AFRH-GULFPORT

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is thriving, yet still re-building, 10 years after Hurricane Katrina

By Becki Zschedrich, Public Affairs

When Katrina roared ashore August 29th, 2005, the Gulfport Home was filled to its practical capacity of 664 residents. The Armed Forces Retirement Home Residents expected to be displaced for only a few weeks after Hurricane Katrina damaged their facility in 2005. Little did they know, they wouldn’t be home for 5 long years.

It’s hard to believe it’s already been 10 years since Hurricane Katrina changed the lives of so many residents of AFRH-G. Katrina, which was the worst natural disaster to hit the U.S., damaged the 11 story AFRH-G tower beyond repair. When Katrina blasted through Mississippi, 414 residents rode out the storm for 17 long hours at the Gulfport Home and 150 residents had voluntarily evacuated in their own cars. Being The Weather Channel’s Meteorologist, Jim Cantore. When the hurricane came through Gulfport it was said to be a 28 to 35 foot surge and allowed water to rise in the building about 3 to 4 feet. The storm surge completely destroyed the steel-and-concrete perimeter. With winds exceeding 100 mph the water tower fell over on the property and destroyed the emergency generator. Winds exceeding 100 mph the water tower fell over on the property and destroyed the steel-and-concrete perimeter. Surprisingly no injuries were reported within the building. However, with no electricity and no running water the building could no longer be cooled and food couldn’t be prepared. Katrina’s wind and water dealt a crushing blow to the AFRH and forced its residents to evacuate. The Residents of the Home were evacuated to Washington D.C. the very next day via charter buses that had been pre-staged away from Katrina’s reach. Many of the residents who rode out Katrina at the facility moved in with family members and some moved away into their own apartments. Some residents decided to stay in D.C. while others were scattered throughout 32 states.

When Hurricane Katrina forced the 11-story AFRH in Gulfport, Mississippi to close, Congress appropriated $236 million to demolish the old structure and build a new state-of-the-art facility. After the implosion of the old Home in 2007, the government contractor began the construction of three eight-story buildings to replace it. The new facility was designed to lessen the effects of a category five hurricane, and included 582 rooms that are more than four times larger than the rooms in the old facility. In the fall of 2010, more than 200 former residents of the home returned to the new Gulfport facility after being forced to relocate to D.C. The first 126 veterans returned home five years after Hurricane Katrina on October 4, 2010 to a larger and more lavish facility.

A decade later, recovery is still underway on Mississippi’s Gulf Coast. There are still empty lots and for sale signs scattered from Bay St. Louis to Pascagoula, which are reminders of the thousands of people who didn’t return to their homes, or couldn’t afford to come back. We are very fortunate and so ecstatic to have our Residents back in Gulfport. For many years, we have been pre-staged away from Katrina’s reach. Many of the residents who rode out Katrina at the facility moved in with family members and some moved away into their own apartments. Some residents decided to stay in D.C. while others were scattered throughout 32 states.

AFRH-WASHINGTON

Republic of Korea Delegates honor veterans of the Korean War at AFRH-W

By Shaun Servais, Administrator

Photos by David Elchaker

Saturday, July 25th, Ruling Party Leader Kim Moo Sung toured the Scott Building and addressed approximately 30 Residents in the Hall of Honors. Major General Shin was escorting the group of 20 visitors, including legislators from the Korean government, and numerous Korean journalists and photographers. A crystal Korean War memento and a cash donation were received by two Korean War Veteran Residents representing the home. During a heartfelt speech, numerous thank you’s were given to the Veterans for their service and sacrifice in defense of the Korean people and freedom. It was an honor to host the group who was so gracious to visit and pay their respects to the Korean War Veterans.

After visiting with residents, the delegation paused for photos with the Lincoln statue before embarking a private tour of President Lincoln’s Cottage.

The Korean Delegates pose for a photo with several residents of the AFRH-W.

The front lobby of the old building was flooded and full of debris after the surge came through.

The old building after Katrina.

The new AFRH-G re-opened October 4, 2010. Every vehicle on the property was totally destroyed, including the 5 vehicles that The Weather Channel had on site.

Residents get on the charter bus to D.C. the very next day.

Meteorologist, Jim Cantore broadcasted live from AFRH-G to commemorate the 10 year anniversary of Katrina.

AFRH-WASHINGTON

Korean War Veteran Bill Opferman (center) attended the recognition ceremony in the Hall of Honor.

