

**AFRH-WASHINGTON**

## Iron Chef competition heats up again

By Carol Mitchell

On Friday, January 16th the Armed Forces Retirement Home- Washington held their Annual Iron Chef Challenge. The Challenge entailed having three teams all cooking a type of Macaroni and Cheese dish. Team 1 included staff member Sarah Kenan, Assisted Living residents Santo Dibella, and Catherine Deitch who chose to make a "Lobster Mac n Cheese". Team 2 included staff member Amanda Jensema, Independent Living resident Eleanor Price and Long Term Care resident Ray Colvard who made a "Bacon Wrapped Beer Mac n Cheese". Team 3 included staff member Carol Mitchell, Long Term Care resident Ray Marriott, Assisted Living resident Edith Ellington, and Memory Support resident Charles Cromack who chose to make a "Cajun Shrimp Mac n Cheese". It was a wonderful event for Residents and Staff to join together and work as a team! The event took place in the Scott Community Center which was transformed into a gourmet kitchen... hot plates and all! The Chefs went into action at 10:00 a.m. and was open to all for viewing. Each team had a variety of tasks to perform such as: frying bacon, chopping and sautéing shrimp, grating cheeses, adding in spices, and of course boiling up the various types of noodles. The dishes were then put into the ovens to bake. At 1:30 p.m. Residents and staff were asked to come back for the Judging and Tasting. Our judges for this tasty event were Ron Kartz, Chief, Resident Services, Teresa Hui, Supervisory Dietitian, Cleophus Snow, Dining Hall Manager, and Phil Ford, Resident Advisory Committee Chairman. While the judges were making their decision, all in attendance were able to try the different types of Mac and Cheese. Special thanks to our judges and participating chefs. The expert judges were scoring the dishes on appearance, texture, taste, etc. This led Team 2 to a 1st place win! Congratulations to Amanda, Eleanor, and Ray! All the dishes were delicious. We look forward to next year's "Challenge" and new chef's in the House!



Charles Cromack and Edith Ellington dice up shrimp for their Macaroni and Cheese recipe.



Santos Dibella helps grate cheese to be added into his team's dish.



Eleanor Price, Amanda Jensema, and Ray Colvard show off their winning Bacon Wrapped Beer Mac & Cheese dish.

**AFRH-GULFPORT**

## Happy 100th Birthday to Gulfport Resident, Stephen J. Lucas

By Christopher Alexander, Admissions Officer

On Sunday, January 11, 2015, the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport Miss celebrated the 100th birthday of resident Stephen J. Lucas. Lucas retired from the Navy on September 1, 1955 after serving 22 years between the Navy and the Marine Corps. He served in both WWII and Korea. Born in New York, New York on January 11, 1915, Mr. Lucas joined the US Marine Corps April 1, 1935 serving until November 7, 1940 in China, Quantico, Cuba, and Norfolk, VA. After a brief hiatus, he joined the US Navy on January 10, 1941 and retired September 1, 1955. His military ratings include gas and diesel engines and refrigeration.

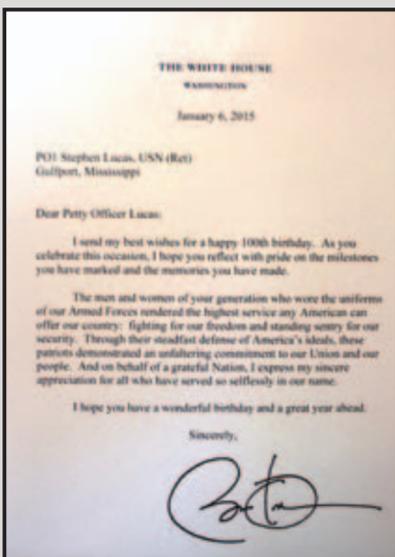
On behalf of all the staff and residents at AFRH-G we would like to wish you a very Happy 100th Birthday. Mr. Lucas is the first resident to turn 100 years old since the re-opening of Gulfport in 2010.



Stephen Lucas blows out the candles on his 100th Birthday.



Chuck Dickerson congratulated Mr. Lucas on becoming a centenarian.



President Obama sent his best wishes to Mr. Lucas for his 100th birthday.

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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 Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi



ARMY NAVY AIR FORCE MARINE CORPS COAST GUARD

AFRH-Gulfport waiting time for residency is  
27-29 months from the date of application approval

AFRH-Washington has no waiting time for residency

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

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

- who are 60 years of age or over; and were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions after 20 or more years of active service.
- who are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty in the Armed Forces.
- who served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay were discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of injuries, disease, or disability.
- who served in a women's component of the Armed Forces before June 12, 1948; and are determined under rules prescribed by the Chief Operating Officer to be eligible for admission because of compelling personal circumstances.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH, PAO/Marketing, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400. Visit us on the web at: <http://www.AFRH.gov>



The Joint Commission  
[www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)

A CARF-CCAC Five-Year Term of Accreditation was awarded to the Armed Forces Retirement Home. <http://www.carf.org>  
<http://www.carf.org/aging>



## AFRH-G Veteran Highlight

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian



Frank Haney was born on August 30, 1924 in the Delta region of Mississippi in the town of Friars Point. His father worked for the city of Clarksdale and his mother was a housewife. Some of his fondest memories of growing up in the Delta are working at his first job. At age sixteen, he delivered groceries by bicycle earning \$1 per week. He later worked at a bakery in town.

