason, residents are turning off the lights in the common areas. I fail to understand why some residents are doing this. The turning off of lights is a health hazard. Yes, a health hazard. Many residents of the Washington home suffer from low-vision problems. This means that they need additional light just to get from point A to point B. When you turn off the lights you may be the one that causes of the residents to run into a wall, door or even to misstep and fall. Please remember your fellow residents. **Do not turn off lights in the common areas.**

Another issue that the RAC has been working on is the new smoking area. It has been decided that one of the current smoking areas outside the Scott Building will be moved to a location outside of the Sheridan Building. Siding will be added to allow for smoking during the winter months and some method of heating the structure will also be added. No final date for completion of this has yet been provided but it will be done.

You may have noticed that during the last Birthday Dinner that the noise level was greatly reduced. This was as a result of residents asking me what could be done about the noise level. Just another example of a problem brought to the attention of the RAC that was taken care of.

The RAC along with the Chief, Recreation Service are exploring another suggestion brought forth by several residents. That is WiFi for the Sheridan and LaGarde Buildings. WiFi is nothing more than wireless internet. Depending on the costs associated with this request this might be possible.

But again, as with all things paid for out of the Resident Fund, if the costs are too high it will not be done. It might only be installed in the Sheridan and not LaGarde again, depending on the costs. Finally, in any action that deals with the Resident Fund, we have to consider all residents not just those who would benefit by this action. And finally, I need a resident to serve as a committee chairman for this action.

Several resident have asked me as to what the policy is regarding the riding tri-cycles in the halls of the Sheridan Building. Even though I don't have an answer for this consider that it might be a medical problem and the person may have approval to have the device on the floors. I have asked the Chief, Recreation Services as to just what the policy is and will let residents know the final outcome.

Mr. John H Porter has agreed to Chair the Arts & Crafts committee. This committee works with the people in the craft and hobby area to insure that their needs are being met. In addition along with the Craft area supervisor oversees the annual craft displays in the Sherman Building. Thank you, Mr. Porter for agreeing to serve as the Chairman of this committee. This appointment lasts through the end of March, 2011.

The council is still in need of floor representatives for the 2nd, 5th and 7th floors of the Sheridan Building. Those wishing to be considered for this position, please read the position requirements contained in Paragraph 7 C, AFRH Directive 8-12; June 15, 2009. A copy of this directive can be seen in the Ombudsman's Office, which is in the process of moving into the Sheridan Building. Or you may see the RAC Chairman. In addition, the position of floor representative is a stipend position.

The Council also needs two additional Ombudsmen to serve the residents located in LaGarde. The requirements for this position is contained in Paragraph 7 d, AFRH Directive 8-12; June 15 2009. These positions are also stipend positions.

Well, that is about all for this month. The coming year will see an election for the Chairman and new floor representatives. This election will be held during the month of March, 2011 with the new council taking office 1 April 2011. I hope that many of you will wish to serve on the Resident Advisory Council. See the Ombudsman, Al Mori, for further information.

*Esker McConnell
Chairman, RAC*



Korean War veterans from AFRH-W attending a dinner hosted by the Korean Embassy and Brigadier General Kim representing the Republic of Korea.

Tree Lighting Ceremony at AFRH "A Night to Remember"

By Nicole Chappell & Carolyn Weber

On Wednesday, December 8th, residents, staff and guests were treated to a very special Tree Lighting Ceremony in the Scott Dining Hall. The evening began with an Invocation by Chaplain Goodloe, reminding us of our holiday blessings.

The U.S. Marine Band Brass Quintet played a marvelous mix of holiday melodies followed by the Gotta Dance Tap Dancers dressed in their red-sequenced tops dancing to a few familiar songs. Once the holiday spirit filled the room, our Director, David Watkins told the story behind our holiday light tradition and lit up the AFRH Christmas Tree with the

assistance of Christine Baldwin, Librarian. The evening wrapped up with a beautiful concert of Christmas Carols sung by the AFRH Chorus featuring Girl Scout Troops 395 and 1877 and directed by Amanda Jensema, Recreation Therapist. Furthermore, thank you to Campus Operations, Dining Services and Recreation Services who coordinated this festive event!



Girl Scouts delighting the residents with good ole fashion Christmas carols.

