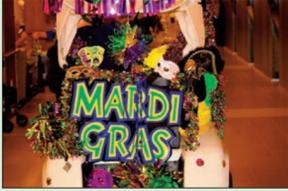




AFRH-GULFPORT

Throw me something mister!

Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs



Mardi Gras was in everyone's soul on Friday, February 24, 2017 when the AFRH-G held its annual Mardi Gras parade and ball. Everyone found out who the King and Queen were when they came down the Boardwalk riding in their floats. The King was Frederick "Pete" Petersen and the Queen was Eva Downs. The Grand Marshall was the youngest resident - Donna Rogers. Past Kings 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 Sonny Tanner.

Mardi Gras is always on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday and is designed for people to indulge in all the excitement and fun they can prior to Lent. In the United States, one of the largest Mardi Gras celebrations takes place in the city of New Orleans. As a result of this town's historic connection to France, many of the common phrases are expressed in Cajun French such as "Laissez les bons temps rouler", which means "let the good times roll". Also many decorations and beads are made with the fleur de lis in honor of the New Orleans Saints.

King cakes are a must during the Mardi Gras season and the AFRH-G held a King Cake and Coffee Social on Mardi Gras day, which was on February 28 this year. This is a cinnamon-filled cake containing a small plastic baby figure inside. At the AFRH-G the parade was called the Krewe of NAMAC (Navy, Army, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard).



AFRH-WASHINGTON

Recreation Therapy Valentine's Day chocolate lover's social and dance

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

WOW... What an AWESOME night!

Recreation Therapy and Recreation hosted an evening event on Friday, February 14, 2017. The theme of course was Valentine's Day. The event started at 6:00 PM in the Scott Community Center.

Over 90 Residents and 30 volunteers attended. The volunteers did a fantastic job in making the event run smoothly and making all the residents feel special.

Residents were treated to sweet tunes by resident disc jockey Billy White. The music had everyone tapping their toes or up and dancing. The Daughters of The American Revolution (DAR) provided delicious chocolate cake and chocolate treats along with partnering up with residents to "shake a leg" on the dance floor! The Friends of The Soldiers Home (FOSH) volunteers mixed, mingled, and also helped dance the night away with residents from both healthcare and independent living.

Community volunteers helped stroll through the Community Center with a beverage cart, which held a variety of wine, beer, punch, soda, and water. They also helped with the refreshment table, which was provided by our fabulous Food Service. Refreshments included assorted cheeses, crackers, fresh fruits, miniature cheesecakes, and sweet and sour meatballs.

The night was made even sweeter with the chocolate fruit fountain... nothing tastes better than chocolate covered strawberries and bananas! It was a "SWEET" night for all!



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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

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 & 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, #584
3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.AFRH.gov>



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.



The Joint Commission
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-W Veteran Highlight – Billy Ray White

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian



Billy Ray White was born in North Carolina. After high school he received his draft notice, which stated that he had 30 days to choose a branch of service. So at the age of 19, Billy joined the United States Navy. He did this for two reasons: first, the Navy would give him a chance to travel and see the world, and second, since this was the era of the Vietnam War and he was under the impression that he would

stay out of harm's way. Unlike other branches, which were on the front lines of battle, the Navy seamen would serve far removed from the active warzone and therefore away from danger.

Billy's draft notice brought him to Baltimore, Maryland and then to Great Lakes, Illinois for boot camp. The corpsman training prepared him for his position on the Pickaway, a transport ship responsible for transporting 2,000 troops to Vietnam. Taking care of the wounded on a U.S. Navy vessel is no easy feat. Treating injured men on the open sea is a special challenge. Billy remembers having to transport incapacitated men from lifeboats to the ship decks, using only the strength from his body. He had to climb a rope ladder to carry the stretcher up to the deck. Keeping the stretcher level and the victim safe and comfortable was the most challenging part of the ordeal. Billy's first Navy excursion departed from Long

Beach, California. After many weeks on the ocean, with stopovers at Hawaii and the Philippines, Billy was flown to Japan to a Navy base, where he was stationed on a construction battalion. He was in charge of tool distribution and he also became licensed as a battalion truck driver. Billy's membership in the battalion required that he be among the first soldiers to enter into enemy territory. In addition to the dangers of battle, there were also environmental dangers for those who were first to reach the Vietnamese coast. The members of the construction battalion had to negotiate the dense jungles and protect themselves, while building roads and raising tents. The heat, the terrain and the wildlife were all dangers to the battalion's construction campaigns and the men's wellbeing. This meant that Billy was in fact in harm's way while serving in response to his draft letter.

After one tour in Vietnam, Billy requested a transfer into the data processing area. He was sent to Japan, where one of his duties was to prepare payroll for the entire seventh fleet! He was stationed there for three years and three months before returning to the United States. When he returned, he immediately noticed a commonly held sentiment that expressed not resentment, but merely disregard for returning soldiers. People didn't care about the psychological or sometimes even physical condition of the returning veterans, and they didn't want to hear of the hardship faced while in Vietnam. Billy remembers that he was treated differently after returning home. No one spoke to him about his experience in Japan or Vietnam.

