AFRH-WASHINGTON

Banana Split Social with Deputy MCPOCG

By Nicole Chappell & Constance Maziel

On Friday, February 13th, AFRH-W celebrated Valentine’s Day with a Resident/Employee Banana Split Social hosted by the Recreation Department in the Scott Dining Hall. Oldies but Goodies love songs were played throughout the event by the DJ Billy White, as staff and residents enjoyed a cool treat! All participants appeared thrilled by the many choices of strawberry ice cream, vanilla, chocolate, butter pecan, and a variety of sugar free options as well. Volunteers and special guests, including Deputy MCPOCG Leilani Cale-Jones, all assisted and enjoyed the social.

As you know, the Recreation Department never keeps it simple. We challenged our guests to a “Name that Tune” game during the event. All the residents gladly joined in the activity to win a Valentine’s prize. The volunteers even intermingled during the game to assist some of the residents. The prizes included boxes of chocolates, chocolate roses, Valentine’s Teddy Bears, Hershey Kisses, musical stuffed animals, heart-shaped Gumballs and Pink & Red Jelly Beans.

The event concluded with upbeat music followed by dancing from the Residents and Recreation staff. The guests stated that socializing and having ice cream with the residents was the highlight of the afternoon. Thank you to all the Residents who came out to the social and to all of the volunteers for their support, making the Valentine’s Banana Split social a delightful occasion.

AFRH-GULFPORT

AFRH-G Mardi Gras Parade and Ball

By Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

“Laissez les bons temps rouler” is a Cajun expression meaning “Let the good times roll!” It strongly conveys the “joie de vivre” (“joy of living”) attitude. AFRH-G celebrated “Fat Tuesday” on Friday night where the 2015 King and Queen were crowned. The King was Vernon Bourdette and the Queen was Mildred Knoble. Past King and Queens were also in the parade, along with employees who made beautiful floats and threw beads and doubloons to the crowd of residents and guests. The Mardi Gras Ball followed the parade in the Community Center where residents celebrated and danced the night away with music provided by Eddie McDaniel.

Vernon Bourdette was crowned King by the AFRH-G Administrator, Chuck Dickerson.

Beautiful Mardi Gras Maids handed out beads in the parade and Mardi Gras Ball.

Queen Mildred Knoble was crowned Queen by the AFRH-G Administrator, Chuck Dickerson.

Vernon Bourdette had a blast riding on the beautiful King’s float decorated by volunteers from Keesler AFB and driven by Lee Corban.

Queen Knoble was all smiles while leading the parade in the Queen’s float driven by Sean Campbell.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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Page 6 American Gold Star Mothers visit D.C.
Waymon Lucas Jr. grew up in Maryland. In the 8th grade, he and his class went to the Naval Academy at Annapolis and were all billed as sailors’ kids. Waymon’s experience gave him a profound feeling of pride about the military and his nation and he joined the US Navy at the age of 18.

Waymon went to Basic Training at Great Lakes, IL, and then went to Tennessee to receive extra training in Aviation Structural Mechanics. Since aircraft had always fascinated him, he was able to combine two passions in one. As Waymon later said, “There’s nothing like seeing an aircraft you’ve worked on and maintained being launched off the end of a catapult. I’m proud to have been part of and served the best aviation team in the world, the U.S. Naval Aviation team!” Waymon went to his first duty station in 1972 at San Diego, CA, aboard the USS TICONDEROGA (CV-14) working on the maintenance of their airplanes. He was able to see many parts of the world including the Mediterranean aboard the USS AMERICAN (CV-65) and the Virgin Islands on the USS KENNEDY (CVA-67).

