



# Armed Forces Retirement Home

The premier retirement community for our veterans

# The Communicator

Washington, District of Columbia & Gulfport, Mississippi

VOLUME XIX ~ QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ~ VOLUME II

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## AFRH-WASHINGTON

# Residents' artwork honored, displayed at Pentagon

Story by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs

Photos by Karen Nowowiecki | Washington Headquarters Services



Residents from the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) traveled to the Pentagon recently to be recognized for their contributions to a military veteran exhibit currently on display at Defense Department headquarters. "Today is about the residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home," said Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) Acting Director and Organizational Policy and Decisions Support Director Regina F. Meiners. "You have showcased your talent, and we have, with great pride, showcased it on our walls here. So, even though you're at the Washington campus, and for those that are down in Gulfport, [know] that you are alive and well here, every morning, every evening, when people walk through. So, thank you, and I am so glad to have some of you here."

Meiners took a moment to honor the late Miriam Rivkin, one of the D.C. residents whose work is featured in the exhibit. "I want to take a moment to acknowledge and remember Miriam Rivkin, fondly referred to as 'Mimi,'" she said. "For those of you who don't know, Mimi was a photographer for the Women's Auxiliary Air Corps during WWII. And so, as a photographer, she had that eye, and she streamed her photography background into her own artwork. She was a lifelong artist and talked about this exhibit. Sadly, we lost Mimi in late 2020. And even though she isn't here, her spirit is alive and well in all of you who knew her so fondly."

AFRH CEO Army Maj. Gen. (ret.) Stephen T. Rippe thanked Meiners for hosting residents and staff at the Pentagon, and said this event gave residents a chance to see their work in a setting outside of AFRH. "We are glad that the resident artists are here to see what's being done with their artwork," he said. "It's fantastic."

The exhibit features paintings, veteran portraits and short biographies printed on wallpaper covering the entire length of two opposing walls and a back wall in a main atrium. The artwork includes depictions of United States Army Gen. Winfield Scott (founder of the Old Soldiers' and Airmen's Home), military battle scenes, a guitarist, an angel, hot air balloons, plants, residential dwellings, oceanic scenes and wildlife, to name a few.

Resident artist and retired United States Air Force veteran Fred Layman appreciated having the residents' artwork displayed at such a prominent location. "I would not have believed in my lifetime that I would have something like this to be proud of," he said. "I mean how many people get the opportunity to have a painting hanging in the Pentagon?" Resident artist and United States Air Force veteran Joseph Grant felt honored and pleased to be part of the event. "It's fantastic," he said. "I was excited to come. I am really, really well pleased. I am so glad I didn't miss this."

For Gulfport residents, displaying their artwork at the Pentagon community is an honor and a unique opportunity to share their gifts with others, according to AFRH-G (Gulfport) Art Specialist Milton Williams.

Exhibit designer, Kathy McCorkle, a visual information specialist with the WHS Office of the Secretary of Defense Graphics and Presentations Division, said people, particularly active-duty military, felt something special when, on their way to a meeting, they briefly stopped in the hallway to see the exhibit going up. "It was our connectivity with our active-duty troops saying, 'I got to go visit AFRH and see what is going on there.' It was amazing," she said.

The Pentagon and AFRH had previously met prior to the pandemic to discuss ways to showcase residents' artwork at Defense Department headquarters. However, COVID protocols and safety rules put in place to protect the public health delayed the project and its reception ceremony.

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## AFRH-GULFPORT

# Resident artists at AFRH-Gulfport receive personalized "Thank You" booklets of their artwork displayed at the Pentagon

Story by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Group Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Artwork at Pentagon Photos by Karen Nowowiecki | Washington Headquarters Services

The AFRH art project for display at the Pentagon has been in the making for about a year, and it has finally come to fruition. On May 19, 2022, the AFRH-Gulfport resident artists were presented personalized booklets showing how their artwork is being displayed at the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

The exhibit at the Pentagon features paintings, veteran portraits and short biographies printed on wallpaper covering the entire length of two opposing walls and a back wall in a main atrium from resident artists at AFRH-W and AFRH-G.

The AFRH-G Art Specialist, Milton Williams, presented the booklets to the residents in the Hall of Honors. He said, "The resident artists are thankful, pleased and honored to display their art works with the active duty men and women as well as the civilians and guests at the Pentagon. It is their hope that each work of art will be an enjoyable and pleasant adventure."

Congratulations to all the resident artists at both Homes for this prestigious opportunity to share the gift of their talents with everyone who visits and works at the Pentagon.



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# AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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



Becki L. Zschiedrich ~ Gulfport Public Affairs

Robert W. Mitchell ~ Washington Public Affairs

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

## Serving America's Veterans

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 commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer, are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home.
- Active-Duty Career Retired:** Veterans who retired with 20 or more years of active-duty service in a regular component of the Armed Forces.
- Eligible for Retired Pay:**
  - Veterans, who served in a regular or reserve component of the Armed Forces, who are now eligible to receive retired pay and benefits.
  - Retired Guard/Reserves with over 20 years of creditable service (combined inactive and active-duty).
  - Veterans who qualified for an early retirement such as TERA (Temporary Early Retirement Authority).
  - Veterans who were given a medical or disability retirement with pay and full benefits.
- Service-Connected Disability:** Veterans with a service-connected disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- War Theater:** Veterans who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay and now suffer from injuries, disease, or disability.
- WWII Female Veteran:** Veterans who served in a women's component before June 12, 1948 who are determined to be eligible due to compelling personal circumstances.
- Beneficiary Spouse:** The spouse of a retired veteran may apply to live with the Retiree if he/she is enrolled as a beneficiary in DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) and was married to his/her sponsor prior to the veteran's retirement from the Armed Forces.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to: AFRH, Public Affairs Office, Box #584 ~ 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, ~ Washington, DC 20011-8400

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**WE CURRENTLY DO NOT HAVE A WAITING LIST. APPLY TODAY!**

## AFRH-W resident highlight – Hilary J. Landay Rosado

By PK Knor | AFRH-W Resident



Hilary J. Landay Rosado was born on June 25, 1954 in Paterson, N.J. There were three more children in her family: her twin brother Eric, Michael, and Evelyn. Hilary's father was a World War II and Korean War veteran. Her family moved to Scotland when she was five-years-old. She graduated from Dunfermline College of Physical Education in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in education. She taught for three years in secondary school and then changed her career path.

In 1978, the U.S. Army recruited her at High Wycombe Air Force Base in England and six weeks later she was in Fort McClellan, AL for basic training. From one accent to another!

Fort Huachuca, AZ was her Advanced Individual Training (AIT) station as a 96D, photo interpreter. She also attended another course there for photogrammetry.

Her first duty assignment was to Ft. Campbell, KY with the 101st MI Bn. There she was involved with the training brigades conducting camouflage detection from helicopters.

From 1980 to 82 she was stationed in Frankfurt, GE with the 533rd MI Bn in the S-3. She handled MOS training and field radio operations.

As a sergeant at Ft. Carson, CO from 1982 to 84, her unit, the 104th MI Bn, afforded support for the Grenada invasion. Her section provided terrain assessments to enable U.S. operations.

Hilary's next duty assignment was to Camp Casey, South Korea, with the 102nd MI Bn, 2nd Infantry Division. In September 1984, she applied for and was accepted to Warrant Officer School at Ft. Rucker, AL.

As a WO1, Hilary was assigned to the 303rd MI Bn at Ft. Hood, TX as the Chief of the Imagery Analysis Section, but that wasn't all... she did all things tactical, i.e., NBC Officer, motor pool checks, and lots of field duty. While there, they also sent her unit to Germany for Exercise Reforger in 1987. For all these assignments done well, she was promoted to CW2.

Hilary was next stationed at Ft. Clayton in Panama, along with her entire family. This included her husband and two daughters, Autumn-Dawn and Spring-Eve. She was assigned as imagery intelligence platoon leader with the 746th MI Bn during "Operation Just Cause." Her section reviewed aerial film to provide intelligence to Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). This was a brief assignment because many troops were sent back to CONUS after the Operation.

From 1990 to 93 she was assigned to Co B, 306th MI Bn, Fort Huachuca as an instructor and writer. She conducted classes for AIT students, warrant officers and advanced officer intelligence courses in the Imagery Intelligence Section of the Department of Tactics, Intelligence and Military Science. Hilary was promoted to CW3 while stationed there in May 1993.

In 1993, she was again assigned to Panama as the Operations Officer in Co B, 308th MI Bn until 1996. There she was involved with intelligence issues and "very secretive" support issues! For fun, she assisted with a Girl Scout Troop (also particularly secretive) and competed in the Iron-Person Competition, winning the women's category. In addition, she ran a leg in the Atlantic-to-Pacific relay race with other members of her unit.

An important overseas assignment came next at the Joint Analysis Center, RAF Molesworth, England. Her duties included supporting the intelligence effort in EUCOM's area of interest. While there, she made the CW4 list, but turned it down and retired in July 1999.