After returning home, Billy was able to find a

job, but it was only guaranteed for one year. So he enrolled in night school, where he was trained in Computer Engineering. After graduating, he got his first job working for ITT, where he stayed for ten years as a computer specialist. After working there, Billy began working for himself in the field of investment marketing, mortgage refinancing and insurance with Primerica Financial Services. As his salary grew, so did his professional merit, which has been recognized by a number of plaques that today line his room at the AFRH-W. Billy has also helped several former military with navigating the VA benefit program, even giving seminars at his church. In all, his success has given him opportunities to see the world in a bright light, a dream he has had since before his enrollment in the United States Navy.

On a family note, Billy is very proud of his great grandfather, George H. White, who was born into slavery in 1852 in North Carolina.

George became a lawyer, a legislator, a congressman and a racial spokesman. If you look at a picture of him, he looks identical to Billy. Billy came to AFRH-W in 2006. He has added so much to the campus, especially with his awesome deejaying at numerous events!



AFRH-G Veteran Highlight - Marion Ritchie

By Lori Kerns, AFRH-G Librarian



One hundred years ago, Marion Ritchie (who prefers the nickname "Ritchie") was born in Oakland, Calif. where she led what she calls an ordinary life. She was the second child of three born to a postal worker and house wife.

After graduating high school and attending junior college, Ritchie made the decision to work at a Navy medical supply office in San Francisco. One day during her lunch break, she had the impulse to join the Navy. She remembers coming back to tell her coworker what she had done. She had a good laugh when her friend replied, "What in the hell did you do that for?"

Ritchie was sent off as a WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service) to boot camp at Hunter College in New York. After boot camp, she asked to be stationed on the East Coast since she had never really seen the area. However, she was sent right back to the West

Coast and only 20 miles from home, at that. Once in San Francisco, she began working as a Captain's Yeoman at Shore Patrol Headquarters with the 12th Naval District. Some of her most exciting experiences happened when she worked on Market Street in San Francisco. She described the area as "wall to wall people," which made transportation to and from work a nightmare. So her Captain arranged for her to ride in the "paddy wagon" almost every morning and evening. This was one of the best parts of her day!

Ritchie's next duty station was in Norfolk, Virginia. By this time, WWII was winding down. She had been in the Navy around three years. Not caring too much for Norfolk, she made the decision to take a discharge and begin her life as a newlywed with her husband, Norman. The couple decided to live in Lafayette, Calif. where they eventually raised their three children. Ritchie became a stay at home mom and Norman worked for the post office.

After raising their children, she began to reunite annually with some of the WAVES. It was at one of these reunions that Ritchie met Catherine Dailey. As their friendship grew, Catherine traveled to California to visit Ritchie. In return, Ritchie decided to visit Catherine who was living at the U. S. Naval Home in Gulfport, MS. She was very impressed with the

facility.

Sadly, Norman passed away in 1998. Ritchie decided to make plans to move to what was now AFRH-G. She enjoyed life at AFRH-G until Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005. A vivid memory of the catastrophe is when she was looking out her eighth-story window and saw cars floating by in the storm surge. Like many other residents, she relocated to AFRH-W and returned to the Gulf Coast when the new AFRH-G facility opened in 2010.

Ritchie has enjoyed and stayed active throughout her many years at both homes by quilting, volunteering, going on trips, reading, and doing word puzzles. She has donated many of her handmade quilts to warm babies in the NICU at the local hospital. She also enjoys attending socials and going out to dinner with her good friends. However, her most thrilling endeavor has been the two occasions she has gone parasailing with her daughter and great granddaughter. The last time she went she was 98-years old! The event was even covered in the local news. According to Ritchie, "It was a great time!" Now she's waiting on warmer weather so that she can go again!

To say Ritchie has a zest for life is an understatement. She says she has always tried to find the fun in anything she has done. Obviously this must be the formula to a long, happy life since she will be turning 100 years "young" this March! Happy 100th Birthday, Ritchie!

FUN FACT: In Ritchie's family history, she has five generations of military that have served during war time. Her grandfather was in the Civil War. Her father fought in the Spanish-American War. Her stepfather served during WWI. Ritchie was a WAVES during WWII. Her daughter, Katie, served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Ritchie remains very proud of her family's military service.



Message from the Chief Operating Officer



What a month February has been, with temperatures as warm (or seeming as warm) in Washington as they are in Gulfport! And it's also been a great month for celebrations at the Home – from Valentine's Day to Presidents Day to Mardi Gras – as we wind our way through Winter with Spring officially only three weeks away!

February is also a month to celebrate diversity and to learn from each other, most prominently through Black History Month programs which we are honored to hold here at AFRH.

Promoting a culture of dignity and respect is essential for our residents – whose lives have been enriched through their service in the military, where they worked side-by-side with those of different faiths, creeds and colors – and who continue to enrich the lives of each other in our diverse communities.

Promoting a culture of dignity and respect is also essential for our staff, who learn from each other in providing you, our residents, with exceptional residential care and extensive support services.

Please know that I continue to work on behalf of you, our veteran residents, and our outstanding staff to ensure AFRH remains operating efficiently. Our goals are not only to improve the effectiveness of these programs, but to ensure the long-term solvency of the AFRH Trust Fund to meet the needs of our residents.