In 1943, Frank and a few of his closest buddies were drafted into the military to fight in WWII. He was sent to Army basic and tactical training at Fort Sill, OK. The Army trained him to be a cook and baker and he was assigned to the 100th Division. His division did a winter time maneuver before being sent overseas in April 1944. Theirs was the first convoy to land in Marseilles. At the time, the Germans were retreating and his division followed them up and shelled them. Then the

division got held up in a citadel near Collège de Bitche (as a joke, they had an organization called "Sons of Bitche"). Here, they battled back and forth with the Germans. Unfortunately this wasn't the only combat he saw. He spent a total of nineteen months in combat.

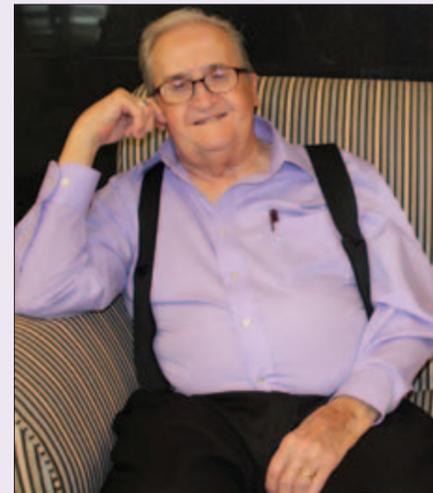
After the war was declared over, he was sent to Berlin. He said Berlin was in shambles. He was put in charge of the dining hall and named Service Supervisor. When he left Berlin in 1946, his rank was Sergeant First Class.

Arriving back in America by ship, Frank decided to get out of the Army but was still in the Reserves. Before too long, he was activated with the Army National Guard for the Berlin Crisis staying a couple of years. After he left the Army National Guard, he enlisted with the Air National Guard. Working for the Air National Guard, he was chosen to supervise the dining hall and barracks at Gulfport Field. His rank by this time was Master Sergeant. Upon leaving Gulfport Field, he went to work in food service at Keesler Air Force Base. After devoting 32 years to military service, he decided to retire in 1984.

When questioned whether or not he was married, Frank answered, "That's the most important part!" He met his wife in 1951 when he was set up on a blind date. He said it was love at first sight. They were married in 1954 and eventually had two sons and one daughter. His family has lived in Gulfport since 1962. Tragically, one of his sons died at the young age of fourteen from a cerebral hemorrhage. Frank also lost his sweetheart in

2005. His son and daughter have definitely made him proud. His daughter, who is a retired school teacher, works for the Department of Education. His son is a state representative for Mississippi. Between his two children, he has five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

When asked if he enjoys living at AFRH-G, he replied, "This place is a blessing." He also spoke of his experience in the Army saying, "The Army taught me how to live. That was the blessing the Army gave me."



## AFRH-W Veteran Highlight

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian

Vere Andrew Hotchkiss was born in California and he joined the US Air Force from Boy's Town, Nebraska. Upon going to Basic Training at Parks AFB, CA, his training flight was made up of seventy-five members of his senior class of boy's Town High School class of 1955. After basic training, Vere attended the Air Force Tech School and his first assignment was to Walker AFB, NM, where he went Sentry Dog Handler School at Fort Carson, CO. His dog's name was Prince, and he became Vere's big pet for the next four years at Walker. From there, Vere went to Earnest Harmon Air Base in Newfoundland, which he thought was the best kept secret in the Air Force due to his assignment and the semi-remote location. While Vere was stationed there, he got to go on a refueling mission around the North Pole and watch the refueling of B-52. That was an experience he has never forgotten. After being in Newfoundland for twenty months, where he had not seen a temperature above fifty degrees, the Air Force sent him to Eglin AFB in Florida in July. That first summer, the heat almost did him in!

While at Eglin, Vere met and married the mother of his two daughters and he cross trained into the field of Manpower and Organization. This was a big change in Vere's military career and when he left Eglin it was his last assignment to a base level organization. He was next assigned to HQ USAFE in Germany, HQ ADC at Ent AFB, Colorado, and his last assignment was at HQ AAC in Alaska. Vere spent five years in Anchorage, where he retired after twenty-two years and twenty four days.

After Vere retired from the Air Force, he stayed in

Anchorage for an additional twelve years and started his second career in the insurance industry. He stayed in this career until 2001 and then retired and moved to San Diego, CA. He later went to the cultural capital Kingsman, AZ before coming to AFRH-W in 2014.

**AFRH wants to hear your military stories. Please contact the Public Affairs Office.**

**AFRH-G  
228-897-4429**

**AFRH-W  
202-541-7550**

## Military Bowling Championship

The 58th Annual Military Bowling Championships were held at The Orleans and The Gold Coast Hotels & Casino in Las Vegas, NV for the 9th consecutive year from January 18-22, 2015. The tournament brings together military bowlers from worldwide assignments to participate in the outstanding competition in 3 divisions: active duty/veterans, retired, and senior retired (age 60+).

The Military Bowling Championships (MBC) is primarily a "Scratch" Team Event comprised of 6 individuals per team. There were 262 teams bowling in this year's event (1,572 bowlers). This is Pete Hudson's 9th year bowling in the MBC. Pete represented the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington very well in this Worldwide Military Bowling Tournament.



# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



Wow, the New Year is flying by! It seems like I was just writing an article yesterday! January was a good month; we welcomed in several new residents and had a myriad of visitors, to include a contingent from the NBA's Washington Wizards to the AFRH-Washington campus. The Wizards visited the AFRH-Washington Residents as part of the NBA's FIT week, a wellness/fitness campaign. The NBA is attempting to get the public to make a pledge, "whether you pledge to drink more water, swap your snack for a healthier alternative, or commit to work out like the pros, NBA FIT and Kaiser Permanente are helping empower fans with health-related content and opportunities to "Be Active, Eat Healthy and Play Together!"

AFRH-Gulfport sponsored several trips this month to include the USAF Armament Museum and the Reese's Senior Bowl Game in Mobile, AL (my Executive Officer is still angry he missed that one!). AFRH-G also welcomed an amazing donation from the Magnolia Quilters. The group is made up of members from Biloxi, Gulfport, and Saucier, MS ranging in age from teenagers to 84.

Last month I spoke about communication and answered some of the anonymous communications I receive. This month I would like to expound on the communication efforts, and talk about transparency.

My staff and I make every effort to be transparent in our actions; between Focus Groups, Town Halls, All Hands, the Communicator, et al. We make every effort to ensure both Residents and Employees are aware of events/issues at AFRH. We have also increased our communication efforts with the AFRH Advisory Council as well as the surrounding communities.

All of that said, there will always be rumors, inaccuracies, and incomplete information floating in our midst. I recall an AFRH Fact Sheet from 2003, when it was stated that "rumors create an environment of negativity and unnecessarily stress individuals who hear these rumors." That remains true today. I would ask that if you hear something that doesn't seem quite right, ask someone in the know; Campus Administrators, Section Chiefs, etc. Use the forums I discussed last month; Town Halls, COO Boxes, COO Email (coo.office@afrh.gov), etc. I know we will never stop disinformation but we should be able to minimize it.



Ron Kartz, Armand Johnston and Steve McManus join in the aerobic exercise program during the NBA FIT Week.

So...what's on the horizon? We will be having a ceremony, 9 Feb, to celebrate the signing of the lease with Creative Minds International (CMI) Charter School. CMI will be bringing a charter school to the AFRH-Washington campus in the Sherman Building. This is a major accomplishment for AFRH that has community and more importantly revenue implications. It will also afford the opportunity for AFRH-Washington Resident interaction, allowing our veterans to share their knowledge and experience with future generations.

Additionally, in honor of Black History Month there will be a ceremony at AFRH-Washington 27 Feb at 1300. In Gulfport there will be an International Cultural Social on 24 Feb at 1400 and a Black History Month movie series. Of course we will also be having Super Bowl parties at both campuses. Please take the time to participate in these scheduled activities. I believe you will find them enjoyable and enlightening.

Steve McManus

## Comedy power hour

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist

On January 5, 2015 the AFRH had a Comedy Power Hour in the theater. If you do not know what the Comedy Power Hour is then you need to come to the theater and find out. There were 50 residents who came to see Jeff Dunham's Very Merry Christmas Special. Jeff Dunham and his cast of characters make Christmas very special, and hilarious, like only they know how. This was such a success that the Comedy Power Hour will be on the calendar each month. Residents were also lined up for popcorn and drinks.



## Fitness News: Aerobic Exercise

By Jerry Carter, Fitness Specialist

Aerobic exercise includes activities during which oxygen plays an important role in the release of energy in your muscles. Aerobic exercise involves some of the most important popular, and fun exercises you'll do. Examples include walking, dancing, biking and swimming at a low moderately intense pace. No matter what your age, aerobic exercise will help you in your daily activities. It will help your heart, blood vessels, lungs and muscles complete routine tasks and rise to unexpected challenges. It will improve your stamina and endurance so that you can do the things you want to, whether it's training for a marathon, or playing hide-and-seek with your grandchildren.

Most any activity you do from taking a walk to doing the dishes to mowing the lawn requires oxygen. When your aerobic capacity is high, your heart, lungs and blood vessels efficiently transport and deliver large amounts of oxygen throughout your body. As a result, you don't fatigue as quickly. If you don't get enough aerobic exercise, your aerobic capacity is reduced and you fatigue easily. Aerobic exercise also burns calories to help you lose weight or maintain a healthy weight and it can increase your life span and improve the overall function of your body.



## New Year gift baskets & visit spark amazing WWII story!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

SSgt Amanda Gallegos, KAFB 335th Training Squadron Instructor gathered donations for 62 gift baskets for Healthcare residents including toiletries, puzzle books, socks, candy, ornaments, cards, pens, pads, lotion, Chap Stick, and several Mary Kay products. SSgt Gallegos along with several volunteers from KAFB and the 335th Training Squadron helped pass out gifts, visit, and reminisce with residents on Valor, Loyalty, & Allegiance Halls on Tuesday December 30, 2014. SSgt Gallegos also received donations through Ocean Springs Girl Scout Troop, active duty military at KAFB, and her generous Mary Kay clients.

During the visit, resident, James Burkett shared his military experience aboard the USS Comfort Navy Hospital Ship during WWII. He described how a Japanese kamikaze plane circled their brightly lit ship before crashing into it directly above its large Red Cross emblem. The USS Comfort (AH-6) with beds for 700 patients, left Okinawa for Guam with a full load of wounded on April 28, 1945. On the same evening, the suicide plane smashed into the starboard side and into the surgery rooms killing 29 (including 6 Army nurses and 7 patients) and wounding another 48. Mr. Burkett described how they utilized a search light for mayday which was answered by a Destroyer 21 miles away. The ship ended up in Guam after being pumped and levelled. After listening, both resident and military volunteers thanked each other for their service and acts of courage to promote freedom in their time.