In 'retirement', she worked for 11 years as a distribution clerk for the U.S. Postal Service in Florida. By this time, she had two grandchildren. She decided to move to Virginia to be near her children and to babysit her grandchildren, which she did for seven years.

Moving to AFRH was something Hilary always wanted to do. Since coming to AFRH-W, she has been involved in many groups, such as The Book Club, The Garden Club and The Women's Group. She is also very talented in knitting and crocheting plus makes beautiful items that are for sale at AFRH-W. She has been studying Scottish Gaelic, which she expects to use on a trip to Scotland in June. Hilary enjoys living in this retirement facility, and we thank her for all her 'above-and-beyond' volunteer work.



Hilary competed in the Iron-Person Competition, winning the women's category!



Hilary crochets and makes beautiful items that are for sale at AFRH-W.



Hilary Rosado today at AFRH-W.

# The life of Laurel "Mac" McMarlin

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



When asked, Mac related, "Like most military retirees I have had two careers: one in the Armed Forces and one as a priest in the Episcopal Church. In addition there was civilian employment as: farm hand, men's store salesperson, helicopter base manager, house framing carpenter, truck driver, high school teacher, and agricultural warehouse manager."

Mac was born in 1947 as the oldest child of Wallace and Audrey McMarlin. He lived on a rural subsistence farm in Gibsonia, PA, situated twenty miles north of Pittsburgh, claiming ancestry from the late 1700s, who were among the first residents of Western Pennsylvania.

The nearest village was less than a mile up the road, having two churches, a volunteer fire station, a general store, an old fashioned ice cream parlor, and a country doctor and a dentist.

Mac graduated from Pine-Richland High School in Gibsonia and then attended Nyack College in Nyack, NY, where he majored in theology. He completed his undergraduate degree with the Regents College of the University of the State of New York, while a member of the Armed Forces.

During 1967 to 1971, Mac joined the U.S. Air Force and specialized in weather communications. His first assignment was at Andrews AFB, MD, and later, stationed at Tan Son Nhut AB in Vietnam for more than two years having attained the rank of E-4. He remained for another year as a civilian lay minister with the Protestant Church of Vietnam.

An Air Force sergeant related to Mac and others that he had been drafted into the Army for WWII, joined the Marines for the Korean War and when it came to Vietnam, he joined the U.S. Air Force. Mac followed this course throughout his military career.

From 1972 to 1974, he served as a dispatcher for heavy construction equipment, part time, with the Army Reserve at Butler, PA.

He then enlisted with the U.S. Coast Guard with tours from 1974 to 1981. Mac attained the rank of chief quartermaster, while stationed aboard three USCG Cutters, and as a search and rescue coordinator at USCG Group Galveston. Also during this time, Mac met his wife, Donna Waksmonski, in 1979 while attending his brother's wedding. It was love at first sight and they reared three daughters and a son, and have

twelve grandchildren.

Mac then took a turn with the Army from 1982 to 1991, beginning as an infantryman and achieving the rank of sergeant first class.

He was stationed at Fort Polk, LA, as an infantry team leader followed by assignments as a Pathfinder team leader at Fort Rucker, AL, and at Yongsan, Korea.

At Fort Bragg, NC, he served as an operations and training management instructor for U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard units. During Operation Desert Storm, he was part of the mobilization team for reserve and National Guard.

Mac took his final military retirement on May 31, 1991.

Since his childhood, Mac's devotion to his Christian faith has been a significant part of his life. He grew up in the Presbyterian Church, but became an Episcopalian while in college.

In 1969, Mac became a licensed lay minister in the Episcopal Diocese of the Armed Forces while in the U.S. Air Force in Vietnam. He continued as a licensed lay minister until his retirement in 1991 from the U.S. Army at Fort Bragg, NC.

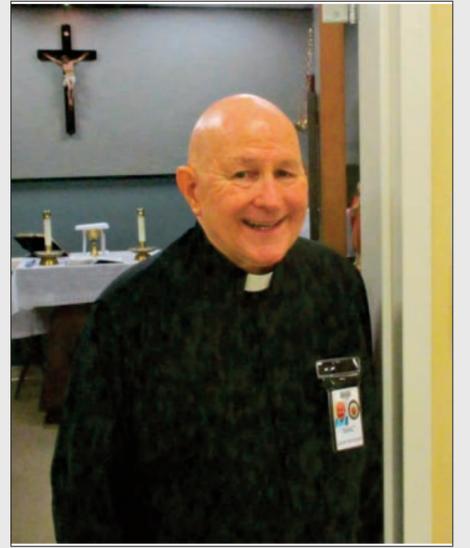
After his military retirement, Mac continued in lay ministry, and while being involved in local parishes, he became the program director for an Episcopal priest who was an international evangelist.

In 2001, Mac and his wife along with their adult daughter, Sarah, moved to Guatemala. As lay volunteers, they served in a local parish, and he graduated from Seminario Teologico Episcopal Santo Tomas, in Guatemala City and was ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Guatemala.

During his last twelve years in Guatemala, he ministered at two English-speaking congregations, plus served as the chaplain for youth ministries throughout Guatemala. He concluded his ministry in Guatemala as a priest serving at the cathedral in Guatemala City.

Having suffered a stroke in May of 2020, Mac and his wife moved to Alaska to be with their son. In December 2021, he became a resident of the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

Mac continues his ministry by offering Holy Communion worship services every Tuesday morning in the meditation room located on the first floor adjoining the A-tower elevators. When called upon by residents, including those who reside in D-Tower, Mac is always available for counseling and consoling.



# AFRH-W resident highlight – Kenneth Faller

By PK Knor | AFRH-W Resident



Kenneth Faller was born on May 21, 1942, in Paterson, New Jersey, and was adopted at the age of three. The neighborhood where Ken lived was a rough-tough type of area, and he tried to lie low and keep out of trouble. In doing so, he found a neighbor who was constantly re-doing his basement. Ken learned a lot of valuable carpentry and mechanical skills from this man, and also by spending nearly all of his school time in shop class! As a matter of fact, he skipped so many classes (164), his mother was called to the school! While Ken and his mom were anxiously waiting for the principal, they were informed that all of the cut slips had been stolen from the safe the night before. Phew!

In 1959, Ken joined the Navy and was sent to Great Lakes for boot camp. In Long Beach, California, he was assigned to the USS Merritt AK 97, leaving for a Pacific tour. His supervisor, E-6 Tom Matson, took him under his wing and treated him like a son and showed him the ropes. The ship anchored in Hong Kong, where Ken bought his first tailor-made uniform, which was created in three hours!

Upon his return to the U.S., the Navy sent him to "A" School in Chicago. He was now an E-4, and attended sub school in New London, Connecticut. In order to be appointed to a submarine, you had to pass the "escape tunnel test," which he did. I'll let you ponder what that was! They then assigned him to the USS Dogfish SS 350, a WWII submarine, where he worked in the engine room with hydraulics and as a refrigeration expert.

Across the river from Ken's designated location was 'electric boat,' where fleet ballistic missile submarines were built. He requested and was assigned to the USS Patrick Henry nuclear submarine. Since the sub was too large to be docked in the U.S., it was docked in Holy Lock, Scotland. The crews would fly from Connecticut to Scotland and spend 30 days on upkeep of the sub, then 60 days on secret patrol, and then return to New London. Ken did this for seven years while working with atmospheric control equipment.

In 1967, Ken volunteered for Vietnam! As an engine-man, he spent a year there, during the Tet Offensive, on swift boats or Boston whalers to patrol the rivers and coastal waters. They sank at least one Russian trawler which carried seven tons of AK 47's.

Ken, as an E-6, was then assigned as an instructor at sub school in New London for three years. He then returned to Vietnam as an advisor for one additional year.

Upon his return to the U.S., the Navy offered Ken his choice of assignments, and he chose a recruiting duty in Paterson, N.J., but was given recruiting duty in New York City! In three years, he rose from recruiter to chief recruiter, E-8. His Command Captain was former POW, CPT Dick Stratton. Their district was the top recruiting team in the U.S. with over 7,000 recruits!

One of Ken's recruits was Guadalupe Rivera. He recruited her to be Mrs. Ken Faller! They have twin sons, Vincent Michael and Kenneth John, and he has one grandchild from each son. They lived in Ft. Bliss, Texas while Ken attended the Sergeant Major Academy as one of only two sailors. While there, Ken met General Omar Bradley, who he greatly admired.

The Navy again assigned Ken to recruiting duty, this time at the University of Texas in Dallas, where he retired after 23 years as an E-9 Master Chief. Even though he was offered an around-the-world submarine cruise, he chose his family and retirement.

After the Navy, Ken held several positions. He joined the Merchant Marine for three years. He was chief engineer at a thermal energy plant at the University of Texas, a shipyard inspector in Miami-Dade, Florida, and owner operator of a fire extinguisher business. But his most important job was as a Cub/Boy Scout father, and travel agent for his family.

