



Armed Forces Retirement Home

# Communicator

Gulfport, MS & Washington, DC

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 5

MAY 31, 2020

## AFRH-GULFPORT

### Painting of the live oak at AFRH-G - No greater love

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Photos by Milton Williams & Becki L. Zschiedrich

During the Covid-19 "stay at home for safety," it was the perfect opportunity for an "Art Adventure". On April 14, we set up a large canvas in a room adjacent to the dining room. Each resident got to see a painting of a special live oak tree take shape as they exited the dining room.

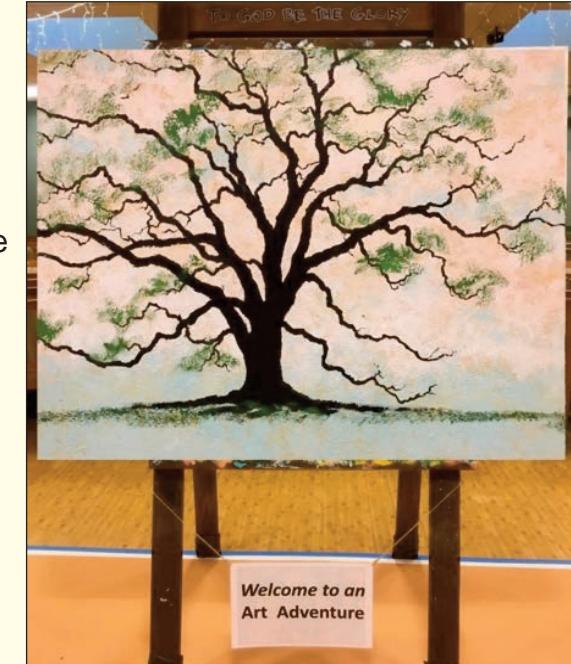
Perhaps it was the location of the live oak; the grounds of the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, that inspired the artist. Maybe it is the historical and enduring value, its age is between 400 to 500 years old. It could be the strength and character of the roots, trunk and branches with the graceful canopy of evergreen leaves and the cool welcoming shadows they cast that caught the artist's eye. YES, all the above and more.

The title, the tree, the location and the people who have made AFRH-G their Home, all these have brought to mind, what the artist attempted to portray in a symbolic painting, the men and women of our armed services. The title of the painting is "No Greater Love," which comes from a Bible verse in the Gospel of John 15:13.

Like this mighty oak tree, our veterans stood their ground, through the easy days and the stormy ones. They endured what most of us will never have to go through, thanks to them. They were strengthened by their resolve to serve, protect, and rescue their fellow Americans and not depart from their mission. Amazing!

We should all be grateful for their willingness to step in our place and offer, if need be, even their life for us. From the pages of the Bible, Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this that one should lay down his life for his friends."

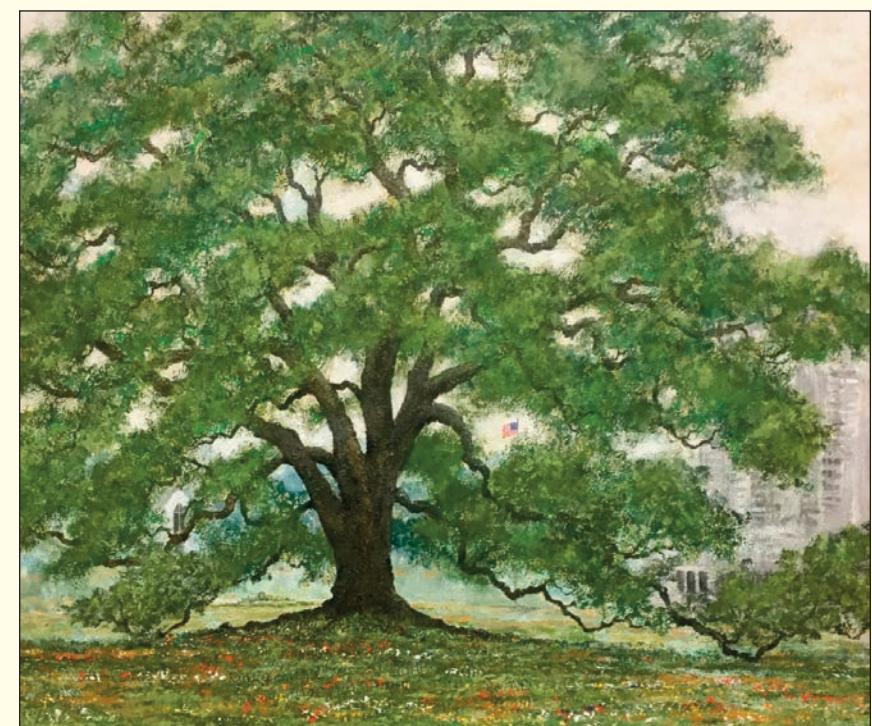
I will always be thankful to the Lord and our veterans. May this painting help us see the similarities of strength, courage and of sacrificial love. Thank y'all for allowing me to be your art specialist and remember, *Art is an Adventure*.



Photograph of the live oak tree at AFRH-G.



Art Specialist Milton Williams making progress.



The finished painted masterpiece.

## AFRH-WASHINGTON

### Wood sculptures around AFRH-W

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian

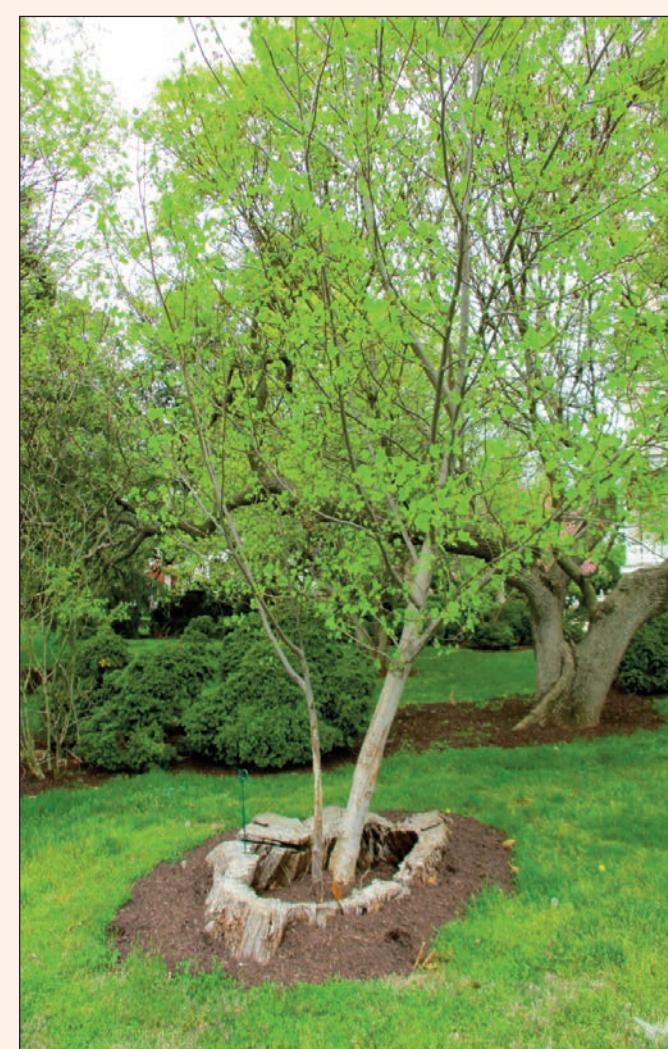
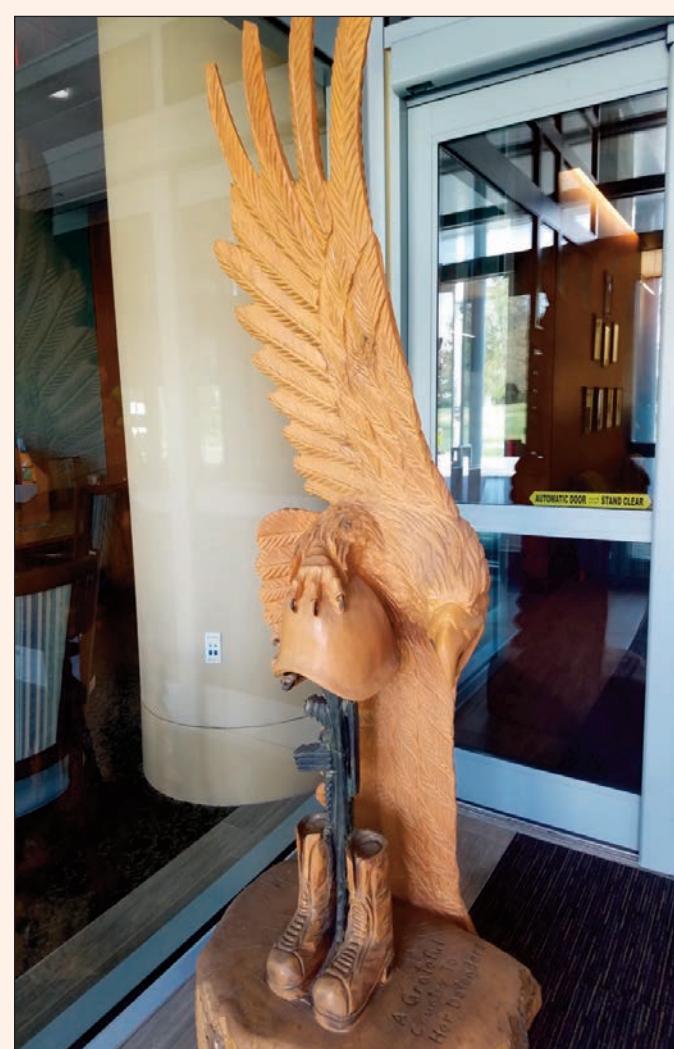
Photos by George Wellman | Resident