We thank SSgt Amanda Gallegos for her collaboration in wishing everyone a Happy 2015!



Keesler Air Force Base 335th Training Squadron gathered all the donations for our residents and helped pass out the gifts.



James Burkett shared his military experience with the volunteers.

## From the AFRH-W Administrator



The year ahead... 2015 is well underway at AFRH-Washington! We've already battled our first snow storm of the season which brought the city of Washington to a grinding halt. I was pleased to see the grounds crew anticipate the storm and pre-treat to minimize disruption to the campus. Some may argue Mother Nature is more powerful than the US Government! We are fortunate to have many dedicated employees who are willing to brave the storm to maintain the mission, despite the snow.

I wish to thank the active Resident members on the many committees at AFRH. There are numerous ways to be involved and get "in the know." Communication vehicles such as The Communicator, Weekly Bulletins, Towns Halls, and notification boards offer a lot of information for those looking to learn.

Similarly, there are numerous committees and AFRH employees who contribute their time and effort. In January, the Dr. Cloud One Team met twice-

weekly to suggest improvements to the electronic medical records (EMR) program. This team includes the Gulfport campus and facilitates collaboration of the two communities on one team. The expertise shared from both sites makes process improvement recommendations every time they get together via Webcam. I am very thankful for the group's participation and its commitment to quality care.

AFRH is dedicated to providing person-centered care. One demonstration of this philosophy in practice is the edification of medical directives and standard operating procedures. January was particularly active with five directives reviewed by leadership and staff. Researching industry best-practices, and including in policy, helps to ensure Residents are provided the best treatment and care plans.

During focus groups and notes in the bulletin, Residents should by now know user fees are pro-rated when a level of care change occurs. Keep an ear out for forthcoming focus groups on the Primary Care Network Model. This project is another collaboration with our sister community in Gulfport. Stay tuned!

**Shaun Servais**

## Employee of the 2nd Quarter.

**Sarah Kenan receives the Employee of the 2nd Quarter from Shaun Servais.**



## Winter Poetry Event

*By Christine Baldwin*

On a cold evening in January, a group of AFRH-W residents enjoyed poems of humor and sadness that were recited in the Scott Theater. It started with a short poem written by resident William Sorince called "Snowman". Esker McConnell followed by reading "My Captain, My Captain". To keep the cold theme going, Rick Walk did "The Snowstorm", followed by a poem written by resident Ida Emily Simpson called "The Old Year is Ending, The New One Starts". Martin Cody read a prose piece on "Winter", followed by two short poems recited by Armand Johnson on cold weather. A wonderful reading of the powerful "My Christmas Eve" by Paul Grimes finished the official program and left many with tears in their eyes! What a wonderful variety of poetry!

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



It is hard to believe February is already upon us; I can only hope the winter stays as mild as it had been so far. In my last article I mentioned that during my time at AFRH-W I have met so many amazing people. One of the persons I am getting to know, and enjoying communicating with, is my counterpart at AFRH-G, RAC Chairman Henri Gibson.

He and I presented the voice of the residents at the semi-annual agency board meeting in late October. We had no idea at the time that your voices would be heard so succinctly by the agency! As you are most likely aware, changes were made to the proposed fee increases initially announced in September; the percentage for upper levels of care has been reduced from 95% to 80%, active service persons 'contributions' will be increasing to \$1.00 from the .50, and the fee increase will be spread over two parts (3% in July and 2% in January 2016) for those not paying the maximum. That being said, I would like to extend a huge thank you to the members of the Agency's Advisory Council and to the Agency (and particularly Mr. McManus) for their support when they were apprised of the resident's concerns. I also want to thank Henri Gibson for always being available to discuss items that affect and effect us, the residents. One thing is definitely certain; residents are not bashful about expressing their views on almost anything. To list every person I am thankful for, as I carry out my responsibilities as the RAC Chairman, would probably fill this page. Please know how much your input, and lending an ear to me when in need, is appreciated.

I feel it bears repeating that to me the H in Armed Forces Retirement Home is most apt. We are a Home. If only a fraction of the time is spent looking for things to compliment, as is expended for things to complain about, how much more pleasant would our Home be?

I am often asked to extend greetings of some in independent living to those who are in upper levels of care prior to my visiting with residents in As-

sisted Living, Long Term Care and Memory Support. I am also quite frequently thanked for the time I put in as your RAC Chair and also for volunteering at different events such as when I tended bar all New Year's Eve or verify BINGO! (Both very worthy uses of my time I might add!)

What does one have to do with the other is hopefully what you are now thinking? Our friends 'and family' that have moved to upper levels of care oftentimes feel forgotten and would welcome you to come say hello, perhaps assist them to an event, or even just sit and chat over a cup of coffee or juice and perhaps regale about days gone by. Along those same lines, staff is very appreciative when residents take the time to assist with events such as calling bingo, handing out prizes, helping to serve food or beverages, setting or cleaning up events and volunteering to man areas, including but not limited to, the sewing room, thrift shop, library, Chaplain's Office, etc. The common denominator here? Utilizing some of your free time to make a positive difference for the benefit of all. I can almost assuredly promise that the good feeling you will have by helping will far outweigh the small time commitment you made. (I'd be remiss to not give a huge shout out to Bill Jentarra for wrapping all the holiday presents – THANKS, BILL!)

