



Armed Forces Retirement Home

Communicator

Washington, DC



Gulfport, MS

VOLUME XVIII NUMBER 4

APRIL 30, 2021

AFRH-WASHINGTON

AFRH-W spring photo challenge

By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist
Photos by ARFH-W Residents

Recreation Services offered the whole month of April to get out and take photos of spring beginning in Washington DC. Some of the highlights of the photographs were from George Wellman, Hilary Rosado, Annemarie Wilson, Carol Mitchell, and Marla McGuinness. The pictures will tell the story.

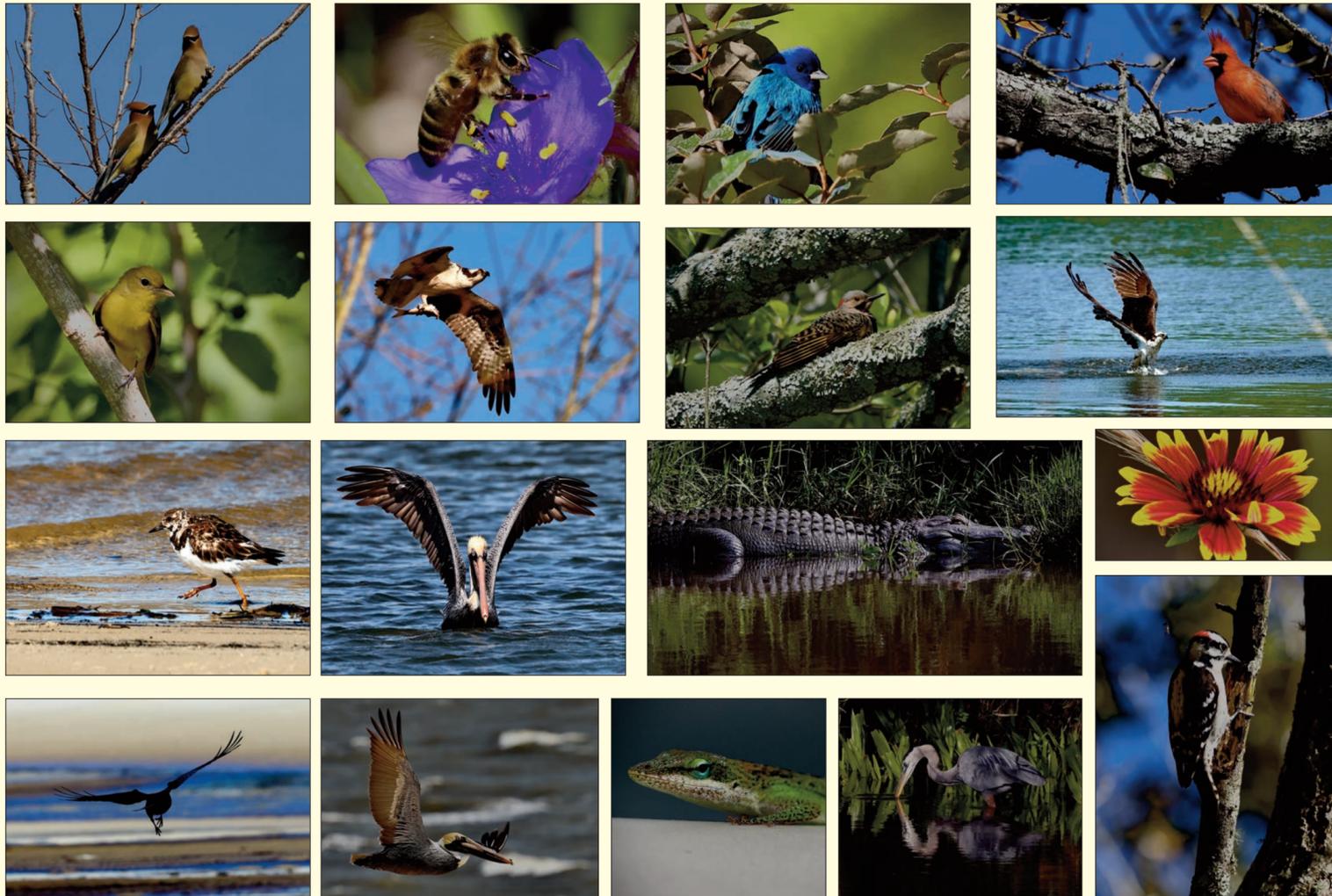


AFRH-GULFPORT

Nature in its finest around the Mississippi Gulf Coast

Photos by Pauline Larson | AFRH-G Resident

Here are just some of the exquisite photos that Gulfport resident Pauline Larson has taken of nature along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Thank you Pauline for reminding us that all we have to do is look around and take notice of the beauty that surrounds us.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 2
Resident Highlights

Page 3
Gulfport Resident Honored with Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award

Page 3
Washington Earth Day Cleanup



AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988 Web site: www.AFRH.gov Email: Public.Affairs@AFRH.gov



Christopher Kelly - Public Affairs Officer
Carolyn Haug - Washington Public Affairs

Becki L. Zschiedrich - Gulfport Public Affairs

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

Serving 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 active 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 of 50 percent or greater from the Dept. 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, PAO/Marketing, #584 ~ 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, ~ Washington, DC 20011-8400

Visit us on the web at:
<https://www.afrh.gov>



LIKE US ON
facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>

APPLY TODAY!