As you enter the Scott Building from the front, have you noticed a large wooden eagle, with a GI helmet, an M16 rifle and a pair of combat boots? How about the wooden bench with twin eagles just outside the door? There is a third large sculpture in the Sherman building of an eagle draped with the U.S. flag. These artistic endeavors happened in May 2010, when three professional woodworkers came to make sculptures from a large Tulip Poplar tree that was going to be cut down. Unfortunately, the tree was rotted, so three Sycamore trees were cut down from another part of the campus. The artists also created three "fun" sculptures; a fish jumping out of our pond, a bear with a bowling ball at our alley and a baby bear with golf clubs at our course. The men came from California, Indiana and Illinois and donated their time and talents, while residents were allowed to watch them create! (By the way, a new Tulip Poplar tree was planted in the stump of the old one and is growing very well.)



THEIR SACRIFICE,  
OUR GRATITUDE.

MEMORIAL DAY  
WE REMEMBER.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Page 2**  
**Resident**  
**Highlight**  
**Elizabeth Lloyd**

**Page 4**  
**Year of the Nurse**

**Page 8**  
**Thinking Inside**  
**the Box**



## 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)



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:

-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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**APPLY TODAY! IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY AT BOTH GULFPORT & D.C.**

### AFRH-W resident highlight – Elizabeth Lloyd

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Elizabeth Lloyd was born in Johnstown and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Two of her brothers joined the military in World War II and she wanted to enlist even though she wasn't old enough. But first, Elizabeth married her fiancé in 1942 at the age of 18, before he went to serve in the Far East. After their honeymoon spent at his grandmother's house, Elizabeth went to join the WAC in September 1944. (It wouldn't be until three years and three months later that she saw her husband again). You had to be at least five-feet tall and weigh 100 pounds or more; neither of which Elizabeth could do! She had

even tried a weight-gain plan that the recruiter told her about of eating lots of bananas. In the end, she was still four pounds underweight. When she went into the recruiting office and stood on the scales, however, the recruiter said with a twinkle in his eye "five-feet; 100 pounds."

After basic training at Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia, her superiors chose Elizabeth to go to leadership cadre school. At the tender age of 20, she served as basic platoon sergeant

teaching women up to 50 years old or older how to do things correctly, including cleaning grout on a wood floor with a toothbrush! She also worked in finance and did payroll, and as Elizabeth says "No computers, just an adding machine, fingers and a brain!" Elizabeth received her discharge papers in December 1945 and reenlisted in 1946. Assigned to the Army Air Corps and sent to Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1948, she helped train the first regular Army company of women. It was also here that she got her nickname 'Little Bit' through a chance encounter at the PX when someone said, "Oh, you are just a little bit of a thing."

Later, Elizabeth became the only woman on an IG inspection team. She inspected NCO clubs, officers' clubs and personnel records branches. Next Elizabeth went to Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania to attend the troop information and education program. She set up the program to teach basic trainees customs and courtesies of foreign countries. To hold the students attention, she would start the classes by reading the Dick Tracy comics! After almost twenty-six years in service and the beginning of the all-volunteer Army, Elizabeth retired at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.

Elizabeth decided to come to AFRH-W in September 2013, after living with her sister-in-law for several years. She wanted to keep her independence as long as possible and be around military people. Recently, she had her first techno-experience, when she participated in a Zoom teleconference with family members. They sang songs and talked about the past and Elizabeth is looking forward to their next meeting.

### A Nurse's Story: From CNA to Doctoral Prepared Nurse

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs



May marks a special month for nurses. The Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington celebrated a solemn and yet very significant Nurses Week this year. Our Director of Nursing, Dr. Patricia Howard, put a lot of her heart into making it a special occasion for our nursing staff. As you can tell in our interview, Dr. Howard loves her profession.

#### Q. Could you tell me a little bit about your background (education/work experience)?

A. I began working at Backus Hospital in Connecticut as a candy striper at the age of thirteen. This is the hospital where I was born. I thoroughly enjoyed helping others. I worked at a group home for developmentally delayed geriatric residents, and as a Certified Nursing Assistant during nursing school. I completed my associate's degree in Nursing and went on to obtain my doctoral degree in Advanced Public Health Nursing in Healthcare Systems Leadership from Rush University. I have experience in long term and acute care, maternal care, medical-surgical care, post-anesthesia care, and nurse management. I also served in the United States Air Force Nurse Corps.

#### Q. Why did you choose to become a nurse?

A. The desire to become a nurse began as a child. My father was ill with cancer and I often heard how well the nurses cared for him. My neighbor and mom always commented that I would make a good little nurse. I truly enjoy caring for others.

#### Q. What motivated you to pursue the position of Director of Nursing at the Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington?

A. I was motivated to pursue the director of nursing position because I knew I could do what I enjoy. I never had the opportunity to meet my grandparents so I have always enjoyed talking with elderly people. I love our country and what better way to serve than to care for our nation's heroes. These brave men and women supported and defended our nation so that we can enjoy the freedom we have today. It is important to me to be an advocate for them.

#### Q. During your career in the nursing field, what have you noticed to be the biggest challenge as a nurse?

A. The biggest challenge I noticed in the nursing field is that nurses' voices are often disregarded. Nurses are smart and very innovative. I believe if nurses were brought to the table more when major healthcare policies and laws are developed we could move forward in healthcare much faster. Nurses find a way to make it happen.

#### Q. What has been the greatest joy?

A. My joy has been being a part of the circle of life and caring for people during their time of need. I have coached mothers to deliver babies, and I have held the hands of countless people as they breathed their last breath. I also enjoy working with the physicians to develop the best plan of care for the patient.

#### Q. Could you explain the Nursing Pledge and what that means to you?

A. The Nursing Pledge is a true commitment to the nursing profession. We pledge to a life of goodness and to practice prudently. That translates into the care we render daily by providing the best care and advocating for quality care. We are committed to caring for our patients and families. Nurses are the heart of healthcare as we coordinate and collaborate with the physicians to develop the best plan of care for the patient.