I will end with a final thought. PLEASE take the time to use the suggestion box in the Wellness Center, in front of the Dining Facility, in front of the Sheridan Main lobby elevators, or the Administrators Suggestions/Comments slot located in the back of the mailboxes facing the Dining Hall and, to me, most importantly the RAC comment box in the tunnel. I, and the floor representatives, are available and want to know what is on your mind; whether it be a suggestion, compliment, or criticism. To adequately represent you we also need documentation. It is vastly different if I/we say "X number of residents feel" versus "I/we have received X number of written comments concerning" when speaking with staff and administration. Help us, your RAC representatives, to help you by writing out your thoughts. I thank you in advance.

As always, if you have a particular item you would like to see addressed in my future columns in the Communicator, let's

sit down and discuss.

**All the best,  
Phil**

Highlights of last meeting:  
Call to order at 10:00, January 21, 2015 in the Scott Community Center, Minutes of December 17, 2014 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 RAC Fund always welcome donations, and requests that residents consider remembering the AFRH-W RAC Recreation Fund in their final bequests(wills).

>Administrator Town hall to be held on Thursday, Jan. 22 at 10A in Community Center.

Patrick Benjamin, Chief, Campus Operations, presented a request for \$29,832.05 be transferred from Resident Fund to Campus Operations Budget due to increase in Golf Course Maintenance contract for current fiscal year. Motion presented by Golf Committee Chair, 2nd by Joe Maier to recommend to RFAB that 1/2 of amount requested, not to exceed \$14,916.00 be expended from Resident Fund to Campus Operations. Approved unanimously by hand vote.

Tek Tone – If you 'push the button' and still have a health and welfare check conducted call in a work order, submit a work order by e-mail, or call Campus Ops Admin Assistant (Marlena) at 202-541-0613 if issue not resolved timely.

### **RAC FLOOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS and COMMITTEES**

FLOOR REPS: working with Volunteer Services to obtain a computer instructor  
CAMPUS OPERATIONS: Tek Tone – see above. Mr. Benjamin to inquire/work with CMI regarding the removal of tape and patching of walls from old systems removal.

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 for any additional comments, suggestions, concerns regarding the food service provided. 14 Comments received and all were positive. Meetings held 2nd Tuesday of month at 10AM in Dining Facility. New 6 week cycle menus begin in February.

GOLF: see Master plan

HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Please use COO suggestion box located on Front Desk of Wellness Center for comments, questions, concerns and suggestions you have. Residents request made, and endorsed by voice from Floor Reps, that COO consider changing suggestion box in Wellness Center to Campus Administrator.

MORALE WELFARE and RECREATION: projectionists for weekly movies needed.  
MASTER PLAN: Agency in process of formulating Letter of Intent for committee's review concerning SW corner and FOSH. After meeting jointly with Golf Committee, MP Committee unanimously recommended that agency put the golf course and driving range out for privatization bids with stipulation FOSH could use driving range for select events.

RESIDENT FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE: no report

SECURITY: No report

OLD BUSINESS: Please put your comments, concerns, questions, suggestions, compliments, etc. in writing and submit to a RAC member or place in RAC box in tunnel. RAC Chair noted the administration (agency and campus) as well as all employees are very open to listening to residents when they have comments, concerns, compliments, and suggestions. If it is an issue where RAC action is requested it must be in writing. Without paper back up the RAC cannot move forward on 'perceived issues'.

2nd floor rep and secretary for RAC still sought.

NEW BUSINESS: 5th Floor Representative needed. Bob Doerler ended residency.

Motion to adjourn at 10:35 passed, Next meeting at 10AM on February 18, 2015 Thank you for supporting your Resident Advisory Committee

RAC meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at 10 AM in the Scott Community Room

The Resident Advisory Committee (RAC) is here to serve you! Please contact us; a) in person, b) through submission of form placed in RAC box in tunnel, or c) by e-mail at afrhrac@gmail.com

# From the AFRH-G Administrator



It's hard to believe that January has come and gone already. It's been another busy month at AFRH-G. We started off the New Year with a champagne brunch, one of our residents celebrated his 100th birthday, we had a Comedy Power

Hour, a Parisian Café Social, the monthly Birthday Dinner, and the Fall Game Awards/Ice Cream Social. Next month we will be honoring Black History month and celebrating Mardi Gras with our annual Mardi Gras Ball.

Last month Tommy Lofton, who is the Historian for the WWII Museum in New Or-

leans, came to AFRH-G for the day to interview seven WWII veterans. His goal is to carry on their legacy with film documentation that will be shown at the WWII Museum. He was so impressed with our residents, and the facility here in Gulfport that he will be coming back in February.

AFRH-G will be initiating a new billing module starting on February 5, 2015. We have been working on this process for a while. If you notice anything out of the ordinary on your bank statement, please contact the Business Center at (228) 897-4419 or (228) 897-4420 to immediately to have the matter resolved.

One of our very own Gulfport residents has become a centenarian. Stephen J. Lucas turned 100 years old on Sunday, January 11, 2015. Mr. Lucas served in both WWII and Korea. Mr. Lucas contributes eating healthy, working out in our Fitness Center, and swimming in the AFRH-G pool the key to living a long and healthy life. Along with a birthday cake made by our Dining

Hall, Mr. Lucas was also presented a letter by our Chief Operating Officer, Steve McManus, and a letter from President Obama. Congratulations Mr. Lucas.