In last year's resident satisfaction survey, over 90% of our residents rated AFRH as excellent or above average. And in 2017 we'll be working hard to earn a similar rating again from you, our key stakeholders, to carry out our vision of a retirement community committed to excellence, fostering independence, vitality and wellness for veterans, making it a vibrant place in which to live, work and thrive.

Dr. Timothy Kangas



Dr. Kangas with resident Mike Swickerath and Administrator Jeff Eads at the February Birthday Dinner Celebration. Happy Birthday Mike!

The National Commander of the American Legion visits Gulfport

Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On February 15, 2017 the National Commander of the American Legion Charles E. Schmidt visited the AFRH-G. Resident Harry Rhizor, who is a past New Mexico State Commander, gave Commander Schmidt the tour of the Home. The National Commander was all smiles as he walked around the Home and residents were happy to see and meet him.

Charles E. Schmidt was elected national commander of the 2.2 million-member American Legion on September 1, 2016, in Cincinnati during the 98th national convention of America's largest veterans organization. Schmidt enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1965 and served on active duty until his retirement in 1993.

Thank you Harry Rhizor for showing Commander Schmidt the beautiful retirement community we have for our veterans on the Gulf Coast.



Residents visit Washington's Spy Museum

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS

For an afternoon, residents were able to take on a new identity as they walked through the Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. As everyone entered the museum floor, guests were given five minutes to pick a cover identity and memorize it. Periodically throughout the museum we were asked questions to see if we could keep our cover intact or whether we had to "abort our mission." - Many of us failed and had to abort our mission, but a select few were able to keep their identity. We learned it is not easy being a spy. As we walked through the exhibits we learned about many different techniques spies use, as well as different tools they had. Have you ever seen a compass the size of a pencil eraser?

One area introduced us to celebrity spies such as Julia Childs and Moe Berg. Did you know that Josephine Baker used invisible ink on her sheet music to carry messages that helped smuggle people to safety? In the James Bond exhibit, celebrating 50 years of Bond villains, we were able to try hanging from a bar that was lifted off the ground. Out of all who tried, resident Larry McAnally held on the longest!

After touring the museum we ate next door at the Shake Shack. It was such a nice unusual February afternoon that we sat outside and enjoyed the beautiful weather. We would like to thank the Fenwick Foundation for tickets. We had a great time and look forward to going again!



City Singers perform at AFRH-W



By Amanda Jensema, CTRS

The residents were treated to great music sung by the City Singers. They are the outreach arm of The City Choir of Washington. They perform music of all genres, including jazz, spiritual, choral, show tunes, and more. Some of the songs sung were "Route 66," "Java Jive," "The Music Man Medley," and they closed with "A Tribute to the Armed Forces." The City Singers come every year to perform for the residents and they always bring a wide arrange of tunes known, and unknown for everyone to enjoy. While watching the performance I witnessed many tapping toes and hand tapping on the legs. We are looking forward to The City Singers return next year!

Volunteering for Veterans

By Robert W. Mitchell, AFRH-W Volunteer/Activities Coordinator

With a unique population of veteran residents, some of who were in Vietnam, Korea, WWII and Desert Storm, AFRH-W is an exceptional place where military and civilian volunteers will find plenty of community service opportunities. On any given day, volunteers might hear about the work in being a Navy "Seabee" while setting up equipment for a special event, or learn what Army Airborne life is as they remove debris by the pond or golf course. A volunteer might brighten a resident's day by escorting him or her to a bingo game or by helping keep score during a special bowling challenge event.

As the new Volunteer/Activities Coordinator here AFRH-W, I am privileged to be a part of amazing team of professionals dedicated and driven to ensure our special group of veteran residents have every opportunity to stay active, be vibrant and thrive through a variety of activities and events.

As a U.S. Marines and U.S. Army veteran with three combat aviation tours (Operation Desert Shield/Storm and Operation Enduring Freedom), I have the utmost appreciation for our veteran residents and for the volunteers who dedicate their time and service to AFRH-W. For me, volunteering is more than community service, it's a calling. Semper Fi.



Robert W. Mitchell (right) celebrates Veteran's Day 2013 with fellow soldiers and a U.S.S. Enterprise Navy veteran at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, home of the 101st Airborne Air Assault Division (Screaming Eagles). Mitchell is the new Volunteer/Activities Coordinator here at AFRH-W.

From the AFRH-W Administrator



Our expansive Washington campus has been enjoying an extremely mild winter. Residents were able to get out and enjoy the grounds this February with no measurable snow accumulation and record high temperatures. Cherry trees are blossoming in mid-February and we are saving a boat load on snow removal costs, cha-ching! Following is a recap of notable events at the Washington campus for February, 2017.

On February 2nd, the periodic visit from the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General (DoD-OIG) kicked off with campus leadership taking part in the meeting via teleconference. With our agency principals onsite, the DoD-OIG reviewed the plan to inspect the AFRH campuses and agency for compliance. This inspection is focused on healthcare services, including medical, dental and pharmaceutical, as well as financial compliance and contract management. The inspection is anticipated to last several months and includes on-site visits, tours, interviews, closed-door discussions with residents and employees, and off-site examinations of documentation to review compliance in our operations. I'm looking forward to demonstrating improvement with this year's inspection, as well as learning opportunities for improvement for the betterment of the home. This inspection is the first go-round for me and many of our new employees, and is anticipated to be very educational and helpful.