#### Q. What would you like to tell our nursing staff during this year's Nurses Week?

A. Nurses Week 2020 is the Year of the Nurse: Lead, Innovate, Excel. I challenge the nurses to lead a new initiative. To find an innovative way to take a challenging issue and find a resolution. And excel in all that you do this year and ever more because you have the heart, strength and tenacity of a nurse and we get it done!

### Coming onboard as DC's new volunteer coordinator

By Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator



Hello to everyone, long time no see! I hope that you are well and we can look forward to easier times together in the coming months. In the interest of staying current: the Washington, DC residents already know me well in my former capacity as a recreation therapy assistant, and I'm excited to share that I've taken over the volunteer coordinator position at the DC campus. As a part of the recreation therapy team, I witnessed firsthand the tremendous impact that community and military volunteers have on morale among all of us and on the operation of this facility. I'm shrilly thrilled to continue to serve the veterans at AFRH in a new capacity, and have a whale of a time serving up A+ puns in this newsletter.

High tide or low tide, we are all in this together. Keep the spirit and let minnow if you need anything! (And yes, all the ocean puns were on porpoise.)

## "Super Hero" Tyler Stallings delivers Hero Bags to AFRH-Washington!

*Story & Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer*



Eight-year-old Tyler Stallings is AFRH-Washington's "Super Hero." On May 12 Tyler delivered over 70 "Hero Bags" – containing masks, hand sanitizers and other goods – as a way to give back to veterans. "The reason why I call them Hero Bags is because they are heroes, they've helped us," he said. Tyler and his parents arrived at AFRH with Mr. Scott Mallory from "Truckers for Troops" in tow – Mallory's patriot-themed oversize vehicle contained the Hero Bags.

When Tyler wasn't climbing into the vehicle to retrieve his donations, he was greeting AFRH leadership – including CEO (Major General, USA, retired) Stephen Rippe, COO James Branham, and Washington, D.C. Administrator Susan Bryhan.

"Tyler is a fabulous young man who has done a remarkable thing," MG Rippe said. "It means a lot to the veterans who live here at AFRH that he would organize and deliver these Hero Bags. We're very grateful."

Tyler and his mother, Andrea Blackstone, are cousins of AFRH-Washington's Chief of Rehabilitation Services Lynn Holt. Tyler has volunteered at AFRH-Washington since he was four-years-old. Thank you, Tyler!



## Cleaning task force

*Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist*



AFRH-W has its own cleaning task force. Many of the residents have stepped up to take an hour or so to clean in areas that are widely used. We have a team of five residents who work on Tuesday and Friday, (Dan Webber, Harvey Crowe, Bill Bowen, Milton Grant, and Marion Marques). This crew is armed with cleaning supplies to disinfect all surfaces. Jack Beck makes sure all doorknobs and electronic door buttons are disinfected. Richard Heinrich took the time to clean off the airplane sitting outside the residents' home. He also cleaned the outside windows so others could look out more clearly.



## Fantastic fabric face coverings

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

Independent Living (IL) residents, Roberta Chappell and Sharon Price created new face coverings for Loyalty Hall residents. They utilized fabric designs that would be appealing, softer textures on the inside, and some even reversible to offer additional options to match their clothing or mood. Residents were shown a variety of masks and brightened when picking the perfect one that stood out for them. Pictured are just a few of the featured masks. Thank you to our wonderful IL sewing ladies for the fantastic fabric face coverings!



## The mask makers

*By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator*

Over the course of past several weeks I've had the privilege of working with two local couples who collectively made and donated 200 masks to AFRH-G. Both of these couples wanted to donate to our residents to ensure their continued health and safety. I would like to say a big thank you to Trent and Holly (last name initially omitted) and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Titus who noted they donated to AFRH-G in honor of their family members who served in WWII.

## "Takee Outeee" service now at AFRH-G

*By Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy*

On March 30, 2020, the Independent Living residents at AFRH-G learned the new procedures for dining room safety. The new "Takee Outeee" service is strictly take-out with eating in their apartments. Though "Cheekin on a Steek" was not served, the regular meal menu and grill items were. X's and lines with arrows direct residents through the dining hall to ensure social distancing and decreasing crowd gathering. Residents that receive assisted service for meals enter through the south side of the dining hall and the others enter through the north end. When the new procedures began, recreation services assisted in educating and directing residents through the new process to ensure a smooth transition. Ms. Helen Noel was the first resident to go through the new line procedures that day. The new "Takee Outeee" service will continue until further notice. Thank you all for cooperating and being such great people.



## Volunteer appreciation

*By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator*

National Volunteer Appreciation Week was April 19-25. Typically, we recognize our resident, community and military volunteers during this week with an awards ceremony. Given the current health and safety concerns, I postponed the ceremony but I didn't want this dedicated week to pass without expressing my deep appreciation to all our volunteers who provide dedicated service in many areas of the Home. In addition to our devoted resident volunteers, we have tremendous relationships with local community members and military units. These volunteers are frequently used during special events, weekend activities, and re-occurring activities in D-Tower. In calendar year 2019, 20,912 hours were dedicated by 1,801 volunteers in AFRH-G. That service, dedication, passion, and reliability helps make AFRH-G an awesome place to be.

To all our volunteers, I look forward to celebrating with you soon and again say thank you for your service!

## Volunteer Recognition

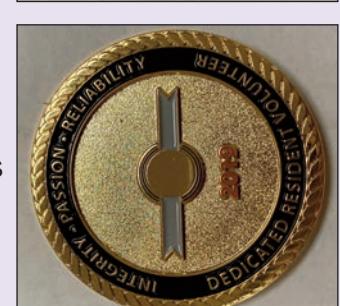
*By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator*

On May 21, AFRH-G recognized and celebrated our dedicated resident volunteers. It should come as no surprise amid COVID19 this celebration will look a bit different than in years past.

I would like to share a bit more about the Presidential Service Award and our 2019 statistics. The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation created the Presidential Service Award in 2003, with the role of recognizing America's strength and national identity through its volunteers. Subsequent presidential administrations continued the award, led today by the Corporation of National and Community Service and managed by Points of Light. On May 21, we recognized 12 residents with the Bronze pin signifying 100-249 hours volunteered in 2019; five residents with the Silver pin signifying 250-499 hours volunteered; and, 12 residents with the Gold pin signifying 500+ hours volunteered. The 12 Gold pin recipients joined four other residents who are continuing to reach the Lifetime Achievement Award of 4000+ hours volunteered.

In addition to residents receiving a Presidential Service Award, all resident volunteers received a custom designed challenge coin as a token of appreciation.

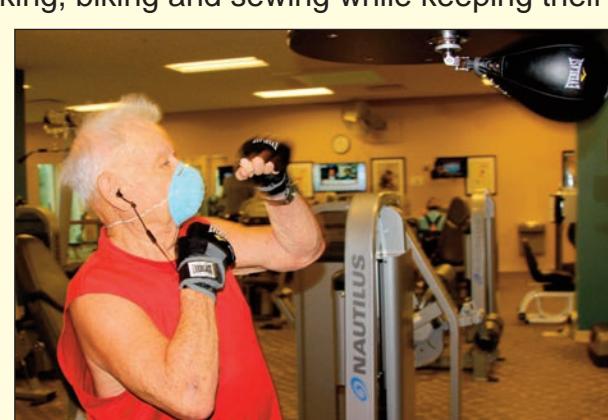
For more information on the Presidential Service Award, please visit: [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov)



## Staying busy at a distance

*Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

Gulfport residents have been very creative in finding things to do and stay busy since all recreational activities have been cancelled due to the coronavirus. It is really good to see the residents painting, exercising, reading, walking, biking and sewing while keeping their distance and wearing their masks. Thank you to all of our residents.



