



Communicator

Special COVID-19 Edition

Gulfport, MS & Washington, DC

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APRIL 30, 2020

From the Chief Executive Officer

Taking precautions to protect our residents and staff during COVID-19 outbreak



This has been a challenging time for our residents, staff, and families, despite the hardships we are facing. Please be assured that everything is being done to protect your health and well-being.

We are following and closely adhering to the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance and recommendations, and consult frequently with DoD experts on best practices.

AFRH began initiating plans to protect residents and staff in January. This included encouraging frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitizers prior to entering communal areas such as the dining hall and wellness center. By early March we established social distancing guidelines and mandated the use of hand sanitizer at all building entrances. Out of an abundance of caution, we also limited visitors and postponed new admissions.

Since March 30, all residents have remained on campus and are strictly limiting contact with others. Facial coverings are required for everyone, and staff in upper levels of care receive daily temperature checks and health screenings. This is especially important to protect our highest-risk residents.

To further protect your health, we suspended communal dining indefinitely. Meals are now carry-out only for residents in independent living, while residents in upper levels of care are having their meals delivered. I recognize this is a significant disruption to your lives, and I ask that you remain patient as we navigate our way back towards a gradual return of services.

Getting there will not be easy, but we are working towards it. Additional masks, hand sanitizers, and personal protective equipment are on order, along with ultra violet equipment for more extensive sanitizing purposes.

And our superb staff continues to work tirelessly on your behalf. Many residents have also jumped in to help others with meal deliveries, errands around campus, and morale checks.

Thank you for your dedication and perseverance – together, we will see this through!

Stephen T. Rippe



From the Chief Operating Officer

Looking ahead: An interview with AFRH Chief Operating Officer James M. Branham



For the last few months, AFRH residents and staff have made numerous sacrifices to protect everyone's health. We've not only engaged in social distancing and wearing masks in communal areas - our residents are also keeping to their rooms and dining in. Despite these and other precautions, AFRH leadership is working on plans to take the first steps towards reopening our community. We sat down with AFRH Chief Operating Officer James Branham for further updates.

Q. When do you see AFRH relaxing the current restrictions?

A. There are multiple decision criteria that need to be met before we begin to consider lifting restrictions. The White House COVID Task Force has issued a three-phase approach and we are engaged in planning for all. We're doing this to protect the health of our residents and staff, and to determine how to begin accepting new residents on our campuses. We also need to keep in mind that each campus may be recovering at a different rate, depending upon local circumstances.

Q. What are those decision criteria?

A. We're currently at the Department of Defense (DoD) Health Protection Condition (HPCON) Delta level, which is the most stringent. And we will stay at that level until DoD provides guidance to begin to lower the HPCON levels. For AFRH, that also means waiting for the governors of Maryland, Virginia, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia, and the governors of Mississippi and Louisiana to lift stay-at-home orders. We also want the availability of tests to increase to the point that we can test all residents and routinely test staff to early identify and isolate any asymptomatic carriers.

Q. What about regional trends in new cases and deaths?

A. We absolutely need to ensure the safety and health of everyone on our campuses, and will be following trends closely. That means seeing data showing continuous reductions in new cases nationally, and regionally we're tracking and watching for significant decreases in new cases as well as low number of cases per 100,000.

Q. What can we expect life to be like on campus once those benchmarks are met?

A. Once we implement Phase I – and we don't yet have a date for that – residents and staff will still have to wear face coverings in communal areas, maintain six to 10 feet of separation, wash hands multiple times daily and sanitize hands and shoe soles upon entering buildings. Pending DoD approval, we may be able to ease certain dining restrictions.

Q. When can we expect to see new residents moving in during Phase I?

A. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the level of COVID-19 activity where they now live and subject to testing negative for the virus upon arrival. And the only visitors we will allow at the Home during Phase I will be those who are accepted as residents and want to tour the facilities, and who meet the same standards above. We are also hopeful that during the warmer summer months, the number of new cases will decrease enough to give us a window to bring in some new residents, which we would do very cautiously, probably requiring pre-testing and initial self-quarantine.

