



Armed Forces Retirement Home

Communicator

Washington, DC



Gulfport, MS

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AFRH-GULFPORT

Veterans Day 2021 at AFRH-G

Story & Photos by Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident

On Saturday, November 6, AFRH-G residents were offered transportation and seating at the 21st Annual MS Coast Veterans Day Parade. To keep the Veterans Day celebration going, the Yankee Doodles Parading Group and the FRA Home Chapter of the Fleet Reserve Association had ceremonies and paraded through the AFRH-G on Thursday, November 11. AFRH veterans are very cognizant of military holidays and Veterans Day is one of the very special occasions.

The story of Veterans Day started with the signaling of the end of World War I, between the Allies and Germany, an armistice was set for the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, was considered the end of "the war to end all wars" and called Armistice Day.

In 1926, Congress recognized it as an official holiday, a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. With the happenings of World War II and the Korean War, at the urging of veterans service organizations in 1954, Congress changed the word "armistice" to "veterans" so the day would honor American veterans of all wars. Veterans Day celebrates the service of ALL U.S. military veterans.

The Home's November 11 celebrations began at the flag post with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. To uplift the viewing residents, the Yankee Doodles and FRA Members sang out with the WWI song, "Over There," before parading through the AFRH-G halls and waving American flags in honor of this patriotic day.



AFRH-WASHINGTON

The Veterans Day photo gallery is back!

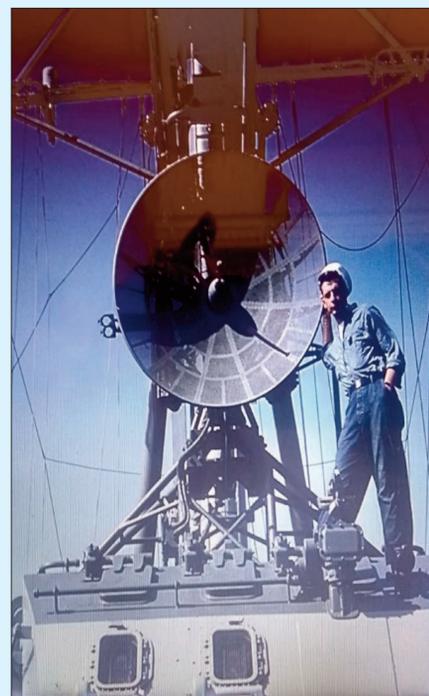
Story & Photos by Linda Bailey | Recreation Specialist



Last year for Veterans Day we needed to come up with a new way to celebrate our residents, as our traditional Veterans Day ceremony was

outside of the bounds of what Covid precautions would allow. We displayed a photo gallery of our residents, 90 years or better, in their days on active duty with their photos in uniform. It was quite moving.

This year, we went all-inclusive and invited all residents and staff, who have served, to submit a photo for the gallery. Photos continue to come in each day, but as I write this, we have 77 photos of residents and 14 photos of staff on our gallery wall. The first week they were up with no labels to indicate who the person was in the photo. Considering how young many of the residents were in the photos, it was interesting trying to figure out who was whom. Even when someone has changed over the years, there is usually a resemblance in a smile, or in bearing that gives the person away. The photo gallery will stay up until the end of November.



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AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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

Serving America's Veterans

AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement communities are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

-Eligibility: Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH. The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer, are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home:

-Active-Duty Career Retired: Veterans who retired with 20 or more years of active-duty service in a regular component of the Armed Forces.

-Eligible for Retired Pay: Veterans who served in a regular or reserve component of the Armed Forces, who are now eligible to receive retired pay and benefits:

- Retired Guard/Reserves with over 20 years of creditable service (combined inactive and active-duty).
- Veterans who qualified for an early retirement such as TERA (Temporary Early Retirement Authority).
- Veterans who were given a medical or disability retirement with pay and full benefits.

-Service-Connected Disability: Veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 50 percent or greater from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs.

-War Theater: Veterans who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay and now suffer from injuries, disease, or disability.

-WWII Female Veteran: Veterans who served in a women's component before June 12, 1948 who are determined to be eligible due to compelling personal circumstances.

-Beneficiary Spouse: The spouse of a retired veteran may apply to live with the Retiree if he/she is enrolled as a beneficiary in DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) and was married to his/her sponsor prior to the veteran's retirement from the Armed Forces.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to:
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AFRH-W Resident Highlight – Robert Farris

By PK Knor | AFRH-W Resident



Born on April 28, 1931 in Chicago, Robert Farris considers Alabama his home state. During that period in the United States, people had to travel wherever they could to find work, and Bob's father was no exception. William "Kay" Farris (from Alabama) and his wife Elizabeth (from Pittsburgh) traveled between Alabama and Chicago, where they had family, seeking employment! At one point, Bob's dad was the head meat carver for a Chicago restaurant! (He was the man in the white chef coat who would stand in the restaurant's window and 'finely' carve the meat to show off his skills to the public.)

Bob and his two older brothers, William "Bill" and George "Bud," were raised in Elba, AL. They lived there until Bob was a junior in high school and then moved to Montgomery, AL, where Bob graduated. He immediately joined the Navy, just like his brothers.

Basic training took place in San Diego, and then to San Francisco, where he boarded a ship for reassignment to Guam in November 1949. (In December of that year a typhoon hit Guam, what luck!) As it turned out, the motor pool was full, so they sent him to the carpenter shop, where he learned his job from a Guamanian carpenter. What Bob remembers from that tour was that everything seemed to be reversed! The deer were two-feet tall, the lizards were five-feet long, and the fruit bats were huge!