## From the AFRH-W Administrator



We are now into our fourth month dealing with the COVID-19 virus. While the country has sustained many losses, thankfully our residents in both Homes have remained COVID-19 free. While I know many residents would like to have more freedom, the reason we've remained virus-free is because we have kept our gates closed to the public. While staff have been able to go home and return back to work, there have been only a few that have gotten the virus and none have passed it to anyone in the Homes as shown by our careful contact tracing. We are all cognizant of where we work and have been careful while in public places. We've put into practice a "Four Pillar" check before any staff member or contractor is permitted to report to their work station. These include wearing a face covering, sanitizing hands when entering the building, using the UV foot sanitizer, and completing a health status check that includes a temperature reading. We have also added face shields for staff in certain areas for extra personal protection.

While some areas of our country have opened up quite a bit, we are not seeing that in our local area due to the continued increase in cases. Restaurants remain closed or take-out only, barbers and salons remain closed and other places we frequent are still closed. Those stores that are open, require social distancing lines to gain access due to the limited number of people allowed inside. Stores are slowly beginning to get more supplies, each week seems to be better with less empty shelves, although toilet paper, canned goods, pasta and flour are still hard to find and many stores are limiting the amount of meat you can purchase.

While we have no volunteers on campus, we still can feel their presence. We continue to receive wonderful packages of medical and handmade masks on TV that a young man put together "Hero Bags" with many helpful items for our fortunate residents. And we just received thousands of surgical masks recently airlifted from South Korea. These and the face shields we received last month have been vital to our ability to protect both residents and staff.

Our recreation staff continues to do activities with residents to keep things moving. They are sprouting lots of plants that we will be able to watch grow this summer in the many outdoor garden projects.

We celebrated Nurses/CNA week this month and our nursing leadership did a wonderful job with all of the many fun activities despite social distancing requirements. Now, more than ever, we need to thank and appreciate those who care for us. In addition to our busy healthcare staff, I would also like to applaud all of our staff and contractors that have worked so hard these past few months, having to make changes from day to day so that we can safely care for each other. We also chose our Employee of the Quarter from a group of dedicated employees. Constance Williams was chosen, our Infection Prevention Nurse, who has been quite busy ensuring we are following CDC guidelines in our daily work.

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. The resident volunteers can be found delivering meals and packages and cleaning high touch areas of the Home, helping each other.

I am proud of the teamwork I see each day among our residents and staff. Let's continue to take care of each other!

*Susan Bryhan*



Administrator Susan Bryhan (right) congratulates the AFRH-W Employee of the Quarter, Infection Prevention Nurse Constance Williams (left).

## AFRH-W celebrates "The Year of the Nurse: Lead, Innovate, Excel"

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs Specialist

Photos by Dr. Patricia Howard | Director of Nursing and AFRH-W Nursing Staff



Each year, National Nurses Week begins on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale's birthday. While caring for British and allied soldiers during the Crimean War (1854-1856), Florence Nightingale molded a mostly untrained profession into a highly skilled profession. A profession that has, in recent months, been on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic. In the midst of social distancing, modified practices and taking extraordinary precautions at work and home, our nursing staff at the Armed Forces Retirement Home - Washington celebrated Nurses Week 2020, "The Year of the Nurse: Lead, Innovate, Excel" in COVID-19 modified fashion.

The week kicked off with nurses and CNAs recommitting themselves to their profession by wearing their white, partaking in the Nurses Creed and retaking their pledge. The pledge was administered by the Clinical Nurse Supervisors on their respective units and the Director of Nursing to the nurse leaders. Participating in the special occasion was one of AFRH-W's

resident LPNs, Chris Engle, USA retired (1968 – 1988) who stated, "This was the first time I've been included in the oath. It was very special." She added, "It was very nice to recognize the nursing and medical staff's service and dedication to nursing."

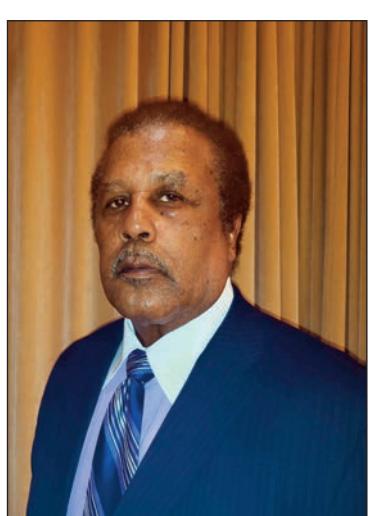
Picture boards were displayed as a salute to our nurses and CNAs. A special recognition included a picture board of several of our AFRH-W residents who served in the nursing and medical field. AFRH is home to licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, dental surgical hygienist and Parajumper Rescue. Their experiences have been behind enemy lines, mending our troops and caring for our POWs out of Vietnam.

The nurses and CNAs of AFRH carry on the great responsibility of caring for our national treasure – our veterans. Confronting an invisible enemy, they are exemplifying their ability to lead, innovate and excel. "I am very proud of how well the nursing team has taken this situation in stride and taken care of our veterans in a highly professional way," remarked Susan Bryhan, AFRH-W Administrator. Keeping spirits up, it was fitting that they received Survival Kits filled with candy reminders. Lifesavers to remind you of the lives you save; Tootsie Rolls to remind you to roll with the punches; Snickers because sometimes laughter is the best medicine.

Director of Nursing, Dr. Patricia Howard shares her sentiment. "I truly love being a nurse. I would like to thank all of my nursing colleagues and all healthcare workers for all you do each day to care for others! During this pandemic: Stay safe, be brave, and stay strong, this too shall pass."



## Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The new normal teaches us to let go of the life we have planned and face the one before us today. During these tough times in our life, we have to be stronger to make it through the storm. The best way out of the darkness is to go straight through to the end. Remember when you go through deep water, He will walk with you to the sunny side of the street. We have overcome challenges before in our life and this is just one more. Let us continue to work together to encourage one another and to feed off each other strengths. Remember our mind is like a parachute, it functions only when open. Let us keep an open mind to any new challenge God may put before us. Let us pray that all the leadership we have here at AFRH will continue making decisions that will keep all of us safe. Let us be encouraged to be strong, because we are all in this together. Over the weekend, everyone across America was going out to the beach, so I decided to put my beach going outfit on and made a trip to the dining hall and back to my room. You should have heard the compliments. It felt good to go to a "safe beach" only in my mind with no worry about COVID-19. Everyone at the Home was wearing masks and keeping a safe distance. We have truly been blessed.