Q. What about Phase II and Phase III? Do you know when they will be implemented?

A. Our entire focus will be on getting Phase I up and operating at some point in the future, and we still don't have a firm date for that yet. Phase II and Phase III will follow, in order, once Phase I is successfully implemented and that the data and trends show enough decrease in COVID cases to move forward.

Q. Until Phase I becomes operational, what should residents expect?

A. Residents should expect things to remain the same as they are. We understand that residents are becoming weary of the restrictions on their daily activities, but this is not the time to let up. Rather, we are still purchasing specialized UV equipment to help sanitize soles of individuals entering buildings, to sanitize mail and other deliveries, and to sanitize larger common areas. As we watch local communities ease some of their restrictions for public gatherings, we know that the trend in new cases could reverse upwards again; therefore, we will continue to watch the trends and data before easing our own restrictions on either campus. Residents should know how much we at the Agency level, and the terrific staff at each location, genuinely appreciate the sacrifices they are making during this extraordinary time in the world. Thank you for everything you are doing to keep safe and healthy!



AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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The AFRH Communicator is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by the *AFRH Communicator* staff for journalistic style and length. 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:

- who are 60 years of age or over; and were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions after 20 or more years of active service.
- who are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to have a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty in the Armed Forces.
- who served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be suffering from injuries, disease, or disability.
- who served in a women's component of the Armed Forces before June 12, 1948; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be eligible for admission because of compelling personal circumstances.

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

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From the Agency Medical Director

Protective measures are working!



It's important for our residents and staff – and their loved ones – to know that we are fighting very hard to keep our AFRH family safe.

Staff caring for our residents receive daily symptom and temperature checks, wash hands frequently and wear personal protective equipment. We've also limited the number of staff interacting with residents in order to reduce the risk of contracting the virus.

This is an especially high-risk time, and I understand there's a lot of fatigue because of this new way of doing things. We know our residents would like their lives to return to normal, but we still have a way to go.

AFRH will take a very measured approach towards lessening current restrictions.

We'll base our decisions on guidance from the Department of Defense and a reduction in the current Health Protection Condition (HPCON), together with a close look at illness trends in the jurisdictions closest to AFRH.

Public health indicators are critically important. These indicators, or statistics, tell us about the local activity and trends of the virus itself. AFRH will be maintaining an assertive and protective stance for the near future until it is safe to begin the next phase.

This will give us a clinical picture of what's happening locally where our two Homes are.

Our population is extremely vulnerable to this illness, so we can't necessarily just follow timelines set by local governments for relaxing restrictions. We must have a very guarded and measured response. My primary goal is to have the best clinical outcomes possible for our residents and staff.

And when the public health indicators show it, we'll be in position to very slowly and safely begin rolling back some of the protective measures now in place. We'll continue social distancing, wearing masks, and restricting visitors for a while. Our goal is to eventually resume normal operations based on maintaining positive outcomes for staff and residents.

Be patient - your life is worth it. This is a very dangerous virus, and all of our residents are in high risk categories for negative outcomes. A few more weeks of 'changed behavior' is worth it for everyone's life.

Dr. Etheldreda Collins



From the Agency Director of Safety and Security/Inspector General AFRH Security Division is working hard to keep you safe during the pandemic



In light of the unique and challenging circumstances facing our community and our nation as a whole, I want to take this opportunity to talk to you about how our security officers are working to safeguard our community while protecting themselves and you from the coronavirus. The Armed Forces Retirement Home's (AFRH) Security Division officers will continue to patrol our grounds and buildings; proactively address concerns and public safety issues; and, respond to calls for assistance from residents and staff. To prevent the spread of this virus and keep residents and officers safe, however, some new safety measures have been implemented.