Operation Gratitude

By Carolyn Weber

Mission accomplished! Thanks to the help of our resident volunteers, over 20,000 thank you cards were sorted and shipped to our troops deployed overseas for the holidays. The Armed Forces Retirement Home partnered with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) and Operation Gratitude to sort cards sent from all over the country relaying messages of thanks, including: "I salute you from the bottom of my heart. - Brighton, CO", "Our granddaughter, age 9, was thrilled to have her teacher say her daddy was an American hero when he left for Iraq. That's how we think of all military. - Madison, MS", "Good for 1 home-cooked meal and massage by a Certified Massage Therapist, phone: 209-xxx-xxxx - Waterford, CA". Thank you to the fol-



John Bennington is reading one of several thousand cards for our troops overseas.

lowing resident volunteers: John Bennington, Philip Cardinalis, Susan Chubb, William Cooper, Roger Davison, Ken Faller, Chuck Felder, Bill Fowler, Marion Marques, Jean McCarthy, Esker McConnell, Helen Sadowski, Corrine Robinson, Sharon Weikel and Billy Ray White. A special thank you to John Miller who reached out to VVMF!

New exercise class offered in the Fitness Center



By Jerry Carter

Volunteer instructor from the Wellness Program / YMCA of Washington, DC are leading new exercise classes in the Fitness Center. The new classes are **Cardiolite-Low Impact & Cardiolite Chair-Low Impact** and they are held every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday starting at 9 a.m. There are many benefits to participating in the classes: improved quality of life, improved circulation and metabolism and increased strength, good balance and encouragement for socialization with other residents.

From the AFRH-G Director



It is a new year, our first January in the new AFRH Gulfport and as with any new year, 2011 should be viewed as a clean slate and a new beginning. If you read the newspapers

and watched television news during last year, there was plenty of reason to be glad to see 2010 end. But as with anything in life, 2010 was what you made of it, just as it will be in 2011.

William Arthur Ward, an American author and scholar, wrote: "The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails." There is little question that those three views of life exist and while it is true that we all have days where we share all three views, people are generally and naturally inclined toward one point of view or the other. I would suggest that it is healthy to feel both optimistic and pessimistic at times but it is generally more useful to

yourself and those around you to practice realism.

My personal view of life is that very few people or institutions were created to establish road blocks to my happiness (optimism) but some appear to be (pessimism). I prefer to deal optimistically that the road blocks are unintentional and that I can figure out a way to navigate them (realism). Thus, the energy I would waste on pessimism can be focused toward realistic solutions.

Another quote by Ward sets the tone for how I am instructing the Gulfport Team to approach the New Year: "Do more than belong: participate. Do more than care: help. Do more than believe: practice. Do more than be fair: be kind. Do more than forgive: forget. Do more than dream: work." If you just examine the quote as a whole, it is a call to action; it is not enough to be a passive bystander who complains about their lot or the collective lot of others. If you see problems, offer solutions; if you have convictions, act on them; be kind (it doesn't cost any more); let go of old disagreements before they eat away at you; and if you have a dream or vision about how to make AFRH a better place, find an outlet for that energy.

An act of nature and the combined



Santa finds his way to the AFRH-G

Richard Heath, the AFRH-G Director, stood in for the real Santa at the AFRH recently and brought gifts and wishes of cheer to the Assisted Living residents.

efforts of many diverse people and organizations gave us the wonderful building that is becoming a home. Those of us who live and work here have the opportunity to honor past traditions and to start new ones in order to

fulfill our Agency Vision to provide premier retirement community living and services for our nation's veterans.

Happy New Year,
Richard C. Heath



Town Hall Meetings draw large crowds

Residents attend monthly Town Hall meetings at the AFRH-G. The Town Hall meeting is a time residents get information about upcoming items of interest within the organization. Residents are also encouraged to ask questions about services, programs or facilities... or anything else that might come up. Residents are also encouraged to participate in Focus Group meetings. These meetings address one particular subject matter or area and resident input is vital.



Navy chiefs support AFRH-G

AFRH-G Director Richard Heath thanks the Navy Chiefs from Naval Construction Training Center for the shadow box they built for the flag that flew over the AFRH-G prior to Hurricane Katrina. The flag is now on display in the main lobby.

Food, fellowship and... FOOTBALL!

Friends from the Seabee Center join residents in the lounge to cheer for favorite team in the Army-Navy matchup



Above - Cmdr. Stanley Wiles, the Executive Officer of the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, shows his enthusiasm for the Navy team during the Army-Navy football game. Residents and active duty members from NCBC watched the game in Fiddler's Green.