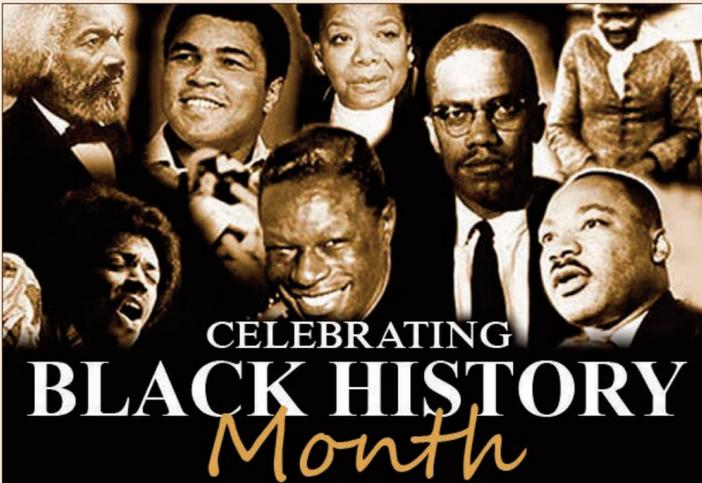
On February 11th we hosted a group of special volunteers organized by Casey Trees. This company has been extremely generous in restoring the tree canopy of our historic campus. The volunteer group met in our Stanley Chapel (originally a fitness center and boxing ring for residents of a bygone era) to learn about proper tree trimming for adolescent trees 3-5 years old. Residents were offered the opportunity to listen-in to the training before volunteers set about trimming the trees to facilitate healthy growth. I'm reminded of an old proverb I'll paraphrase, "Society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they'll never sit in." Thank you to the volunteers from Casey Trees!

In February, the campus celebrated Black History Month with a recognition ceremony in our community center. Resident Billy Bowen was our master of ceremonies for the event, co-sponsored by President Lincoln's Cottage. Our guest of honor was Cosby Hunt, an educator and native Washingtonian, who gave a speech regarding education in our city. He also brought students from his school to visit the veteran residents- a fantastic opportunity for intergenerational activity! It was my honor as the administrator to bestow a token of my appreciation by presenting Mr. Hunt with an Administrator Coin.

Time and time again, it has been proven that education is a major key to moving up in our society. I'm very thankful to the dedicated people who make it their mission to educate our youth! Thank you to all the planners for making this year's event special. We are truly blessed by the diversity of our employees and residents which adds greatly to the richness and enjoyment of our historic Home.

Shaun Servais

Black History Month musical special



By Christine Baldwin, Librarian and Pete Hudson, Resident

On Saturday, February 11, Pete Hudson showed a special musical DVD to twenty-five residents. It was a musical tribute by African American artists honoring Black History Month. It was originally hosted and produced by journalist Tony Brown at the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada where Pete lived before becoming a resident here. Some of the singers included guest soloist Howard Hewett, Hampton University Concert Choir, Hampton, VA and LeMoyné-Owen from the College Concert Choir, Memphis, Tennessee. Pete had enjoyed the live event so much, he wanted to share the experience with his friends at AFRH-W!

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

AFRH-G
228-897-4429
AFRH-W
202-541-7550

AFRH-W artists join fight against lakocreativism

By Lori Thompson, Art Specialist

The warning signs of lakocreativism were raising heinous flags during the dark month of February. Members of the Crazy Artists Club came to one conclusion; AFRH-W residents must band together to battle this dreaded disease. So what is lakocreativism? There are many unanswered questions when it comes to this distressing illness, such as, "How contagious is it?" and "How does one contract lakocreativism?" These are questions that doctors, scientists and artists are working night and day to answer. Common symptoms may include, but are not limited to, the following: difficulty choosing a color; preoccupation with one medium; new technique avoidance; repetitive subject/theme use (yawn).

There are no actual "facts" concerning lakocreativism. It is believed to be a weakness in the cranial region at the molecular level caused by limited creative endeavors. Scientists believe it was originally spread by bats. The only known cure involves social art. Thus, when art club members decided to join the fight against this disease, a new group painting project was born. It will be an ongoing piece and residents may jump into the work at any time. Everyone is welcomed to join, regardless of the paintings' stage(s) or one's experience in painting. It is hoped the activity will reach folks in time!

If you are suffering from this illness, please come to the Artist Colony on Wednesdays at 1:30 PM and/or to the Sheridan 3rd Floor Activity Area across from the elevators on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM for social art activities. And, be sure to look on the ARTS, CRAFTS and HOBBIES board in the tunnel for other creative endeavors to join as soon as possible. Residents may also visit Lori in G409 for a free lakocreativism screening and possible treatment options.



Above - Mimi Rivkin and Linda Hardy, who are members of the Crazy Artists Club, have a blast in the art room.

Right - Art Director Lori Thompson (middle) joins in on the fun.



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



On the 6th, 7th and 8th of this month, I led a tour of our static display for some of the Creative Minds Charter School students. They are learning how airplanes fly, so we spent extra time checking out the F-86 Saber jet. The kids are only in pre-kindergarten, but they already know a lot about the parts and features of airplanes.