AFRH-G Resident Highlight - Wayland Travis Webb

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Wayland Travis Webb was born in Forest, Mississippi. His parents had 14 children, seven boys and seven girls. Sadly, six of their sons and one of their daughters did not survive infancy. Wayland was the only son raised with five girls (his youngest sister was born after he left home). The family lived and worked on a farm, where Wayland began plowing the land with a mule at the age of eight. After completing high school, he moved to Jackson, Mississippi to enroll in a business college, while working part time at the local A&P grocery store. Eventually he quit school to work full time. When he did not get a managerial position, due to his draft eligibility, he decided to join the U.S. Air Force in an effort to better himself.

At eighteen, Wayland took his first airplane ride to San Antonio, Texas to begin basic training. Two weeks later he was sent to Wichita Falls, Texas to complete basic. His first assignment brought him back to his home state to radio school at Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi. He began his training to become a ground radio operator but ended up becoming an airborne radio operator. He left Keesler AFB to go back to Texas for Randolph AFB training as a radio operator on B-29s. He was then sent for advanced training at Forbes AFB in Kansas. While there, he also received ECM (electronic countermeasure) training. His next venture was survival training in the Sierra Mountains before receiving orders for Okinawa where he became part of the war efforts in Korea. Wayland served many TDY trips to the Far East, including three six-month trips completing 350 combat missions in Vietnam as a boom operator.

When he made it back stateside, Wayland went to Barksdale AFB in Louisiana to be a radio operator on KC-97s. Since he was the 29th spare radio operator there, he went to work in the office, in addition to flying. For six years he kept the flight records for the squadron and also became an operation supervisor. He made the rank of tech sergeant while he was training to be a boom operator on KC-135s at Castle AFB in California. His next orders brought him to Tacoma, Washington where he stayed less than a year before his

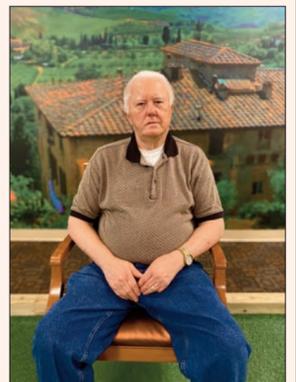
unit was shut down. He was given orders for Travis AFB back in California to work as a boom operator, with an additional duty as admin supervisor. He was then sent back to Mississippi for duty at Columbus AFB. While there, they needed someone for wing scheduling so he filled the position while still serving as boom operator. After three years, the outfit was shut down so he moved on to work in scheduling and as boom operator at Altus in Oklahoma. His last duty was at Minot, North Dakota as a boom operator. After one year, he was assigned as the alert force superintendent. He stayed in this position until retiring. Wayland served in the Air Force for over 28 years before retiring at the rank of E-9.

When he retired, he began working for a CPA using the BA degree he earned while in the military. He then decided to take a position with the postal service where he worked for fifteen years before completely retiring.

Back in his early years of military service, Wayland had met Helen. The couple had dated and then married after he returned home from Okinawa. They had three children, Sherry, Carol, and Wayland, Jr. From these children they now have three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Heartbreakingly, Sherry and Wayland, Jr. were both diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Sherry is still battling the disease but Wayland, Jr. lost his battle. In 2004 just after Wayland and Helen's 51st wedding anniversary, Helen passed away after her own fight with leukemia.

A few years after losing Helen, Wayland decided to apply for AFRH-G. He moved in 2010 right after the Home reopened. He now enjoys his retirement by socializing and volunteering. He is an avid participant in recreation's many tournaments held throughout the year and actually wins a majority of them. Wayland also offers extensive volunteer hours at the Home, to include working in admin, calling bingo, giving tours, and serving as Treasurer for the Protestant Chaplain Fund. If that is not enough, he dedicates countless hours to the Home's residents by using his tax expertise to help them prepare their annual tax returns. Just this year alone he has helped file 222 federal returns (and the season is not even over yet!)

This month, Wayland will be receiving a Lifetime Presidential Service Award for his volunteer services that have surpassed 4,000 hours. The home is thankful for his service and dedication!



AFRH-W resident highlight – Harry Dressler

By P.K. Knor | AFRH-W Resident



Harry Dressler was born on March 7, 1921! Yes, Happy "100th" Birthday Harry!