*Billy Ray White*



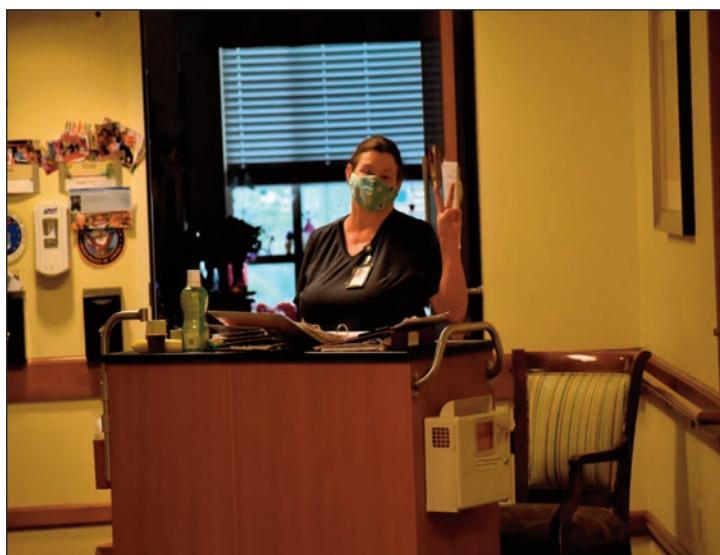
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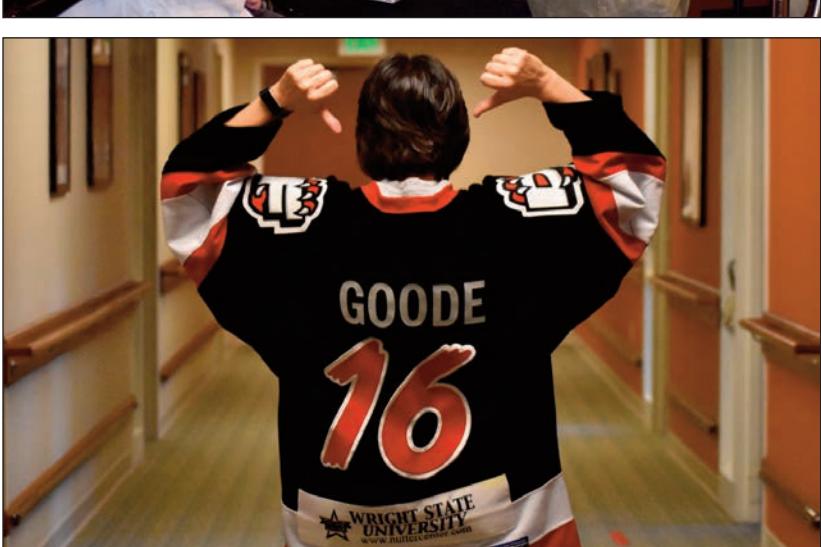
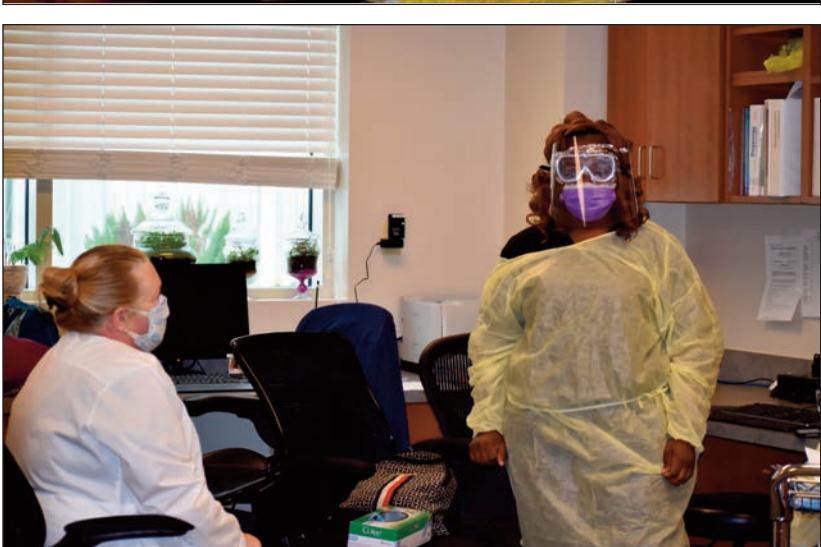
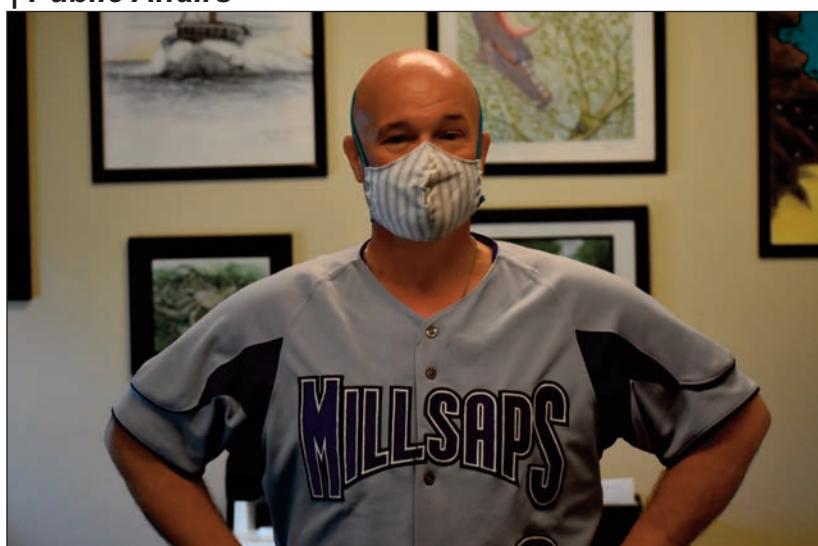
The week of May 18 we celebrated Employee Appreciation Week. Every day the employees received little items to show our heartfelt appreciation for what you do day in and day out, every day. I hope everyone enjoyed the week, dressing up and participating in Crazy Mask/Sports Day, Movie TV Star Day, Nurses Day, Bingo Day and Patriotic Day. Know that you are truly appreciated EVERY DAY.

It is truly a privilege and honor to work with each of you and see the amazing things you do for the residents we serve and for each other.

**Jeff Eads**



*Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*



## AFRH-G Employee of the Quarter

*Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

Congratulations to our Dietician Stephanie Jenkins, for exceptional service to the Armed Forces Retirement Home during January, February and March 2020.

Stephanie cares about all the residents in the Home, and goes out of her way to take care of their dietary needs. When a resident has a new peg tube, Stephanie goes above and beyond with frequent visits to their room to educate, assist, and provide nutritional items. When a resident recently received a new peg tube she was there for him every day, even accompanying him to a doctor's appointment. When another resident recently returned from a hospital stay, he stopped in the Wellness Center looking for the person who stocked his refrigerator with bottled water, juice, and mighty shakes. He wanted to know where he could get more shakes! Stephanie's commitment to the residents is outstanding, and she always has a welcoming smile.



## NEX Supervisor of the Year

*By J.W. Bothe | Exchange Manager, Navy Exchange Gulfport*

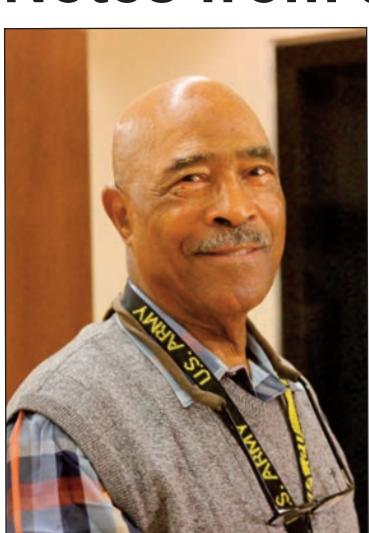
*Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

Congratulations to JuneAnn Weddle on her selection as NEX Gulfport Supervisor of the Year. June's dedication to the AFRH-G has been above and beyond! This past year she has built strong relationships with the administrators, staff members, and residents to better serve the needs at the AFRH. She has been dedicated to listening to the residents to understand what their needs are. June worked closely with HQ to win approval to get a one off plan-o-gram to ensure residents had dental products specific to their needs and previously not carried. She quickly then started bringing in lift chairs, rocker recliners, large TV's, apartment refrigerators, pre-made vending sandwiches, Navy pride merchandise, and custom coin holders resulting in 18.7% sales increase over last year. One AFRH-G resident recognized her dedication by writing a letter to Admiral Bianchi to express his gratitude.

Thank you for your professionalism, commitment, and valuable contribution to the success of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Your performance reflects great credit upon yourself and is in keeping with the highest standards of the NEXCOM Enterprise.



## Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The month of May has come and gone and out of an abundance of caution, we are still practicing mitigation. Procedures such as increased washing and sanitizing of hands, solitary eating, social distancing and wearing face masks have become routine. Isolation precautions have limited our contact with the surrounding community. The DoD Health Protection Condition (HPCON) is at the Delta level which means we are staying the course for the long haul.