February was Black History Month. On February 3, 1870, The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, guaranteeing the right of citizens to vote, regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Some of the more recognizable names celebrated during this month are Rosa Parks, James Meredith, Andrew Young, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, George Washington Carver, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., just to mention a few.

-February 2, 1848 - The war between the U.S. and Mexico ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In exchange for \$15 million, the U.S. acquired the areas encompassing parts or all of present day California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Texas. The treaty was ratified on March 10, 1848.

-February 4, 1861 - Apache Chief Cochise was arrested in Arizona by the U.S. Army for raiding a ranch. Cochise then escaped and declared war, beginning the period known as the Apache Wars, which lasted 25 years.

-February 6, 1952 - King George VI of England died. Upon his death, his daughter Princess Elizabeth became Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Her actual coronation took place on June 2, 1953.

-February 10, 1942 - The first Medal of Honor during World War II was awarded to 2nd Lt. Alexander Nininger (posthumously) for heroism during the Battle of Bataan.

-February 14, 1929 - The St. Valentine's Day massacre occurred in Chicago as seven members of the Bugs Moran gang were gunned down by five of Al Capone's mobsters posing as police.

-February 27, 1991 - In Desert Storm, the 100-hour ground war ended as Allied troops entered

Kuwait just four days after launching their offensive against Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces.

-February 4, 1902 - Aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh (1902-1974) was born in Detroit, Michigan. He made the first non-stop solo flight from New York to Paris, May 20-21, 1927.

-February 6, 1922 - Ronald Reagan, (1911-2004) the 40th U.S. President, was born in Tampico, Illinois. Reagan spent 30 years as an entertainer in radio, film, and television before becoming governor of California in 1966. Elected to the White House in 1980, he survived an assassination attempt and became the most popular president since Franklin Roosevelt.

-February 8, 1820 - Union Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891) was born in Lancaster, Ohio. You might recognize his name from the front of the AFRH Administration Building.

-February 12, 1809 - Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) the 16th U.S. President was born in Hardin County, Kentucky. He led the nation through the tumultuous Civil War, freed the slaves, composed the Gettysburg Address, and established Thanksgiving.

-February 15, 1820 - Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) was born in Adams, Massachusetts. A pioneer in women's rights, she worked tirelessly for woman's suffrage (right to vote) and in 1872 was arrested after voting (illegally) in the presidential election. She was commemorated in 1979 with the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin, thus became the first American woman to have her image on a U.S. coin.

-February 22, 1732 - George Washington (1732-1799) was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He served as commander of the Continental Army during the American Revolution and became the first U.S. President.

There are many things to do around the AFRH, but most are staffed by volunteers. Without help, we may not be able to keep things like the bowling alley, thrift store and library running smoothly. Please consider helping out; there are stipends currently available for some positions. If interested, see Bob in the Volunteer Office.

Sheldon Shorthouse

From the AFRH-G Administrator



Greetings residents, staff, family and friends,
 Another month has come and gone. My how time flies whether you are retired, working, or just plain having fun. I hope everyone is doing well and looking forward to more spring-like weather on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

This is an exciting time to be a part of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. The first week of March we will have the pleasure of hosting a team of professionals from the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General to review our healthcare operation. They will review our program policies and directives to see how we implement them into our daily routine of providing wonderful care for our nation's heroes also known as our residents. We will also have the DoD OIG reviewing other facets of our operation later this year. In addition, we will host The Joint Commission accreditation team as they review our home in the months ahead.

I would like to give a big shout out to our Krewe of NAMAC's Mardi Gras King Frederick "Pete" Peterson, Mardi Gras Queen Eva Downs and Grand Marshall Donna Rogers. Everyone had a festive time at our annual Mardi Gras Parade and Ball.



I also want to thank all the healthcare staff who helped get our upper levels of care residents dressed for the parade and ball. Thanks to the wonderful recreation team and our great volunteers for making the 2017 Mardi Gras Parade and Ball a special time for all who attended. Thank you to everyone who participated in making this a night to remember.

God bless you and God bless America!

Jeff Eads

Low Vision/Low Hearing Expo at AFRH

By Lori Kerns, Librarian

The inaugural Low Vision/Low Hearing Expo was held at AFRH-G on Tuesday, February 7, 2017. Seventy-two residents and several staff members were in attendance. The event, which was held in the Community Center, was organized to provide services and information to residents with low vision and low hearing.

The Biloxi Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center Audiology Department, Mississippi Department of Rehabilitative and Library Commission, and Sprint-Captel were all represented. These representatives came from the Gulf Coast and Jackson areas to provide their services, which included hearing tests, hearing aid cleaning, and demonstrations. They even brought free gifts like back scratchers, pill organizers, and pens! Residents enjoyed the two-hour expo by visiting with the representatives, socializing among each other, and drinking refreshments. Ten residents were the lucky recipients of a door prize. Among the prizes were talking watches and large number clocks. The event went so well, it will now be held annually!