In 1951, Bob reported to San Diego as a carpenter, where he commissioned the USS Frontier AD-25. This ship toured Japan for six months and then returned to Long Beach. That year, for the Christmas holidays, Bob visited a friend in Van Nuys, where he met his future wife, Betty, on New Year's Eve. Then he returned to San Diego for his first discharge from the Navy. While out of the Navy, Bob traveled around the country from California to Chicago, New York, Alabama, and Pennsylvania to see Betty!!

When Bob rejoined the Navy, after 87 days, he was assigned to the carpenter shop on the USS Hornet CVA-12, in Brooklyn. On the Hornet, he proceeded to Gitmo for touch-and-go training, then to Bremerhaven, GE, and France for brief stays. He was ready to take his "first" around-the-world cruise, when his

previously applied for shore duty was approved. So, he and Betty married and lived in Annapolis, MD for two years. (Their marriage lasted 35 years and produced two beautiful children, Joanne and Robert!)

On his next assignment, on the West Coast, Bob commissioned the Thetis Bay CVHA-1, which was the first helicopter assault carrier. From there he attended electronic school in San Francisco, which drew an appointment to Yorktown, VA, for four years at the Naval Mine Depot. There he loaded ships with missiles, restocked and refueled them!

Bob's next tour took him to Boston, MA, where he commissioned the USS Long Beach CGN-9 (the first nuclear-powered surface ship), which was waiting to take him on two Mediterranean tours. On the day the Long Beach was prepared to leave with the fleet on the "second" around-the-world cruise, Bob was again transferred back to Yorktown, VA, promoted to chief (E-7), and stationed at the Naval Weapons Station, for two to three years.

His final tour was aboard the missile cruiser USS Columbus CG-12 on a cruise of the Mediterranean, and then retired in Yorktown, as a chief after 19.6 years. As a civilian, Bob spent 19.5 years in civil service, mostly at the Defense General Supply Center in Virginia. One highlight of Bob's life was a trip he took with his church to Egypt and Israel.

Bob then moved to Georgia, where he met his second wife, Carolyn. They were married for 25 wonderful years, until she passed away.

Aware of the two Armed Forces Retirement Homes, Bob visited both locations. He ended up in DC because (1) there is so much more to do and (2) his children live in Virginia. Bob is involved in numerous projects at AFRH-W. He loves making wooden toys from kits, working at the library, reading books, watching movies and playing pool.



AFRH-G Resident Highlight – Dr. Tim Williams

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Dr. Tim Williams was born in Knoxville, TN in 1962. He is the middle child of three brothers and three sisters. Growing up, Tim moved around a bit, attending three different high schools in the span of four years. At the age of 16, he moved to Richmond, VA. After high school, he attended college and made the move to Savannah, GA.

After moving to Savannah, Tim decided he wanted to travel so he decided to join the United States Air Force. His enlistment definitely paid off right away when he received orders for his first duty station to Japan, where he worked as security police. Some of the other countries he had the chance to travel to were Korea, Philippines, Canada, Indonesia, and Thailand. He also served during Operation Just Cause in Panama. His final duty station was at Grand Forks AFB, ND. Growing up in the South did not prepare him for the extremely cold weather. The weather and the experiences of war helped him make the decision to separate from the military. He dedicated a total of seven years to the U.S. Air Force.

After leaving the military, Tim moved to Japan to start a new life. He lived in Tokyo for over 30 years all while earning his bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. His two children were born while he was overseas, although they are both U. S. citizens (Tim would love for one of them to be President!).

When it came time to settle down from his busy life, he took the recommendation of a retired Marine and friend to apply to become a resident at AFRH-G. Eleven months later, in the midst of a pandemic, he was able to move in. Tim is one of the newer residents in the Home, so he is still learning the area. So far he enjoys the Home and spends his leisure time using the computer, watching TV, and reading.

Veterans Day at AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator

Happy Veterans Day at AFRH-W from Memorial Day Flowers Foundation, Operation Gratitude, and students from Creative Minds School, Barnard Elementary, Huntland Schools, Madisons Trust Elementary, and students from around the country. Memorial Flowers Foundation was responsible for providing flowers to Arlington National Cemetery for the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. As a partner project while in DC, they donated almost 500 bouquets of fresh roses to our campus, which took over the volunteer homeroom and were distributed to residents and staff as a thank you for all they have done and continue to do. After the tide of roses, Operation Gratitude provided goodie bags of snacks and toiletries as they do annually around this time, packaged and sent to us from the soldiers of the DC National Guard. These items were surrounded with cards from students around the country thanking our veterans for their service and reminding them that they are always in our hearts. As always, an abundant holiday of thanks for our residents and their service!



Independent living recreation team recognized by Leading Age for Innovations in Programming

By Linda Bailey | Recreation Specialist
Photo by Mike Hoth | Resident Photographer

Leading Age is an industry group that represents more than 5,000 non-profit aging service providers nationally. Their DC chapter, which has been holding their annual meeting pre-covid at AFRH for a few years, recognized the difficulties that the pandemic placed on all aspects of delivering services to older clients amidst Covid protocols. They put out a call for nominations for excellence in various areas of service, including innovations in service delivery. Knowing that the AFRH-W Independent Living Recreation Team was using old resources in new ways, and knowing that we were stretching these resources further than other comparable retirement communities were in our region, a nomination was entered. While the team, consisting of Linda Bailey, Team Lead, Marla McGuinness, Programmer, Marine Robbins, Volunteer Coordinator, and Chris Baldwin, Librarian, did not win the top prize, we did get recognized with an Honorable Mention in the category of Innovations.