The Korean War Veteran Bill Opferman (center) listens to guest speaker, Kim Moo Sung.
Sherry Lawrence - AFRH-W Public Affairs
Becki Zachledrich - AFRH-G Public Affairs

Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi

AFRH-G Veteran Highlight

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian

Andrew Lemstra was born in December 1933 in a northern province of Holland called Friesland. He was the third child of seven. As a child, he spoke the local language, Frisian, until he began grade school where he learned to speak Dutch. He vividly remembers German occupations coming in May of 1940. Luckily, his family got liberated by the Canadian part of the Allied Forces in May 1945. It wasn’t until after the war that he found out his dad had been drafted and had joined the Resistance.

During high school Andy would ride his bike 10km to school and back. The children attended school six days a week. He and his classmates were also required to learn three foreign languages, German, French, and English. He and his friends/siblings would have fun and pass the time by playing soccer. At 18, Andy got drafted in the Dutch Navy and served two years. Upon completion, he went to work in a candy factory. In 1957, he decided to follow one of his brother’s footsteps and immigrated to the United States. At that time, immigrants were obligated to sign up for the draft. Within six months he was sent a draft notice. He decided to join the Army before he was drafted. He completed his basic training at Fort Ord, CA. His first assignment after basic and AIT was for The Old Guard at Fort Myer, VA. As part of B Company, he led a platoon of soldiers on reconnaissance flights into the interior of communist China for The Old Guard at Fort Myer, VA. As part of B Company, he led a platoon of soldiers on reconnaissance flights into the interior of communist China for

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Sherry Lawrence - AFRH-W Public Affairs
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James Judy was born in Pennsylvania, the youngest of thirteen children; six brothers and six sisters. He maintained the Honor Roll throughout school and was valedictorian at the High School graduation ceremonies. Jim worked hard to attend college and applied to Indiana State College (ISU). He received a prompt reply which said he was academically acceptable, but was denied admission because there was no room in the women’s residence hall. Apparently the ‘Judy’ in his name made for confused gender identification. He worked in the local public library for the first year after graduation, while sorting through the Resistance.

In 1951, Jim enlisted in the U.S. Navy, rather than be drafted and had joined the Resistance.

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Former Senator Bob Dole visits AFRH-W

By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington recently had the honor of hosting a distinguished visitor, who had previously visited the home. Senator Bob Dole visited AFRH-W back in 2005 and gifted neck ties to the Residents.

This time, he sat, chatted with Residents and answered questions. Senator Dole even joked about his 1996 bid for the Presidency, being neighbors with Monica Lewinsky and old age. His visit to AFRH-W and President Lincoln’s Cottage was arranged by Harry Miller, an AFRH-W Resident.

At 92 years old, Senator Dole is still very active. He makes television appearances, consults at a DC law firm and strongly supports Veterans’ causes. A war veteran himself, Senator Dole visits the WWII Memorial in DC, every Saturday from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Senator Dole speaks to the Residents in the AFRH in Washington D.C.

Statue of Liberty - A work of art from the heart

By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

I should say, hearts plural, for many collaborated on this group project. During one of our many discussions in our AFRH “School of Arts and Sciences” room, Dianna Lamb and other resident artists came up with the idea of painting a type of “mosaic” rendering of the Statue of Liberty. Twelve resident artists came together and painted 24 separate canvas panels, each one depicting a section of the statue and each painted in the artist’s own style and technique.

All used the same colors and followed a set pattern, so when placed next to each other they came together as one piece. Marion Wolfe, Gerry Gorsky and Fred Van Peet helped install all the canvas panels in a frame made by woodworker, PJ Johnson. A signature strip of wood at the base was used by all to sign and PJ inserted a special coin that has an American Flag and the words “United We Stand”. This unique painting of the Statue of Liberty is an outstanding work of art and a nice addition that will be displayed on a column in the Art Display Room of our Home. It is, however, a whole lot more. It exemplifies how our veterans, who served together, helped keep our “One Nation, Under God” safe and secure for us. The alliance of all is a moving reminder of the uniqueness of the United States of America, its citizens and those who serve. Thank you to my Art Class and I’m looking forward to the next Art Adventure...

Barbara Folk, Gerry Gorsky, and Ray Eckert couldn’t wait to get started on the Statue of Liberty project.