- Security personnel at both campuses are posted at the front gates, making sure visitors meet the strict CDC criteria prior to entry. AFRH suspended visitation with few exceptions.
- When AFRH-W suspended regular shuttle service to local health care facilities, security personnel stepped in to ensure residents in need of medical appointments arrived and returned from their appointment safely. Security officers follow all new requirements, including wearing masks and practicing social distancing by staying at least six-feet from everyone.
- At AFRH-G, the medical team revised the shuttle services to include shuttling residents to all appointments as needed in order to reduce contact with the general public and to reduce the number of vehicles entering and exiting the campus.
- AFRH-G moved the temperature check and medical screening station from the main gate to the front circle drive, reversing the flow of traffic around the circle to put the driver - side to the front door of the building. This has been a great help in keeping the nursing staff out of the elements during inclement weather, and preventing traffic backing up at the main entrance.
- AFRH-W is also getting the job done at the front Security desk in the Scott Building, screening those who enter for symptoms and general health. The security staff are also collaborating with the Washington, DC Health Care Coalition on weekly teleconferences to discuss best practices.
- AFRH-G attends daily meetings with administrative staff to discuss challenges and the solutions to all.
- Both campuses continue to handle all emergency responses at each AFRH campus – responding to calls from residents and staff as needed.
- Both campuses have reduced rounds in all upper levels of care to absolute emergencies, security rounds are conducted telephonically with the on-duty nursing staff to assist in the prevention of contamination of our most vulnerable population.
- The Security Division has been trained on responding to a variety of potential emergencies and on donning and doffing of appropriate personal protective equipment.

During this unprecedented time, I want to assure all residents and staff that our officers are working very hard to protect our community and to keep our grounds safe. Now, more than ever before, the men and women of the Security Division are rising to the challenges presented during this pandemic and still meeting the needs of those they serve and protect. These small but important changes will help keep everyone - officers, residents and staff - safe while allowing us to continue in our safety and security mission.

Thank you, and please be safe and stay informed about the latest recommendations from our federal, state and local governments and health agencies on how to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 and what to do if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Patrick Cavanagh

The new normal?

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

It's hard to imagine being quarantined and advised to stay home to be considered the "new normal" when actually it's very abnormal. On the coast the only time the casinos have ever been closed was during and after Hurricane Katrina. Now, everything is closed with the exception of grocery stores, pharmacies, hospitals and some medical offices. Restaurants are offering take-out only. Even though the veterans at AFRH aren't thrilled with this new normal, the proactive decisions that our leadership team put into action are really working. We have to believe though, during these sad and trying times, that better days are ahead of us.

With the arrival of spring, the Gulf Coast is usually vibrant and busy. It's very unusual to drive to work down Highway 90 in the morning and pretty much be the only vehicle on the road. It's been absolutely beautiful in south Mississippi and looking through the glass, it's implausible to believe that a worldwide pandemic is happening.

At AFRH we are taking all precautions necessary to fight this for the safety of our veterans and our employees. We encourage our residents to take advantage of our walking trail and bicycles or just go sit outside on the swings overlooking the Mississippi Sound. Just realize things will get better, eventually. During these trying times please have patience with each other and be kind to one another. Please don't forget your masks when you leave your apartment or office and keep practicing social distancing (at least six-feet away) from each other.

To our residents: we love you and are very concerned for your well-being. Before long we will all be together again eating in the dining hall, having recreational activities, trips planned and life will become "normal" again. Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness.



Gulfport residents step up to help our nurses

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Several Gulfport lady residents have created over 100 fabric face coverings in our sewing room for our nurses and staff during this coronavirus epidemic. It is what many Americans are doing throughout our country, making an effort to be part of the solution, helping us get through this storm.