In 2009, Ken moved to AFRH-W and immediately got involved in volunteering. He took over the wood shop and has made over 500 projects for himself (including his granddaughter's rocking horse) and the Home, to include two outdoor nativity sets and a beautiful military plaque, which hangs in the conference room of the Sherman building. He became chairman of the golf committee and helped purchase the carts and refurbish the clubhouse. He is currently a floor representative for the Resident Advisory Committee. Ken would love to see the new residents engage in volunteering at the Home.



Ken (pictured above in the middle) served in Vietnam in 1967.



Ken created this beautiful military plaque in the AFRH-W woodshop, which hangs in the conference room of the Sherman building.



Ken Faller today at AFRH-W.

# From the AFRH-W administrator



It is hard to capture all of the news and activities on a quarterly basis and as time goes by so fast, it seems like I just wrote my last article. Thankfully, our COVID situation has improved, and we continue to monitor the DC area cases and adjust our practices as needed. We have had a few resident cases and continue to have some staff and contractor cases, but most of those have been asymptomatic. We also continue to provide the vaccine to those who request it.

For Memorial Day, we participated in the Lincoln Cottage sponsored Veterans' Day event at our cemetery to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice to our country and some of our fortunate residents were able to attend the National Memorial Day concert at the Capital. Three of our World War II lady veterans were honored onstage and received rousing applause. We had our first cookout, which due to rain, became an inside event, but still honored Memorial Day. We were privileged to be visited by HM1 Sully H. W. Bush, who had been the companion dog to the former President. Needless to say, he brought smiles everywhere he went. We were also able to bring back our dog and cat visitors after a long time away. For the annual Donut Day, Commissioner Hodder, the National Commander for the Salvation Army came with his staff to provide each of us a donut, a tradition going back to World War I. Other VIP visitors included the spouse of the current and some of the former USMC Assistant Commandants. It was a very engaged group and they were very happy to see all that we offer our veterans.

After much anticipation due to COVID delays, the Pentagon art exhibit showcasing resident art from both Homes has been completed. Some of our artists were able to visit and meet with Mrs. Regina Meiners, who welcomed us and extolled how those passing by found much enjoyment looking at the display. Thanks to Mrs. Meiners and her graphic arts team for honoring our residents in such a lasting way! This quarter marks the beginning of annual service birthday schedule. We held our new tradition of a steak service birthday meal, in addition to our usual cake cutting ceremony to celebrate the Army's 247th year. Other events of this quarter included a bike ride on National Bike Day, our first softball game, our annual White Elephant auction, horse races (watch out for Seabiscuit!), Kentucky Derby events and more. As you can see, our recreation staff is getting back to normal programming.

Once again, we have been the fortunate recipients of generous donations from The Old Soldiers Home Foundation. A local TV station came to highlight our grand opening of the sport court, patio furniture and enhanced garden area that the Foundation provided while we served up hotdogs and treats from an ice cream truck. The Foundation was given another generous donation from a local automotive company at this event. Another fundraiser was held on our golf course, sponsored by Vet Force and Fairways for Warriors. All who attended had a great time for a good cause!

This quarter included our annual Nurses/CNA Week, where we thank those who

take such good care of all us, especially throughout the pandemic. Activities included a breakfast, ice cream and gift baskets donated by fellow staff. Thank you Nursing Team! We welcomed our new Ombudsman, Sam Gitchell, Sergeant Major (ret), who recently retired from the Army National Guard, stationed at the Pentagon. He has quickly become a valued part of our team. Our most recent Employee of the Quarter is Dominic Bernardy, who works in Campus Ops. Congrats to him and the other nominees! We have hired some other new staff and were fortunate to promote a few including Captain Jay Scott and Marla McGuinness.

I hope everyone gets to take a break and engages in some summer activities whether on campus or elsewhere. Enjoy and stay safe!

Susan Bryhan



Catharine Deitch, Army veteran, who was our oldest resident until her recent passing, with HM1 Sully H. W. Bush.



RAC Chairman Fred Layman with HM1 Sully H. W. Bush.



William Morgan with cat visitor from GitMeow.



Emmy Lou Daly with cat visitor from GitMeow.

# Residents' art a huge hit at DoD HQ, designer says

Story by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH Public Affairs

Photo by Karen Nowowiecki | Washington Headquarters Services



A chat with AFRH art gallery designer Kathy McCorkle (a visual information specialist with Washington Headquarters Services' Office of the Secretary of Defense Graphics and Presentation Division) reveals how AFRH residents are making an impact at the Pentagon.

**AFRH:** How did you all go about developing this project?

**McCorkle:** Our whole team took this amazing artwork and acquired the wall space, acquired the approvals and all of the areas that we wanted to put this artwork in. The Pentagon is quite a unique community; we all cooperate together to get things like this completed.

**AFRH:** Yes, and this is a fantastic location.

**McCorkle:** Yes, yes, much traffic.

**AFRH:** How were you able to secure this area for AFRH?

**McCorkle:** We had acquired the gallery space two years ago, and then COVID hit, of course. But, I really want to share some stories with you. When we were installing all of these murals, when the artwork went up, people stopped in their tracks. We were there. And these are people, who are active duty, were looking at this amazing effort. It was incredible to see. I had one very tall, purposeful Marine walking through the hallway, striding purposefully across this open space, and when he saw artwork created by a Marine, he stopped in his tracks, went over and read about the artist, looked at the pieces and said, 'Oh hey, there is some artwork by a Marine, I'm gonna check that out.'

**AFRH:** Wow! That is amazing.

**McCorkle:** It was incredible. (People were quickly walking across) 230 feet of hallway space on their way to some important event and suddenly they stopped and said, 'Thank God the artwork is coming back.' We saw so many people stopping, asking questions like, 'How did all of this start?' and, 'Is this from Washington?' I said this is a combination of the D.C. and Gulfport retirement homes. And then, people asked, 'Well, how can I find out more?' It was really quite a spark.

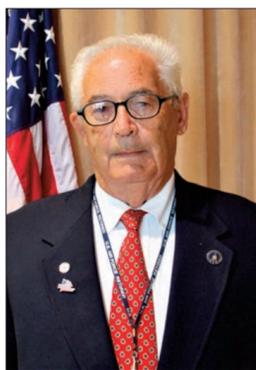
**AFRH:** What really stood out for you?

**McCorkle:** I had a gentleman walking down the big corridor, he saw the painting of Gen. Scott taking Mexico City, he stopped and he said, 'Well, you got that right, and that's correct.' He was a military historian checking the painting for the accuracy. He said 'Yes, the troops were south at the bottom of the hill, that guy came through here, this group over here attacked the western flank,' and on and on. He stopped and started pointing out all of the accurate details of Gen. Scott's campaign. You just can't believe how this artwork has pulled people.

**AFRH:** Thank you so much for sharing.

**McCorkle:** Thank you all for sending us your beautiful work. It is a great gift to the people on active duty. These folks are really hustling, working, stressed out, and your work is giving them a few moments away from all that stuff. It helps all of us that work here.

# Notes from the AFRH-W resident advisory committee chairman



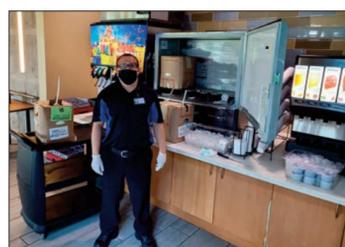
The dining room staff at AFRH-W is one of the most important elements of our Home and sometimes one of the most under appreciated. I think it's time for our residents to take a look at all they do. Imagine what it would be like to come up with a menu and then prepare what is needed to serve over 200 individuals, three meals a day, 365 days a year.

Not only does the staff know our names (we don't even know the names of half of the residents), but they cheerfully greet us at every meal! They prepare the food, serve the food, replenish and clean the salad bar and drink machines, maintain the silverware and tray areas, clean the dining room, remove the trash, and do it all with a smile, three times a day! They decorate for all of the holidays and serve the wonderful birthday dinners with cheer.

We could take a few minutes from our busy schedule and let them know we understand that they will never be able to satisfy everyone all the time, but we do appreciate all the effort that goes into them trying.

To the staff who greet me and the residents each meal I say, "Thank you and keep up the good work! Your efforts are appreciated."

Fred Layman



# AFRH-G residents celebrate 75 years of marriage!



*Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

This is a true love story going all the way back to World War II. Harry and Jean Rhizor first met in 1946 while stationed in Florida. The World War II veterans married less than a year later and have shared a lifetime of adventures together since then.

Harry and Jean Rhizor celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary on June 6. AFRH-G held an ice cream social in their honor today. Now at 93 and 95, the couple continue to share their lives together while living at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport. "We're living happily ever after," said Harry with a smile.

On June 6, 1944, Allied soldiers stormed the beaches of Normandy, which led to the eventual downfall of German forces. A few years later, the date would come to hold even more significance for Harry and Jean when the couple married on the anniversary of D-Day. It was a fitting date to get married on, said the couple, because Harry and Jean are both World War II Navy veterans. "That war was the war everybody responded to," said Harry.

Harry Rhizor joined the Navy at just 17 years of age. He was still in training when Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy, an effort that soon ended World War II. While Harry trained to be a radioman and gunner, Jean was part of the Navy Waves.