Nursing Skills Fair

By Diane Snyder, MSN, Nurse Educator AFRH-G



AFRH Gulfport held the Annual Nursing Skills Fair for annual competency skills training on January 31 and February 1, 2017 in the Community Center. This year's Mardi Gras theme was "Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler!" (or "Let The Good Times Roll!"). The annual competency training for nurses and CNA's included eleven separate stations: 1) National Patient Safety Goals, 2) Falls Prevention, 3) Wound Care, 4) Infection Control/Isolation Precautions, 5) Documentation/Dr. Cloud, 6) Emergency Procedures/EKG Review, 7) Dietary Training, 8) Depression Assessment, 9) Glucometer/Accu-check Recertification, 10) Respiratory Modalities/Oxygen Safety, and 11) Tube Feedings/Medication Administration.

All of the nurse and healthcare trainers provided excellent hands-on training, and also provided educational materials to the nurses and CNA's. The success of this year's program was a direct result of our volunteer staff trainers. The Skills Fair training instructors included: Stephanie Jenkins, RD, Linda Smith, LCSW, Brandon Kinchen, RN, Corinn Burton, RN, Cynthia Lee, RN, Shaneika Brinkley, RN, Shannon Foster, RN, Jeanne Lipely, LPN, Minh Nguyen, CNA, LaToya Thompson, CNA, Savannah Ladner, RN, Tina Gauthier, RN, Latoria Porter, LPN, & Selena Brewer, LPN. Beth Towns, LPN from Grace Healthcare assisted with oxygen care training.



Ms. Julia Goode/Wellness Manager, networked with the healthcare training team from the 81st Medical Group at Keesler Air Force Base. Keesler trainers, Brad Belford, Dave Capps, and Randy Bernhardt graciously brought their life-size mannequin/simulator to AFRH-G to provide emergency care training to the nursing staff. Using the "life-sized" simulator, they reviewed EKG rhythms, pulses, eye (pupil) reactions, and use of the AED.

Diane Snyder, AFRH-G-Nurse Educator said, "Simulator training allows for hands-on skills review in a controlled setting. Most nursing and medical programs now include simulator training as part of the curriculum" said AFRH-G nurse educator Diane Snyder. "The 81st Medical Group at Keesler AFB uses various high tech simulators in their medical and surgery residency training programs. We were very fortunate to be able to network with them to gain educational opportunities for our nursing and healthcare staff. Our hope in the future is to partner with several local community health care facilities in continuing to maintain nurse competencies."

Mr. Jeffrey Eads, Administrator AFRH-G also participated in the training activities. The staff was able to demonstrate vital sign assessment skills for Mr. Eads. Leadership support is vital, and an integral part of all educational training programs.

At the end of the two-day training event, participants were given an opportunity to complete a "training critique" in an effort to improve future annual health care fairs. The feedback was very positive for this year's training, and the staff said it was "well organized." They also provided positive feedback to improve future annual health fairs.

The annual health fair provides educational opportunities to meet the Joint Commission and CARF standards of care for the staff. Thanks again for the support of all the team members in making this year's annual event a success!

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



I sat here today, staring blankly at the e-mail informing me that the February Communicator article is due by the 21st. I had no earthly idea what I wanted to tackle in this month's column. I happened to be coming out of the Community Center a bit later and my article found me. A resident was having medical difficulties necessitating immediate attention. Of course, it happened where there is no button on the immediate wall, despite the numerous emergency buttons throughout the facility. I called into the Community Center, pushed the button as I flew by it on the way to the Wellness Center to notify them. Simultaneously our Exchange personnel called in the emergency as did two others. I saw security rounding the corner towards the resident in need as I rounded the corner to the Wellness Center.

Why am I telling you all this? It is the third time in the last nine months I have come across a resident needing medical assistance. Fortunately the other two times there was a medical alert button within reach. This time there wasn't, which led me to go to security and sign up for one for myself.

Hopefully I will never use it for myself but I sure will push it if I come across a resident in need again. I do not wish to waste valuable time running for help when it could be literally a push button away. The life I save may not be mine, but it could certainly be yours. I'd encourage you to consider getting a button from security. There is no cost (unless you lose it) and as I have found out, you never know when it will be needed. It should go without being said that if you push your button because of another resident in need of assistance, STAY with the resident as security will be looking for you.

Along those lines, all residents are encouraged to keep an emergency bag near their room door to the hallway. Put a change of clothes, a toothbrush, toothpaste, a comb and/or brush, a phone charger cord, list of medicines and medical conditions, and maybe even your pajamas or a gown in it. Hopefully we never have to use it, but it sure will be handy if it is needed. It will also be of benefit if you are hospitalized unexpectedly and want our Ombudsman (or one of your friendly neighbors) to bring it to you. It keeps someone from having to rummage around your room looking for the items. They will appreciate your preparing the bag in advance.

Phil Ford

Congratulations to Al Hampton, Barbara Jones, Ramon Alford and Ray Harvey for receiving the RAC Contract Employee Awards.