Left - AFRH-G Resident Bobby Renfro leads the Navy fans with a cheer each time his team scored. There were some Army fans cheering as well and participants enjoyed the friendly banter.

AFRH-G Residents enjoy the 2010 Holiday Season

Holiday Happiness

By Adelina Wasser, Volunteer Coordinator

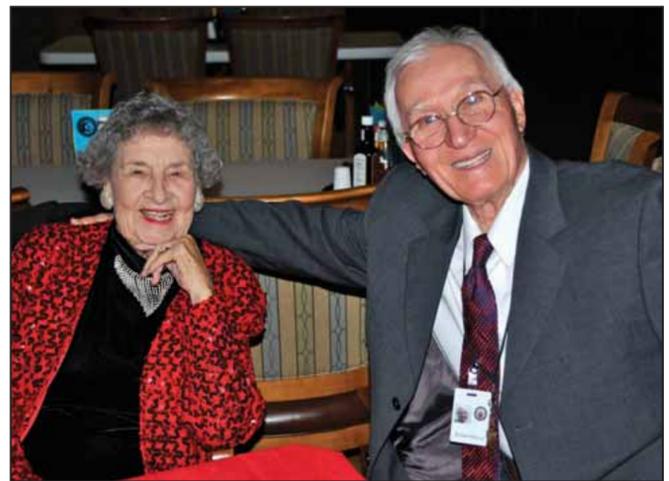
The residents of the AFRH Gulfport were busier than elves this month with all the activities, special events, and festivities held here on campus. The month started off with an incredible martial arts demonstration of self defense techniques, featuring Alan Blecher, number five in the world in mixed martial arts fighting. What would December be without lots of musical cheer from various singing groups? We had visits from the 1st Presbyterian Youth Choir, Anniston Elementary School, 1st Trinity United Methodist Choir and dance team, The Treadaway Sisters, and many more. We also had the chance to decorate the home for the very first time, with huge trees, lights, wreaths, menorahs and the place looked dazzling! The USO co-sponsored an awesome holiday dance with the sounds of "Hessions Sessions" and a wonderful time was had by all. The Army Navy football pizza party was very well attended with loud cheering and painted faces to mark the event! Finally, Santa, Mrs. Claus, a helpful elf and Rudolph all made an appearance at the Assisted Living Christmas party and the December Birthday Dinner. It's been a Holly, Jolly month for all!



Navy volunteers assigned to various units located at the Naval Construction Battalion Center decorate one of the many trees on display at the AFRH-G.



Charlie Jenkins and Doris Jones enjoy a tune at the 2010 AFRH-G Christmas dance.



Robert Royce and his guest take a quick break from the dance floor during the first AFRH-G Christmas dance.

Caring residents give back to the local community

By Resident Doris Jones

On Thanksgiving Day, three residents from the Armed Forces Retirement home in Gulfport volunteered to help the Gulfport Sheriff's Department feed the less fortunate in the community. Residents Doris Jones, Claire Smith and Lou Bose as well as Cheryl and Julie with the Paralyzed Vets Association, reported for duty at 0815 hours to the Youth Work Center on Lorraine Road in Gulfport. The outer perimeter of the facility was surrounded on all sides with razor type barbed wire with a police officer at the entrance. We asked where to report. We then walked into this huge block of rooms and into a dormitory-like setup, lined with US Army type bunk beds/cots plus the open bathrooms with gang showers. This reminded us of our barracks in Basic Training many years ago. There were volunteers from church groups, boy scouts, local businesses and other Veteran Associations. The Salvation Army was there too, and they served us coffee, juice and fresh glazed donuts. The head Sheriff made the announcements of how we were to facilitate and box up 1,800 hot turkey meals with all the trimmings at break neck speed, and loaded into our cars for home delivery. We tried to follow orders, and he kept shouting, "MOVE IT, MOVE IT! Form two lines and keep moving!" We were balancing these Styrofoam boxes, the kind used for take out, one in each hand, as the food servers behind the line loaded up the boxes. We were hoping not to drop them. Finally when all 1,800 meals were boxed up, we got our assignments. Our little group had 20 meals to deliver. We got lost just once. Everyone we saw was THANKFUL for those meals, and we felt good about helping the less fortunate.

Guess what?

We were asked to come back and help with the Christmas meal too! It feels great to give back to our community that has been so giving to us.



Santa and his helpers spread holiday cheer at the AFRH-G.