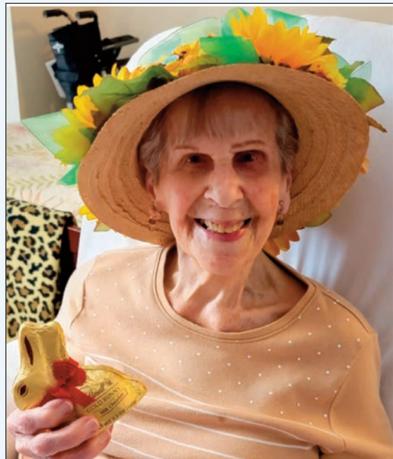
They also believe in keeping it simple, and that communication is one of the keys to a successful marriage and family. On behalf of everyone at AFRH-G we wish Harry and Jean Rhizor a very Happy 75th Anniversary! What an honor it was to witness this moment and be a part of this very special day. Congratulations!



## Team Easter bonnet parade!

*Story & Photos by Kimberly Clothier | Recreation Therapy Services*  
*Submitted by Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services*

On April 16, 2022, healthcare residents experienced a day of good cheer and special deliveries. "Team Easter Bonnet Parade" as Sharon Price (IL resident that made the bonnets) and Dan Ellis (IL resident that provided the music) made a fun-filled Saturday morning for our residents and ladies on Allegiance, Valor, and Loyalty Halls. The music had everyone dancing and singing in the hallways along with the dining rooms as the ladies especially joined in the festivities. They also enjoyed Sandra Joiner's donated Golden Bunny Chocolates as a treat to top off the rest of the day. We even had a sneak-in hat dancer, Dan Scott, who showed us how to move and shimmy around the room. A fun morning was had by all thanks to "Team Easter Bonnet Parade!"



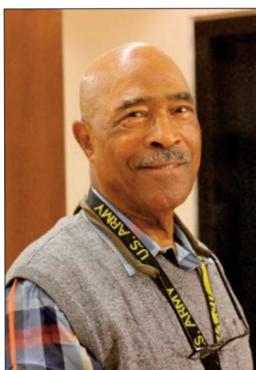
## Hippity hoppity Easter Bunny visits!

*By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services*  
*Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant*

On April 14, 2022, resident's faces lit up with a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny. With the cheerful sound of "Peter Cottontail" playing in the background, chocolate filled carrots were delivered along with the greetings of "Hoppy Easter!" Curt Young did high-fives while Mary Nelson closed her eyes and leaned on the Easter Bunny's cheek with a happy sigh of comfort. After travelling to visit and deliver treat bags full of goodies to the Valor, Loyalty, & Allegiance Hall healthcare residents, the Easter Bunny made a stop to see residents in the main dining hall. IL resident, Tony Langdon, made sure to get his annual picture too! You could often hear residents say, "Oh, I know who that bunny is!" Some residents even asked for a quick peek of the Easter Bunny, a.k.a. Susan Bergman, Board-Certified Music Therapist in Recreation Therapy (and yes, she was wearing a mask under the bunny costume head for a third year in a row). Hippity Hoppity...hope you had a Happy Easter!



## Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



The month of June ushers in summer vacations, pool parties, and a lot of visitors to the Home- bringing good times all around. However, on a more serious note, residents are beginning to make decisions about the upcoming bi-annual elections that will take place soon. Since this is the last article I will be submitting before the elections take place, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for allowing me to serve as your RAC Chairman for the past four years. It has been an honor to represent you and carry your banner during this time. I will not seek re-election.

The AFRH Directive 8-12 requires a Resident Advisory Committee be formed with elections to be held every two years during the month of September. The positions covered by this directive are the chairman of the RAC and the floor representatives. It also states that any residents who run for the RAC must have been a resident of AFRH for six months prior to the elections.

During my tenure as chairman I came to realize just how critical resident involvement can be. Much can be achieved by working together with the administration. The quality of life we enjoy now is a reflection of that team work. Always remember when good people do nothing, change will occur, not always for the good. So GET INVOLVED!!!

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-G RAC Chair Art Jones at the U.S. Army Birthday Celebration on June 14, 2022.

# AFRH-Washington

## Employee of 1Q FY2022: Bessie Wilson

Submitted by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs



Congratulations are in order for Officer Bessie Wilson, Employee of the Quarter, (OCT 2021 – DEC 2021) for going above and beyond in her duties as a Security Officer at AFRH-W.

Officer Wilson is highly motivated and demonstrates outstanding communication and interpersonal skills when interacting with residents, family members, staff or visitors. Her exceptional performance while at work is infectious to the entire staff and her attendance and punctuality is unblemished.

In the first quarter, Wilson made a significant impact on the AFRH-W by responding to numerous medical incidents and other occurrences.

Wilson is the primary oversight of emergency activations that occur for all pull cords, pendants, and the Memory Support Units' Wander Guard, to include activating AFRH's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). In the first quarter, Wilson oversaw and supervised numerous emergencies without incident and ensured they were quickly and accurately documented. Wilson exhibits exemplary customer service skills and is always motivated to learn.

Her superb conduct, note-worthy performance, and unwavering efforts to support the agency, staff, and residents is nothing short of outstanding. Her commitment and dedication is in keeping with the highest standards of excellence here at AFRH. Bravo!

## Employee of 2Q FY2022: Dominic Bernardy

Submitted by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs



Congratulations are in order for Dominic Bernardy, Employee of the Quarter, (JAN 2022 – MAR 2022) for going above and beyond in his duties in Campus Operations here at AFRH-W.

Dominic embraces the AFRH's philosophy on Resident Centered Care by always responding to resident requests promptly and efficiently with a smile on his face. He is always going the extra mile to help out in situations outside of his position description including looking out for the residents' well-being, transporting residents to medical appointments, and helping residents set up their computers.

Dominic has taken the lead in the pest control process for Campus Operations. During the last quarter he has worked with Campus Operations staff and the pest control contractor to complete a full building inspection of the Sheridan and Scott buildings. He has also completed the COR II certification was assigned as the main COR transportation and ACOR for ground maintenance. In the absence of the administrative assistant Dominic has also taken on the responsibility of filing contract files correctly, submitting work order requests from residents, and loading utility data in the Energy Star system. His hard work has resulted in him being promoted to the COR supervisor's position for the department.

Dominic is a team player in the best sense, always willing to fill in and complete tasks, sometimes out of his position description. He leads by example.

His superb conduct, note-worthy performance, and unwavering efforts to support the agency, the campus, and the distinguished military veteran residents and staff is nothing short of outstanding. His commitment and dedication is in keeping with the highest standards of excellence here at AFRH. Bravo!

## AFRH-W celebrates U.S. Army's 247th Birthday

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH Public Affairs

Residents and staff at the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) in Washington, D.C., convened in the Hall of Honors recently to celebrate 247 years since the founding of the United States Army on June 14, 1775.

The ceremony featured remarks by National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John T. Raines who spoke about this year's birthday theme and the state of the National Guard. Afterwards, he recognized and coined three Army veteran residents (all centenarians) for their service and contributions.

In the spirit of the Army's founding (approximately 80 years before the establishment of the Old Soldiers' Home), Raines decided to refer to AFRH by its original, historic name. "Thank you residents of the Old Soldiers' Home for having me as your guest today," he said. "Defending America 24/7, the play on the 247 years, that's what the theme is this year, so that's what we do around the globe. We defend the citizens of the United States of America and we defend the interests of our country all around the world."

Raines said over 100,000 soldiers are currently deployed and some are supporting NATO in Ukraine and others are still operating in Iraq, Syria and Africa.

"People think, that when the war ended in Iraq, and when the war ended in Afghanistan, the soldiers came home, but soldiers are still scattered all over the world supporting American interest overseas and here [at home]," he said noting some soldiers are on the Southwest border managing the flow of illegal immigrants while others deal with wildfires, hurricane season and floods.

Raines appreciated being invited to speak at the AFRH-W and thanked residents for paving the way for today's, modern military fighting force. "I look out at the people in this group and think about what you did, the foundations that you laid for our soldiers of today and all of the service members of today," he said. "Without you leading the way and establishing things like Army values, and establishing things like Army standards, we would probably look like any other forces out there in other countries. But we don't look like that, we know we have the premiere fighting force, the premiere ground force in the world here in the United States Army. And that's what we are here to celebrate, the birthday of that premiere fighting force."

AFRH-W Ombudsman and retired Army Sgt. Maj. Sam Gitchell hosted the ceremony and led attendees in the singing of the Army song. AFRH-W Administrator and retired Navy Capt. Susan Bryan thanked Raines for his participation and presented him with an Administrator's coin. Referring to the historic nature on the founding of both the "Old Soldiers' Home" and the U.S. Army, she said, "This is the perfect spot to celebrate the Army's birthday."

At the conclusion of his remarks, Raines presented coins to residents Jean Ringuette (100), Sandra Intorre (101), and Annelise Albert (102).