AFRH-W Activities

Recreation Therapy pre Super Bowl party

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

On Friday, February 3rd the Recreation Therapy Department hosted a fun-filled day of events to kick off the Super Bowl LI. The day of events started off at 10:00 AM in the Scott Community Center. Residents enjoyed watching highlights of the New England Patriots famous Super Bowl moments on two big drop down screens. Residents also had the opportunity to place their Super Bowl bucket bids to include guessing who would win the coin toss, 1st fumble, 1st interception, 1st touchdown, 1st sack, 1st field goal, lead at halftime, and champions/final score. Then at noon the Atlanta Falcons year in review was shown along with more bucket bowl bids. The main event for the day then started at 1:30 PM. The Navy Ceremonial Guard, JROTC students, and local community volunteers came out to help support the event and also mixed and mingled with the veterans. The residents enjoyed listening to the history of the Super Bowl, watching Super Bowl moments of the past, Super Bowl trivia, and munching on Super Bowl snacks. Special thanks to Food Services for providing delicious chicken wings, cheese and crackers, BBQ pulled pork sandwiches, chips and dip, and assorted mini-cheesecakes. Beverages included water, soda, and beer. All in all it was a great event with a packed house of 75+ residents and 25+ volunteers leading into the Super Bowl LI!

Winners of the RT Super Bowl Bucket Bowl Bids

Coin toss-Marvin Archer
 1st interception-Erwin Springer
 1st touchdown-Robert Webb
 1st field goal-Victor Mosesso
 1st sack-William Palmer
 Lead at halftime-Stan Harrell
 1st fumble-Don Freer
 Champions/final score-Alexander Farmer 34-30 New England Patriots



Super Bowl LI at AFRH-W

By Jerry Carter, Fitness Specialist

On Sunday, February 5, 2017 Super Bowl LI was shown on the two gigantic screens in the Scott Community Center. More than 100 residents were in attendance and witnessed one of the best games played in Super Bowl history. New England defeated the Atlanta Falcons in overtime! Residents were treated to delicious pizza and cold beverages provided by Recreation Services.

AFRH Food Service provided a tasty menu for all in attendance: Chicken drumettes, BBQ pulled pork with potato sliders, chip with salsa, cube cheese with crackers and assorted finger desserts. The residents really enjoyed this marvelous menu provided for Super Bowl LI.

Recreation Services would like to thank all the community volunteers and our very own resident volunteers who helped make this a very successful event.

SC3 Kentucky Fried Chicken day

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

On Friday, February 17, the residents from Scott 3 enjoyed a special luncheon from Kentucky Fried Chicken otherwise known as KFC. The meal included KFC fried chicken, home style string beans, mashed potatoes and gravy, macaroni and cheese, beverages, cake, ice cream, and more! KFC was founded by Colonel Harland Sanders, who opened the first franchise in Utah in 1952. Before his first franchise opened, in the midst of the depression, Sanders opened his first restaurant in 1930 in a small front room of a gas station in Corbin, Kentucky.

KFC is one of the leading fast food restaurants in the nation and is also an international food chain. Residents were all familiar with Kentucky Fried Chicken and had enjoyed eating there at one time or another. The KFC slogan "finger lickin' good" was agreed upon by all with residents voting to bring back KFC again in the future!



Cars, cars and more cars!

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy



It was a wonderful night at The Washington Auto Show with the healthcare residents of AFRH-W. This is a favorite trip for residents to attend. Special thanks to the Fenwick Foundation for donating the tickets to attend this event held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Over 600 new vehicles from over thirty-five manufacturers were on display. Residents enjoyed looking at the old, new, and futuristic vehicles. Some of the favorites included an Aston Martin, Corvettes, Lamborghinis, trucks, and police vehicles. Residents look forward to attending again next year!

Residents enjoy trip to Longhorne Steakhouse



And they're off!!!

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapy

On Friday, January 27th the great horses of past and present came to life.... Secretariat, War Admiral, American Pharoah, and Seabiscuit were all in the house and ready to race. Wooden horses were created by skilled residents from the AFRH-W Wood Shop over fifteen years ago for Recreation Therapy to hold indoor horse races. The track was designed by Recreation Therapy and is approximately 60 x 35 feet in size. Due to constant wear and tear by the horses the track is rebuilt every three years. Residents attending the races are provided with a set amount of poker chips to bet on each race. At the end of the races the resident with the high chip count wins a cash prize. This past race winner was resident Al Brotski. AFRH is looking for a Triple Crown winner in the near future.



"Crafters-R-Us" gang hit by cupid's arrows

By Lori Thompson, Art Specialist

In February, Sheridan's third floor gathering space (across from the elevators) became a mecca for crafters as volleys of cupid's arrows rained down upon them. It began innocently, as residents glazed Valentine ceramic ware that had been poured by the ceramics gang. The following Tuesday, they held a Valentine card-making social; enticing new recruits with cookies and punch. (The cards were delivered to Memory Support residents, who were very pleased with the cards). Once the "crafty" ones formed a solid core group, the gang decided to expand their turf by joining the pouring class in Ceramics on February 21.

In March, they will further swell their ranks by beguiling those of Irish descent and their sympathizers by glazing St. Patrick's Day ceramics on March 7. They will also be hosting a St. Patrick's Day magnet and pin making social on March 14. If you think you don't have the "creative gene" to join this group, put your fears aside. Many of the gang had never picked up a glue stick or paint brush before joining, and had little confidence in their artistic abilities. The gang will assist you in saying, "pishshaw," to those fears. You don't have to participate in order to check them out. However, if you decide to join gang activities, everyone will do their best to help your first mission be successful. Check them out on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM, Sheridan 3.