He lived in West Springfield, Massachusetts with his grandmother until he decided to join the Navy in 1938. Upon his enlistment, he attended a naval training station and a hospital corps school. His first assignment as a corpsman put him in a surgical ward at a naval hospital and later at a naval dispensary.

In 1940, he attended Laboratory Technician School at the U.S. Naval Medical School in Washington, D.C. and upon graduation was assigned a class in epidemiology and sanitation. During this class, he was sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to study the environment and test the local population for malaria to see if it was endemic to the area before the actual camp was built. He also went to Great Lakes Naval Training Station to test recruits to determine their immunity to diphtheria. At one point he returned to Camp Lejeune to test Marines for the presence of hookworm. He was also in charge of a laboratory at Quonset Naval Air Station, Rhode Island.

In June 1942, with one day's notice, he was assigned to malaria control and flew from Washington, D.C. to the South Pacific Island of Efate in the New Hebrides. During a two-year period he served on three different islands in that area, including Guadalcanal. In 1944, Harry returned to the U.S. to serve at a disease control unit in Boston, Massachusetts, where he married his dream girl!

After the U.S. took the island of Guam in 1944, Harry was sent to the Naval Medical Research Unit #1, where he tested dairy cattle body specimens for the cause of death. He was able to determine that the deaths were caused by a protozoa carried by ticks. To this day, there are no dairy cattle on Guam.

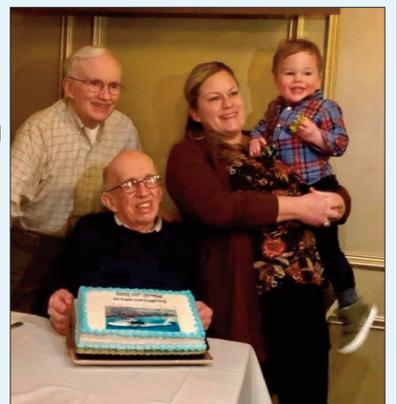
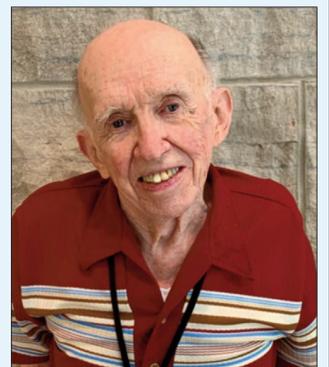
Harry made several trips from Guam to the University of California, San Francisco laboratory carrying virus specimens in dry ice for study. He was asked to stay there for two months and work at the lab. During this time Harry was notified that he was given quarters in Guam, so he had his wife Lois and their son Wayne accompany him back to Guam.

When he was assigned to Cairo, Egypt he was again able to take his family with him. In Cairo, he assisted renowned scientist Dr. Richard M. Taylor, in establishing a virology research unit. On a trip to Lebanon he accompanied Dr. Dorothy M. Horstmann to investigate a polio outbreak in American personnel at the American Embassy, who discovered that polio was transmitted through the blood and not the nervous system. Harry had met and worked with incredible scientists throughout his career, which he considers a major highlight. He had also been involved with writing over 20 research papers on various work related subjects.

Harry and his family were sent home to the U.S. from Cairo on a cruise ship. They settled in Kensington, Maryland. He retired from active duty in 1958, after 20 years as a chief. After an additional 10 years in the reserves, he ended his total career with 30 years of service as a warrant officer.

During his reserve unit time, Harry attended George Washington University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Natural Sciences. And, to keep weeds from growing under his feet, he worked at the U.S. Naval Medical Research Institute for 21 years and retired from there.

Harry and his wife loved to travel and managed to visit 49 U.S. states. In 2014, a few years after his wife's death, he moved to AFRH-W after having discovered it on a chance drive-by several years earlier. Since his son lives in College Park, Maryland, it was a perfect location.



Four generations of Dressler's at Harry's 100th Birthday party!

AFRH-G Employee of the Quarter – Ashley Herring

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Congratulations to the AFRH-G 2nd Quarter FY21 Employee of the Quarter Licensed Practical Nurse Ashley Herring for exceptional service to The Armed Forces Retirement Home during January, February, and March 2021.

Ashley lives the person-centered care mission. She is a dedicated nurse committed to delivering compassionate care. She is one of two nurses assigned to Independent Living and Independent Living Plus residents seeking care and treatment in the Wellness Center. Ashley is very proactive and anticipates what information the provider staff needs. She secures it for review, and enables the highest level of quality care during appointments. She patiently conducts thorough patient education, builds a rapport with the residents, and helps them to stay as independent as possible. Ashley assisted a resident with navigating a complicated medication issue. She worked diligently with the resident's non-AFRH medical specialist to complete special prior authorization paperwork. This expedited the Keesler Pharmacy to obtain an expensive, non-formulary medication for the resident. The resident was extremely appreciative and praised Ashley. She is a great multi-tasker and not only proficiently accomplished her nursing duties, but she also covered the Wellness Center reception desk during her co-worker's absence. Ashley shows great pride in her work, willingly takes on tasks, and works as a team to foster results. Ashley's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon herself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

Congratulations to the Honorable Mentions for the 2nd Quarter FY21: Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell, Campus Operations Administrative Assistant Sheila Ford, and Administrative Officer Monica Fragello.