Out of seven squadrons that he was in, only two aircraft were ever lost. The most heart wrenching was aboard the USS KENNEDY, when a young sailor was given a seat aboard the EZC HAWKEYE to fly home to attend his wife’s funeral and the plane went down with all five aboard perishing. The other had a happier ending, when an F8 CRUSADER fared out after takeoff. Fortunately, the pilot ejected safely. Waymon also enjoyed stateside stations, such as Norfolk, VA. Andrews AFB and Pax River, MD, where along with his military duties he became a Volunteer Firefighter, joined a gospel group and he and his wife had their first child, Damien. They later had two more children, Adriane and Jennetta. Waymon’s last duty station was San Diego, CA during Operation Desert Storm. After, in his civilian career, he ended up working the same job he left, but this time he was in charge.

Waymon heard about the “Old Soldier’s Home” when he was young and had noticed it on his leave and earnings statement while in the military. So in December 2014, he came to AFRH-W. Waymon enjoys music and plays his harmonica on campus.
Message from the Chief Operating Officer

FEBRUARY 28, 2015
ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

Scratch another month from your calendar! Frankly, with all of the snow and cold that February brought, I’m not sad to see it go. However, even with the adverse weather, February was yet another productive time for AFRH. The Washington, D.C. Campus hosted the Creative Minds International Charter School Lease Signing Ceremony and the Gulfport Campus signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Keesler Air Force Base Medical Center.

Chuck Dickerson, AFRH-G Administrator and Col. Thomas Harrell, 81st Medical Group Commander, signed a Training Affiliation Agreement, 9 Feb 15. This agreement now allows the Residents living at AFRH the ability to receive medical treatment at the Retirement Home instead of traveling to Keesler Medical Center.

A Keesler AFB press release provides that the new process will make receiving medical treatment easier for retirees by shortening their travel times to and from the home, which will improve the training for the internal medicine residency program and makes it easier for veterans living in the Retirement Home to have access to specialty care available at Keesler Medical Center, according to Col. Robert Edwards. It also outlines other necessary medical services that better support the veterans living in the community.

This endeavor is actually mutually beneficial as it offers opportunities to improve patient health, as well as, providing educational opportunities for Keesler providers. Col. Edwards indicated that “for the Air Force, our medical education program needs access to the complex medical cases that, unfortunately, come with the natural human aging process,” said Edwards. “The experience for our internal medicine physicians is invaluable in continuing to develop their medical expertise.” Not to be out done, AFRH-Washington had a ceremony, 9 Feb, as well. Creative Minds International Charter School is now a tenant of AFRH. Signing a lease agreement to operate out of the Sherman Building on the Washington, DC Campus.

Legislation requires the Department of Defense to approve/sign leasing agreements for AFRH; therefore, Susan Lewis, Chief, Real Estate Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, represented the Department of Defense at a unique real estate signing ceremony. Details of the visit have not be finalized at this time. AFRH will provide an update to residents and staff members once available.

The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall will visit Washington, DC on March 19, 2015
Prince Charles and Camilla are scheduled to visit the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington and President Lincoln’s Cottage on March 19, 2015. Details of the visit have not be finalized at this time. AFRH will provide an update to residents and staff members once available.

Resident’s son writes poem that will be displayed in the Hall of Honors

I served you with my best. When the time came to take a stand and draw the line I was there. I took that stand and did so with pride.

Now in my later years you serve me and help me stand. In my final days and in my final hour you will be there to give me one last salute as I heed my final tour.

There is no gun fire, no mortars to explode around, no orders to be yelled and no bugle to play as my alarm clock. Just the idle chatter of other residents about their days, a slow flowing of music drifting from another dorm down the hall as we sit and remember who we once were and the many adventures we had.

My room is filled with many items collected from overseas on my many tours away from home, but my heart is filled with gratitude and appreciation for you, who serve me in my final hour. Time marches on for many, but for us that time is short and we are proud that you are there for us, to serve us and take care of us.

We thank you so brave to endure the long hours and difficult care as we endured long days and long nights protecting you and those before you. Now you protect us. After many campaigns, wars and conflicts we can sit and reap peacefully about our day. Our friends, family, and brothers and sisters in arms can sleep peacefully at night, not just because we fought for this peace, but because they know we are in such great care.