About our three centenarians:

Jean Ringuette, the youngest of the three, was born January 27, 1922. She joined the Army on March 14, 1943 and traveled throughout the United States and Europe until she retired on October 31, 1963 at the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Sandra Intorre was born on July 4, 1921 and joined the Army against her father's wishes who said she would regret joining the military. Just the opposite occurred and she ended up spending 23 years in the Army serving during WWII, Korea and Vietnam, and traveling to places like England, France, Belgium and Japan. "I had more freedom in the Army than at home," she said. Her favorite tour was in Hawaii where she was stationed for five years. She purchased a home there and remained there for 10 years before returning stateside. She retired from the Army at the rank of First Sergeant.

Annelisse Albert, the eldest of three, was born on June 13, 1920 and served in the Women's Army Corps during WWII. She coordinated events for the USO while stationed at Fort Monmouth, Eatontown, New Jersey and married a radar engineer. She graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in English, and minor in recreation, and worked as an employment counselor for the D.C. employment agency until retirement. She has two daughters, six grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren.



## The Fenwick Foundation

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation

Photos by Residents of AFRH-W

The Fenwick Foundation has played a major role of getting the residents out and about. They also sponsor plays that are performed at the Home, They have also given out virtual events that the residents may stream in their rooms.

### OUT AND ABOUT:

-Spirit tickets to see soccer. Paul Armbruster and Warren Pospisil have gone to a few games. A group of residents are going to a few of the Nationals baseball games.

-Tickets to the National Geographic, Baltimore Aquarium.

-Sponsored Shows

-In March the show "Oklahoma" by Songs for seniors

-In June "As Time Goes By" Songs For Seniors.

Special thanks goes out to the Fenwick Foundation for all of their support to our veterans.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G Employee of the 1st Quarter FY22

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Congratulations to Brandon Kinchen, Supervisory Clinical Nurse – Wellness Center for exceptional service to the Armed Forces Retirement Home during October, November, and December 2021.

Brandon responded to a non-responsive resident in the Dining Hall, performed basic life support by initiating the use of the AED while awaiting the AMR ambulance team. Due to campus-wide nursing shortages, Brandon has been assigned additional shifts, and has also volunteered for extra duty, fully understanding the impact of our critical nurse staffing gap. Brandon provides steady leadership and guidance to his staff and co-workers ensuring smooth Wellness Center operations. He is the only Registered Nurse assigned to 339 IL and ILP Residents seeking care and treatment in the Wellness Clinic, and professionally supports three medical providers. This quarter he conducted 195 patient visits to include annual exams and new resident admission physicals. As a result of various COVID-19 restrictions, he conducted 57 telephonic facility round calls to various healthcare facilities, obtaining residents' clinical statuses to determine appropriate levels of care upon their return to the Home. Brandon collaborated with the laboratory techs to address inaccurate lab tests and missing lab test results directly impacting patient medication and treatment plans.

Brandon's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

## AFRH-G Employee of the 2nd Quarter FY22

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Congratulations to AFRH-G's Employee of the Quarter Shannon Frazier, LPN for exceptional service to the Armed Forces Retirement Home during January, February and March 2022.

Shannon consistently communicates the needs of the Valor Hall residents in a detailed, caring, and compassionate method. She advocates for the residents in a manner of kindness and ownership, as if the residents were family of her own, plus she exemplifies person-centered care. Shannon also assisted on a special project to design order templates in Point Care Click (PCC). Her contributions on the project improved nurse efficiency and consistency in selecting order templates and facilitates documenting consistent resident care. Shannon took it upon herself to initiate an ethical discussion for a resident on the Long Term Care unit by escalating her concerns with the Nurse Educator and truly advocated for the resident. She generated well written documentation for a resident admission, then followed up with the hospital to include documenting the follow-up call. This ensured exceptional continuity of care for the resident.

Shannon's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon herself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Thank you Shannon for your exceptional service and congratulations for a job well done!

## AFRH-G Army Birthday Celebration

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On June 14, 2022, AFRH-G held a birthday celebration in honor of the U.S. Army and Flag Day in the Community Center. Our special guest speaker was Captain Brad Dinkel, who is the Commanding Officer, Charlie Company 169th Engineer Battalion. The cake was cut by AFRH-G's oldest Army resident in attendance, DC Breland, and the youngest Army active duty in attendance. Happy 247th Birthday to the U.S. Army and Happy Flag Day!

Army's motto is "This We'll Defend." Defend remains our Army's main mission.



## AFRH-G Cinco de Mayo luncheon

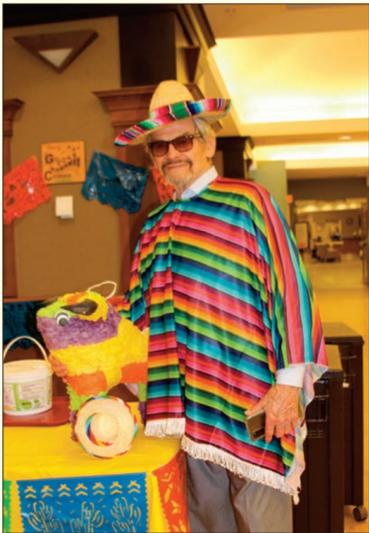
Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G celebrated Cinco de Mayo with an awesome Mexican luncheon. The dining hall staff served Mexican steak casserole, chicken tortilla soup, Mexican salad, fried rice, stuffed peppers, corn, zucchini, tacos, nachos, plus Mexican egg rolls, and cornbread. For dessert Mexican brownies were served. Our recreation team was standing by serving margaritas and Modelo beer.

Adding to the fiesta was Music Therapist Susan Bergman, who was dressed like a taco! Yes, a taco!!!! Susan brought many smiles and laughter throughout the building, in the dining hall and throughout the upper levels of care. She has a costume for every occasion.

Thank you to the dining hall for the fabulous Mexican Fiesta, recreation for serving the drinks and Susan Bergman for making everyone laugh. Now, I'm sure everyone is taking a siesta after eating all that delicious Mexican food.

Happy Cinco de Mayo everyone!



## AFRH-G residents celebrate St. Patrick's Day

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

WOW!!! AFRH-G residents really know how to party! Thank you to resident Dan Ellis for coordinating such a fun-filled St. Patrick's Day parade. Residents met in the lobby, had some Baileys Irish Cream and started the parade route on the common hallway, then down the Boardwalk and onto the upper levels of care.

Many employees and residents were wearing green costumes, leprechaun costumes, face paint, lit up shoes and lucky green headbands. It was nothing but fun, joy and excitement throughout the vibrant hallways, not to mention tons of smiling faces. I think we all needed this boost of exuberance. The energy was incredible. It really was a blast, and it was so great to see everyone's faces again. Thank you to all the residents and employees who participated.



# AFRH-Washington

## DON celebrates passion, profession of nursing

By Gladys Osuchukwu, RN | AFRH-W Director of Nursing  
Photo by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs



Last month, we celebrated Nurses Week. This month (from June 16 to June 23) we celebrate Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). Both nurses and CNAs work hand-in-hand to ensure that residents receive quality care in every healthcare setting. The CNAs are highly valued because they are the first contact and closest observers of changes on the residents. Nurses bridge the gap between the residents and the providers. Nurses are caregivers, advocates, educators, and sometimes they play the role of family members when the residents' families are not readily available. This is why nursing is not just a job, it is a passion. Nurses are heroes because they save and prolong lives. I love this saying, "God found the strongest people and made them nurses." We are proud to be nurses and we love what we do.

My name is Gladys Osuchukwu. I have been an employee of AFRH-W for 14 years and 8 months. I have been a nurse for 29 years with hospital, home care, skilled nursing, and Long Term Care experiences. I started at AFRH-W as a clinical nurse in September 2007 and worked on the skilled unit of then LaGarde 4. After two years of serving our veterans here, I was promoted to the position of Assistant Clinical Nurse Supervisor and I managed the night shift. In 2019 I was promoted to a Clinical Nurse Supervisor position and I managed the Independent Living Plus program also called the Homecare Program. During my 14 years of service, I have worked on all the levels of care here in AFRH-W.

I started my nursing journey in Africa where I obtained a Registered Nurse degree. In 2012, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and in March 2021, I obtained a Master's degree in Nursing Leadership and Management. I was promoted to the position of the Director of Nursing (DON) in August 2021. As the DON, I supervise the activities of the nursing staff on the long-term care (LTC), Assisted Living, and Memory Support units. I provide education to staff, as needed, to ascertain that policies and procedures are followed while rendering nursing care to our residents. This approach helps to improve and maintain our residents' quality of care, maintain their safety and ensure that residents' and family members' are satisfied.

Our nurses are dedicated, loving, caring, kind, passionate, and always want the best for our residents. Most of the time they think about resident safety first, and view their safety as a secondary issue. I remember a fire incident involving oxygen use that happened here at AFRH-W on January 14, 2014, on the night shift. All the nurses who responded to the fire incident were focused on saving the resident whose room was on fire and ensuring that the fire did not spread to other residents' rooms or the entire building. We ran into the residents' room with wet blankets and fire extinguishers notwithstanding the deadly flame and smoke that were coming out of the resident's room. This was a challenging moment for me as the night supervisor who led the rest of the team, including the security department, in making sure the fire did not spread to the entire building.