The artists include; Gerry Gorsky, Wanda Webb, Barbara Folk, Frances Scott, Ray Eckert, Ted Wesolowski, Frank Haney, Clifford Smith, PJ Johnson, Ron Washington, Corena Wash and Ron Persing.

Photographs by Becky Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs

Preparation of bed spaces in Washington had to be accomplished, transportation from An- staff, and volunteers throughout the surrounding military communities (the assistance provided by the Seabees and their trainees was invaluable). The efforts, communication, and draws Air Force Base had to be arranged. All of these things were achieved by Residents, staff, and volunteers throughout the surrounding military communities (the assistance provided by the Seabees and their trainees was invaluable). The efforts, communication,
From the AFRH-W Administrator

The summer is almost over and it is a close and breathing countdown to the school year coming back! Football already started this week and the corner as well. We will be having a field day for October 1st.

In August, we hosted a focus group on the Rupert Landscaping Company Field Day scheduled for September 18th. The focus group explained to residents the agenda for Field Day, the campus beautification projects that will be completed, and what we can expect to see throughout the day. Included in the agenda is one of the 12 large tree spade trucks that will be using to plant a 40-foot tree in a little less than 5 minutes: a site! This is a very special event that the home will be hosting and a great opportunity for all other organizations to win. I may be biased but feel strongly AFRH-W is a very special place, and I wanted to ensure that those who attended from 150 Pennsylvania Volunteers who guarded the Lincoln Family here at the home would have attended. More to come about Presidential Guard a prior to the US Secret Service. The Bucktails will camp on campus at the Old Soldier’s Home (FOSH) until September 11 to Sunday, September 13.

The main event families should consider making travel plans to attend Fall Fest October 4th. Fall Fest is the third and final annual campus event when gates are open to the public. This year, we are considering the Old Soldier’s Home (FOSH) is the main sponsor. Antiques car show, whiskey tasting, food trucks, petting zoo, and military vehicle display are all in the works. The fall weather is my favorite time of year and hope to see many in attendance for this year’s Fall Fest.

August was indeed a busy month. I want to extend a very warm welcome to Creative Minds International Public Charter School, the new tenants of the Sherman Building. The school opened its doors August 24th after extensively renovating much of the Sherman Building and the former Secret Service.

The fall weather is my favorite time of year and hope to see many attend the campus event when gates are open to the public. This year, we are considering the Old Soldier’s Home (FOSH) is the main sponsor. Antiques car show, whiskey tasting, food trucks, petting zoo, and military vehicle display are all in the works. The fall weather is my favorite time of year and hope to see many attend the campus event when gates are open to the public. This year, we are considering the Old Soldier’s Home (FOSH) is the main sponsor. Antiques car show, whiskey tasting, food trucks, petting zoo, and military vehicle display are all in the works. The fall weather is my favorite time of year and hope to see many in attendance for this year’s Fall Fest.

Arthur Davis

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

I talked today knowing that I would need to pen the monthly article with no topic in mind other than what I would focus on. At 1300 inspiration hit! So here I go...

During the Ice Cream Social meet and greet with our new neighbors at Charter School International, teachers mentioned how wonderful it would be if residents come over periodically to share stories and talk about their skills. I began to think how enlightening that would be, not only for the students to hear the stories but also for the residents who would be interacting and hearing the reactions of the students to the stories they told just now. More about this opportunity forth-coming shortly. Please consider volunteering for this magnificent opportunity.

Which leads to a nice segue into the topic of volunteering. There is always a need for volunteers, so if you would like to get involved, please mention in last month’s article. Although volunteers, many of the positions come with some responsibility. Trip calling is a good one, calling out the loading order for the bus. It is also making sure the numbers of people who were at roll call are actually on the bus. It is about making sure that resident’s accommodation are attended to.

The RAC Fund always welcome donations, and requests that residents consider remembering the AFRH-W AFRH-W Recreation Fund in their final bequests/wills.

The RAC has always done so, and requests in concern in box in Tunnel for the most expediously handling rather than waiting for a RAC to call.

The RAC in 2015: All RAC representatives have yellow ID tags.

Between meetings of the RAC each month the meeting schedule to meet with the Chief of Residence Services, Ombudsman, Chief of Health Care (or Ombudsman for mental health) twice a month, and a concern in box in Tunnel for the most expediously handling rather than waiting for a RAC to call. All RAC representatives have yellow ID tags.