Residents and staff are to be commended for finding ways and means of entertainment while adhering to the rule of ten-person groups. Our campus has taken on new meaning as more residents look for outside activity to occupy their time. Some residents are birdwatching, some are enjoying the aqua marine life that resides in the ditch that traverses the campus. Other activities include a golf chipping contest, horseshoe pitching and shooting hoops at the basketball court. Walking and bicycling have also increased. In short, life goes on. Of course, we celebrated Mother's Day during the month and also Nurses Week. I want to thank all the nurses here at the Home who have worked so tirelessly to ensure our well-being during this life threatening event. Sometimes we just need to stop and smell the flowers and truly each of our nurses is a rose.



**Arthur "Art" W. Jones**

# AFRH-Washington

## RT early bird happy hour

*By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy*

*Photo by Steven Briefs | Recreation Services Supervisor*



RT's monthly Happy Hour survives COVID-19. Recreation therapy provided a roving "Tiki Bar" to quench the thirst of the residents of AFRH-W.

The first pit stop was the Memory Support unit followed by the Long Term Care unit. Residents residing on each unit enjoyed a tasty drink as they maintained social distancing. Drinks of the day included fresh strawberry/banana daiquiris with or without alcohol and rum and coke on ice. Upbeat reggae music had staff providing some lively entertainment for the residents to include a limbo contest! Residents truly appreciated the continued staff efforts to provide social interaction!

## Billiards and beer

*Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist*

AFRH-W hosted an 8-ball tournament with double-elimination challenge. Along with the tournament, beer, water or soda was offered. Eight participants enjoyed a relaxing day of pool.

The key to making this pool tournament happen was to follow social distancing regulations and to make sure everything was sanitized.

The first-place winner was Richard Heinrich, and Ted Wilson gave him a run for his money. Bert Spangler, Marvin Archer, Frank Lawrence, John Baker, Bennie Anaya, and John Morris also participated.



## Dunkin Donut treat

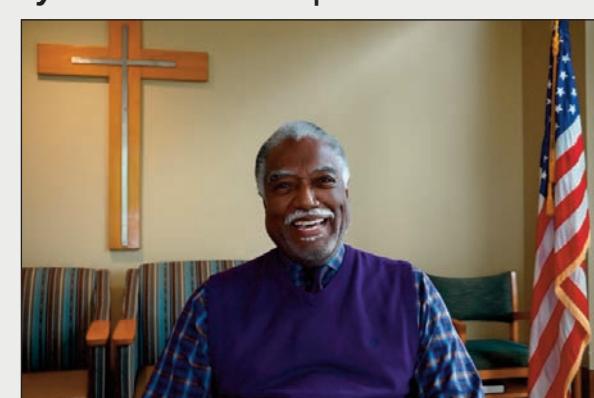
*Story & Photo by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist*

The AFRH-W recreation department wanted to give the residents a treat from the outside. Recreation staff picked up ten dozen donuts and two coffee carafes from Dunkin Donuts for breakfast. So many residents were surprised to come into a tasty donut and coffee for the day. Its recreation department's way of saying, "We know these are tough times, and we care about you."



## Virtual church services

*By Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator*



In an effort to reach all our residents and encourage continued engagement with prior interests, the chaplain's office at the Washington, DC campus has continued to provide sermons and Bible studies via Senior TV's channel four. Join your Protestant Chaplain, Pastor John Goodloe, this month for moving discussions of the Psalms on Tuesday

afternoons and inspiring sermons every Sunday morning. The Chaplains continue to be available for all residents' spiritual, emotional, and social wellbeing, and encourage residents to seek them out or engage with the materials available in their offices.

## Flyover honors healthcare workers

*Photos by Tammy Davis & Amanda Jensema*

A view of the Navy Blue Angels and Air Force Thunderbirds flyover in Washington, DC honoring healthcare workers and first responders. It was a special treat for our veterans and staff to see the formation flights in the skies above the Armed Forces Retirement Home. #AmericaStrong

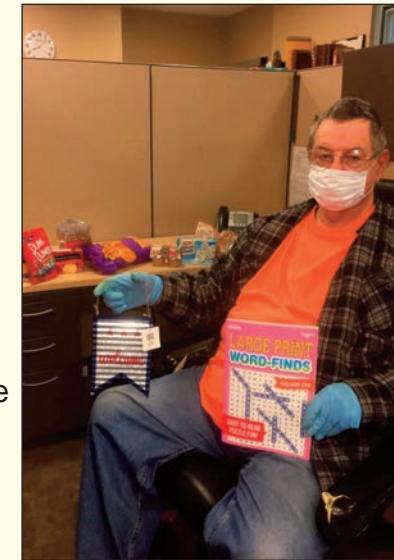


## Munchies & mind games through the mail

*Story & Photo by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy*

It started with AFRH-W resident Orville Groves and his sister thinking about what they could do to brighten the healthcare residents' day. Mr. Groves' sister, who lives in Ohio, thought it would be a good idea to send care packages loaded with single-serve items to include trail mix, fruit gummies, crackers, word search booklets, and more! The Long Term Care, Memory Support, and Assisted Living units got room-to-room service with the items from the Recreation Therapy Roving Cart of "Everything." Thanks to Orville and his sister, the Independent Living residents also enjoyed the snack addition. The trail mix and peanuts certainly enhanced their Thirsty Thursday beer beverage station hosted by recreation's Marla McGuinness.

Upon receiving the package at the post office in Chillicothe, Ohio... the Post Mistress of the facility decided it was a wonderful idea and sent another "box of munchies and mind games" package. Residents look forward in the future to seeing the RT Roving Specialty Cart!



## Semper Gumby is our guiding principle

*By Linda Bailey, CTRS & Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Services*

*Photos by Linda Bailey | Recreation Specialist*

Semper Gumby is always flexible. This has been our guide for the last eight weeks as we reinvent how to keep on keeping on here at AFRH-W. How do we keep people socially engaged when we cannot be within six feet of anyone? When we can't plan groups, what do we plan for recreational activities? How do we function when we are so reliant on volunteers, and the volunteers cannot come through the door? Semper Gumby.

Luckily we have had many residents step up to help with many of the new practical tasks such as helping people get their meals back to their rooms, delivering the daily newspapers, or wiping down and sanitizing the public areas. Since packages must wait 48 hours to be delivered, we need a whole delivery crew five days a week to get them to the recipients.

To thank these cheerful and willing volunteers AFRH presented them with a Semper Gumby t-shirt. The shirt has the Semper Gumby logo on the front and Covid 19 task force with the Home's logo on the back. In addition to residents receiving them, the staff was given the opportunity to purchase the shirts as a fundraiser for the resident fund.

The shirts were purchased from a company called Marine Parents, a non-profit organization that supports Marines and their families. Marine Parents has permission to use the Gumby logo in order to raise funds for the organization. So, when you see a resident wearing one of the COVID-19 t-shirts, you know that they are helping to keep the Home running during this unusual time.



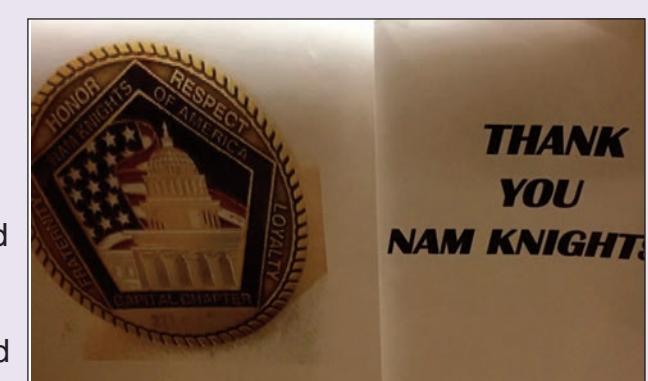
## RT Roving Nam Knights happy hour

*Story & Photo by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy*

The last couple of years on the last Tuesday night of the month recreation therapy has been able to host a RT Happy Hour with the Nam Knights Capital Chapter. The event is held in the Scott Community Center or if the weather is nice in the summertime, it is held outdoors on the Scott Terraces. COVID-19 could not put a damper on the event.

