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.)

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!

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.

**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.)
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 empowerment.

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 woman’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 benefits 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

https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov

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

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 St. Mary’s Hospital in Connecticut on my 18th birthday. I had just graduated high school and entered the army at the age of 18. 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 helped mothers to deliver babies, and I have held the hands of countless people as they breathed their last breaths. I also enjoy working with the physicians to develop the best plan of care for the patients.

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 solution. 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 on the role of volunteer coordinator as part of the recreation position at the DC campus. As a part of the tremendous impact that community and military volunteers have on morale among all of us and on the operation of this facility, I’m sharply thrilled to continue to serve the veterans at AFRH in a new capacity, and we have a whole 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 mornow if you need anything! (And yes, all the ocean puns were on porpoise.)
"Super Hero" Tyler Stallings delivers Hero Bags to AFRH-Washington!

By Taylor Chamberlain | Volunteer Coordinator

On May 21, AFRH-G recognized and celebrated our dedicated resident volunteers. It should come as no surprise amid COVID-19 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 recipients joined four other residents who are continuing to reach the Lifetime Achievement Award of 4000+ 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

Cleaning task force

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

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 Tilmus 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 Jon Biemacil | 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 "Cheeekin on a Steeek" 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. As it turns out, we have no surprise amid COVID-19 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

Staying busy at a distance

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-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 return 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, barber 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 in a limited 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 which have helped us to keep everyone in good supply. You may have seen 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 all 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

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 forefront 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 Pledge of Allegiance and taking the Nightingale Oath. “I promise to use my Nursing knowledge and skills on behalf of patients and their families. I will do my very best to provide excellent care to everyone that I can,” stated, “This was the first time I’ve been included who stated, “This was the first time I’ve been included.

Each team having a member of their respective units and the Director of Nursing to the nurse leaders. Participating in the special occasion was one of AFRH-W’s resident LPN, Chris Engle, USAF (1968 – 1988).

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

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman

The new normal teaches us to let go of the past, to take the present 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 on 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’s strengths. Remember our mind is like a parachute, it functions only when open. Let us keep an open mind to any new change 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 beach. I bought a new pair of flip flops, made a trip to the store, and bought some snacks. We are all in this together.

Billy Ray White
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
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.

Semper Gumby is our guiding principle

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

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

DT: 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.

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.

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 Thrust 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!

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.

AFRH-Washington

MAY 31, 2020

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

Photo by Steven Briefs | Recreation Services Supervisor

RT early bird happy hour

AFRH-W’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!

RT Roving Nam Knights happy hour

AFRH-Washington resident Pete “Sleeper” Rauer, president of the NAM Knights Capital Chapter, recently joined the Scott Community Center and the Memory Support unit’s Memory Night. 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 “Sleep” 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!

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. The AFRH-W’s Memory Support, Long Term Care, and Independent Living units got room-to-room service with the items from the Recreation Therapy Roving Cart of ‘Everything.’

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.

Roving munchies & mind games

Story & Photo by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Linda Bailey | Recreation Specialist

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 Thrust 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!
A new hobby creates meaning and enjoyment

Story & 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 a few times as well as just sharing the goodness of the life of God.

Sunshine, fresh air, & tennis balls!

By Dennis Crabtree | Recreational Specialist

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 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

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.

A FR H-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.

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Beary 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 surprised 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 baseboard is used as an outline to glue the jigsaw 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 beary 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 “Beary Special” indeed!
Healthcare terrace - “Victory” gardens

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

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.

GULFPORT

Happy planting

**Story & Photos 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 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.

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WASHINGTON

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