AFRH-G Activities

AFRH-G Super Bowl LI

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist



Another Super Bowl Party has arrived with the Atlanta Falcons playing New England Patriots. Residents showed up to support their NFL team with the Atlanta Falcons dominating the first half. But the Atlanta Falcons could not keep up with the New England Patriots in the second half. It was the first time in Super Bowl history the teams went into overtime with New England winning Super Bowl LI.

Boy Scouts Troop 211 replaces shuffleboard court

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist



On Saturday February 4, 2017 at 1000 Boy Scout Troop 211 came to the Armed Forces Retirement Home to take down the old outdoor shuffleboard court and replaced it with a new outdoor shuffleboard court. This is one of the many service projects that Troop 211 does in the community. They first recycled parts from the old outdoor shuffleboard and replaced the damaged parts on the second outdoor shuffleboard court. They then constructed the new outdoor shuffleboard. When completed, Recreation Specialist Dennis Crabtree showed them how to play the game.



Staying active

By Carol Davis, Recreation Assistant

Exercise and physical activity are important at every stage in our lives. Even if hiking, running, or weight training is not an option for you, there are still ways to get and stay active.

Chair-based exercises offer many positive benefits such as improved circulation, better balance, and stronger bones and muscles. Besides the many health benefits, attending chair exercises in small groups provides a great opportunity to meet new people and socialize.

Come join us every week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 0900 in the Exercise Classroom (Room 1211).



Putting Tournament

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist

On Friday February 10, 2017 residents competed in the Outdoor Putting Tournament. It was a nice cool morning to play. Bill Jossendal took his time aiming for that beautiful shot to make that hole in one. First shootout for 5 holes was Bill Jossendal with a 12, Jim Bass with a 13 and Jim Taylor with a 12. Second shootout for 6 holes was Bill Jossendal with a 16 and Jim Taylor with a 14. Bill Sanders took 1st place, Jim Taylor took 2nd place, and Bill Jossendal took 3rd place.



Indoor Shuffleboard (Horse Collar) Tournament

By Dennis Crabtree, Recreation Specialist

On Monday February 13, 2017, residents were competing in the Indoor Shuffleboard (Horse Collar) Tournament in the Bocce Center. Fredi Van Pelt shot all eight pucks and succeeded in getting the maximum points. Woody Hilliker played on the other end of the shuffleboard table. There could only be three winners that day. Bill Jossendal took 1st place, Fredi Van Pelt took 2nd place and Fred Ray took 3rd place.



The volunteer home room gets a makeover

By Milton Williams, Art Specialist

Our volunteer room is now featuring a one-person art show of twenty paintings by resident artist, Gerry Gorsky. With permission from Gerry and the expert arrangement our CMI staff (Jonathan Nissen and Jeremy Howell), this wall will become our newest avenue to display the paintings of our talented veterans. Our guests, residents and especially our volunteers will get to enjoy some very fine art. Gerry is our first one-person art show and in two months a new display by another resident will go up. Our volunteer room also serves as our package pick up area, so lots of folks will be blessed by the new view. Be sure and visit the volunteer room and take an art adventure soon.



Mississippi State Guard at Camp Shelby



Resident Tony Langdon (left), who is a retired U.S. Army Military Police Investigator, attends a fundraiser at the all Rank Club at Camp Shelby, Mississippi on February 11, 2017. He is pictured here with the Mississippi State Guard 310 Military Police Battalion.

WASHINGTON

Artistic Dance Academy performs for AFRH-W residents

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapist

On Saturday, February 4th Recreation Therapy happily hosted the annual performance by the Artistic Dance Academy. The event was held in the Scott Community Center to a packed house! The dance studio is located in Upper Marlboro, Maryland and students of all ages perform a fantastic show for the residents of AFRH-W! The owner of the studio, Cindy King, put together a captivating performance that included tap dancing, ballet, hip hop, solos, and groups. The skill and technique of the students was excellent and the costumes truly enhanced the show.

Residents, staff, and volunteers look forward to next year's performance!



GULFPORT

Nothing says "love" like pie

By Sean Campbell, Recreation Services & Melodie Menke, Volunteer Coordinator
Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

Cupid was nowhere to be seen at the Valentine's Day Pie and Ice Cream Social at AFRH-G, but nobody complained because the ladies from Waffle House were there! For several years, AFRH-G resident Raleigh "Dawg" Player rounds up his friends from Waffle House and they treat residents and staff to some delicious pie and ice cream. This all started on February 14, 2012 when Mr. Raleigh (Dawg) Player escorted Ms. Marion Ritchie to the Waffle House Sweetheart Night and thus began their Valentine's Day tradition. Dawg also started another tradition that night; he asked Waffle House if they would come to AFRH-G with their delicious pies and on Tuesday Feb 14, 2017, over 200 Residents and staff enjoyed the sixth year of this yummy pie tradition.

Dawg had decorated the Community Center tables with heart shaped centerpieces and balloons and bought in gallons of ice cream for all to enjoy. Air Force Volunteers with MSgt Rhokea Daniel's excellent leadership skills were helping out with serving, socializing and helping with anything and everything. Our famous Ice Cream Ladies were smiling and scooping, lots of scooping! The Waffle House staff generously came out with pies, lots and lots of pies. From all of us at AFRH-G, we send a sweet thank you to Waffle House and Dawg for such a fun Valentine's Day tradition.