But know in our hearts you are loved and appreciated by us. Your name won’t be known by many, but you will be known, by our smiles, by our joy, by our appreciation and love. You will be known by the families and friends who come to see us and see how well we are cared for.

You may not be soldiers, but you are warriors who stand by us and help us fight for what most take for granted daily. You stand by us. Know that in our hearts we stand by you. To the nurses, cooks, housekeeping and all others of the AFRH staff we thank you.

Susan Lewis, Chief, Real Estate Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with Golnar Abedin, Creative Minds International, complete the official signing of the 10-year lease.

This event was well attended, led by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes-Norton, and a myriad of guests from the D.C. government, Department of Defense and Residents. The lease to Creative Minds, a District of Columbia not-for-profit corporation, will include portions of the North Sherman Building and Sherman Building Annex and adjacent parking area for a total of 32,000 sq. ft. The lease is designed to allow the Charter School to start with the renovation and use of a base area, allowing for potential renovation and use of additional areas of the premises depending on Charter School growth over the 10 year term of the lease. Proposed use of the identified leased premises is compatible with the mission of AFRH and will generate revenue to AFRH by leasing under utilized spaces.

Looking forward…hopefully warmer temperatures! We have St. Patrick’s Day, and hopefully the coming of spring, but did you know that March 4th is “Hug a GI Day”? Now, I won’t be out and about issuing hugs, but I will take the opportunity to say thank you for your service. See you next month!

Steve McManus

Students from Creative Minds International Public Charter School and founder, Gondar Abient, swings a sledge hammer to close out the lease signing ceremony.

The Angels of AFRH
By Neal Allen Stone

RAC Chair, Henri Gibson (left) receives the poem from author, Neal Allen Stone (right) at the monthly Town Hall Meeting.

Resident Neal Stone (above) is very proud of his son (below).
February is coming to a close and many Residents and Staff are looking forward to spring. We have endured several snow days this month which significantly impacted employees commuting to work. I want to thank the dedicated staff who understand the importance of their positions in providing care and support for our Residents and brave the weather to report for duty.

There are several ways AFRH-W works to improve the lives of its residents during winter weather events. “Snow Rooms” are set aside to allow employees a place to spend the night when travel conditions make commuting dangerous. It is better to have employees on site through the event, provide shelter and a hot meal, than risk an impossible commute. Employees reporting to duty early, because of impending weather, are also provided a hot meal in the dining hall.

February is Black History Month when the country observes and remembers important people and events in our national history. AFRH-W was proud to have Congressman G. K. Butterfield speak to Residents, Staff, and guests during our event February 27 which was co-sponsored by President Lincoln’s Cottage. As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and proponent of civil rights, it was our privilege to hear the congressional speaker.

Our campus has a lot to be proud of: our military heritage, history, its Residents and Staff, and our facilities. Several distinguished visitors were here this month to share their support and we were proud to host each one. Ms. Stephanie Barra, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Readiness and Force Management) performed the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Readiness and Force Management), Stephanie Barra is briefed on the TekTone (resident monitoring system) by Patrick Cavanagh, Security Supervisor.

“SUPERBOWL XLIX PARTY”
By Jerry Carter, Recreation Services

On Sunday February 1st the SuperBowl XLIX Party took place in the Scott Community Center. The New England Patriots defeated the Seattle Seahawks in a very exciting and competitive football game. The Community Center was packed and the residents had a good time during the game. Many residents were treated to pizza, chicken wings, and cold beverages throughout the game. Several residents commented on how unique it was to watch the game on two giant screens in the Community Center. Ralph Randers won first place prize for picking the Superbowl winner and Patrick Goldsworthy picked the team leading the game at halftime. Recreation Services thanks the Armed Forces Volunteers for helping make this a successful and fun party.