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If you sign waiver to pay maximum fee and the judgment will be final. All RAC members for the most expeditious handling rather than waiting for a RAC to call. All RAC representatives have yellow ID tags.

For the fall 2015 season, we are going to do our best to ensure the pay properly and on time. Residents are encouraged to submit required documentation requested (except for V A resident)

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Student Reply to this article is available at rac.afrh@gmail.com. Minutes approved for this month’s meeting at 10AM on September 16, 2015. This does not appear that any current services or functions will be affected. The new Charter School will begin operation on August 24, 2015. Please be patient as there may be some minor issues that arise with traffic flow.

OLD BUSINESS: Secretary for RAC still sought.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion made to have Tom Myrick represent 6th floor as alternate floor Rep for Marvin Archer, 2nd by Al Brodsky. No discussion. Passed unanimously

Motion to receive Resident Submission Request received
did you or someone you know immigrate to the United States? If so, please consider sharing your story with President Lincoln’s Cottage! In October 2015, the Cottage will open to a special exhibit on President Lincoln and immigration, and they are collecting personal accounts for potential use in the exhibit. To schedule an interview, or find out more details about the interview process, please add your name and contact information to the sign-up sheet in the Recreation office.

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Professional bull rider visits AFRH-G

By Sean Campbell, Lead Recreation Specialist

Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR) sensation Chase Outlaw visited veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport to promote the upcoming “Battle at the Beach,” a Professional Bull Riding Competition to be held at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum this upcoming weekend. Chase entertained questions from AFRH residents explaining the intricacies of bull riding and the PBR career.

Chase began riding calves at the young age of 4 and from that point on there was no question of what career he wanted to pursue. Being a third generation bull rider, Chase quickly rose through the ranks of amateur bull riding and began riding in the PBR events as soon as he turned 18. Chase has qualified for 5 straight PBR World Finals and was the PBR Touring Pro Champion in 2013.

Unfortunately, Chase is rehabbing from a previous shoulder injury and did not compete, but 30 lucky AFRH residents were on hand to watch some of Chase’s competitors in action as they rode 2,000 pound bulls in search of that elusive 8-second ride.

Chase Outlaw talks with Obie Webb and discusses his belt buckle.

What a Treat – Fried Green Tomatoes!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Therapy Services

Residents & Recreation Therapy on Loyalty Hall were caught shaking up some fun. What a treat – preparing fresh fried green tomatoes (it’s a Southern thing) from the gardens of IL resident, Don Ober.

Music Therapist Susan Bergman gets ready to fry up some homegrown green tomatoes from the vegetable garden at AFRH-G.

Cross-stitch artist

By Milt Williams, Art Specialist

William “Bill” Sanders, a new resident in Gulfport, has been doing cross-stitch for 37 years and is showing his works of art in our Display Room through September. These works of art are on 18-count Aida cloth utilizing cross-stitch, half cross-stitch, backstitch, satin stitch, quarter cross-stitch, couching and French knots. He said, “Most of the cross-stitching was done using two pieces of DMC Ross with approximately 324 stitches per square inch. Working approximately 15 hours a week takes 4 to 5 months to complete one piece of work. It is a relaxing hobby and I get enjoyment seeing it completed and framed.”

My favorite art piece is the “Wolf piece” which looks like a photo – even close up! Thank you Bill for sharing your cross-stitch art with us. All who have seen these pieces likewise share in that enjoyment and we look forward to seeing more new pieces.

Above is the wolf piece that created that resembles a photo, even though it’s cross stitch.

To the left is Bill standing in front of his many cross-stitching works of art on display in the Art Room.

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

This is an open letter to Charles (Chuck) Dickerson, a really good friend of AFRH. I say AFRH because you are a good friend to us all here and to the Washington campus. I hope you and not the people of the past few. Last month AFRH-Gulfport, the residents, and I lost a truly good friend. You are, as my father would say, “A Mighty, Mighty Man!”

Being the Administrator is a hard job with little reward, except for the occasional handshake and a cheerful good morning from some of the residents. You, though, always had a cheerful greeting and smile for us. With every interaction I had with you, Chuck, I knew that you put the welfare of the Home and the residents first. You took time to talk and listen with an open mind and open heart.

I first met you Chuck in 2008 when I arrived at the DC home and you were the Chief of Resident Services there. At that time I didn’t know you well, but when you won the job of Administrator here in Gulfport, and I began working closely with you, I found you to be truly dedicated to the Home and I believe that you made it your personal mission seeing that we had the best of care and the best living conditions. I believe that when you retired we lost the best friend this Home has ever had or ever will ever have.