Congratulations to the AFRH-G Employee of the Quarter Ashley Herring, LPN



Congratulations to Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell for receiving honorable mention.



Congratulations to Campus Operations Administrative Assistant Sheila Ford for receiving honorable mention.



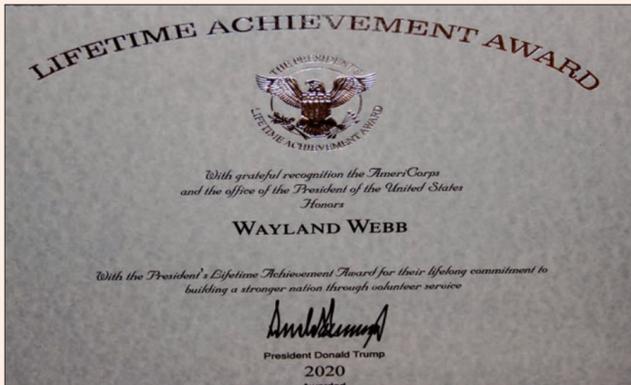
Congratulations to Administrative Officer Monica Fragello for receiving honorable mention.

Gulfport resident honored with Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award

By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator

Photos by Christopher Alexander | Resident Services Chief

On April 23, 2021 Mr. Wayland Webb was honored with the Presidential Service Award for Lifetime Achievement. This milestone marks over 4,000 hours of dedicated volunteering from Mr. Webb. He volunteers in many areas of AFRH-G including administration, recreation, and as a tax preparer. Congratulations Mr. Webb and thank you for your continued commitment to AFRH-G!



Annual Volunteer Recognition Award Ceremony

By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator

Photo by Christopher Alexander | Resident Services Chief

National volunteer appreciation week was April 19-24. Traditionally, we would celebrate with a beautiful reception and award ceremony in the community center, but for the second year in a row we've had to make modifications. I suppose that could be said about much of the past year. On April 23, 2021 all AFRH-G residents who volunteered in 2020 were recognized with a certificate of appreciation and photo opportunity. Although this isn't the traditional way to say THANK YOU, please know that the sentiment remains the same. The wonderful resident volunteers provide thousands of hours annually to the home and from all of us at AFRH-G THANK YOU!! We appreciate you!



Gulfport Administrator Jeff Eads (left) presents resident Terry Graves (right) his volunteer certificate of appreciation.

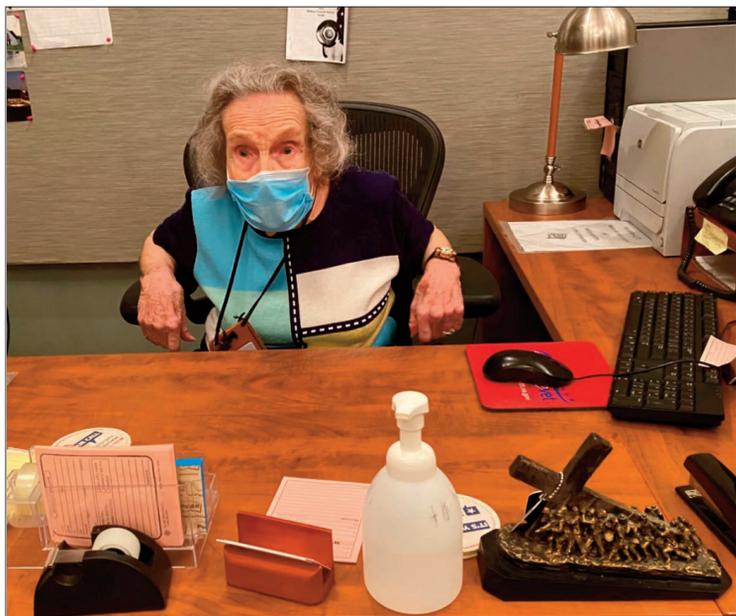
Got to get back to work

Story & Photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant

Mildred Sobierajski has returned to work at age 99. With the opening of more and more activities in Gulfport, Mildred is able to return to her volunteer job that she has held for quite some time before COVID.