I am pleased to announce that our Employee of the Quarter is Jen Biernacki. Jen is a Recreation Therapist by profession and works as the Recreation Therapy Assistant in the AFRH-G health care areas. She has received this award for her exceptional service to the Armed Forces Retirement Home during October, November, and December 2014. Jen developed an innovative new program, Model Train Railroading. Due to Jen's enthusiasm and fun-loving, person-centered care nature, many Residents have become involved. She has incorporated Independent Living Residents to assist the AL/LTC/MS Residents with the project, creating a sense of community. This is a work in progress which will provide ongoing planning, seasonal layout changes, and fun for the Residents. Jen's creativity encourages Residents all across LTC/AL/MS to participate in a variety of recreation activities

such as the Chauffer Express, Travel to Italy, and the Homemade Pizza Bash. Honorable Mention Awards were also presented to Shelly Thompson, Brandon Kinchen, and Cemika Nelson.

**Chuck Dickerson**



**Resident, Frances Scott (left) with Employee of the Quarter, Jen Biernacki (right).**

## Resident served on land, at sea, and in the air

By Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

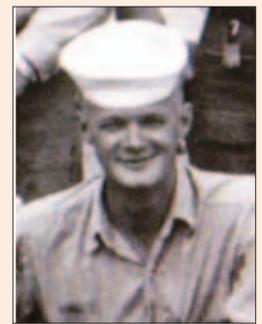


**Francis Symans at Beale Air Force Base in California in 1961.**

In 1953 Francis Symans enrolled at the University of Alabama and majored in "girls" and minored in engineering. After two years he decided that college was not the best thing for him. He returned to Dunkirk, New York where he went to work for his father, who owned an excavating business. After a while of working for his dad, he got "itchy" and decided to enter the U.S. Navy Seabees as a heavy equipment operator. After 3 1/2 years he left the Navy to work for his father again. He then met his darling wife, Marilyn, and decided to get married. He wanted to provide security for his wife so he joined the Army Combat Engi-



**At the University of Alabama in 1953, Francis stands by his 1932 Ford Roadster Hot Rod before joining the military.**



**Navy Seabee School at Port Hueneme, California in 1957.**

neers, where he became a heavy equipment operator in Germany. Francis stayed in the Army for 3 1/2 years and discharged as a staff sergeant. Two months later he decided to join the Air Force as a heavy equipment operator. He looked around and everybody who was wearing "wings" had more stripes than him, so he became an in-flight refueling technician. In 1969 Francis was grounded due to his loss of hearing from exposure to loud noises. He then became an Air Force recruiter in Flagstaff, Arizona. While he was a recruiter young men would ask him which branch of service is the best? His reply was, "If you want to have fun, join the Navy, if you want to make money, join the Army and you will make proficiency pay for digging a ditch, and if you want to go home in the evening to be with your family, join the Air Force. He retired from the Air Force in 1972 after 12 years of service. He has a total of 27 years in three different branches of the military.



**In 1960 Francis was in the Army in Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri.**



**F105 - Ben Hai River between North and South Vietnam during an in air re-fueling.**

His favorite duty assignment was at Castle Air Force Base in California, where he was an in-flight instructor for boom operators. A boom operator flies on his stomach and "passes gas" to the receiving air craft. When asked what he liked most about being an in-flight instructor he replied, "I like teaching new guys how to fly the in-flight refueling boom. I enjoyed seeing people who had no experience become a qualified in-flight refueling technician."

During Vietnam he was stationed in Thailand and was responsible for refueling Fighters and Bombers. He said, "I received a distress call over the airways from an F-105 fighter bomber that was low on fuel over North Vietnam. The crew went and met him over North Vietnam. We did a careful "hookup" and towed him back to South Vietnam and dropped him off at the DaNang Airport where he coasted into land and everything was just fine."

After retirement Francis became an industrial electrician for 22 years in Flagstaff, Arizona. Francis said his favorite branch of the military was the Air Force because he could be home with his wife and children at night. He was married to his wife Marilyn for 52 years and they had three children.

Francis moved into AFRH-G in August of 2014. He said he likes the combination of the Armed Forces Retirement Home's building and the people. He stated, "The building is so well put together and the people are just so nice. I absolutely love living here. This place is magnificent!"



**Bridging on the Rhine River in Germany while in the Army as a combat engineer in 1962.**



**This is Francis Symans today at the AFRH-G on Veterans Day.**

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



Well it's a New Year and by now almost everyone should be used to writing the dates on their checks and letters as 2015 instead of 2014. I guess I'm one of the ones that will have to take a few more months to get the date right when writing a check. Someone told me that the human brain has a capacity to store 5 times the information as Wikipedia. If that's so, how come I can't remember to date my checks correctly?

This New Year will bring some new

challenges for many of us. With new Resident Fees coming in July, many folks are looking for more precise information on what constitutes income. I will be looking forward to the Focus Group meeting in April on this subject. I can say that we did get a great concession when DoD moved to get enlisted contributions raised from .50 cents to one dollar. This was one item both Phil Ford and I worked hard on and it will go a long way in helping to shore up our "Trust Fund". One of the Residents here in Gulfport gave me a proposal concerning enlisted contributions to AFRH that I will discuss with my counterpart in Washington (Phil Ford) and I will be writing more on this subject in future articles.