Nurses are heroes who derive joy in saving the lives of others. One must see nursing as a passion (rather than a job) to bring out the caring nature that nurses are known for.

## CNA reflects on three decades of serving veterans

By Robbin Michelle Sescocoe | AFRH-W Nursing Assistant  
Photo by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs



My name is Robbin Michelle Sescocoe, and I am the oldest of four girls and one boy born to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and Bernice Sescocoe. My father retired as a correction officer at a prison in Lorton, Virginia. My mother was a nursing assistant, but she retired as a supply supervisor at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. (AFRH- W), formerly the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. I believe my mother was the first or second nursing assistant to work here at a time when the Home was run by nuns. The men did the heavy work like bathing residents and bringing up the food from the kitchen. The women would provide meals and care.

I always wanted to be a nurse, so after high school, I went to Prince George's Community College for nursing. However, events in my life changed and I found myself pregnant. So, I went off to school to be a nursing assistant like my mother. After I graduated, it was time to look for a job. And, with a baby on the way, I had to find a job with better pay than a nursing assistant. Back in the 1980s, a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) only earned \$3.25 per hour. I worked for several nursing homes before I got the call to be interviewed for a nursing assistant position at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. I was hired on November 12, 1986 and six months pregnant. You know the saying, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"? Well, no one asked, I didn't tell.

At that time, the Home provided a uniform which was made of polyester fabric (all virgin white from top to bottom), white nursing shoes and a lab jacket.

I was assigned to the Fourth Ward building located behind the LaGarde building. The Fourth Ward building consisted of four floors (I heard that the fourth floor was an old, haunted operating room). The third floor is where residents were given breathalyzer tests. The second floor was setup like a MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) unit, like the T.V. show. The beds were lined up only to be separated by curtains, the elevators were run by the residents, and after 4 p.m., we (the medical staff) ran the elevators.

We were paid every other Tuesday and picked up our checks on the third floor. This was before direct deposit. We would line up to get our paychecks. There were two banks on campus, one next to the Sheridan building and the other next to the Scott building.

Eventually, I had to let everyone know I was pregnant. They all were surprised. My daughter, Michelle, was born on March 14, 1987.

After three weeks, I returned to work. The Fourth Ward building was being closed, except for the second floor. I was relocated to another part of the campus - the "Pipes" building.

The "Pipes" building had six floors. On the sixth floor was the Admissions Ward, the fifth floor was Assisted Living, the fourth floor was Long Term Care, and the third floor was a mix of Assisted Living and Long Term Care residents. The second floor was Memory Support. Each floor had 64 residents, four nursing assistants and two nurses (at that time we didn't have lift chairs). Residents shared rooms and the bathroom didn't have showers. Residents ate their meals in the mess hall downstairs, and those who couldn't go down to the mess hall ate in the dining room.

One of my favorite activities was taking residents to the Bingo games and other activities hosted by recreation. One evening, Carol (from the recreation staff) was teaching residents how to make moccasins. I watched her and learned how to do it. I made five pairs of moccasins for all of the residents at LaGarde.

Back in 2005, Hurricane Katrina destroyed the AFRH in Gulfport, Mississippi, and all of the residents from there came here to Washington, D.C. It may have been more than one thousand people and AFRH-W didn't have enough staff to take care of all of the residents from both campuses. We just had a big furlough, so the Home had to rehire the furloughed staff and bring on contract nurses and assistants to help provide care for the additional residents from Gulfport. The "Pipes" building was opened and new residents moved in.

The Gulfport residents occupied all of the floors in the building. They had brand new computers and a sports room. Some of the Gulfport residents were not so comfortable with the change in their living condition, but we took great care of them during their time here in D.C. until 2010 when they returned to Mississippi to a brand new facility. A few Gulfport residents really liked living in Washington, D.C. and decided to stay at AFRH-W.

I still remember when Prince Charles and his wife Camilla visited AFRH-W when they came to D.C. back in 2015, and when then-President Obama and his family came to AFRH in 2016 to help serve pre-Thanksgiving Dinner to residents (everyone was excited and there were Secret Service guys everywhere, even all of the elevators were run by them).

I never thought I would be working in one place for 36 years and experience so much here at AFRH-W. It wasn't always easy, but I have a lot of people to thank for my long career. I want to say to my friends and family, I love you all, and as the sun comes down on my side of town, these distant memories are all that I keep here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home here in Washington, D.C.

## City Band of the Village of Duermen, Germany

By Steven Briefs | Supervisory Recreation Specialist  
Photo by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs



Sometimes we have "culture shock" and other times there is enjoying culture from another country. On April 12 our residents enjoyed meeting and seeing the latter. Colonel (Ret.) Regina Draper is the director of the International Artists for Culture and Creative Therapy and she coordinated a group of German musicians, who were visiting America, to perform at AFRH-W. This group hails from Duermen, Germany and call themselves, City Band of the Village of Duermen. There were fifteen members composed of wind instruments and a drummer. The band director introduced the band to us and gave a history of each song they were to play. He had a good sense of humor, as he spoke to us, and was very informative in his descriptions of the music the band was to play. Lots of

German and Polka songs, lots of clapping and they even invited us to sing along, which our residents did. A great time for all and at the end, our residents were happy to go up and meet the band members. A nice culture exchange for all who attended.

## The ladies group

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation  
Photo by PK Knor | AFRH-W Resident

At AFRH-W the ladies group meet once a month. They enjoy snacks and conversation about what is going on in the Home. They also have guest speakers that come in and talk on different topics.



## Line dancing at AFRH-W

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation  
Photo by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs

Lead Recreation Specialist Marla McGuinness taught a line dancing class; Electric Slide, Macarona, Cupid Shuffle to name a few. This will be a monthly event and other dances will be introduced for the future. Some participated, some watched, and some wiggled in their seats. Everyone had a good time.



## Chug! Chug! Chug!

By Jenna K. Kriegel | Art Specialist  
Photos by Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator

These vets consider themselves far too rugged for a classic Paint & Sip class. That's why on June 9 Jenna Kriegel, the new Art Specialist at AFRH-W, hosted the first ever Doodle & Chug! Marketed as "manly art for manly men" residents gathered in the onsite bar, Defender's Inn, to drink domestic beer in good company. In between sips, they followed along and learned how to draw a rainbow trout with chalk pastels. Self-proclaimed "bad artists" were shocked as they developed their skills "from bad to mediocre" and are already looking forward to the next gathering of bad artists and good drinkers.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## Hola! 2022 AFRH-G Nursing Skills Fair

Story & Photos by **Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs**

The theme for this years' Nursing Skills Fair was "No Time to Siesta – It's Time to Fiesta." This three-day event (May 2 – May 4) was hosted by the healthcare experts of AFRH-G, the Biloxi VA, Keesler Air Force Base, Singer River Health System and Aerocare. Our Healthcare Educator Donna Iler, RN, MSN, PhD really went above and beyond making everything so festive, colorful and fun. The Community Center was completely decorated, including several piñatas. Donna Iler created gorgeous gift baskets and wreaths to give away as door prizes. She also gave everyone sombreros and Mexican blankets. Donna said, "This was the first time for the medical staff to be without masks and to have a little fun. It's also an interactive fun and joyous way to learn."

The fair is a mandatory educational requirement for nurses and certified nursing assistants to review hands on clinical skills, perform safety training using life-saving equipment and learn new practice standards to support delivery of ongoing high quality resident centered care.

Special thanks to everyone who participated and especially to our Healthcare Educator Donna Iler for all of her efforts in making this the best Nursing Skills Fair yet. Donna's talent, knowledge and dedication to this skills fair was extremely appreciated by all.



## Easter service brings spring blooms & new growth!

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

Photos by **Susan Bergman, Lee Corban | Recreation Supervisor & Rosie Lake | Volunteer Coordinator**

On April 7, 2022, residents gathered in the Valor piano lounge for the annual Easter Service with Pastor Gibson and Father Uko. Beautiful wildflowers, herbs, blooming patio amaryllis and a cross filled floral arrangement graced the room as a reminder of spring and the message of new growth. The prelude began with "Ode to Joy" performed on small Scottish bagpipes followed by guitar accompanied hymns, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "Holy, Holy, Holy," "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," and "Praise God From whom All Blessings Flow." Residents joined in to read the Prayer of Saint Francis followed by sharing the peace sign to peers around the room stating, "Peace be with you." AFRH Catholic Priest, Father Uko led the scripture reading and sermon and AFRH Protestant Chaplain, Pastor Gibson gave the concluding remarks and closing prayer. Also included in the service was "I Said a Prayer for You Today." Some individuals knew of this prayer recalling former resident Forest Schneider, who created prayer adhered wooden plaques for the assisted living residents, who lived in the previous Home. After the service, Claire Dimler-Smith and Carl Smith donated their prayer plaque which is now hanging in the Valor piano lounge. With the surrounding spring blooms and message of new growth, residents gathered to mark a fresh season filled with faith, peace, and love.