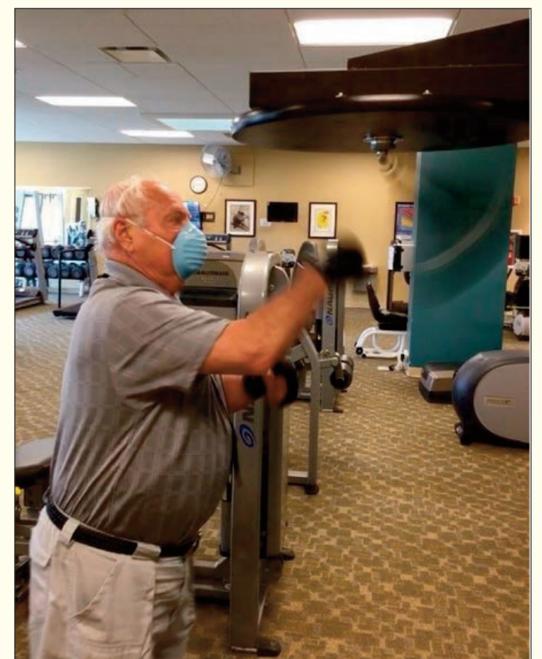
Roberta Chappell, Katrina Bradley and Sally Havens are few of the thousands in our country that have been busy these past few weeks making something that our front-line medical personnel can use. They are busy cutting, folding and sewing fabric face coverings. These coverings, when placed over the N95 mask, can help preserve and extend their usage. "Our nurses need all the help we can give them, especially at this time," said resident Roberta Chappell. Also volunteering in the sewing room are residents Sharon Price, Doris Hopper, Linda Siebert, Margie Scott, Diana Dopp, Doris Denton, Claire Smith, Jeanette Porter, Saundra Whitaker and Nancy Dickson. Susie Baumunk with Ability Works donated a lot of fabric, especially the flannel cloth. Be it a veteran or civilian, we should all be grateful for the efforts of the men and women who have stepped up to fight this national and worldwide pandemic. Personally, to those who are our neighbors, that have done the right things by being part of the solution, thank you. May the Lord bring us safely through this critical and challenging time.



Staying active

Story & Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

These are stressful times for us all. It is very easy to let fear and anxiety overwhelm us. In order to stay positive, it is extremely important to focus on our physical and mental health. For your convenience, an exercise video has been uploaded to channel 4 on SRTV. It will play every day at 0900. Also, the fitness center is OPEN! Many are taking advantage of this opportunity to get in the gym for a good workout. I know we are in a shelter-in-place status, but that does not mean we can't go outside at all. Turn off the news and ride a bike or walk the track. If you don't want to be in contact with other people, sit on your balcony and read a book, solve a word-search puzzle, or just get some sunshine. Stay in touch with loved ones through calls or email. Try to keep a positive attitude during these challenging times. Stay active, wear your mask, and wash your hands!! We can do this!



From the AFRH-W Administrator



We are now into our third month dealing with the COVID-19 virus. The news continues to flood us with information and updates about the coronavirus or COVID-19 that has brought the world to a stop. Restaurants remain closed or are offering take-out, many stores, gyms, movie theaters and other places we frequent are closed. Going to the grocery store has its challenges, first to socially distance in lines to gain access due to the limited number of people allowed in, to the shelves that are empty of toilet paper, canned goods, pasta and flour. Our citizens have gotten back to our old ways of cooking at home and spending time with their family.

Companies are innovating and coming up with ways to manufacture ventilators and hand sanitizer so desperately needed. So to me, there is some goodness to this situation. Our team of residents and staff have worked very hard to protect everyone, but also try to keep life as much as normal as we can here on the Washington campus.

Even though we have no outside volunteers on campus, there is still a lot going on with individuals and groups to assist us through this time. We have received hand-sewn masks from multiple individuals and groups from as far as Connecticut and Tennessee as well as locals. The fabrics used add a bit of cheer to our days with the colors and patterns of fabric. We were also blessed to receive a delivery of face shields from a group of engineer volunteers in Southern Maryland that are using their talents to help veterans. They are using 3D printers to fabricate some of the parts and doing the work on their own time and expense. And our longtime partner, Costco, has donated much needed supplies so that we can continue to clean our spaces and monitor the health of our staff.

Our recreation staff started out the month making masks so that everyone had a face covering to allow them to move about the Home. Once they had supplied most with a mask or two, they got back to what they enjoy most – activities for our veterans. They have had a walking around pina colada party, virtual bingo games, Popcorn Monday and many one-on-one activities to help our residents stay energized.