I was at your retirement ceremony but could not bring myself to stay until it was over. I tried but could not take it any longer because I was beginning to choke up and I felt like I was going to cry. So Chuck here is my farewell and good luck to you and yours. Remember when it’s your time to enter the Home I will be here to welcome you and hope we will continue our friendship. Your friend, Henri

Henri D. Gibson

Col. Willsite, Jamie Gominger & Michelle Gargiulo (Liaison/Oice of U.S. Congressman Steven Palazzo), Elizabeth Gray Henry (Legislative Aide/Office of U.S. Senator Thad Cochran) and RAC Chair Henri Gibson.
WINGS presents: WWI Remembrance

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS

The residents at AFRH-Washington had a special treat on August 6th. WINGS Performing Arts put on a special production for us entitled “WWI Remembrance.” The residents are from Gulfport, MS, and on Veteran’s Day last year they performed for the residents at our Gulfport location. After that, WINGS was invited to perform this special production at the Kennedy Center, which brought them to Washington, DC.

Remembrance is performance that focused on the time during WWI. It is based on poems, letters and music written during WWI. It honors the patriotism, sacrifice, and aftermath of that time, following all those involved, soldiers, and loved ones. It was a touching tribute and performed beautifully. There was music and dancing throughout the performance that portrayed all emotions felt during that time in our history.

Sue Bergman, the Music Therapist at AFRH-Gulfport had a part in this production. Dressed in full Scottish garb, she played “Amazing Grace” on her bagpipes at the end of the show. As she played she walked through the audience and exited out the back as we all listened to the haunting melody until it could be heard no more.

WINGS is a nationally recognized program held at the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center that works with youth of all ages to nurture talent, spirit, and leadership. We would like to thank all of the youth who worked so hard on this performance, as well as their parents and directors. This surely will be a production many will not forget.

Summer in the city means residents, friends partner in gardens

By Ken Rubotzky

Tomatoes, beans, peanuts, eggplants, corn -- these items from the Armed Forces Retirement Home-DC gardens are delicious and nutritious. Not every tomato is perfect, but they’re still tasty. Now in its fifth year, the gardening partnership of Home residents and volunteers from Friends of the Soldiers Home is the centerpiece for a relaxing time in a hectic city. Vegetables in more than 25 plots push through the long hot days of summer with the help of over 50 volunteers. Garden socials offer opportunities to serve beer and grilled food, and to swap tales. Residents bring their coolers filled with bubbly treats. Recent incessant rains has everything in the gardens spiraling skyward, including the weeds. Swallows nesting in Matthew’s new birdhouses flit above everyone’s heads, making tasty morsels of mosquitoes and other pesky garden critters. Michael, Enid, Casey and others carefully tend to Roger’s row of flowers. Kelly’s stewardship of the cut flower bed is rewarding us with yellows, purples, and reds. Good times are ahead too -- the cool growing weather is just two months away.

National Guard 257th Army Brass Band Concert

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS

Residents were treated to a wonderful concert put on by the National Guard 257th Army Brass Band. The music played was a wide variety of different styles and tunes from Broadway, Popular, Jazz, and Patriotic. During the concert they spoke about each song and medley and shared stories. One such song they did was a version of “Shenandoah” that wasentitled “Ragged Old Flag” composed by Johnny Cash. This song was a hit with the residents, as one of the band members read the poem as the song was played. It was a very moving tribute and received a standing ovation. Another song that resonated with the residents was a song that was led by a tuba. This song was “Rubber Ducky”. Other popular songs performed included, “American Patrol”, “When the Saints Go Marching In”, and “My Country Tis of Thee”. The members of the band were SFC Fred Marcellus, SSTG Brandon Lebe, SPC Charles Berry, SGT Paul Deschene, SSG Dave Tarquine, and SGT John Rosa. We look forward to having them return next year to perform for our Veterans.

2015 Hawaiian Luau at AFRH-W

By Nicole Chappell, Recreation Specialist

Aloha Kakou! On August 14th, the AFRH-W residents celebrated the “Hawaiian Luau on the Scott Patio. Although the sun was hot and bearing, the residents were all thrilled to engage in the festivities outside. The Ukulele Band provided an exciting introduction of traditional Hawaiian music which set the mood for the upcoming activities.