A group of Girl Scouts walk the Boardwalk at the AFRH-G singing Christmas carols for residents.

Throughout the month of December, we had many local groups perform: the 1st Presbyterian Youth Choir, Anniston Elementary School, 1st Trinity United Methodist Choir and dance team, The Treadaway Sisters, and more.

KHC Bowling "4" Dollars League

By Steven Brief

Mr. Tillery, from the ALP unit of LaGarde, takes his turn at our monthly bowling program. He told everyone to get out of the way and then he rolled one right down the pike. What a shot! He knocked down five pins. Even though he missed on his second try, he still got a big hand. Fifteen residents participated, all showing off their professional styles, but only three won cash prizes. Mr. Clifton won the grand prize of \$5, Mr. Boone finished second and won \$3 and Mr. Bronfman won \$2 for third. We all had a great time and we look forward to next month when we'll test our skills out again.



Continued support from Costco to our veterans

By Amanda Jensema

During this time of year there is a lot to be grateful for...health, love, happiness and Costco's. On Dec. 11th members from Costco delivered many wonderful gifts to AFRH. Every year Costco has been wonderful to AFRH and our residents here providing many items that we need, such as new televisions, DVD/VCR players, golf balls, etc. This year was no different. We are very thankful that Costco supports our Veteran's and we would like to say THANK YOU!!!



Costco representatives on site were Joe Portera, Kathy Kinter, Andrew Santmier and Tonya Mitchell with residents from KHC.

Chanukah Festival at KHC

By Amanda Jensema

"Oh Chanukah Oh Chanukah come light the menorah". One of the many traditional Chanukah songs that were played during the Chanukah Festival program held at KHC on Friday, Dec. 3rd. The residents were told the story of Chanukah and learned about the Driedel game. A food that the residents look forward to at this time of year is the potato pancake, known as Latkes. They

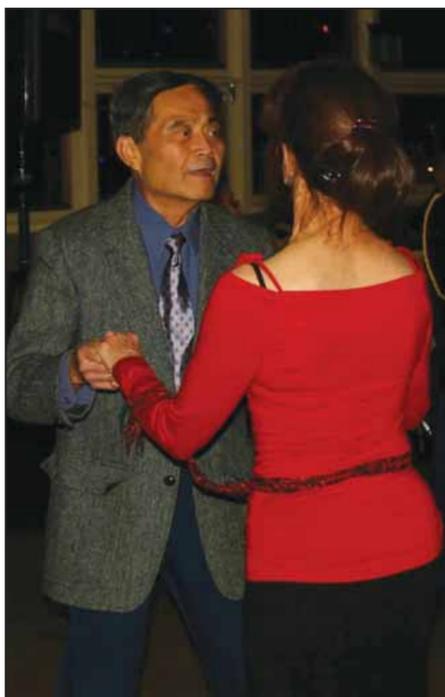
are served with apple sauce or sour cream. During the program many residents asked questions about Chanukah, and one asked, "Why do you spell it with a "Ch" and not an "H". The answer to that question is simple. When spelling from the Hebrew word Chanukah, the first let makes a "Ch" sounds so that is the correct way of spelling it. An acceptable way of spelling it is also Hanukkah. Happy Chanukah!

AFRH-W Christmas Dance

By Nicole Chappell
Recreation Specialist

On Friday, December 17, AFRH celebrated our last Holiday Dance in the Scott Dining Hall. "Dancin', Dancin', Dancin' She's a dancin' machine", which set the theme for this year's Holiday dance. The guests and residents in attendance danced throughout the night to wonderful holiday music provided by The Army Blues Combo Band and Billy White aka (Music Man). However, for those who preferred to relax their feet, enjoyed the site of watching live dancers take center stage, as well as, the line and hand dances. There were plenty of food and dessert choices such as raspberry brie phyllo, spinach & artichoke dip, BBQ meatballs, chicken wings, devil eggs, Christmas shrimp, wine, beer and so much more.

Special thanks to Steve McManus, David Watkins, Charles Dickerson, Chaplain Goodloe, Laura Fogarty for their attendance. In addition, Carolyn Weber, Jerry Carter, Michele Bailey, Keith Turner, Susan Chubb, Greg Wilson, Mr. Snow & the Dining Hall staff, KHC Recreation, and nursing staff for all of their hard work and participation. Lastly, to our wonderful volunteers; The MSC Navy, FRC Navy, USCG Headquarters, Flying Feet/USUHS, Lincoln Cottage, Reginald Ragland and Helen Butler for making this year's event successful. By summarizing this year's event, I must add that the Recreation Department "Sure does know how to shine." Therefore, until next year Happy Holidays to all.