February has flown by and we had some significant events occurred that impacted residents. The staff and administration is to be commended for the quick response in ensuring services are put in place. The residents, was not impacted in any way. The number of personnel who ‘bunkered down’ and stayed in place to ensure that meal service, janitorial service, was not impacted due to the sometimes horrendous traveling conditions caused by snow and ice is very much appreciated. The willingness to take time away from family maintained, speaks directly to the cooperative spirit amongst residents, staff and administration is strengthening. I hope you continue to be involved in our community.

If you need the boost of caffeine, the burst of flavor from juice, or a quick snack (cereal, crackers, etc.) until the cantina repairs are completed, it is available on the assisted living units of Sheridan Building. Please keep in mind that some residents are not as fortunate to be totally independent and mobile as others who rely on these areas. Consideration of their needs before your own is appreciated.

The RAC is mandated to meet quarterly, but does meet monthly, as it has traditionally for many years. Some have expressed interest for the meetings to go to quarterly. Please let me know your thoughts on this potential change. The meetings are open to all residents, if you have a suggestion or comment you would like to see addressed in my future columns in the Communicator, let’s sit down and discuss.

Highlights of last meeting:
Call to order on February 18, 2015 in the Scott Community Center.
Roll Call – Members present: Phil Ford, George Brewer, Lilian Miller, Joe Maier, Howard Shirley, Ken Faller
Members absent: Al Brotski, Michelle Busch, George Pembury
Staff and Guests present: None
Minute of January 21, 2015 meeting approved by unanimous vote.
Chairman’s Welcome to all / Announcements
>> Please be reminded that emergency pendants are available at no cost from Security.
>> The AFRH-W RAC Recreation Fund in their final request(s).
>> Thank you to Staff who stayed the night on Monday to ensure a continuity of resident services and meals on Tuesday, February 17, 2015
>> TekTone – If you ‘push the button’ and still have a health and welfare check conducted call in a work order, submit work order by e-mail, or call Campus Ops Admin Assistant (Markena) at 202-541-0613 if issue is not resolved timely.

RAC FLOOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS and COMMITTEES
FLOOR REPS: None
CAMPUS OPERATIONS: No report (see above regarding Tek-Tone).

FOOD SERVICE: Please use comment box in front of Dining Hall if you have food items you would like to be considered for chef’s specials, as well as any additional comments, suggestions, concerns regarding food service provided. Meetings held 2nd Tuesday of month at 10AM in Dining Facility. New 6 week cycle menu began February 1, 2015. There will be a field trip to U.S. Foods Warehouse on March 12, 2015. They will have a number of items for us to sample. Sign up sheet to be provided one week prior to Recreation Trip table.
GOLF: No report
HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Please use CDO suggestion box located on Front Desk of Wellness Center for comments, questions, concerns and suggestions you have.
MORALES WELFARE AND RECREATION: No report.
MASTER PLAN: Long term lease for Charter School building needed. Several residents interested in building for RAC still sought.
NEW BUSINESS: Motion to approve Ken Faller appointment as 5th floor Rep made by Howard Shirley, 2nd by Joe Maier. Passed unanimously.

Special Events
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Several residents commented on how unique it was to watch the game on two giant screens in the Community Center. Ralph Randers won first place prize for picking the Superbowl winner and Patrick Goldsworthy picked the team leading the game at halftime. Recreation Services thanks the Armed Forces Volunteers for helping make this a successful and fun party.

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Memorandum of understanding (MOU) makes medical services easier for veterans
By Senior Airman Holly Mansfield

Almost a decade ago, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) making it easier for veterans living in the retirement home to receive medical care. Although this agreement has been in place for years, many veterans do not know about it. This MOU allows veterans to get their health care closer to home, making it easier and less stressful.

The MOU was signed by Col. Thomas Harrell, 81st Medical Group commander, and Chuck Dickerson, Gulfport Armed Forces Retirement Home Administrator. The MOU allows veterans to receive medical care at Keesler Medical Center, which is closer to the retirement home.