The entry spoke about the use of the in-house TV system to show videos created right at AFRH-W, including both staff and residents. The special events were filmed separately, but edited into one video, which was shown throughout AFRH-W. These provided a replacement for the special events in the calendar that we could not come together to celebrate in the past year. Examples would be the reading of the Declaration of Independence video for Independence Day, the Women's History Month video, the Black History Month Video, the Air Force Birthday video, and the Holiday Tree Lighting video. Also mentioned were Social Distance Bingo, Thirsty Thursday, Popcorn Mondays and the Cleaning Crew, among other activities. These activities kept everyone going despite the Covid precautions of staying six-feet apart.

To borrow from a popular song from some years back, what a long, strange trip it's been. But we just had our first large group event with our Halloween celebration since the St. Pat's Celebration in March of 2020. And we look forward to the holiday season with more fun to come.

Congratulations to our team, and their recognition for a job innovatively and well done under trying circumstances.

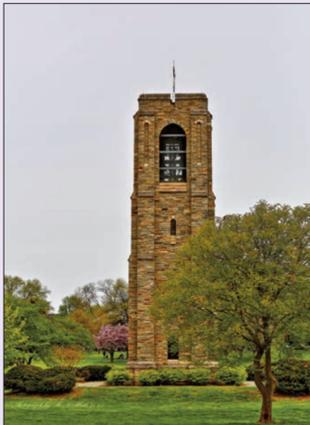


Annual Creative Arts Festival

By Annemarie Wilson | Recreation Therapy Supervisor
Photos by Mike Hoth | AFRH-W Resident

Several AFRH-W residents placed first at the Washington DC VA Medical Center's Annual Creative Arts Festival. The creative arts is one form of treatment that can help veterans and others recover from and cope with life in general as well as physical and emotional disabilities. Due to COVID, all entries and judging were completed virtually. AFRH-W residents Fred Layman, John Baker, Hugo Rodriguez, Joe Grant, Richard Potts, George Wellman and Mike Hoth all participated this year. Each resident displayed his own talent through poetry, dance, photography, paintings, metalwork and glasswork. First place winners' art is sent to the national level where they are judged, along with all other first place winners from VA's all over the country. Should anyone win gold at the national level, he will be invited to attend the National Creative Arts Festival, which is sponsored by the VA and the American Legion Auxiliary. It's held in a different city every year and the next one will be held in St. Petersburg, FL in spring 2022. This week-long celebration is a culmination of talent and veterans have an opportunity to showcase art through writing, music, dance and drama all ending with a live stage performance.

Congratulations to Mr. Baker, Joe Grant, Richard Potts, George Wellman and Mike Hoth who all placed first in various categories! Job well done to our residents and good luck to each of you.



The Bell Tower photo was taken by Mike Hoth.



Spoon wind chime was created by Joe Grant.

Byways

Creative Writing/Poetry Non-Rhyming
By Richard Potts | AFRH-W Resident

I like straight roads, field-edged and tree-lined; where trucks transport felled timber, tow horse-trailers and RV's poke along. I like to see the "Business Loop" and "Byways" sign; I have no use for big-city "Beltways."

Give me that two-lane road past large lawns with big trees taking me to a downtown where turn of the century buildings are vacant; where City Hall, the Library, the Police Station are glass, and steel, and stone; all new and low-slung with good fields of fire.

Here I can see a turn of the century Courthouse, rail station, grand hotel, and competing churches with tall spires pointing to the sky above – all monuments to an old-time state of mind.

Here the outskirts stand stark in their neon glow – big box stores, grocery stores, package stores, scores of stores in a calm sea of asphalt and concrete. Incongruous trees here and there, the best place to park at noon.

I like towns where a river runs through it or a broad lake spreads below; with clay brick or cobblestone side streets reminding me of long ago.

I like towns where "pretty young things" have long legs and long hair hanging loose; where they wear sandals, short-shorts and a tank top.

I like towns where the local stations play Classic Country music that makes the heart go pitty-pat.

I like towns where people enjoy boiled peanuts, country ham and fried chicken; where fresh fruits and vegetables are sold at tree-topped roadside stands.

I like towns where you can meet and greet strangers and just shoot the breeze.

Give me small town America; reconciling its past (I'm thinking now of Anthony Crawford) and its future – ours

Small town America – pleasure for a slow stroll today, pulse-beat of tomorrow.

Soldiers' Home Cemetery

Poetry Rhyming
By George L. Wellman | AFRH-W Resident

Who is here asleep?

They are below the surface just six feet deep.
President Abraham Lincoln was often on the scene.

He visited the cemetery from his summer cottage through the oak and evergreen.

At that time, the U.S. flag had stars which numbered thirty-four.

We are still struggling with similar issues with fifty stars as we did before.
Ernest Hemingway's first love, Agnes, rests in Section "O" just inside the fence.
My last love, Gwen, is in Section "Q" where the headstones are uniform and dense.

Both our loves were nurses and not with us anymore.

Learn the story of others buried here, visit the cemetery and explore!