She answers the phone in the Lord's Cabin on Fridays from 1300 to 1500. "It gets me up out of bed," Mildred states. "I love to go in there, because people will stop by for a while and chat," she added. As we walked into the Lord's Cabin and she made her way to the chair behind the desk, she shared times when others came to visit. Once she was seated, she straightened the items on the desk then replied, "I am fine honey, come back to get me at 3:00." I waved good-bye as I walked out saying, "See you at three!"

So....If you are out walking around on the boardwalk about 1300 on a Friday afternoon, stop in to say hi to our very special volunteer, Mildred, behind the desk in the Lord's Cabin.



You are appreciated!

By Lori Kerns | Librarian

This past year has been trying and has had us limited more than we're used to. Due to COVID restrictions, many of the activities our residents love had been postponed until they could continue when they were safer. Thankfully, two recreation activities were allowed to carry on with restrictions in place. Movies were still shown in the theater and the library was allowed to stay open for residents to check out books and DVDs. These two recreation areas would not have been able to function without one valuable asset: VOLUNTEERS! I would like to extend HUGE thanks to our library and movie volunteers that kept the wheels spinning and the gears turning in this trying time. We could not have done it without all of you.

Many, many thanks to:

- Les Brownstein
- Frank George
- Clyde Hairston
- Doris Hopper
- Tom Miller
- Leonard Priel
- Jean Rhizor

YOU ARE AWESOME!



From the AFRH-W administrator



We were just beginning to get some warmer weather, and then the winds blew in and brought back colder air. It still looks like spring outside with the beautiful flowering trees and flowers and hopefully it will warm back up soon. Fortunately, our campus has remained virus-free for residents, so the pilot program is still in place. It is almost feeling like normal, even though we are not quite completely back. Our visits have gone well. It is great to see the reunions after so much time apart. We also continue to have more staff and contractors getting their first dose of vaccine each week. We did have to do some 100% Covid testing due to a staff member and contractor testing positive but fortunately, they had little contact with others on the campus. As always, we thank the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center staff for their great support of vaccinations and testing and to the Defense Health Agency for their supply support. Also thank you to the Pentagon for their security patrols and now wastewater testing for COVID-19 to ensure we do not have any cases. April is not a month with many holidays except this year it included Easter, the holiest day of the year for Christians. We were blessed to have a beautiful day to celebrate this important day.

Even though there are not many holidays this month, that did not stop our recreation team from creating fun events. On Earth Day, a few residents and staff braved the cold, windy day to pick up trash throughout the campus. The campus looks much improved with their efforts! On Arbor Day, a cherry tree was planted in view of the dining room. One day, I saw a group on a bike ride throughout the campus, what a nice outing! And not to forget that we all like to eat, we celebrated National BLT Day with what else – bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches. We ended the month with a special dinner complete with shrimp, crab and beef tenderloin among other yummy foods. We had a similar meal during the dark days of the pandemic, this time we just wanted to celebrate spring. Our upper campus garden is beginning to show life, and thanks to the Old Soldiers Home Foundation, we have a beautiful pergola adjacent to our garden and some new gardening items.

We gained some new staff this month including a new social worker, Marc Minken and some much needed nursing assistants. We held our quarterly Employee Appreciation Breakfast, welcoming new staff and honoring some with longevity awards. Nominees for Employee of the Quarter included Adrienne Stephens, Elaine Fry, Mireille Jean-Baptiste, Lynn Holt, Shelia Jones and Kevin Green. All of these staff members represent the rest as everyone has worked very hard as a team during the pandemic. Elaine Fry, our Performance Integrator, was chosen as our Employee of the Quarter! Congratulations to all!

Don't forget to keep doing your precautions (social distancing, wear face coverings, wash your hands), we all want to continue to stay safe and healthy!

Susan Bryhan



Residents braved the cold to pick up trash throughout the Washington campus on Earth Day.



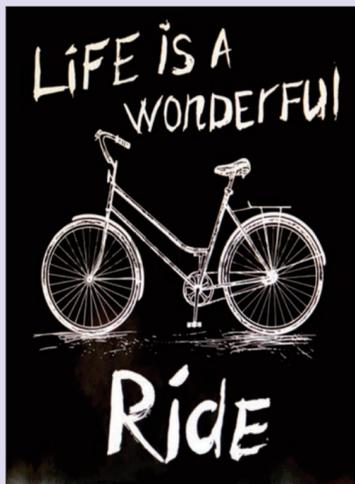
Administrator Susan Bryhan presents Performance Integrator Elaine Fry the Employee of the Quarter certificate.

AFRH-W recreation services offers a bicycle ride around campus

Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

It was a bright sunny day and seven staff and residents decided to go on a bike ride around the grounds. Charles Banchiere, Milton Grant, Neil Ferguson, Norma Rambo, Lillian Miller, and John Baker along with myself, Marla McGuinness.

Charles was like a kid on his bike, he rode it as if it was a new toy. It was a joy see everyone out and enjoying the ride. Milton Grant, Neil Ferguson, and Norma Rambo are avid bike riders. It had been awhile since any of us were on a bicycle so we decided no hills at this time.