Col. Harrell said, “The MOU is a win-win situation for veterans and the Department of Defense. It provides veterans with easier access to medical care, and it helps reduce the cost of medical care.”

Dickerson added, “This MOU has been in place for years, but many veterans do not know about it. We want to make sure that veterans are aware of this opportunity.”

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American Gold Star Mothers tour the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington

By David Eichaker
American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., recently toured the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C., which allowed the organization to see potential opportunities for volunteering. American Gold Star Mothers of America is a volunteer service organization which has its headquarters in D.C., said Jennifer Jackman, National President of American Gold Star Mothers of America, adding that it makes the AGSM available to volunteer at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. "It was a delight to be able to come here and actually tour the Home today and see the opportunities for volunteering," said Jackman, noting that she took a special interest in the library. "The library is available to every resident of the Home. They can come to the library to read, study and relax, regardless of their physical ability.

Although reading books and having a place to relax in quiet is important, there are other activities that can help keep the residents active while being creative. The arts and crafts center offers fine motor development and relaxation, said Jackman. Arts and crafts can keep residents engaged; there is one area where active residents can go to get physical exercise. "The third thing we saw was the exercise fitness room," said Jackman, adding that this allows the ability to keep fit regardless of weather conditions outside. The Gold Star Mothers have been helping veterans for decades through volunteering. "We’ve been volunteering to help veterans and their families and through that we help each other and we move forward," said Jackman. "This is just one of the things we love to do and it brings us joy and it meets our mission and that’s just wonderful for us to come here and do that with the Armed Forces retirement home."

Happy hour hits the mark

By David Eichaker
Residents recently gathered at the Community Center within the Armed Forces Retirement Home for a social event to promote fellowship amongst the occupants. The recreation therapy department hosted Happy Hour, which integrated all levels of care and support, said Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapist with the Armed Forces Retirement Home. "We try to put everybody together to enjoy socializing and mingling with each other," said Mitchell.

During Happy Hour, drinks, food and music were available, but the socializing proved to be the bigger benefit. Happy Hour is a great event for residents to mingle with each other and tell jokes and tell trivia," said Mitchell. Although Happy Hour is a way to keep the residents busy and active, there are other programs used as well. "Part of the aspect of programming here at the Home is to provide activities and events that the residents enjoy attending and participating in actively. It helps improve their quality of life and it gives them an opportunity to be with other residents in a social environment. We try to do a little bit of everything and the residents feel at home when they are here," said Mitchell.

Clarence Darrow Play a hit

By Christine Baldwin, Librarian
On Tuesday, February 10th the Wounded Warrior Command Soldiers: Col. David Oeschger, SGM Patrick Fatuesi, MAJ Lisa Yanity, SSG Barry Homburg, and SSG Giovanni participated in a bowling social with our residents on Tuesday, February 10th in the Sheridan Bowling Center.

The Command Soldiers and participating resident bowlers enjoyed the bowling games and opportunity to interact together throughout this bowling social. The soldiers expressed how much they enjoyed this event and look forward to visiting the AFRH-W again in the future.
Bocce friend
By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

Is it a team member who scores a perfect throw; is it buddy who cheers you in the game, hmmm? It is an invention by our own Dennis Crabtree, Sports Recreation Specialist. The Bocce Friend enables our residents to pick the bocce ball up without bending down. “Bocce Friend” is a cylinder with an opening on the bottom attached to a handle that you lower to the floor, bump the ball in the opening and lift to retrieve. WOW! My back feels better just writing this story. The prototype was made from an oatmeal container, duct tape and a wooden handle. Dennis this is really a great idea, talk about looking after the resident players. We look forward to your next invention and we all will properly see this on the TV Commercials soon.