## Tripoli replica

By **Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident**

The Tripoli Monument honors the heroes of the First Barbary War (1801-1805) who fought against the North African Barbary pirates. It is the oldest military monument in the U.S. and now located at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD.

In 1804, President Thomas Jefferson ordered the nation's tiny naval force to protect U.S. trade against the Mediterranean pirates, thus, the beginnings of a permanent United States Navy.

The monument was carved in 1806 in Italy and disassembled to arrive in New York in 1807 conveyed aboard the U.S. frigate Constitution. When re-erected, the monument base measures 16-foot square, and with the column stands 90-foot tall.

The marble monument column is adorned with Turkish symbols and facial displays, and the column pedestal has inscriptions with epitaphs. Surrounding the column are five unique statues that represent commerce standing, history seated, winged victory and America leading the children. The column is topped with an American eagle.

Dan Ellis completed a replica of the Tripoli monument which can be viewed in the Arts and Crafts Display Room.



## Peace Officers Day

By **Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant**

On 1 October 1961, Congress authorized President John F. Kennedy to designate 15 May as a day to honor peace officers. The bill was signed into law on 1 October 1962. Peace Officers Memorial Day honors federal, state and municipal officers who have been killed or disabled in the line of duty. The week of which that date falls has been dubbed as National Police Week. Later, in 1994, Bill Clinton directed that the U.S. flag be flown at half-staff on 15 May to pay tribute to fallen officers. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial wall in Washington, D.C., features names of more than 22,000 law enforcement officers who have been killed in the line of duty. Thank you to the men and women who put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe and to the families who support them.

## Wisconsin veteran continues to give back to the veterans at AFRH-G

Story & Photo by **Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs**

Renee Piotrowski has driven all the way from Wisconsin several times over the years to deliver beautiful hand-crocheted blankets she created for our veterans at AFRH-G. She has not been able to visit for two years due to COVID. On Monday, April 4, 2022 she stopped by AFRH-G and hand-delivered the blankets she created with love for our veterans. She brought tears to the eyes of many of our veterans for her very thoughtful gifts and kind words, thanking each and every one of them for their service.

Renee lives in Hatley, Wisconsin and served six years in the Army National Guard as a medic. She also volunteers on the Never Forgotten Honor Flight, which is a non-profit organization of dedicated volunteers, that provide veterans of WWII, Korea and Vietnam a flight to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials built in their honor. Renee said, "It is my pleasure and honor to thank these service men and women. They deserve so much more!"



## Thank you NCBC Region Legal Office

Story & Photo by **Rosie Lake | Volunteer Coordinator**

The NCBC Region Legal Office (U.S. Navy Legal Dept.) came out to help our residents at AFRH-G on 3 June 2022 from 0800-1200. Our very own ombudsman, Seabee Master Chief Alexander Bradshaw held another "Handy Helpers" service day and our residents absolutely appreciate them very much.



## Sunday chit chat social!

Story & Photos by **Kimberly Clothier, Recreation Therapy Services**

Sundays are great for spending afternoons with friends and making new friends. On Sunday, May 15, 2022, Recreation

Assistant, Kimberly Clothier brought some unique tea pots along with various types of tea for the first afternoon Valor piano lounge Chit Chat Social since before COVID-19. The participants enjoyed lots of different cookies to go along with their sampling of tea.

"Who says Sunday afternoons are quiet and boring?" Not this rambunctious group who could be heard consistently laughing way down the hallways. Thank you to Independent Living resident volunteer, Sharon Price for assisting with the get together, too!



## Chief Petty Officers visit AFRH-G

By **MC Alexander Bradshaw | Ombudsman**

Photos by **Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs**

On the 31st of March, to mark the Navy Chief Petty Officers Birthday on the 1st of April, The Chief's Mess from the Stennis Space Center, in Hancock County, Mississippi paid our residents a visit. Their time spent at the Armed Force Retirement Home - Gulfport allowed them to interact with our residents, gain some history, pay homage to those who have gone before us and recognize their numerous contributions and sacrifices in the defense of these United States.



# AFRH-Washington

## Golf tourney fosters veteran outreach, engagement

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH Public Affairs

Residents, staff, volunteers, and guests had a spectacular outing at a fund-raising golf tournament held at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, D.C. (AFRH-W) with The Old Soldiers Home Foundation, Vetforce (a philanthropic arm of software maker Salesforce), and Fairways for Warriors (a non-profit group bringing golf to veterans). "It was a great day of fun to be had by all," AFRH-W resident and long-time golf enthusiast Fred Layman said.

The early morning May tournament brought together participants for a friendly competition building partnerships, increasing awareness and raising funds for AFRH's distinguished veteran community. It ended with a cookout and gift-giving at noon.

The AFRH golf tournament was the first time Fairway for Warriors visited the D.C. campus and Roy Bell, national chaplain, co-state director for the Richmond, Va. chapter and U.S. Army veteran, seemed to appreciate the care and comfort provided to the residents.

"This is my first time coming here and from what I have seen, I am impressed," Bell said. "I like that AFRH is peaceful in the middle of an active, vibrant city."

Bell's organization helps disabled veterans obtain adaptive golf equipment. It also aids combat wounded veterans and their families with their physical, mental and spiritual well-being, and works to locate and pay for medical care not offered by the VA or other medical providers.

"Our mission is really to combat the 22 suicides that happen every day in the veteran community," Bell said. "If anyone knows a combat veteran, they make look fine on the outside, but they are dealing with turmoil on the inside."

Vetforce representative and U.S. Marine Corps veteran Richard Hankins applauded the event's community outreach and veteran engagement opportunity.

"This event really allowed us to do more of the things that we like," he said. "That is, interacting with other veterans in the community, meeting with the retirees, and interacting with 501c's like Fairways. I know a lot of their folks that work with the Old Soldiers' Home are actually down in Gulfport, but they've also been putting in a lot of their efforts with the upkeep of the facility here."

Vetforce is a philanthropic arm of the business software company Salesforce. "Our organization is very much about volunteering and philanthropy," Hankins said.

On its web site, The Old Soldiers Home Foundation said it was proud to partner with Vetforce, Fairways and AFRH-W for this event.



## White Elephant auction

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation

Photos by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs & Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation

The White Elephant Auction was a lot of bidding, laughing and smiling. Each resident was given \$150 of "funny money" to spend at the auction. They could bid on items up for auction, or use the buy-it-now table. Plus, they could purchase snacks, beer, soda, or wine for their "funny money" cash.

Items were either donated by residents, staff or outside vendors. RAC Chairman Fred Layman was the lead of this event. He received many gift cards that were part of the auction as a "special" prizes. The recreation department donated an Italian homemade lunch that was up for auction. The bidder can bring a guest and the recreation department will wine and dine two of the special guests.



## Horse racing in the house

By Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Robert Mitchell | Public Affairs & Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

"...and they're OFF!"

It was a fun-filled day at the indoor AFRH-W horse track. Due to a possible tornado watch, the morning horse races and Memorial Day cookout came indoors.

The track was dry and the dice rollers were hot. Residents all received 25 chips to place bets on their favorite horse for four exciting races. The races kicked off with Spectacular Steve, Seabiscuit, Citation, and Seattle Slew and they were all chomping at the bit and ready to get out the gate. The AFRH-W jockeys included a wealth of excellent staff horsemanship experts. A great crowd of 35+ residents came out to watch and place their bets hoping for a Kentucky Derby 2022 long shot win to rake in the big bucks. Residents from all levels of care came out to press their luck. The Big Winners of the day with the highest chip count were:

- 1st ~ Austin Lowe
- 2nd ~ Johnnie Powell
- 3rd ~ Jim Morrison

Special thanks to all our talented crew of new & returning jockeys. A day at the AFRH-W races included beer, snacks, horse history, and good times. Topping off the day, resident Jim Hunnicutt promised to provide a kazoo to kick off future races!



## Presidential pooch visits vets at AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Public Affairs



HMI Sully H.W. Bush, the former service dog and companion to President George H.W. Bush, stopped by the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. recently bringing with him all the honor, joy, and warm and fuzziness one would expect from the Labrador Retriever famous for his unwavering commitment and devotion to his former owner, the 41st President of the United States.

"Sully, is one of the facility dogs (at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center [WRNMMC]) and was formerly owned by President H.W. Bush

and before he passed, he decided he wanted Sully to continue working to improve the experience and provide care for our members in uniform," said WRNMMC Command Project Manager Angela Kinart. "Sully helps to engage the patient and improve the experience at Walter Reed."

Kinart along with fellow command project manager Amy O'Connor (head of the facility dog program at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center) brought Sully to AFRH to share his care and comforting abilities with the residents.

"It's an honor to have Sully visit with our veterans here at AFRH," said Susan Bryhan, administrator of the campus in Washington, D.C. "Dogs always boost the morale of our veteran residents. We thank the Walter Reed Team for sharing him with us today."

Sully is now a member of the WRNMMC's Facility Dog Program in Bethesda, Maryland, a role he assumed in accordance with the wishes of the 41st president.