Did you know that if you sit more than 11 hours a day, there's a 50% chance that you will die in the next 3 years. We have a resident here that just turned 100 on the 11th. He still lives in independent living

(not ILP). He gets out of his room and walks twice a day. I think he will be around for many more years. Why do I mention this? I want all of our residents to have a great quality of life. Our Home provides many opportunities and trips for us to get out of our rooms and enjoy what each of our areas has to offer. If you are not taking advantage of these events you are missing a lot. Don't sit all day and complain, get up, go on trips, volunteer around the Home, and do your part to have a great quality of life. I have seen a great many people come into the Home over the years and we come here to live. I personally CAME TO THIS HOME TO LIVE and not die. Now for all you naysayers, don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about. Remember "Life isn't fair but it's still good".

**Henri D. Gibson**



**Food Service Worker, Markisha Harris, and RAC Chair, Henri Gibson serve birthday cake and wine at January's Birthday Dinner.**

# AFRH-W January Activities

## NBA fit week with the Washington Wizards

By Sheila Abarr,  
Public Affairs Officer

The NBA FIT Week for the Washington Wizards kicked off at AFRH-W on Monday, January 26th with the Wizard's Girls and G-Wiz (Wizard's mascot). Residents participated in exercises with the Washington Wizards representatives that were geared towards the senior population.

FIT Week education is focused on Be Active, Eat Healthy and Play Together. They promoted the benefits to both the mind and body, living healthier, preventing unhealthy weight gain and minimizing other health related risk.



Residents, staff and members from the Washington Wizard organization come together for the NBA FIT Week Kickoff.



Resident Glen Blasdel and staff member Nicole Chappell move down the Soul Train line with cheers from the Washington Wizards representatives.



Staff member Sarah Kenan, along with resident Santos Dibella, take a walk on the Soul Train.



G-Wiz, Washington Wizards Mascot, leads residents and drill team members in a little aerobic exercise.

## Two residents feel right at home in the Art Studio

Mike Martinez is originally from Las Cruces, New Mexico but has called AFRH-Washington home since 2003. When Mike arrived at the DC campus he took up painting full time as a hobby, but also sells his artwork at the Home and throughout the DC Metro area. His work ranges from southwestern landscapes to large downtown metropolitan areas. Mike is a very talented artist who also served his country in the U.S. Navy.



Mike with a steady hand makes the brush strokes very clean and crisp.



Mike uses a photograph of a train scene on this art project and is able to capture every detail down to the rail.



Lewis is sizing up his art work before he continues on this piece.

Lewis Burkett hails from Corbin, Kentucky and has lived in DC since May 2014. Lewis is a Vietnam Veteran as he joined the U.S. Army in 1966. After Lewis was settled into in new home at AFRH-Washington he started a new hobby woking with pencils and pastels in the Art Studio. Lewis spends several hours a week in the Art Studio and produces wonderful pictures.



Lewis keys brings pastels to life on his current art project.

# AFRH-G January Activities

## It's a pizza bash!

*By Jen Biernacki Recreation Assistant*

On Saturday January 3, 2015, the Pizza Bash consisted of making homemade pizzas, sharing, laughing and reminiscing amongst friends. The Bash began with the gathering of all the ingredients, utensils and equipment needed to create the homemade pizzas. The pizza creations began with a flour mixture and water in a bowl. The ingredients were mixed until the perfect dough ball was formed. After the dough ball rose, it was then rolled out into very unique shapes. The dough shapes were the foundations to the very scrumptious pizzas that each Resident attending made individually. The choices of toppings were pepperoni, green peppers, spinach, mushrooms, black olives and cheese. The toppings were placed on the dough with preciseness by the Residents. Once all the toppings were added, the pizzas were baked until the dough was golden brown. Even before the pizzas had a chance to cool, the group enjoyed the delicious taste of homemade pizza, as Larry Papale stated, "Eccellente!"



Frances Scott creates a scrumptious masterpiece.



Joseph O'Carroll and Mildred Knoble roll out the pizza dough.

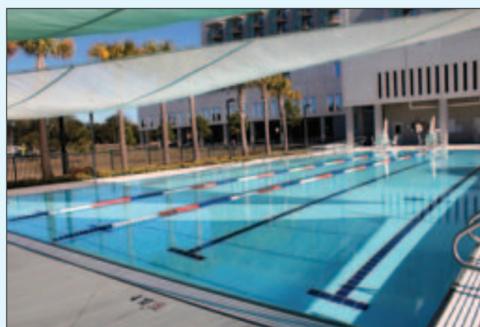
## Pool maintenance

*By John Cage, Chief of Campus Ops*

The AFRH Gulfport pool was closed for a few weeks for a good reason. It has been re-surfaced with a white marcite plaster finish in order to protect the surface area for several years to come. THANK YOU again for being patient while this project was being accomplished.



BEFORE - Workers resurfaced the marcite plaster in the pool.



AFTER - The pool is absolutely gorgeous.

## Magnolia quilters give amazing donations to AFRH-G

*By Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Therapy Services*

On Wednesday, December 17, 2014, AFRH-G welcomed an amazing donation from the Magnolia Quilters. The group is made up of members from Biloxi, Gulfport, and Saucier, MS ranging in age from teenagers to 84. The group welcomes new members as they meet twice a month at Coastal Sew and Vac in Gulfport, MS (2nd & 4th Monday of the month from 6:30-8 pm - 12100 US Hwy 49 N). The quilters made 80 plus smocks / bibs and 30 quilted bags for wheelchairs, rollators (walkers), and powered mobility devices for AFRH-G Healthcare residents. Coastal Sew & Vac and others assisted in fabric donations for the project. Residents will be offered a choice on Christmas Day to promote person centered care and to meet the needs of the veterans. We thank the many hours that went into creating amazing gifts that will be utilized throughout the year.