The residents had the opportunity to engage in Lei making, using the most beautiful Dendrobium Orchids, while waiting for the dance and fire show to begin. As the day progressed, the Hula Polynesian Ladies performed a non-traditional dance using their hips and hand gestures to the rhythm of the music.

Soon after, the Polynesian Men performed a traditional dance using hand and facial gestures that told a historical story of the Hawaiian Island. A few of the residents even participated in the dance too!!! The highlight of the event was the fire show, which left an anxious and eager expression on everyone’s face as the Hawaiian Fire Men tossed, turned, and twirled the fire sticks!

On the menu for the evening was a wonderful Hawaiian spread of Sweet & Sour Chicken, Sweet & Sour Pork, Pineapple rice, and a variety of fresh fruit including the resident’s favorite, pineapples and mangos! As the night went on, more and more residents moved outside where everyone could listen to the music and enjoy the Hawaiian mixed drinks, which were fresh Pina Coladas and frosty Mango Margaritas.

Special thanks to Sarah Kerman and Constance Maziel for all of their assistance in planning the event. In addition, thanks to our wonderful volunteers from the Walter Reed Medical Center, Mr. William Ernestberg from the Coast Guard, and Dining Hall staff. Aloha until next year!!!
Hawaiian good times

By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Assistant

The Residents on Valor Hall enjoyed a variety of Hawaiian goodness from music, decorations and cuisine starting Wednesday August 15, 2015 and ending on Friday August 14, 2015. On Wednesday, a steel drum and a ukulele were played at music time with Susan Bergman singing the songs of the beach and ocean, to the tiny bubbles in the drinks to the classics we all remember so well. A "Luau" themed cookout followed the music group. For the cookout, the dining room was decorated with flowers, bright colors and swinging Tucans. On Friday, a Luau lunch served coconut shrimp, mango and key lime pie and Hawaiian rolls just to name a few of the delicious Hawaiian cuisine selections. At 1400 on Friday, the Residents then were surfed over to the Happy Hour that covered Hawaiian trivia and more great music. Finally the Hawaiian days ended with a night time Luau Dance to put an end to the "Hawaiian Good Times."

A small thank you….

By Rob Miller, Recreation Assistant/fitness

Yes, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the residents of this facility for allowing me to come into your home. Thank you for allowing me to be your Fitness "guy." The most important thing however, thanks for helping me with my health. It may not seem like much, but I have been here for four months and have seen vast improvement with my flexibility, my blood pressure and just my overall health because I feel better.

You might ask yourself, "How did we help"? The answer is simple…Chair Exercise and Stretch class. The classes are held on separate days, chair exercise is Monday, Wednesday and Friday. As for the stretch class, they are held Tuesday and Thursday. These classes are held at 9:00 a.m. The best thing about it is, while working to improve your health, you also get support from others and have some social interaction, which helps you stay interested and motivated.

The chair exercise size class can be as strenuous as you want it to be. We begin with some simple stretches. Once we are finished we start with our "clusters." Clusters are the groupings of movements or exerercises that are done at the same time. They can be as short as 35 minutes. The class is about 45 minutes long, and covers the whole body. At the end, we all feel better. The class is not strict and there are only two rules: (1) If it hurts or you have an injury, don’t do it and (2) Let us keep it fun! I encourage suggestions to make it a better workout. Know when you think of a class it sounds like it is going to be a drag, but I like to think of it as "Chair Exercise Club," because we all are part of the program. The stretch class is the same way. It should feel good and we do good to our entire body through simple stetches that only take about 35 minutes.

In closing, it is my honor to help you. Try coming down for a couple of the classes, even if it is only for a few exercises. Even a little bit helps and it could help me, it can help anyone!

Cribbage Tournament

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist

On Tuesday August 11, 2015, residents were competing in a Cribbage Tournament on the 2nd floor Club Room. Mary German is keeping an eye on Bill Hill for that trick card shuffling. Ron Persing and Fred Van Pelt are making sure their counting comes out right. Wayland Webb and Bob Klotz are studying each other to win the game. Six residents signed up and six players played in the tournament. There could only be three winners for that day. Fred Van Pelt took 1st place, Bob Klotz took 2nd place, and Ron Persing took 3rd place.