Special thanks goes to Jim McCollum; he fixed all of the bikes over the winter in the auto hobby shop. He made sure that the bikes remained accurately greased, tires inflated to the appropriate weight, and everything is tighten up to standards.

Bike rides are offered twice a month with the recreation staff, but the residents are allowed to utilize the AFRH bikes at any time of the day. While on campus, one must wear a helmet, and a protective mesh jacket. Gear may be picked up in the recreation department office.



Notes from the AFRH-W resident advisory committee chairman



Spring is in the air and our Washington campus is so beautiful. From my window, I can see the Washington Monument and the parts of the surrounding area of the U.S. Capitol and other government buildings. The cherry blooms have come and gone and were outstanding as usual.

With some restrictions lifted, our residents spent time visiting family and friends, or just getting out for a day. That seemed to bring more smiles to each of us. Additionally, upper level of care residents may now have family visits in their room.

I invite all our residents, who are able, to get out and enjoy this campus. There is none like it in the area. Everyone should take some time from their schedule to see just how fantastic this place is. We have deer and foxes roaming the golf course; geese and ducks swimming in the fishing ponds, and birds and squirrels nesting in the trees with an occasional hawk in the mix. (If you would like a golf cart tour, please contact recreational services or me directly).

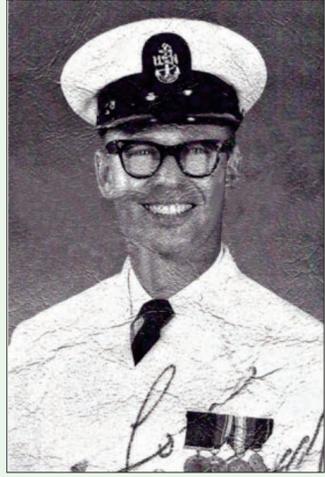
Thanks to hard work and much planning, our golf course is open for play. A special thank you to the agency staff, the AFRH-W staff, and concerned residents for all they did to make this possible.

Fred Layman



The military life of AFRH-G resident Samuel Herman Kirsch

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Samuel "Sam" Kirsch was born on June 27, 1929 to Peter and Melder Kirsch in Burbank, California. He was reared in Pueblo, Colorado where he attended Hinsdale Elementary School through the 8th grade and completed one year at Centennial High School. At age 15, he became a welder's assistant for a year and then a plumber's apprentice during the following year. On June 27, 1946, Sam's 17th birthday, he joined the U.S. Navy and completed his boot camp training in San Diego, California. Having the proper background experience, he was placed with the Seabees at the Naval Construction Battalion Center Port Hueneme, California, where he completed four weeks of carpentry schooling. During this time he noted that the young guys were filling slots that led to relieving older Seabees, who were being discharged after World War II. Sam's first overseas assignment was at Guam for six weeks before being stationed at Calicoan, Samar in the Philippines for six months with a primary duty of repairing and maintaining the water pipeline across the island. While concentrating on his tasks, he had to be cautious of the Philippine farmers who had incurred the habit of shooting holes in the pipe in order to irrigate their fields. Sam's next duty assignment was with the U.S. Naval Air Station at Sangley Point in the Philippines before being transferred back stateside in June 1949. He returned to Guam, and was posted with the 103rd Seabees Mobile Construction Battalion for a year. He returned stateside once more for three years during which he served in active reserve duty with the Navy Reserve Augmentation Unit. While in his hometown and in the reserves, Sam took additional schooling in plumbing and received his journeyman's plumbing license in 1952 and master's license in 1953. In 1954, Sam was recalled to active duty and was stationed in the Caribbean at Antigua. Achieving rank of E-6, he was transferred to Roosevelt Roads Naval Station at Ceiba, Puerto Rico, where he was in charge of refurbishing dependent housing units. Following this assignment Sam was sent to Blackbushe, England as the utilities supervisor at the U.S. Navy operations base. In 1956, he was transferred to Malta while performing as a utilities advisor at the USN FASRON station.

In 1959 Sam was promoted to chief (E-7) before returning to Port Hueneme, California where he taught the plumbing phase of the Seabee curriculum. In 1964 he was sent to Danang, Vietnam with Bravo Co., where he served as naval chief. In 1966 he was part of the group that opened the Seabee Base Training Unit in Gulfport, Mississippi. During this interim Sam was a mobile instructor, providing training at various Coast Guard stations throughout the Southern states.

In 1968, he returned to Vietnam to supervise the airstrip and runway construction for the U.S. Marines. In 1970 Sam was sent back to the states, based again at the Seabee Construction Battalion in Gulfport, Mississippi.