We have also been able to add a few staff during this time, which has helped to keep up the energy of our healthcare workers who are working diligently on the units where many of us do not see them. They have done a wonderful job taking care of our residents and keeping them engaged when so many activities they are used to having had to be curtailed. We have also added a new member to the chaplain's office – Father Elias O'Brien. Please stop by to welcome him!

While there is illness and sadness throughout the world due to this pandemic, we are all learning again what is important to us. Family, friends and staying in touch however we can. Watching neighbors helping neighbors and finding our creativity again. America is strong and will come out of this even stronger. May God bless us all!

Susan Bryhan



Joy on assisted living despite social distancing

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

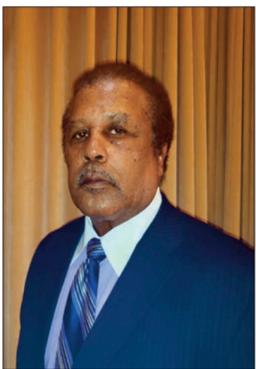
Photo by Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected how we provide therapeutic activities and programs to our residents. While we can't get together in groups, we are able to provide visits with our veterans. We have had to get really creative on how and what we can do to continue to provide our veterans with joy, and enhance their quality of life during this crazy time in our lives. On assisted living, a beverage cart comes around to each room three times a week, offering residents water that has been flavor-infused with fruits and vegetables. The favorite so far was the strawberry, lemon, and mint combination. This is our way of helping decrease dehydration in our residents and help them remain hydrated and healthy. If you have to drink water, why not make it flavorful and refreshing!

Every Friday a special treat is offered. So far there has been an ice cream sundae cart. One resident, Ms. Jirak, was so excited because it was her birthday so she especially enjoyed her treat while "Happy Birthday" was sung to her. The next week was strawberry daiquiri's and pina coladas on the roving luau cart. Staff went around in hula skirts dancing to the music. A few residents, and even staff, danced along, at a social distancing accepted spacing. A roving happy hour with beer and wine was served the next week with fun peppy music in tow. The last Friday of April was fruit smoothies. In addition, an activity cart comes around with multiple items for residents to choose materials for their own leisure, such as cards, word searches, painting supplies, crafts, books, and more. A regular one to one visit allows for socialization and companionship. So we are not the only ones they see, we have the technology to connect via video chats with their loved ones when able. The residents on assisted living have greatly appreciated what is brought around, and even though we can't see their smiles behind the masks, nor they see ours, we know they are grinning from ear to ear. These are rough times for our residents and we are doing everything we can to keep their spirits high.



Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



March 17 was the last day the residents had a social here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Catharine Deitch was the first one there as always and ready to go. Our St. Patrick Day Social was a smash. Two days later, Mimi Rivkin took a trip down to the golf course to play a round of golf and everything look so great. Then our world started to change.

First we had to tell our buddies that we could not eat together anymore. And if we wanted to party, just think about the last party you had. We are so blessed to have leaders at AFRH who care so much for the residents. The residents and the employees became like a family by working together to make sure everything goes well.

The COVID-19 is something we could never even imagine; it has changed the way we think and the way we live. I feel so deeply that God is trying to get our attention around the world. Chaplain Goodloe asked the question on Resurrection Sunday, "What will it take for some of us?" As of this past Easter Sunday, we have lost more than 22,000 family members, friends and neighbors in the United States of America. All over the world we have lost over 112,000, so that tells me he's talking to everyone in the world. Question is: are we listening?

As bad as things may look, I sincerely think some good will come out of all of this. I think the world we live in will be a better place because the people that are left behind will realize they could have been in that number. Mankind really doesn't know when it will be over or if it will come back in our life time. The last pandemic such as this came in 1918 and history shows over 30 million peoples lost their lives. My mother and father were only three years old; they were born in 1915. I pray that good will come out of this for all of us and God will keep all the residents, employees and our families safe. The coronavirus is not fake news as some say, nor is this the Steve Harvey morning show with "Nephew Tommy" making some prank phone calls, nor is this the soap opera "All My Children." I believe it's our Father who is saying "it's time for Me to show up and show All My Children who is really in charge of all the World."