Pete "Sleeper" Rauer, president of the NAM Knights Capital Chapter and his fellow members have graciously been donating an open bar. During the event trivia, jokes, and music give the residents in all levels of care an opportunity to mix, mingle and have a good time.

On March 31, the RT NAM Knights were happy to continue with the festivities in spite of the fact that they could not come due to the virus. RT provided a roving cart of cheer, and went door to door to the healthcare units pouring beverages both alcoholic and nonalcoholic, telling jokes, and giving some much needed one-on-one interactions!



## Roving banana splits

*By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy*

*Photos by Cleophus Snow | Assistant Project Manager Food Services*

While maintaining social distancing at AFRH-W, recreation therapy provided Long Term Care and Memory Support residents with an afternoon treat. The decorated Roving Banana Split Cart, along with playing good old ice cream truck music, brought smiles to resident's faces. Recreation therapy went door-to-door with banana splits.

Special shout out to Jim who celebrated his April birthday.



# AFRH-Gulfport

## AFRH-G spring gardening

Story & Photos by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist



Much like a good spring cleaning after a long winter can help freshen up your house, taking a similar approach to the gardening plots will help you get it back in shape for the warmer months. Even after the winter months, it can be a little overwhelming to tackle all the work that needs to be done for a picture-perfect spring gardening landscape. The Gulfport campus gardening plots are already blooming with veggies. Right now I would have to say the plots have the picture-perfect spring gardening landscape already in progress. Resident gardeners at AFRH-G are John McDermott, Keith Van Doren and Stanley Reeves.



## A new hobby creates meaning and enjoyment

Story and Photos by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant

Mr. Gerald Masterson has learned a new hobby in these trying times that he feels is a way that he can help others. Mr. Masterson is using colored pencils and inspirational sayings to brighten others' days. As a retired pastor, he enjoyed the days when he administered and counseled others through the tough times as well as just sharing the goodness of the life of God. Now through his pictures, he is continuing those same ideas through the inspirational sayings that he cuts out to form the premise of his creations. He shares his creations by putting them on his door for others to read, changing them out daily. Mr. Masterson stated, "I am just really enjoying doing this. I started out just coloring the pictures about one or two times a week and now I make about two to three pictures a day. I feel really good about doing this for others as well as it keeps me very busy."



## Bearry special project brings joy!

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

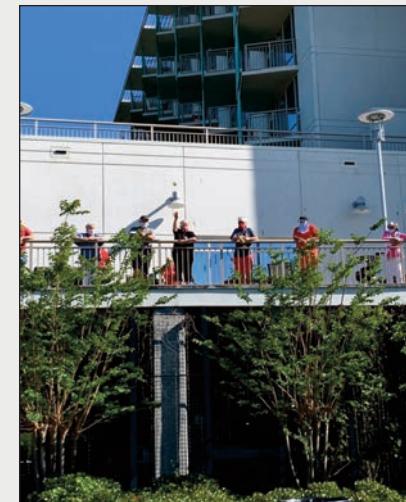
On Tuesday, May 12, 2020, Selso Sanchez wandered the hallways looking and watching as various individualized social distancing leisure events were taking place on Loyalty Hall. With two residents watching at a distance a Country Music Reunion DVD in the TV lounge, another resident was reading a feature article on her WWII Cryptography in the dining hall. Another resident, who had just finished Senior TV Channel 4 chair exercise moved to the activity room to begin her painting project. When shown a wooden puzzle project, Mr. Sanchez said, "No, I am just too darn dizzy for that...but it looks interesting." When encouraged to look inside the bag with the bear example on the front, the various intricate pieces that were carved in the AFRH-G Woodshop piqued his curiosity. He began placing the pieces together, fitting the small shapes, and surprising himself stating, "I just can't believe this...who did this...it is incredible." IL resident, Wayne Wolski utilized his spare time during COVID-19 to put together wooden kits for residents to complete and now several residents in healthcare are finding joy with his Wooden Bear Project. After only moving into AFRH-Gulfport at the end of October 2019, Mr. Wolski began creating wooden art pieces using a form of wood inlaying known as Intarsia. Intarsia is a woodworking technique in which various types, sizes, and shapes of wood are cut and fitted together like a puzzle to create a picture or pattern. Often the grain of the wood is utilized when creating the design of the original project. A wooden backer-board is used as an outline to glue the jigsaw like pieces together and specific pieces are cut to add depth to the finished artwork. Thank you to art specialist, Milton Williams for connecting Wayne's project with Recreation Therapy for the healthcare residents and a bearry special thank you to Wayne Wolski for learning and sharing his new talent. Be sure to check out Wayne Wolski's Intarsia in the art display room. The joy it brought and continues to bring was very "Bearry Special" indeed!



## Sunshine, fresh air, & tennis balls!

By Dennis Crabtree | Recreational Specialist

Photos by Lee Corban & Taylor Chamberlain



Who says you can't throw things off the balcony? In an effort to provide some outdoor entertainment for AFRH-G residents, and still observe all the social distancing guidelines, recreation services hosted its weekly "Mystery Game" on the front balcony. Residents took turns throwing sanitized tennis balls at a designated target for points.



Various zones were drawn on the pavement in chalk corresponding to different point totals, and a trash can served as a jackpot of points. Three residents managed to hit the jackpot target: Doris Denton, and Jack & Roberta Chappell. Points were totaled up to determine the winners, but today, EVERYBODY was a winner as recreation services allowed all the participants to pick a prize. Residents enjoyed the sunshine and fresh Gulf of Mexico air while being able to participate in a fun new activity, and socialize at a safe distance outdoors.

## Bingo at a distance

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreation Specialist

Photo by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

While trying to provide opportunities for residents and still maintain all the required criteria of social distancing, AFRH-G Recreation Services rolled in a scaled back version of Bingo this week, where less than ten residents were spaced more than six feet apart. Residents were excited to be able to have activities slowly becoming available as staff look for more creative ways to entertain residents one small group at a time.

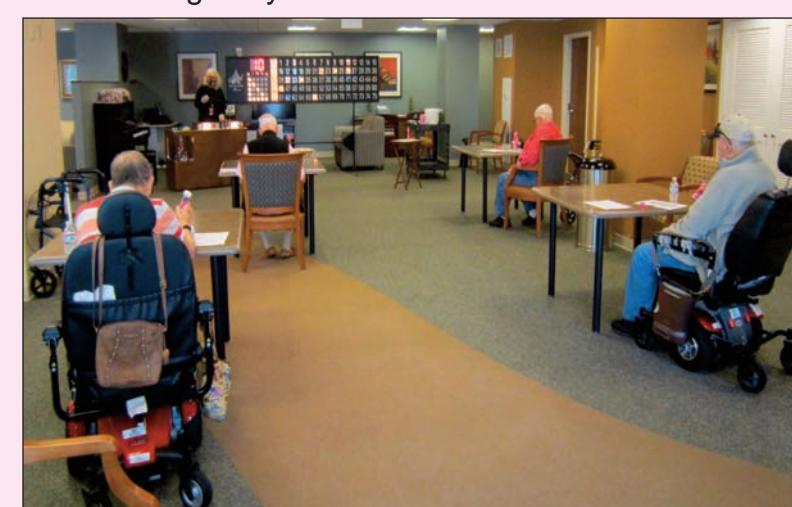


## Bingo, New Age style

By Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Susan Bergman | Recreation Therapy

Last month the Allegiance residents played bingo...New Age style following safety procedures with a little extra just to be sure. AFRH sanitized the tables, dobers and even the money to ensure the residents' safety. Each resident played at individual table, and less than ten residents in total to ensure safety and allowing for pure concentration on those numbers being called. I, using my big mouth, called the numbers out extra loud from underneath my "Saint's mask" cover. (Yes... you read that right "Saints cover." "Go Saints.") Some residents verbalized their enjoyment as some said they felt better as it satisfied their "bingo fix" for a little while. A fun time in a "New Age" style.