AFRH-W Craft Fair

Story & Photo by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

The annual AFRH-W Craft Fair is back! Residents enjoyed displaying and selling their handmade crafts for residents and staff to view. It also gave them an opportunity to get started on Christmas shopping. The event was held on the 18th & 19th of November. AFRH-W has some very talented crafters!



From the AFRH-W administrator



Happy Thanksgiving! I hope everyone had a special day of thanks and some great food. Our campus suddenly came alive with color, the leaves have been beautiful but are now dropping to the ground. The weather changed last night and gave me a reminder that we have returned to coat weather. We are getting more and more back to normal; the dining room and Anderson Suites are open for vaccinated guests. The salad bar is back and looks better than ever. We have no new cases of COVID on the campus, something to be thankful for. We are entering our traditional days of festivities, but it is also the season for illness. I encourage all to get immunized against the flu and get a COVID booster shot. The more who are immunized, the better for us all. Also, remember to wash your hands frequently and cover your cough. This can also be a time of sadness for some, please reach out to a social worker, nurse or friend if you are feeling sad. Let's all do our best to stay healthy!

Veterans Day week was very busy with a flurry of activities. We started the week with our annual Antique Car Show. As usual, there were some beauties and we all had fun remembering the good ole days! The Army Brass Quintet visited and played a wonderful concert full of patriotic tunes. Our PX treated the residents with coins, cupcakes and raffled off gift cards. Other groups donated goody bags and we had many handmade cards to distribute. The Memorial Day Flowers Foundation was very generous, honoring our veterans with 490 dozen beautiful roses, the same ones that were distributed at the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. A big thank you to all of our generous donors!

November marks our last service birthday and this year we decided to make it extra special. We held a United States Marine Corps birthday meal of steak and shrimp, in addition to our usual cake cutting ceremony. We were honored to have the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Troy Black as our guest speaker. He joined our "oldest" Marine, Ms. Kupersmith and one of his young Marines to cut the cake. We also hosted the Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Grinston, and several other senior enlisted leaders for a Town Hall and lunch with the residents. It is always great to have active duty visitors to share stories with and hear what is happening with our troops. We hosted the senior leadership team of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for a two-day offsite and thanked them for their great support during COVID.

Other happenings on campus included our last of the season softball game, which was as enjoyable as our other games and a chance to get some fresh air. Our creative residents held a Craft Fair, a perfect opportunity to buy special gifts. And, in anticipation of Thanksgiving, we had turkey bowling and Warren the Turkey, who hid out throughout the Home. I was honored to give him a pardon in a small ceremony. We are in the midst of the Combined Federal Campaign and I encourage everyone to give whatever they can to so many worthy charities.

Take a moment to count your blessings and enjoy the season. I hope you get a chance to spend time with family and friends.

Susan Bryhan



Susan Bryhan and Clem Clement (not a resident) at our Antique Car Show standing in front of a Ford Woody. It was a beauty!

AFRH-W celebrates the 246th birthday of the Marine Corps with Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Troy Black

By Christopher Kepner | Ombudsman

Photos by Mike Hoth | Resident Photographer

The United States Marine Corps celebrated its 246th Birthday on November 10th, 2021. We were extremely pleased that we were able to celebrate with Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SMMC) Troy Black as our guest of honor. SMMC Black conducted a Town Hall with residents prior to the celebration. There were many great questions regarding the current status of the Marine Corps training and missions. He specifically mentioned that Marines remain in harm's way around the globe defending our Nation's interests. During the ceremony he spoke about the importance of the birthday of the Corps to Marines, and his most memorable Corps Birthday while in combat sharing a pound cake with his Marines. The ceremony concluded with the traditional cutting of the cake with SMMC Black, our oldest Marine Mrs. Muriel Kupersmith (98), and the youngest Marine present Sgt Kenny Joseph (23).
Semper Parvum!



SMMC Troy Black uses the NCO Sword to serve cake to Mrs. Muriel Kupersmith, 98; and Sgt. Kenny Joseph 23.



Sgt. Kenny Joseph youngest Marine present, and Mrs. Muriel Kupersmith, oldest Marine present enjoying a piece of cake.

AFRH-W recognizes our Vietnam Veterans

By Christopher Kepner | Ombudsman

Photos by Mike Hoth | Resident Photographer

On October 26, AFRH-W recognized our Vietnam Veterans with a special ceremony on the grounds. We were honored to be joined by MG (R) Peter Aylward, Director of The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration, and our Guest of Honor and speaker CSM (R) Jimmie Spencer. CSM Spencer served two tours in Vietnam as an infantryman and Special Operations, and is an inductee of the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame. CSM Spencer spoke about the work of the Commemoration team and their charge to make sure our nation never forgets the sacrifice and service of the men and women who selflessly served during those tumultuous times. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of a Vietnam Veteran lapel pin as a memento of the Nation's thanks. A special Thank You to the Washington DC Army National Guard for providing the Honor Guard.



Notes from the AFRH-W resident advisory committee chairman



This is a wonderful time of year here at AFRH-W as we wrap up a season of summer activities and look forward to the upcoming holidays. In that spirit I am opening with a most heartfelt wish to all of our residents and staff for a safe and joyous holiday season enjoyed with family and friends.