Bocce Ball Tournament
By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist


On Monday February 16, 2015 residents were competing in the Bocce Ball Tournament in the Bocce Room. Steve Crews and Buron Noel were looking to get that bocce ball closest to the Pallino (yellow ball). Helen Noel is seen cheering for Buron Noel to beat Steve Crews. There were 16 players that played for 3 hours in the tournament but there could only be three winners for that day. Carl Hardy took 1st place, Don Fisher took 2nd place, Fred Ray took 3rd place.

Wayland Webb helps Frederick Schultz prepare his income tax return.

The Art of Mosaics
By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

Artist, Jo Slay, trained in graphic arts now a Mosaic artist, came to the Home to talk about the history of mosaics and demonstrate some of her art pieces. We were amazed of her delightful use of tile, stone, ceramics pieces, glued together to decorate an item. She doesn’t throw away anything that has the potential to enhance her subject matter, a half broken vase or a ceramic bird missing a tail feather can all be arranged to make one new piece of art. She will be starting a class in April, which many residents signed up to participate. We are looking forward to her teaching us this wonderful technique and learning how to make a mosaic.
WASHINGTON

Nothing quite like a day at the race track

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy Specialist

On Friday, January 30th the Residents enjoyed an afternoon at the races. The track was made of paper and the horses were wooden but that didn't stop the spirits of the famous Sea-biscuit, Man o'War, Secretariat, and the Home favorite, War Emblem coming to life at the AFRH-W track. Residents were given poker chips to place bets on the horse of their choice and the resident with the most chips at the end of the 5 races were decreed the big winners!

Dallas Lamb - 1st
Ollie Brown - 2nd
Don Egolf - 3rd

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME
WASHINGTON
FEBRUARY 28, 2015

GULFPORT

AFRH-G celebrated Mardi Gras with lots of lagniappe

By Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

Mardi Gras begins on the Epiphany (Three King’s Day-January 6) and ends on the day before Ash Wednesday. Mardi Gras is French for Fat Tuesday which reflects the last night of partying and eating rich, fatty foods before the fasting of the Lenten season. The first Mardi Gras parade held in New Orleans is recorded to have taken place in 1837 and was embraced by those of French or Catholic heritage. That is where the slogan, “Laissez les bons temps rouler” came into play. This saying means, “let the good times roll.”

The traditional colors of Mardi Gras are purple (meaning justice), green (meaning faith), and gold (meaning power). The parades are referred to as “Krewes”. A Carnival Krewe is led by the captain, who is the permanent leader of the group. Each year a king and queen are selected to reign over the parade, just like at the AFRH.

The King Cake is also part of the Mardi Gras season and was served as lagniappe (meaning a little something extra) the night of the Mardi Gras Ball. The King Cake gets its name from the three biblical kings. You can only purchase King Cake from the Epiphany until Mardi Gras day. Traditionally the king cake is a sweet, sugary and iced cinnamon roll type bread made in a circle with purple, green, and gold sugar sprinkled on top. Inside there is a plastic baby which is the symbol of Jesus. Whoever gets the baby is responsible for purchasing the next king cake.

Residents and guests have a ball while line dancing at the Mardi Gras Ball.

Queen Mildred Knoble and King Vernon Bourdette toast each other.

Barbara Folk and Sally Manning are in the Mardi Gras spirit.

Cassandra McGowan rides in the Krewe on a float made by Ability Works.

Residents and guests have a ball while line dancing at the Mardi Gras Ball.


Marion Wolke and Rich Carter aka “Cool Breeze” dress in their Mardi Gras gear.

Tom Lynch looked festive in his jester costume.

Ronald Washington gets a hug from Susie Baumunk, who dressed up as a gnome.

Alma Wilson places her bet with Carolyn Haug with the help of Nicole Chappell and Sarah Kenan.

Dallas Lamb celebrates his winning with volunteer Andrea Thomas.

Dallas Lamb - 1st
Ollie Brown - 2nd
Don Egolf - 3rd

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