Thanks to all the residents who volunteer to help make our Home the best in the world.

Billy Ray White



From the AFRH-G Administrator



I want to begin by saying thank you to everyone for your cooperation and teamwork to keep both Homes COVID-19 free. It is not luck that has kept us out of harm's way. It is the caring concern we have for each other to make these past few months successful. I have not enjoyed us resorting to cocooning the campuses, wearing face-covers, and maintaining safe social distancing. But, the precautions have proven to be successful so I will be the first to say if we have to do it all over again, I will be the first one in line.

I would like to give a shout-out to a few remarkable ladies, also known as residents at AFRH-G, for the dozens and dozens of face-covers they created for staff and residents. The ladies stepped up and provided face-covers when they saw the need. And then jumped back into action and made more face covers as the pandemic worsened. The ladies responsible for the face covers are Katie Bradley, Linda Siebert, Sally Havens, Margie Scott, Sharon Price, Roberta Chappell, Diana Dopp, Claire Dimler-Smith, Doris Denton, Jeanette Porter, Sandra Whitaker, Nancy Dickson and Doris Hopper. I also want to give Susie from Ability Works recognition for supplying a lot of the material.

We are always thankful for all the support we get from the community. In addition to residents in our sewing room making cloth masks for residents and staff, we recently received a huge donation from the community. The First Baptist Church of Jackson, Mississippi, donated over

700 "made with love" cloth face masks which help provide protection to residents and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Words are not enough, but a picture is worth a thousand words: THANK YOU!

If nothing else this time in our lives should remind us of what is really important and that is the relationships we have with our families and friends. My hope is we all have a better appreciation for the people we spend the most time with each week, our co-workers.

God bless you and God bless America!

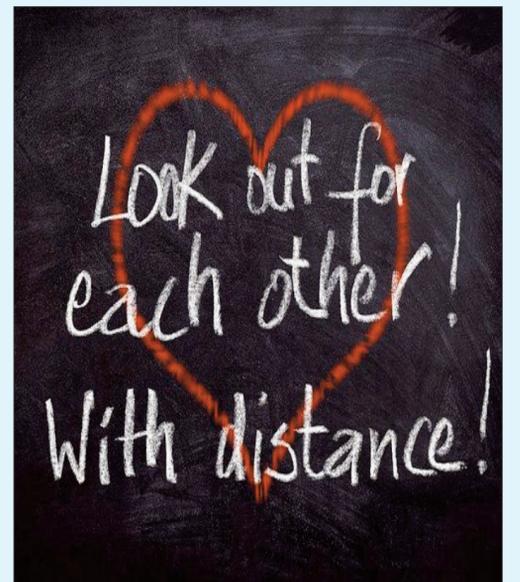
Jeff Eads



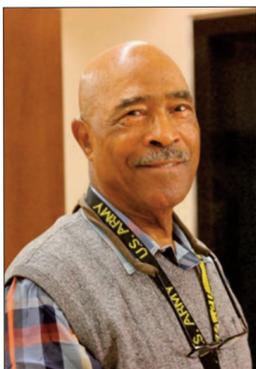
Individual social distancing leisure with safety as our guiding light!