He is famously known for staying by the late president's casket during the funeral service. He faithfully served the former president during the final six months of his life.

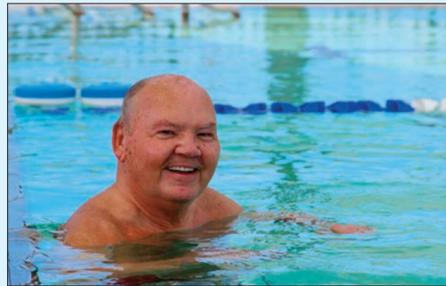


# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G opens pool with a party!

Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

It was no April Fools' joke when recreation posted the flyer saying we were having a pool party on April 1!! With the temperature in the 70's, many residents came and enjoyed the picture perfect weather, plus had a blast dancing, eating, drinking, swimming, and visiting with each other. Eddie McDaniel provided great music while the recreation team served beer, wine, hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, ice cream sandwiches and watermelon. Everyone had a great time and we are already looking forward to the next party. Thank you to recreation and dining services for always making sure our residents have a good time and good food.



## AFRH-G bus trip to The National Naval Aviation Museum

Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On April 6, residents hopped on the HOTARD luxury bus at 0715 and headed out on I-10 to Pensacola, Florida for a trip to The National Naval Aviation Museum. The bus trips were canceled for the last couple of years, but they are back now. The bus trips are wonderful experiences that AFRH-G offers to our residents. Make sure to check out the calendars each month and sign up for the trips. All you have to worry about is getting on the bus. Everything else is taken care of for you by our Recreation Team. Before you board, you can pick up snacks on the ground floor, near the front entrance and then you just kick back and enjoy the ride. Gulfport resident Jack Horsley is the trip caller and he makes sure all the residents are taken care of. The bus ride was comfortable and smooth, and it was so nice to not have to worry about driving or parking, not to mention getting let off at the front door.

When we arrived at the museum we found out that the Blue Angels would not be flying due to the weather. However, the residents weren't disappointed because we all had so much to see at the museum. This museum is so alive with history and adventure. We were all just in awe at all the restored aircraft, authentic memorabilia and unique experiences that the museum offered. Also, it's the first hands-on museum I've ever been to. Usually you can't touch anything or take photos, but at this museum you can take as many photos as you'd like (with a flash), plus you can touch everything and climb into some of the cockpits. It was so much fun to journey through the evolution of Naval Aviation and experience hands-on history like all the historic aircraft, interactive exhibits and the huge collection of artifacts. I'm sure there will be another trip where the weather will be better and the residents will be able to go on the flight line behind the museum to view the Blue Angels practice flight demonstrations. This museum should be on everyone's bucket list.

On the way home resident Jack Horsley asked our very cool bus driver if we could stop at Buc-ee's in Alabama! Well, all I can say is WOW....what a cool store and it was the perfect way to end the trip. Keep in mind that AFRH-G offers many fun trips, so don't miss out. Go sign up outside the recreation offices for one or several trips. You will not be disappointed.



## Hawk released back into the wild at AFRH-G

By Jen Biernacki | Recreation Services  
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On March 23, 2022, a red-tailed hawk was released on the campus of AFRH-G. Gulfport resident Carl Hardy caught the red-tailed hawk as it appeared injured and trapped on his patio. Concerned that the bird may further injure itself, Mr. Hardy threw a towel over the bird's head, captured it and, along with security, called the wildlife rescue. After observations, Maggie Wooten from Southern Wildlife, an organization in partnership with the Wildlife Care and Rescue Center, released the red-tailed hawk back on AFRH-G campus. The hawk flew free from the cage back to the old southern oak trees, where he also calls AFRH-G home.



## It's a small world!

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs  
Photo by Faye Jefferson | AFRH-G Resident

About two months ago, residents Stella Montgomery & Benjamin "Ben" Willett met at an ice cream social in the community center at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi and discovered they were both from Owensboro, Kentucky. As they started talking, they discovered that they attended the same high school, Owensboro Catholic High - Stella graduated in 1962 and Ben graduated in 1963 plus they also know some of the same people in Owensboro! Even though they didn't know each other in high school, they reminisced about their days in Kentucky. They also discovered they were both born in November (almost exactly one-year apart) - Stella's birthday is November 7, 1944 and Ben's is

November 4, 1945.

Benjamin "Ben" Willett checked into the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport in August of 2021. He was a SGT in the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam.

Stella Montgomery moved into the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport in January of 2022. She retired from the U.S. Navy as a CPO/SKC.

Looks like Stella and Ben will be friends for life now. Ben said, "I'm still in shock...she moved here in January; it's indeed, a small world."



# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G Memorial Day Ceremony

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G held a Memorial Day Ceremony outside by the pool. Gulfport Administrator Jeff Eads was the emcee and Pastor Michael Gibson delivered the invocation. Mr. Eads said, "We are happy to once again be able to gather in person to celebrate our nation's accomplishments and memorialize those that fought to provide us the freedoms we enjoy today." We would like to thank our special guest speaker, Col. William Hunter, Commander of the 81st Training Wing at Keesler AFB, Gulfport Mayor Billy Hewes, Gulfport Fire Chief Billy Kelley and members of the Gulfport Fire Department, and Sgt. Sacheree and the Biloxi High School Air Force Jr. ROTC. It was an extremely touching ceremony. It's easy to forget what Memorial Day actually means while you're planning a barbeque or a summer vacation, but the day signifies much more than just a three-day weekend.

Memorial Day is a solemn day of remembrance for everyone who has died serving in the American armed forces. The holiday, originally known as Decoration Day, started after the Civil War to honor the Union and Confederate dead. But the real purpose of Memorial Day is to remember the sacrifices of the men and women who gave their lives in service to our country. Throughout America's history, hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens have died bravely serving our country.

Today and every day, we honor our fallen heroes from all of America's past wars. All gave some.....some gave all. We will never forget.



### Carrying the Load.....through AFRH-G

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist  
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On May 25, 2022 members of the Carry the Load Relay Team visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home as the East Coast Team passed through Gulfport.

The National Relay consists of five routes that cover 20,000 miles across 48 states. The relay team walks and cycles daily throughout the 32-day Memorial Day campaign where people of all ages can join to honor and remember our fallen heroes. Carry the Load is a non-profit organization that provides an active way to connect Americans to the sacrifices made daily by our military, veterans, first responders and their families.

The East Coast route consists of stops in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and continues down the east coast to Florida before turning along the Gulf Coast and meeting up with the other four routes in Dallas on Memorial Day weekend. Special thanks to this group for all they do in honoring our veterans and first responders.



### AFRH-G Resident Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

Story & Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On May 3, 2022, we recognized all of our resident volunteers at AFRH-G. Our Volunteer Coordinator, Rosie Lake, coordinated a very nice ceremony in the theater and created beautiful certificates, plus gave out candy to all of our awesome resident volunteers. Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell was the emcee and the Chief of Resident Services, Christopher Alexander, handed out the certificates and took photos with the resident volunteers. We cannot thank our volunteers enough for all the help they give us every single day.

Volunteering is good for the soul. Giving to others can have a positive impact on your own well-being from relieving stress, depression and loneliness. Volunteering can introduce you to a new circle of friends and be a boost to your own psychological well-being. Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart.



### T-Buckets visit AFRH-G

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist  
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On May 27, 2022



members of the National T-Bucket Alliance stopped by AFRH-G to show off their hot rods to veterans. The group was in town to participate in a coast cruise event, and they were determined to set aside time for our veterans while in town. The National T-Bucket Alliance (NTBA) is a non-profit organization of volunteers, mechanics, engineers, collectors, and hot-rodders.

T-Buckets were created and named by Norm Grabowski in the 1950's. AFRH-G residents enjoyed talking to the owners and appreciated seeing these T-Buckets up close.



# AFRH-Washington

## Fallen vets honored at historic military cemetery

By Steven Briefs, CTRS | AFRH-W Supervisory Recreation Specialist  
Photos by Rebecca Kilborne | President Lincoln's Cottage Marketing & Communications Manager

Memorial Day remembrances and traditions have been celebrated for many years all over the United States, including here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, D.C. (AFRH-W), and our Home has a special connection with this holiday. General John Logan, founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization comprised of veterans of the Union Army, was the founder of Memorial Day and is buried in the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery (USSAHNC) located across the street from the Home.

This year the ceremony was held at the USSAHNC and opened with words of welcome from Dr. John Harrison who represented the AFRH-W Administration. The invocation was delivered by Chaplain John Goodloe and the presentation of the Colors by the St. John's College High School Color Guard. Our own John Baker, dressed in his Korean War uniform, assisted with the laying of the wreath. Then, our residents and community members in attendance joined together to sing the National Anthem. Mr. Rod Gainer, Chief Curator of the Arlington National Cemetery, spoke on the importance of this holiday. He encouraged us to remember and honor those men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in support of freedom and peace for ourselves and around the world.

Many of our residents who attended this ceremony wore their service uniforms or military hats and appreciated participating in this important holiday event.