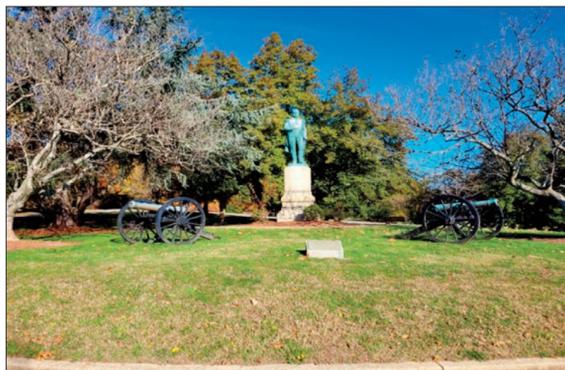
Our recreational services team never disappoints and recent events were no different. Our community center was wonderfully decorated for our Halloween bash and everyone enjoyed the games, snacks, and fellowship, and they didn't stop there. As a tribute to our residents and their service for Veterans Day they collected pictures of our residents and staff in uniform, from days gone by, and made a wonderful display for all to enjoy. Finally we had our year end Softball Championship game between the Ombudsman's team and the Chief of Resident Services team. Even though there were no outs and we don't keep score, thanks to the great play by Father Benedict our team captained by Ron Anderson won by a landslide (13 to 12). The score held up even after the Ombudsman asked our Administrator to "find" a couple more runs and demanded a recount, we remained the legitimate champs.

We celebrated the U.S. Marine Corps birthday with a special dinner of steak and shrimp. The highlight of the evening was the staff and residents singing the Marine's Anthem, even with so many off key singers!!!!

Rumor has it that our Senior Elf and his team are currently working wrapping presents for our residents for the annual Christmas Party. I also heard that the recreation staff is preparing Santa's sled.

Our campus also is showing off, as it always does this time of year, with all the vivid colors as the leaves start turning (photos below). Happy holidays everyone!

Fred Layman



The military life of Rodney Downs Tyrone

By Dan Ellis | AFRH-G Resident



Rodney Downs Tyrone was born on June 24, 1947 to Maxine and Sgt. Thad Tyrone, Sr. at Maxwell AFB, AL. He and his older brother, Thad, Jr., were brought up as normal military children who followed parents through a series of Air Force bases. Rodney matriculated through his elementary schooling at a series of locations that included Port Huyeneme, a one-room school house at Mt. Laguna, CA, and finally at Kisarazu Air Force Base, Japan. Following his high school graduation at Wetumpka, AL in 1965, Rodney enlisted in the Air Force for a four-year term and was sent to Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX for basic training. Having had exposure to his dad's and older brother's experiences, Rodney chose administrative duties for his career endeavor, which made him eligible to worldwide travel. His first assignments were at Hunter AFB Savannah, GA and Charleston AFB, SC as an administration clerk and ended his first tour in Thailand at (NKP) Nakhon Phanom. "The City of Hills" was affectionately known as "Naked Fanny" or NKP by the Americans and referred to as the "End of the line at the edge of the world." As Rodney reminisced, he stated, "I separated for a year until my beer money ran out!" Then, wearing buck sergeant stripes, he reenlisted for four years and was given a month's pay advance and a 30-day leave before being sent to March Air Force Base in Riverside, CA with duties as an office administrator. He was then transferred to Osan Air Base, Korea for one year which was followed by a tour of Torrejón Air Base near Madrid, Spain. In 1969, Rodney was promoted to staff sergeant before being sent to Hurlburt Field, FL, then to Craig AFB at Selma, AL, and later to West Ruislip AB England with duties at London's Heathrow Airport Postal Office. After another year's separation, he reenlisted, and was stationed at Keesler AFB, MS as chief clerk for the Communications Center Squadron. He was then sent to March Air Force Base in Riverside, CA. In 1987 he was discharged while at Maxwell AFB, AL while serving with the headquarters unit.

Following his retirement, Rodney settled in his hometown and purchased a house. Following the death of his father, and being unmarried, he moved his mother into his home until she passed away. He then moved to AFRH-Washington for eight months and in June 2017, Rodney moved to AFRH-Gulfport and is living very happily!

Chief Petty Officer Selectees visit AFRH-G

By MC Alexander C. Bradshaw | Ombudsman
Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On the 16th of November, the Chief Petty Officer Selectees from various commands onboard the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, Mississippi, paid our residents a visit. Every year the Navy advancement selection board selects the "fully and best qualified" candidates to Chief Petty Officer. Once the results of the selection board are released, the newly selected Chief Petty Officers go through an intense six-week training before they are ceremoniously pinned their anchors and welcomed into the Chief Petty Officers Mess. The focus of the training is to prepare our newest Chiefs to enter the Chiefs Mess and ready each one of them to perform at the level of a Chief Petty Officer on day one. Their visit to the Armed Force Retirement Home was another rung in their training to provide a sense of history, the importance of the Home, and to pay homage to those who have gone before us and recognize their numerous contributions and sacrifices in the defense of this great nation of ours. Their visit gave the residents the opportunity to interact, chat, and if they so desired, make thoughtful, congratulatory, motivational, and tradition oriented Charge Book entries to help guide the Selectees as they prepare themselves to assume the additional responsibilities of a Navy Chief Petty Officer. It was a memorable visit with many stories told and little pearls of wisdom given.