Story & Photos by Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services

Due to COVID-19, AFRH-G Recreation Therapy has implemented individualized social distancing leisure to meet the needs of our healthcare residents. From painting to pottery, from patio gardening to puzzling, from humor to hootenanny music, and from treats to trivia, residents have risen to meet the challenges of being hunkered down in their rooms and to having to stay in their assigned areas. It is amazing to see all of the leisure activity taking place at any given time on an individual basis. While one Loyalty resident watched "Easter Parade" on their own, another Valor resident read the paper and listened to audio of Johnny Cash reading Bible verses from the New Testament. An Allegiance resident worked a crossword puzzle after writing a card to his wife while another one set up a creative area in his room to work another jigsaw puzzle. At 0900 each morning, several residents throughout the building exercised along with the senior television Channel 4 daily chair exercise video. On Thursday, April 9, 2020, Valor residents wore their masks and social distanced with one person at a table to play bingo. After Recreation cleaned the dollar bills before starting, one resident said, "Glad to see you laundered the money first." On Tuesday, April 14, residents completed their "Thank You for Staying in Your Room Jeopardy Trivia," reported laughter with an added joke at the end, and said, "That was great...I really worked my brain...we need that kind of exercise, too." Residents continued to express their appreciation to AFRH for the creativity, care, and continued safety given to them during this challenging time. Remember to keep on the sunny side, reach out to ask for resources (of course at six-feet apart), and keep up the great leisure work everyone!! Please know that we will weather this storm together and get through this with safety as our guiding light.



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



April, what can I say? As I write these monthly articles, I have formatted them in such a way as to highlight the various celebrations throughout the month, to recognize individual achievement, official updates concerning the Home's status and some homespun advice on how to enjoy life at AFRH. This month has been very challenging because of the interruptions cause by COVID19. April became a month filled with a series of health-protecting changes as we "hunkered down" against this coronavirus.

So where are we? AFRH put precautionary measures in place to limit access to and from our campus, allowing for medical emergencies, mail service, trash service and mission-essential persons only. We are washing and sanitizing hands frequently, wearing face masks and practicing social distancing. We pick up our food from the dining room and eat in our rooms. We entertain ourselves with phone calls to family and friends, work on puzzles, read books, paint pictures, make clothing, exercise and some other things I failed to mention. The point is "life goes on." I'm sure we all look forward to the day when all this is behind us. There will be trip planning, family visits, social gatherings and a resumption of things we liked and enjoyed. My major concern through all of this is you. Think positive thoughts, be at peace with your inner-self and know that this too will pass.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



Who are those masked people?

Story & Photos by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Recreation Supervisor

Well due to COVID-19 pandemic concerns, we have had to cancel all our activity programming, eating in the dining room and having family and community groups visit, but something special has happened to AFRH-W. Both residents and staff decided to fight back against that coronavirus by adhering to "social distancing" when standing in line for meals or socializing with friends, washing our hands often throughout the day, and wearing face coverings.

In order to save as much personal protective equipment for our medical staff, the recreation staff and residents decided to use all the fabric in our sewing shop to make homemade face coverings. We made enough for all our residents and staff with many coverings unique-looking because of the design on the fabric. In addition to that, residents have been volunteering to help us deliver the morning papers and FedEx and UPS packages.

They are also assisting other residents who need help taking their meal trays back to their rooms and twice a week helping us disinfect the ground level TV lounge, including chairs and hand rails, the canteen area, the Defender's Inn area, the puzzle and game rooms, the Wellness Center and our Sheridan 7th floor exercise room. Our residents have said they want to help keep our Home a safe place to live and work. The staff appreciates all their efforts to accomplish these tasks.

To encourage and motivate us each day, let us remember these old sayings: "Many hands make light work." "All for one and one for all." "A friend in need is a friend in deed." "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." "The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself." "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today," and "Remember the Alamo." (I think I'm breathing in too much CO2 with my mask on!) Anyway, a big shout-out to all who are meeting this challenge with bravery and hope.



Getting ready for gardening season

Story & Photos by Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation

In anticipation of gardening season, and with the need to see new things growing, whether we get outside or not, we have brought a bit of gardening inside here at AFRH -W during the pandemic. Not all are getting outside to see what spring holds, so we are bringing spring to them. We re-planted a neglected standing planter and brought it down where so many residents pass each day.

At the end of the tunnel between the Scott and Sheridan buildings now stands our little flower patch. Currently only a lone daffodil blooms, but the nasturtiums have sprouted, with their promise of vines climbing the trellises on the side of the planter, with cheerful orange blossoms to follow. Our miniature rose bush, which had been in full bloom for St. Valentine's Day, will take its time and flower again. But the geraniums, both propagated from other geraniums growing here, grew large over the winter in a sunny window in the recreation office, should not make us wait as long to see blooms.