Big wins, big smiles

By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Assistant

On Saturday July 18/2015 the LA 1 Molly Marine Chapter, Women Marine Association came to Loyalty Hall to share a morning game of Bingo. Each Resident was paired off with a volunteer to double the odds of winning. Many shouts of "Bingo" echoed during the event as the smiles and cheers followed. The prizes were awarded that also created many sounds of joy. Thanks to the Molly Marine Chapter for sharing a fantastic day with our AFRH-G Loyalty Residents.

AFRH-G June Activities

AFRH-G volunteers are priceless on recreation therapy outing!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

On Friday, July 24, 2014, residents on Valor, Loyalty, & Allegiance Halls enjoyed a Recreation Therapy outing to K-Mart for shopping and Cracker Barrel for lunch. AFRH-G Resident & Community volunteers paired up with residents to assist and escort individuals through K-Mart to find their needs. Resident volunteer, Jack Horsley, said "It was a ball… I love helping those folks… we have a great time!" Frances Scott was all smiles shopping for the perfect accessory for her hair and said, "I just love Jack… he is a great help." Other resident volunteers included Clifford "Smitty" Smith and Ernest Rouach along with community volunteers, Gail Boettcher and Leann Wise. A great big thank you to our volunteers who brighten the lives of the resident veterans and help to make our community outings a success!

The man behind the scenes

Jen Biernacki, Recreation Assistant

The scenery for the train layout has been filled with many talented ideas and developments from Clifford Smith, known as "Smitty" to all in the train yard. Smitty has spent many hours creating mountains, rivers, streams, bridges and buildings for the train layout. The roads, gardens, and terrain have taken shape. The mountains contain ridges, peaks, animals, hikers, lookouts and water that when viewed provides a sense of artistry. The foundation of the layout is now done. Minor changes and holiday additions will continue as the train layout is here for many more to enjoy. A sincere thank you to Smitty for his hard work and talents as our foundation for the layout is complete. We couldn’t have done it without you!

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Local soldiers visit D.C.
By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade HHHC, Fort Meade, recently visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington and were treated to a tour of the campus. Sheila Abarr, Public Affairs Officer, provided the history of the buildings and grounds, as well as an inside look at the facilities and services provided to the Residents.

The tour, which consisted of thirty-five Soldiers, stopped at the arts and crafts studio, bowling center, hobby shop, GI Gym, library, Sheridan Residence Hall and the Hall of Honor. Members of the unit were extremely appreciative, and stated that they would love to visit again, and volunteer.

DC celebrates USCG 225th birthday

Local soldiers visit D.C.
By Rebecca Newton, AFRH-W Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade HHHC, Fort Meade, visited and toured the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington.

Happy 225th Birthday Coast Guard
By Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-G Public Affairs

Happy 225th birthday to the U.S. Coast Guard! The Coast Guard is one of America’s five armed forces and traces its founding to Aug. 4, 1790, when the first Congress authorized the construction of 10 vessels to enforce tariff and trade laws, prevent smuggling, and protect the collection of federal revenue. Responsibilities added over the years included humanitarian duties such as aiding mariners in distress.

On August 4th the Armed Forces Retirement Home, along with members of the U.S. Coast Guard in Gulfport, Mississippi celebrated the 225th birthday of the US Coast Guard with the help of local Coast Guardsmen, including Coast Guard Reserve Force Master Chief, Eric L. Johnson. Ombudsman Rob Webb offered a warm welcome and gifted coins to the guests. Chaplin John Goodloe offered a prayer and Resident Advisory Committee Chair, Phil Ford, presented AFRH-G mugs. The celebration culminated with the singing of the Coast Guard song and the ceremonial cutting of the cake by the youngest, and oldest Coast Guardsmen present. Master Chief Johnson concluded the celebration by sharing warm sentiments with attendees.

Biloxi baseball is back!
By Sean Campbell, Lead Recreation Specialist

For several years the AFRH-G residents have been able to enjoy local AA Baseball in Mobile, AL as the Mobile BayBears hosted AFRH veterans each year at Hank Aaron Stadium. Now that the Biloxi Shuckers organization is in full swing, residents won last time to Hank Aaron Stadium in Mobile, to watch the BayBears take on the new home team. Residents enjoyed food and drink as well as great seats and air conditioned access to enjoy the game. For years the BayBears were the “home team” and now Biloxi has found a home on the Mississippi Gulf Coast at MGM Park. In addition to enjoying a game between the two rivals in Mobile, residents will attend a game in Biloxi in September to cheer on the Biloxi Shuckers.