Important Days in December

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

- Dec 1—Rosa Parks Day**
- Dec 7—National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**
- National Illinois Day**
- Dec 13—National Guard Birthday**
- Dec 14—National Alabama Day**
- Dec 15—Bill of Rights Day**
- Dec 21—National Maine Day**
- Winter Solstice**
- Dec 24—Christmas Eve**
- Dec 25—Christmas**
- Dec 26—Boxing Day (Canada)**
- Dec 28—Pledge of Allegiance Day**
- Dec 31—New Year's Eve**

In case you missed it!

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs
Photos by Pauline Larson | Resident

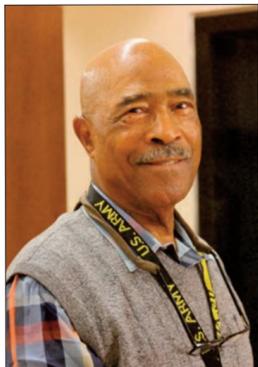
Gulfport resident Pauline Larson captured these amazing shots of the lunar eclipse on November 19, 2021 from the grounds of AFRH-G, right outside of the front entrance into the building.

The eclipse occurred towards a micromoon. This was the longest partial lunar eclipse since February 18, 1440, and the longest until February 8, 2669; however, many eclipses, including the upcoming November 2022 lunar eclipse will have a longer period of umbral contact at next to three hours and 40 minutes.

Pauline was up at 0100 to see the eclipse. She patiently waited for the next three hours to capture these photos. Thank you Pauline for sharing your talent with us!



Notes from the AFRH-G resident advisory committee chairman



November is an exciting month, filled with many activities as we change from daylight savings time and watch the seasons change. We began the month celebrating the reversal of several of the COVID restrictions. The major turnaround was the return of visitors to our campus. Family visitation is a critical component of the quality of life we enjoy here at the Home. The RAC meeting was held on November 9. This was the first meeting attended by the new facility ombudsman, Master Chief Bradshaw. If you were unable to attend, please take a few moments and watch the meeting on channel 4. We celebrated the U.S. Marines Corps 246th birthday on November 10. Happy Birthday and "Semper Fi." Veteran's Day was on November 11. All across this nation in communities, large and small, people gathered to express their gratitude to the men and women who fought for our freedoms. Here in the Home, the residents gathered at the flagpole for a pledge of allegiance and prayer. Later inside the building, a number of residents, some in costumes and military uniform, paraded around the first floor. Well done, and thank you all.

November 16 was the monthly birthday luncheon where we celebrated all residents born in the month of November. The lunch meal was delicious and included birthday cake and wine. A grand time was enjoyed by all. On the afternoon of November 16 we welcomed the Navy Chief Petty Officer Selectees and the opportunity to make entries in their charge books.

Finally, there was Thanksgiving.

This year we truly had a lot to be thankful for. Over the past six months we have gradually returned from a year filled with restrictions, due to COVID, to a way of life similar to what we enjoyed prior to the pandemic. The Home was filled with guests, friends and family, who came to celebrate and give thanks with us for the protection provided during that time and the return to some kind of normalcy now. The Thanksgiving meal was wonderful; people sat and reminisced about past events and the joy of being together again.

If you have not given thanks, pause and do so, for we have been highly blessed.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-Washington

Fishing season is open!

Story & Photos by Steven Briefs, CTRS | Supervisory Recreation Specialist

Wow, after many months of COVID related restrictions on where we could go and what we could do as a group, some of our residents finally got to do what they have been dreaming of: to go fishing.

On Saturday, October 30th we traveled to Lake Fairfax in Reston, Virginia at the invitation of the Wounded Warriors organization who sponsored this Veterans Family Trout Derby day. Dave Kaetzel, his wife, Aura, Billy Bowen, Lee Smith, Terry Tackett and Frank Lawrence put on their fishing hats and enjoyed a refreshing autumn day. The weather was cool with sunshine slipping in and out of the clouds. Many ducks and geese were resting on the lake waters on their migration south. The trees were showing off their best colors, a perfect day to go trout fishing.

To fish, you have to have patience and use the right bait. After casting out your line, you watch your bobber floating on the surface and if it starts to dart under the water, you jerk your line up to snag the unsuspecting fish. All the while, you are chatting with your neighbor or listening to the sweet sounds of nature. It is very relaxing – if you catch something. Dave, Aura and Frank each caught a few trout. If not, you start grumbling, as did Lee Smith, then and the whole way home. Luckily, a free box lunch was provided and everyone soon forgot what they did and did not catch and enjoyed a delicious meal.

Three cheers for the Wounded Warriors organization and their volunteers who enable our residents to get back to nature!



Residents honored at Chesapeake Charities Annual Award Luncheon

Story & Photo by Marine Robbins | Volunteer Coordinator

The residents of AFRH-W were invited as honored guests to attend the Chesapeake Charities Annual Award Luncheon on Tuesday, November 9. The luncheon was held at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club on Kent Island, Maryland, which beautifully overlooks the Chesapeake Bay and the Bay Bridge. The luncheon recognizes charities that have made an exceptional contribution to Maryland communities and this year, the theme was veterans. Awards were given to Cruisin' Southern Maryland, Warfighter Advance, and Patriot Point - all of whom contribute to the wellbeing of veteran communities in our area. Our residents enjoyed a lovely lunch and an outing on the water on one of the last warm days of the year.

Special thank you to Linda Kohler, executive director of Chesapeake Charities and patron of our annual car show, for inviting us and recognizing our residents!