On a more practical note, the aero garden has been filled with herbs for the raised beds purchased for us by the Children of the American Revolution. The plants, started in the hydroponic system, come up quickly and will be ready to re-plant in a few weeks. The herbs will be used to flavor the water in the hydration carts, and in cooking groups held on the health care units. The standing gardens will grace the second and third floor terraces on Scott, and one will reside in the courtyard outside of the Scott lobby.

A kiss of the sun for pardon
The song of the birds for mirth
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth
Dorothy Francis Gurney



From a distance Easter Bunny visits!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On Tuesday, April 7, 2020, residents on Allegiance Hall were surprised to hear the tap, tap, tap on their patio doors and windows. One resident said, "Wow...I saw the Easter Bunny go by out on the roof patio." Another resident had his patio door open for the breeze, smiled catching a glimpse of the Easter Bunny from a distance, and "would have been outside sunbathing if it hadn't been so cloudy." Jack Hicks chuckled as he opened his patio door, waved, and said, "This is so great...you all are the best." With safety, social distancing, and protective measures in place, the Easter Bunny wore a cloth face covering inside the Bunny costume head and utilized hand sanitizer with protective gloves between each room when delivering Easter treat bags to each individual resident. Recently turning "103" years young, Ms. Ritchie hopped right up and shared humorous remarks that were priceless. What "Hoppy Memories" were made as we continue to brighten the lives of our most treasured veterans.



Where's the toilet paper??

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant
Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



We've all seen it lately. COVID-19 has caused panic buying and left store shelves empty. But toilet paper?? Why are people hoarding the prized toilet paper? Thankfully, our dear June in the NEX came through for us and got a big shipment in the exchange for the residents at AFRH-G. I've never seen that many people so happy to be buying toilet paper!! But, then again, TP is one of those things that you don't realize its worth until it's gone.

Through all of this COVID-19 mess, change will be inevitable. Let's embrace it and weather this storm together. Stay safe, keep a distance of six-feet and WASH YOUR HANDS!!



Cabin Fever? Here are some free resources that can make time fly!

By Lori Kerns | Librarian

This quarantine has given us all some extra time on our hands. So to help make our "new normal" seem more interesting, many companies/organizations/artists are providing free online resources to help pass the time from the comfort of your own couch. The links to these different resources will be provided throughout this article. You'll need a computer, tablet, or phone with internet access so that you can type in the link in your web browser.

Travel + Leisure has compiled a list of virtual train rides from around the world for you to experience, which includes the South Western Railway in England and the Nordland Line in Norway. For these rides, type the following in your browser: <https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/bus-train/virtual-train-rides> Another great article from Travel + Leisure provides a list of famous museums that can be "toured." The link for that article is: <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

Never got around to learning Spanish or Dutch like you always wanted? Duolingo offers free lessons to dozens of languages. Duolingo's website can be found at: <https://www.duolingo.com> Just like us, music artists are also quarantining in their homes and some have decided to share their talents with virtual concerts. Glamour magazine has put together a list of artists offering some free online concerts. Here's the link to their article: <https://www.glamour.com/story/coronavirus-all-the-artists-offering-free-online-concerts-while-youre-stuck-at-home>

Ever been too scared to ride that scary roller coaster at an amusement park or just want to relive some of the ones you were daring enough to ride? If you go to youtube.com and type in "POV" along with the amusement park's name or name of a ride, you can catch a ride in the front seat on hundreds of the world's most popular thrill rides (or even the more tame rides). For example, to "ride" the Disneyland classic Matterhorn, go to youtube.com and type in the search box "POV Matterhorn." Beware, this can send you down a rabbit hole of rides you never knew existed leading to hours of fun!

In addition to some of these great resources, don't forget you have also access to so many others like e-books at <https://www.gutenberg.org> and genealogy through [familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org). If all else fails, use google.com, which is an amazing search engine that can help you find more of these free resources. Then you can start your own virtual adventure!