Residents and guests dance to music provided by the Army Blues Combo Band at the AFRH-W annual Christmas dance.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance

By Amanda Jensema

"Yesterday, Dec. 7, 1941- a date which will live in infamy..."

This quote is well known and heard through out the country during this time. This year, on the 69th anniversary, they were said again. At 12:15pm we honored the memory of those who lost their lives, as well as celebrated with three KHC residents who survived those attacks. In the celebration Harris Bircher, Edward Davis and Clarence Rugger each shared what they were doing when they were attacked. Father Dixon and David Watkins each shared their thoughts and blessing. There was a delicious cake provided



David Watkins, AFRH-W Director, assists Edward Davis in cutting the cake in honor of all who served. Edward Davis was stationed at Schofield Barracks during the time of the attack.

ed by Food Services that had a picture of Pearl Harbor on it. May their service be in our thoughts forever.

BOWLING

Intergenerational league a big hit with residents

By Carol Mitchell

On Monday, December 6, the AFRH King Health Center Recreation Therapy Department hosted the monthly bowling league with Norwood Middle School. Each year 10 students are paired up with 10 KHC residents for the school year and bowl at the newly renovated Sheridan Bowling Lanes. The residents and students come up with a team name and assist each other with bowling throughout the year, combining their scores... hoping to have the highest total score!

This month's top team consisted of resident Paul Harper and Debbie Pakaluk better known as "Harper's Army." They bowled an awesome combined score of 320.



Robert Hill locks in the perfect starting position with the help of a Norwood Middle School student.

Season's Greetings

Arts and Crafts Corner

By Lori Thompson

Before peeking at a few of our December activities, I would like to mention the delicious pies which were made at our pie making event the day before Thanksgiving. The pies were mouth watering, down-home scrumptious. What a great way to kick off the holiday season!

We opened December with our exciting holiday window displays. From the gorgeous needlework by Jo Colvard to Margaret Jirak's lighted ceramic winter scene; from the bejeweled trees by Sandy Intorre to Ken Faller's Macrame; from Tom Lewellen's wood carvings to Bill Fowler's hooked wall hangings; the craft window cases are brimming with holiday cheer. A thank you also goes to Jean McCarthy, Jim Webster, Charles Gray, Frank Farr, Chuck Merlino, Don Egolf and George Smith, for displaying their

beautiful crafts. Your talents are amazing! Elf hats off to AFRH-W crafters!

Our annual Holiday Craft Fair on December 10th was held on Main Street at LaGarde this year. The party really got going when LaGarde's Recreation Staff and Residents joined us, bringing their Holiday Social out to Main Street. The craft wares were spectacular. From greeting cards and jewelry, to vintage Japanese textiles and felt craft, we had gift giving needs covered! Thank you to all our Resident and employee crafters, as well as the outside vendors. A good time was had by all!

I'll wrap up this month's arts and crafts update with a bow to all of the Residents who have attended our holiday craft classes. Your cards, gift tags, pins and ceramic pieces are beautiful. Happy Holidays to all, from AFRH-W Arts and Crafts Corner.

Charles Gray specializes in hats, cards and pins that contain the Gulfport and Washington seals.



AFRH 2010

The Power of Progress captured in photos



Seabees from CBMU 202 Det from Washington DC poured a concrete pad and installed an anchor on the AFRH-W campus.



At the AFRH-W Louis Nemecek tells Public Affairs Specialist Greg Moore his room selection. Louis was the first resident to select a room at the Gulfport facility.



The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West, admires a stained glass window in the Chapel during a tour of the facility in March 2010.

Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Jennifer Villalovos



Carver Jason Emmons from St. Croux, Indiana, puts the finishing touches on a viewing bench with twin Eagles.



Korean veterans from AFRH-W are recognized during their July 2010 trip to Korea in honor of the 60th anniversary since the start of the war.



Delta Flight bringing them home. The Gulfport Regional Airport gives the veterans of the AFRH a cannon salute when the plane transporting residents from Washington, DC to Gulfport touched down on October 4, 2010.



The AFRH-G in December 2010, decorated for the Christmas holidays.

From the Communicator Staff . . .

Happy New Year!

We look forward to sharing resident news and photos in 2011.