U.S. Army Brass Quintet Band performs for DC residents

Story by Marla McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

AFRH-W hosted the U.S. Army Brass Quintet Band from the Joint Task Force-National Capitol Region/United States Army Military District of Washington. The band members were SGM Terry Bingham, MSG Rick Lee, MSG Jon Voth, SSG Greg Hammond, and SSG Andrew Boylan. Along with the band, the Home also had a guest speaker, Colonel Lucas J.A. Braxton. This was one of our first official visits from outside since COVID. It was wonderful to have live music and entertainment in the Home again. Residents enjoyed speaking with the band members and guest speaker. Special Events Officer Captain Timothy Hampton from Fort McNair, DC was the coordinator for this event.



A beautiful fall day for a car show

By Linda Bailey | Recreation Specialist

Photos by Mike Hoth | Resident Photographer

Everything is different this year, but in the case of our car show, different is better. We moved the date of our Annual Antique Auto Assembly to the Sunday before Veterans Day, November 7. The weather was beautiful. Twenty-four cars, from a 2004 Chevy Corvette to a 1931 Model A Ford and everything in between joined us. A new location between the Scott and Sheridan buildings and around the Rose Chapel was used for the first time.

After viewing the fabulous cars, residents and owners grabbed a hot dog from the grill and soda from the cooler and had a chance to sit and talk.

Another new item at this year's Auto Assembly is that all participants received an AFRH-W Resident Services Challenge Coin. These were made especially to give to those outside volunteers of AFRH-W, who provide a service to our residents that shows their dedication to our residents. This was the first event to use these coins. The trophies, made in our woodshop, featured the new coins at the top of the trophies



Thankful season

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

It is that time of year when we begin to reflect on this past year. We never thought the pandemic would last as long as it has and it has been difficult for everyone. It is hard to think about what we are thankful for, so I thought I would provide some ideas. With the changing of the leaves, so is our future outlook. Life is looking to be returning to a new normal and that is something we can ALL be thankful for.

Health & Wellness

Family

Friends

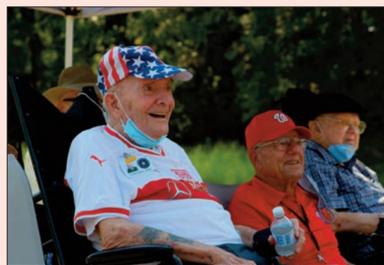
Love

Old & New Friendships

Residents

Staff

What are you thankful for this year?



AFRH-W "Wacky Warren" turkey sighting

Story & Photo by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapist

In the month of November, residents and staff enjoyed participating in the Second Annual AFRH-W Wild Turkey Sighting event! Two turkeys "Wacky Warren & his twin Lauren" were hoping for pardons from the chopping block by Administrator Susan Bryhan. "Lauren" was so relieved when she received an immediate pardon and was enjoying the good life hanging out at the entrance of the RecreationTherapy/Recreation/Rehabilitation Office. "Wacky Warren" on the other hand was still trying to obtain a pardon! He had been on the loose and hiding out in the Scott and Sheridan buildings, from November 15 through November 19, in the hopes of also receiving a quick pardon. Resident Bert Spangler was able to spot our wacky turkey the most frequently, but could not get him to listen! Residents and staff have been notifying recreation therapy and recreation with daily sightings with the expectation that "Wacky Warren" will gain amnesty and join his lovely sister to live foot loose and fancy free on the beautiful grounds of AFRH-W.

"Wacky Warren" has been located in various places throughout the Home. Some of the places included the wellness center, main dining area, theater entrance, leisure lobby, Defender's Inn, and many other places. Once sighted by residents and staff, photos were taken and phone calls were reported to recreation therapy and recreation. This provided incentives for locating "Wacky Warren" to give him help in obtaining a pardon. The hope was that everyone could aide in helping him to live a long and prosperous life with his sister and last year's pardoned AFRH-W Twin Turkeys "Fred & Ed".

On November 23, "Wacky Warren" was finally found! Administrator Susan Bryhan immediately granted him a pardon. "Wacky Warren" is ecstatic to no longer be living a life on the run! HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



AFRH-Gulfport

Purple Mondays!

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

For Alzheimer's Awareness, staff and residents could be seen throughout the building wearing their purple on each Monday during the month of October. With World Alzheimer Day on September 21st, Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month & the Walk to End Alzheimer's in November, AFRH-G has always focused on October, the month in between September and November to show out in purple! Did you know that roughly 50 million people worldwide live with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia? Recognized by President Ronald Reagan due to the need for heightened awareness, Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month was designated back in 1983. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. It is a progressive neurodegenerative disease which often gets worse over time, causes symptoms of memory loss and cognitive decline, and eventually affects a person's ability to accomplish daily tasks. Some activities of daily living that may become a struggle include taking medications, using the phone, managing finances, housekeeping, shopping, and getting meals. Keep in mind that Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging however, there has been promising research, along with medications that assist in slowing memory loss and improving the function of nerve cells in the brain. Structured environments with limited stress focused on a healthy diet, sleep and nutrition are helpful along with leisure interests that promote social interaction and an active mind. Exercise, gardening, music, dancing, drumming, painting, pottery, creative art, essential oils, games, pets, Skype or Facetime calls to loved ones, patio, newspaper, reading, word or number puzzles, jigsaw puzzles are just a few of Loyalty Hall's favorites that engage the brain, as well as improve the quality of life for our treasured veterans. As quoted by Carey Mulligan, "Those with dementia are still people and they still have stories and they still have character and they are all individuals and they are all unique. And they just need to be interacted with on a human level." A big shout out to everyone in purple!