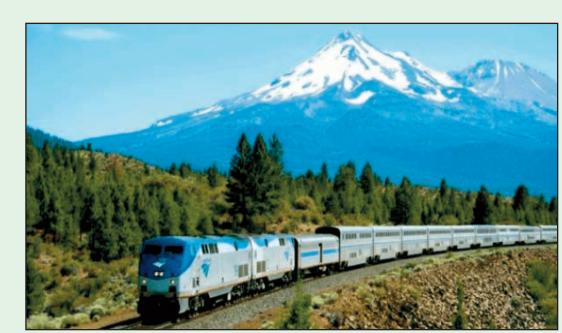
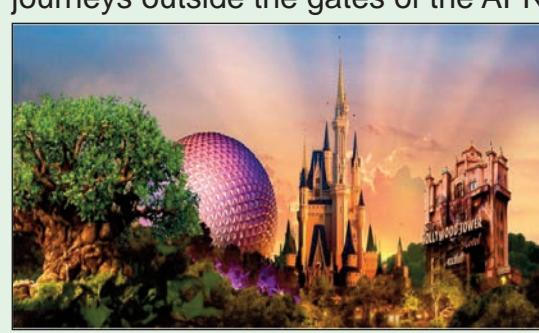


## Gulfport residents still traveling virtually

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist



Since AFRH suspended all recreational travel due to the risks of the Covid19 pandemic, recreation services is hosting a daily segment on Senior TV entitled "Sean's Virtual Travels." Each week a new destination is chosen and video footage takes viewer on a virtual trip to tour various attractions and destinations. During the inaugural week, residents "traveled" to Orlando, Florida. Each day showcased a new and exciting location allowing viewers to explore the sights and sounds of locations including Mobile, Alabama; Pensacola and Tallahassee, Florida; and, ultimately Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and Sea World, Orlando, Florida. Many residents were able to visit virtually for the first time to many locations, while others said it was wonderful to see the changes since their last real visit. Since the first trip residents have enjoyed other exciting destinations such as: the Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta, Georgia; San Antonio, Texas; Savannah, Georgia and an excursion aboard Amtrak's Coast Starlight Train between Seattle, Washington, and Los Angeles, California. Future editions of Sean's Virtual Travels will continue to take residents on journeys outside the gates of the AFRH-G.



# WASHINGTON

## Home is where the heart is

**Story & Photos by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Recreation Supervisor**

The COVID-19 virus continues to affect our Home's daily activities causing us to reflect on words such as patience, resilience, humor, helpfulness, and camaraderie. At AFRH-W, both staff and residents are putting those words into action with many residents taking wood projects back to their rooms and building them. Joe Grant made a clock with the Home's emblem placed in the middle; a volunteer group of engineers from Southern Maryland, "SOMD Loves You," donated 100 face shields that Daniel Weber, Milton Grant, William Bowen and Marla McGuinness, Recreation Specialist, worked to put together for our nursing staff. Recreation Therapist Carol Mitchell set up an adaptive interactive technology station on the Long Term Care unit that healthcare residents can utilize to contact and communicate with their families and friends. At our monthly birthday dinner, staff still sang happy birthday to our residents although they said we should not give up our day jobs! Anyway, all of us are still working to make our Home a safe place to live and work.



## Healthcare terrace - "Victory" gardens

**Story & Photos by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy**

Spring is here, in the air, and the healthcare residents residing on the Scott 2 & 3 units are excited to have outdoor terrace garden beds to grow fresh vegetables and flowers. In these trying times, residents are able to go out on the terraces one or two at a time (while maintaining social distancing) and work on prepping the gardens for planting. The gardens this season are reminiscent of past Victory gardens, which were also called war gardens or food gardens. The gardens included vegetable, fruit, and herb gardens and were planted at private residences and public parks in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Germany during World War I and World War II. The gardens helped to reduce the pressure on the public food supply brought on by the war effort. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that more than 20 million Victory gardens were planted. Fruit and vegetables harvested in these home and community plots were estimated to be 9-10 million tons, it approximately equaled all commercial production of fresh vegetables. In war time governments encouraged people to plant Victory gardens to not only supplement their rations but also boost morale.

On a beautiful warm and sunny day at the end of March, recreation therapy and the recreation staff gardeners Carol Mitchell and Linda Bailey started the fun-filled task of weeding the Scott 3 Gardens! Linda expressed that pulling weeds out of the garden reduced her stress. That afternoon, Carol and resident Ino Sylman weeded the Scott 2 Gardens. Mr. Sylman stated he had not done gardening like this since he was a young boy in the small country of Suriname.

Weather-permitting we will be planting seeds in the next couple of weeks. We look forward to planting corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, okra, peppers, onions and lettuce. We will also bring our Children of the American Revolution indoor herb garden beds outside to continue growing in the fresh air. Keep your eyes posted on further updates on the AFRH terrace "Victory" gardens.



## Picture scavenger hunt

**By Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist**

**Photos by George Wellman & Neil Ferguson**

AFRH-W is offering a picture scavenger hunt until June 1, 2020. We are suggesting the residents get out and take photographs both inside or out of the Home. We have asked them to be creative, look at the big picture and take a different perspective on the photo. They could either email it or bring the camera in and we can download the photos.

The Recreation Department are the judges and we will pick the best of the best pictures. Once all of the photographs are turned in, we will put them up on Senior TV and post them around the Home for others to enjoy. A few ideas to follow: Take a selfie, sunrises, sunsets, wildlife, etc. just to name a few.

# GULFPORT

## Happy planting

**Story & Photo by Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy**

With safety precautions and social distancing a top priority, veteran resident, Mary Nelson took to planting bulbs on the Loyalty patio. On March 24, 2020, the garden planters were prepped with new soil and the bulbs were picked.

On March 25, in the bulbs went with love and care. As Ms. Mary wheeled through the patio reminiscing about her gardener father, you could hear the "Ooos" and "Ahhs" as she reached out to feel the various leaves and greenery.

Thank you to AFRH and Susie Baumunk of Ability Works for the new flowering bulbs. With the beautiful spring weather, other residents took time out to enjoy a patio visit to take in the warm sun and cooler breeze. Even though we all may be getting cabin fever, it is always fun to take a peek out the window, notice the beauties of nature, and know that brighter days are just around the corner. Even under the soil, new growth will be blooming soon and it won't be long until our efforts will be springing forth. Here's to happy planting for brighter days in your life.



## Thinking inside the box with pup & kitty!

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

With additional safety measures and social distancing due to COVID-19, AFRH-G Recreation Therapy has been brainstorming and implementing new ideas to meet the individualized leisure needs of our veteran residents in healthcare. On April 22, 2020, Independent Living (IL) resident and healthcare ombudsman, Ed Summers delivered a donated "Ageless Innovation Joy for All" animatronic cat and dog to Recreation Services as a possible alternative to pet visits. Thinking outside the box led to an inside the box covering that would encase the animals but still allow them to be heard and seen by residents. Cart dimensions were provided to art specialist, Milton Williams, IL resident Art Jones found wood for the frame, and IL resident "Bob" Crews quickly created a

picture-perfect masterpiece "animal box" with his donated dowels. The wooden frame fit exactly on the recreation cart to encase the animals and the dowels were evenly spaced to not allow a hand to fit through. Instead, a plastic hand on the end of a plastic pole capable of being sanitized became the tool for residents to pet the animals. Resident Mary Nelson quickly named the animals, "Pup & Kitty." Double takes and comments such as "Ooooh, my oh my...I thought they were real, wow..." followed by giggles and lit-up faces spread through the hallways and outside the NEX. Allegiance Hall resident Jack Hicks watched as "Kitty" rolled onto its back and sat back up while IL resident ombudsman Chip Wall triggered "Pup" with some friendly barks. Thank you to all for their assistance in thinking outside the box to create an inside the box pet experience for all.