He retired from the military in April 1972 and went on to his second occupation as an instructor with the Jefferson Davis Junior College, which later became the current Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. He opened and conducted the first course in air conditioning. During this 20 year period Sam worked in multiple departments, one of them as director of the evening college.

While active with the VFW Post 2434 in Biloxi, Mississippi, Sam rode as Uncle Sam on several occasions and was proud of his stars and stripes outfit because he had taken time to sew it himself.

In 2015, it didn't take much for Sam to choose Gulfport, Mississippi as his permanent retirement at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.



Seeing things differently

By Jack Horsley | AFRH-G Resident

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



After receiving my second Covid vaccination I felt grateful and energized. Those two shot are "my ticket back to pre-pandemic life." I realized everything was about to change. We may have new challenges with this "new" normal. Even so, I will never take "normal" for granted again.

A glimpse of what I would do first as I'm able to leave the campus: In my vision I see restaurants, shopping centers, parks, trips, and many outdoor events. It was then I realized how self-indulgent I was being. I was only thinking about what I want and not what I need. How can a steak meal be worth more than a hug or a handshake? Could checking out merchandise at Walmart be greater than an unmasked smile? I realize now just how important human connection is.

I also think of the sacrifices by others far greater than mine such as sheer physical and emotional work of the nurses and doctors. Our medical warriors face challenges to the point of exhaustion and beyond. Schools shuttered, vulnerable children at risk for food insecurity, adults without jobs trying to stretch money to cover rent, food and all it takes to just survive. People who every day put their lives on the line to meet our needs until Covid-19 is conquered.

Lastly here at AFRH-G maybe luck played a small part in our well-being. In my mind it is the cooperation of everyone and the many sacrifices of all who work so hard to keep us from becoming one of those retirement or nursing homes with many infections and great loss of life.

I want to do more than just say "Thank You!" I will try to show my appreciation by acknowledging who you are and all you do with compassion and love. That feels about right!



Gulfport resident Jack Horsley (pictured above) enjoys the flowers he planted on his patio.

AFRH-Gulfport's own burial ground

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Upon examining old deeds for AFRH-Gulfport, its land originates with William H. Tegarden, who owned several spacious colonial styled hotels fronting the Gulf Coast during the mid-1800s. Our portion of interest was acquired by Colonel Thomas Hepworth Oswald, Jr. where he lived with his third wife and children, who inherited the land after his death in 1877. His colonelcy was likely honorary rather than from the military, as was the custom of land owners in those days.

After his death, the property was sold to Mrs. Ella Sterling Turner, who in turn, sold the property to the Gulf Coast Military Academy (GCMA) which opened in 1912. The Academy assumed the obligation to preserve the Oswald gravesite located on the premises and according to state law and county ordinances, kept the marker in place that was barely legible on a wooden board.

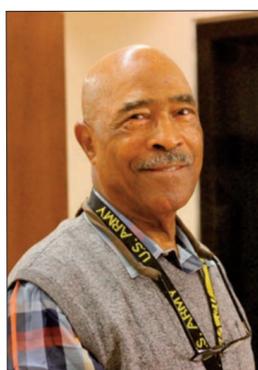
GCMA was legally compelled to protect the private cemetery as was contingent on its purchase. Recordation in Deed Book 10, pp 306-309 ascribed at the Harrison County Courthouse describes the Thomas Oswald lot as containing a protected burying ground that was 28 square feet.

After the closing of the military academy, the federal government purchased the land and the U.S. Air Force assumed the grounds of the defunct senior division of the GCMA in 1951. The obligation to preserve the Oswald family grave passed on to the new tenant. The U.S. Air Force, in a show of good faith, replaced the wooden board with a marble slab that reads "The Family Graveyard of Col. Thomas H. Oswald" and erected a 28-foot square wooden fence around it. Both the wooden fence and the stone marker were lost during Hurricane Camille in 1969.

According to Gulf Coast Archivist Charles Sullivan, "Thomas H. Oswald died in Mississippi City (now Gulfport) on January 13, 1877." A century later in 1976 the U.S. Naval Home opened on the property to a new 11-story building while inheriting the burial ground site from the Technical Training Air Force (TTAF) Headquarters Command and continued honoring the gravesite as a landmark on the property.

After Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in 2005 the old Naval Home had to be imploded and the building of the new three-tower Armed Forces Retirement Home in 2010 reopened. The grave site and the surviving wooden grave-marker remain protected. Ironically, Lee Harvey Oswald, who was accused of assassinating President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963, was the great-grandson of Col. Thomas H. Oswald.

Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



I recently returned from a three week vacation where I drove across country to Maryland. I didn't know what to expect as I crossed the five states between Mississippi and my destination. Because of the pandemic, each state had some required level of protection that individuals were expected to adhere to. I knew how we here at AFRH-Gulfport enforced wearing masks and social distancing and the benefit of limited exposure to COVID because of these requirements. On my journey, I carried and used sanitary swipes and gloves at gas stations and rest stops. On many occasions, people looked at me as if I were from Mars. Yes, I have been vaccinated but I also felt secure with the extra precautions I took. So, I say to you, if you are planning a trip know that the positivity rate varies greatly from place to place and your level of exposure will also. We have come to expect a high level of protection over the past year and now is not the time to relax. I hope you enjoy your vacation as much as I did mine. I also strongly suggest you continue to practice good prevention protocols.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



Mr. Jones attends the COO Town Hall meeting in the Community Center on April 27.

AFRH-Washington

Earth Day clean up

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

Recreation Specialist, Marla McGuinness joined AFRH-Washington residents Frank Parker, Hilary Rosado, and John Baker as they walked and cleaned the grounds as good stewards on this Earth Day. It was a chilly and blustery day in Washington, D.C., but that didn't stop them picking up items around the grounds after yesterday's severe winds. According to Marla, "We had fun doing it and did a lot of laughing."



Celebrating the Library

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

To culminate the weeklong National Library Celebration, a walk through event happened in the Scott Community Center. Starting with a display table of books written by or about residents, stations included "Making Your Own Bookmark" and "Writing Your Favorite Book on a Leaf" for a display tree. Other activities included solving four library puzzle sheets and listening to a Zoom talk from the Washington, D.C. Petworth Librarian, Darryl Wilson. A cup of refreshing sherbet was at the last table to pick up and enjoy. A drawing was held for a new Kindle reader won by Henry Kauffman. Thanks to all in the recreation department for their ideas and help at this very fun event!



BLT....yes please!

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

Did you know that every month has so many crazy holidays? One in April is National BLT (Bacon, Lettuce, & Tomato) Sandwich Month. Recreation Therapy could not let this national holiday go without being recognized and celebrated. On Thursday, April 22, the assisted living Recreation Therapy Supervisor Annemarie Wilson and Recreation Therapist Amanda Jensema cooked up 50+ slices of bacon, sliced tomatoes, washed and ripped lettuce, toasted bread and smeared each slice with mayonnaise to make the perfect BLT Sandwich. The residents were elated for this treat, many stating they had not had a BLT in a long time. A few residents were so happy that they decided to take a whole sandwich and save it for their supper. The residents vote for more snacks and we couldn't agree more!



AFRH-Gulfport

Easter Bunny finds the carrots!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services

Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant & Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On Wednesday, March 31, 2021, residents and staff throughout AFRH-Gulfport were all smiles with a visit from the Easter Bunny, a.k.a. Peter Cottontail. After traveling to visit and deliver treat bags full of goodies to the Valor, Loyalty, and Allegiance Hall healthcare residents, the Easter Bunny made a stop to see residents in line awaiting the opening of the dining hall. Once open, the dining hall staff quickly jumped like bunnies and joined in with some fun photographs caught by Becki Zschiedrich in public affairs. Following down the boardwalk, hopping through the front lobby security, and onto the recreation areas, the bunny's path eventually led to the jackpot – "Wow! IL resident Keith Van Doran's home-grown garden grown CARROTS!" I know Recreation Assistant Carol Davis was surprised to find the Easter Bunny peering through her office glass window! Fresh carrots were the great find on this hunt! Many said, "Oh, I know who that is in the costume" but some asked and got a quick peek of the Easter Bunny, a.k.a. Susan Bergman, Board-Certified Music Therapist (and yes, she was wearing a mask under the bunny costume head). Through administration, the Wellness Center, along with more stops, "Hoppy Memories" were truly made for all.

P.S. - Thanks again for the carrots!



A fun game since 1964.....What is Jeopardy!

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreation Specialist

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G residents participated in a fun rendition of one of America's favorite game shows. Jeopardy made its debut on NBC in 1964 and aired until 1975 hosted by Art Fleming before being revived a few short years later with Alex Trebek.

Recreation Services operated the game board while AFRH-G Administrator Jeff Eads acted as host. The event included all the familiar sights and sounds of the actual game. Questions and answers were taken from actual Jeopardy broadcasts and contestants were randomly selected from the audience to participate. The winners (Doris Hopper, Les Brownstein, and Susan Meckley) will come together again to compete in the "Tournament of Champions" on April 30. Pre-packaged snacks and refreshments were provided and all spectators and contestants were socially distanced.



Alcohol ink painting!

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

It's an adventure using a recently new art medium. Alcohol ink painting is fast, fun and very fluid. On six-inch square white tiles, a dash of rubbing alcohol and a drop of alcohol inks; and almost instantly! You have a colorful, bright splash of colorful art.

A class of adventuresome residents has been meeting on Tuesdays, to make these "ink tiles" and on Thursdays, to seal them with epoxy. WOW, this has been fun. I think this may be a whole new medium to explore. Come by the art room folks and check these new re-creations.