Happy Veteran's Day from East Central Middle School

*By Lee Corban | Recreation Supervisor
Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs*

Happy Veteran's Day to the AFRH-G residents from Mrs. Hawes' and Mrs. Rawson's, 8th grade U.S. History classes at East Central Middle School in Hurley, Mississippi. The awesome students collected puzzle books, candy, socks, lip balm, Kleenex packs and more, then made 430 goodie bags for every single resident at AFRH-G! The teachers made the drive from Hurley after school to deliver these wonderful treats!

Recreation Services employees gave the bags to the very happy veteran residents during lunch! Thank you so much to all the 8th grade students at East Central Middle School for thinking of our veterans. Your thoughtfulness was very much appreciated.



We're baaaack!

Story & Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

As soon as we were allowed to take our masks off in the fitness center, the exercise room was bustling with residents ready to get back to exercise class! Feel free to come join us on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays at 0900. You may even have so much fun that you don't realize you're exercising!



New hair washing station in Beauty/Barber Shop

Story & Photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant

On November 4, 2021, Gigi Malone was the first resident to use the adaptive hair shampoo bowl located in the hair salon at AFRH-G. The adjustable shampoo bowl moves up and down to accommodate the height of a resident while sitting in a wheelchair or PMD. With being able to remain in her wheelchair, Gigi was able to get her hair washed and rinsed with minimal effort and without the discomfort of transferring to another chair.

With some kinks to work out, the adjustable hair washing station is a great tool to those that may need some assistance.



Pyro-graphic art

By Milton Williams | Art Specialist

In November, soon after our fall season started on our coast, we had a pyro-graphic wood burning art class. It had the aroma of autumn, must have been the wood as each artist gently touched the soft wood panels to "etched" in the outline of what they wanted to have wood darkened by pyro-graphic heated iron. It was a fun class and a full class. Residents who participated were Danny Gordon, Sandy Joiner, Clifford "Smitty" Smith, Bob Smyth and JB Atchison. Everyone was very, very careful and only the wood felt the heat.

Thanks for participating. We will have more pyro-graphic classes sometime this winter.



Mystery game

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On November 8, 2021 recreation held its Mystery Game. The Mystery Game was Alien Invaders. The object of the game is to get the Nurf Balls into the net with the shooting from the Nurf gun. There could only be four winners for this Mystery Game. Wolf Kiessling took 1st place, Ernie Fowler took 2nd place, Wayland Webb took 3rd place and Diana Dopp took 4th place.



Bocce Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On November 1, 2021 residents competed in the Bocce Ball Tournament in the Bocce Room. Residents were seen competing against each other to see who would advance in the brackets. Residents lined up on the outer court were seen watching the game.

There could only be four winners. Fred Ray took 1st place, Ernie Fowler took 2nd place, Wayland Webb took 3rd place and Gerry Gorsky took 4th place.



AFRH-Washington

Halloween happy days

Story and Photos by Carol Mitchell, ADC | Recreation Therapy

It was a fun filled AFRH-W Halloween week from October 25th thru October 31st! Some of the programs and events included Pumpkin Decorating, Monster Movies & Munchies, Roving Poker Run Cart, Guess the Number of Candies in the Jar, Guess the Weight of the Pumpkin, Halloween Treat Day, and a Costume Contest. To top off the week we held our first group gathering, since March 2020, at our Halloween Party.

The Halloween Party had a variety of spirited game stations for residents to try their luck at winning a prize. The stations included Pumpkin Bowling, Boo Basket Fishing, Spooky Photo Shots, and an exciting Candy Corn Relay Challenge. Residents also enjoyed the tasty refreshments, cupcakes, candy, chips, and beverages.

The Wicked Winners were:

Poker Run - Healthcare: Jim Hopkins (2 pairs K's & Q's)

Independent Living: Frank Lawrence (Flush Q high)

Number of Candies in the Jar - Jim Morris

Weight of the Pumpkin - Muriel Kupersmith

Candy Corn Relay Team - Hilary Rosado, Louis Barbieri, Ronald Dressen, Lee Smith

Costume Contest - Joe Grant

It was so nice to have residents join together for fun & games!



AFRH-Gulfport

Happy Halloween Spooky Fun House & trick-or-treat!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services

Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On October 28 and 29th, AFRH-Gulfport residents were treated to a Spooky Fun House along with Trick-or-Treating at Susan's office in the B Tower 2nd Floor. The activity room next to the office was lit up with a variety of colorful hanging lights, Halloween-themed animatronics, haunted fun house props, and a variety of music. After starting the Spooky Fun House 19 years ago when her son had his first Halloween, trick-or-treaters came through their decorated greenhouse that was attached to their house in Baton Rouge. From then, it became a tradition with adding items each year, going from being in their garage to inside the car for Trunk-or-Treat to Lynn Meadows Halloween Star Dance. With COVID-19 changing how residents access recreation, the Spooky Fun House was a way of thinking outside the box to provide a memorable individualized experience for healthcare residents. As word spread about the upcoming event, independent living residents and resident volunteers joined in to escort small groups of healthcare residents with a parading Hall Crawl to and from the Valor Piano Lounge to the Spooky Fun House. While waiting for the fun spooks, residents watched a Scary-oke DVD while enjoying their treats of candy. Hope you had a Spooktacular Happy Halloween!