## Army Navy game



The Hooter Girls are always very involved with activities at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

*By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist*

Navy wins for the 13th year in a row. Navy 17- Army 10. Residents watched the Army Navy Game in the Community Center Saturday Dec 12th at 1400 kick off time. Even though Army scored the first touchdown Navy still came out ahead to win the game. Hooters brought out the wings for the residents during the first and second quarter. Domino's brought out the pizza's for the third and fourth quarter. Army and Navy were both represented by active duty military personnel.

## Christmas Takedown

*By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist*

The morning of January 5, 2015 there were six Coast Guard, Ability Works and one Airman that came to help with taking the decorations off of the AFRH-Gulfport Christmas trees. Ability Works helped to take down the trees next to Fiddler's Green and the front lobby next to the Security Desk. Four of the Coast Guard and one Airman tackled the trees in Administration, Business Center, Library, Wellness Center, Community Center and the two downstairs in the main lobby. Two of the Coast Guard helped with taking down the Christmas trees on D-tower. All seven military personnel also helped decorate the Mardi Gras tree. The easy part was taking the decoration off the trees instead of putting them on which made the time go fast.



This Christmas tree was transformed into a Mardi Gras Tree.



The Coast Guard volunteers take down the Christmas trees.

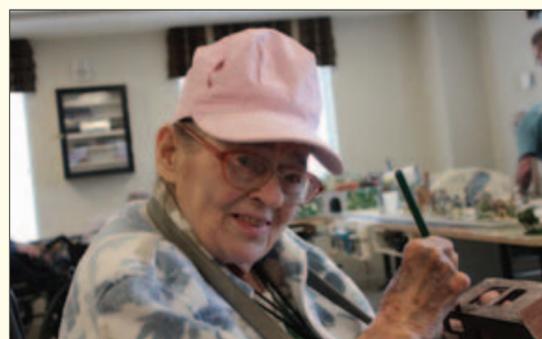
## The train layout is taking shape

*By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Assistant*

The Valor Hall and Independent Living Residents have been "working on the railroad" layout that is now beginning to take shape. The layout contains a town square with a town, mountains, lakes, waterfalls, a forest and roads. Clifford "Smitty" Smith has been working hard to create scenery such as mountains, roads, lakes and waterfalls while Jim Eberhardt is working on the locomotives, cars and track. Marvin Heth is creating the "Heth Forest and Reserve" while Mildred Knoble is making "Knoble's Diner" a building that will be featured at the entrance of the town square. The town and other features have not been named at this time however, in the future we might see "Smith Lake" and "Eberhardt Crossing" just to name a few. The trains are open to all and anyone interested are welcome to join in on the fun of model railroading. (Who knows the town hall is yet to be named!)



Marvin Heth creates the "Heth Forest and Reserve".



Mildred Knoble paints "Knoble's Diner" for the railroad layout.

## Gulfport Happy New Year....2015!

By Dennis Crabtree,  
Recreation Assistant

The New Year's Eve Dance and Celebration at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport was a blast. Residents and Guests celebrated New Year's Eve with Music By Sonny Tanner.

Buffalo wings, BBQ meatballs, spinach dip, fajita wraps, and pigs in a blanket were served, topped off by key lime pie, brownies, and a fruit tray.

Residents celebrated the New Year with champagne and a balloon drop that had prizes for five dollar bills. A fun time was had by all.



Residents watched the ball drop on the big screen.



Everyone enjoyed the New Year celebration at AFRH.



Before the balloon drop in the Community Center residents and guests put on their dancing shoes.



Residents and guests had fun dancing the night away.

## Bringing In the New Year at AFRH-Washington

By Constance Maziel & Amanda Jensema

In this season of celebration, AFRH-Washington residents, family, and friends all gathered together in the Scott Community Center, and Defender's Inn on December 31st, 2014 to bring in the New Year. The party began as you entered the room. Everyone was gifted a noisemaker and beads. Music was provided by resident Ray Anderson to get all of the guests in the mood. The history of New Years was discussed and there was trivia which gave residents an opportunity to earn a dollar or two! Afterwards they were able to share their best toast and the best one won \$5.00, which went to resident, Catherine Deitch. We then proceeded to do an early countdown for those who wanted to celebrate early. A grand time was had by all.

Later that evening, the festivities continued with live music performed by the Tower of Talents Band. Residents and guests cheered, danced, and reminisced as the band played music from the 1920's to the present. The celebration continued as participants enjoyed delicious finger foods and drinks provided by AFRH dining, while partaking in New Year's Eve trivia and games. All participants lightly joshed amongst each other, as they competed for winning prizes during the games. As the countdown began, everyone turned their attention to the "Ball Drop" on television, and raised their glasses with excitement for the possibilities of what the New Year may bring. The band trailed with the song "Auld Lang Syne" as everyone joined in. Joy, laughter, and anticipation filled the air as everyone toasted into the 2015 New Year.



These residents are getting ready for the New Year's Eve toast.



Don Egolf joins in the New Year celebration with a loud bang!



Ollie Brown lifts his glass and toast to the beginning of 2015.



Sarah Kenan and Herman Pometto ring in the New Year!