



AFRH-WASHINGTON

New York Rolling Thunder rides on AFRH-W

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator



The 2019 Memorial Day Cookout at the Armed Forces Retirement Home here in Washington, D.C. was a huge success for residents, staff and volunteers, thanks in part to the community outreach and volunteer service by Rolling Thunder Chapter 2 New York. "We love coming here and we plan to keep coming back every year," said chapter president, Vinny Perno. "It's an honor to be here." Perno had reached out to AFRH for the second year in row looking to have his group volunteer for the Memorial Day Cookout on May 24. Sixty volunteers riding on 30 motorcycles arrived early ready to help with preparing for the afternoon festivities. Right away, they started setting up tents, unfolding tables and chairs and posting American flags.

Volunteers escorted healthcare residents to and from cookout and enthusiastically served as wait staff providing residents with food and drink. Their participation ensured everyone had someone to talk to, someone to eat with and someone to engage with.

Residents truly felt appreciated when about 30 Rolling Thunder volunteers lined up on both sides of the hallway from the Scott Lobby to the Defenders Inn in order to greet residents as they made their way out to the cookout. They were greeted with warm applause and cheers (and cameras) as if they were on the "red carpet."

The volunteer/community outreach effort positively impacted the event and AFRH-W Administrator Susan Bryhan thanked them for supporting AFRH. She presented Perno and his riders with an AFRH-W Certificate of Appreciation and a coveted administrator's coin.

Rolling Thunder Chapter 2 New York made the 200 hundred mile trek from Staten Island, New York to Washington, D.C. to participate in the annual ride on Washington, a tradition that has taken place over several decades. Despite reports of the national organization halting the annual trip to D.C., Perno assured residents that his chapter will continue to visit AFRH every year.



AFRH-GULFPORT

AFRH-G Flag Day Ceremony

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



AFRH-G celebrated Flag Day on June 14 with a touching ceremony to honor the United States flag and to commemorate the flag's adoption on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress. Celebrating Flag Day has been a long and honorable tradition for United States citizens. President Woodrow Wilson issued a presidential proclamation in 1916 offering national recognition for "Old Glory."

The program started with a recording from Johnny Cash titled "Ragged Old Flag." Resident Services Chief Christopher Alexander served as the master of ceremonies and read a very moving poem called "I Am the Flag." The Gulfport Fire Department Honor Guard presented the colors. After the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance, Safety Officer Frank Bermudez presented the invocation. Our special guest speaker Major Christopher De Back, an Army veteran and currently the Major of the Investigations Division with the Biloxi Police Department, thanked our residents for their service and spoke of the meaning of our flag and why it is so important. Then, our

very own resident Keith Van Doren read the poem "The Flag Goes By."

The ceremony concluded with the picturesque "Old Glory" waving atop the Gulfport Fire Department truck ladder. We send a special thank you to the Gulfport Fire Department and special guest speaker Major Christopher De Back for their participation in commemorating this special day.



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AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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

Serving America's Veterans

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

Eligibility: Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH. The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not 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 have 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 suffering from 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**

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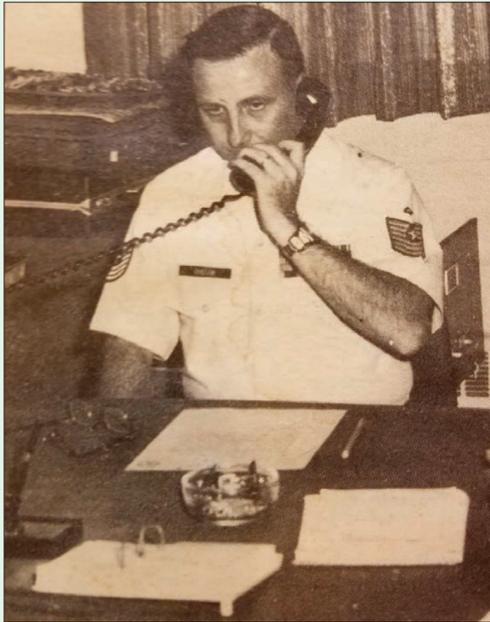


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AFRH-W Resident Highlight – Thomas Dodson

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Thomas Dodson was born in Virginia. His father was career U.S. Navy, who served before World War II and was recalled after Pearl Harbor. He ended up with 23 years' service. After graduating from high school, Thomas worked in supply for the navy at Portsmouth, Virginia. In 1953, knowing that the draft was coming up, Thomas decided to join a military service. He decided on...the U.S. Air Force! No long deployments on ships for him. He had his basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas and after taking the Airman's Qualifying Exam, Thomas was sent to the Finance and Accounting School in Denver, Colorado.

Thomas' first duty station was at Orlando AFB, Florida and he felt he had a very important job handling the Airman's financial situations. He moved on to handling the travel section at Yokota AFB, Japan for the next eighteen months. Next, it was back to the states and the newly refurbished Homestead AFB, Florida,

where Thomas experienced state-of-the-art equipment for his job. He then got orders for Thule, Greenland, where he worked as a cashier. Further assignments included Westover, Massachusetts, (for payroll duty); Homestead, Florida (again); and Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland.

Thomas was fortunate then to be sent to his hometown in Virginia for four years of Air Force recruiting duty. It was here that he met his future wife. They traveled together to his

next assignment in Aviano, Italy; where he was the chief of the travel division. Both enjoyed being there and his wife even learned to speak Italian. After being sent to California and experiencing an earthquake, Thomas volunteered for a tour in Vietnam. Here, he again was the chief of the travel division at Da Nang and one of his duties was to deliver paychecks to Thailand. Unfortunately, Thomas got an infected colon and had to be medevaced to the states. He ended up at Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina, which started poorly with a bad boss, but ended up with him becoming a 1st Sergeant and being in charge of the largest squadron on base. Thomas ended his military career in 1976 back at Homestead AFB and just like his father, he had 23 years!

Thomas and his family, (which had grown to add a daughter and a son), went to Goldsboro, North Carolina where he sold insurance and later worked in finance as a civil servant. They moved to Baltimore, Maryland and Thomas got a job in finance at Fort Meade, which had many problems. After straightening things out, his department was inspected by a team from Georgia. The next thing Thomas knew, he was working in Atlanta, Georgia. By this time, his daughter was working in finance at White Sands AFB, New Mexico and alerted her father to an opening there as the chief of a financial division. He applied and spent the next 14 years there. After his wife died, Thomas retired in 1996.

Because of his career in the financial world, Thomas always knew that AFRH existed. But it wasn't until a niece checked out the Home and convinced him to look at it, that Thomas came here in October 2017.



AFRH-G Resident Highlight - JC Robinson

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



JC Robinson was born in the small town of Brownedale, Texas. He is the youngest of four children born to a farmer and housewife. His family moved around Texas a lot after WWII. JC graduated from high school in Chester, Texas. He made the decision to join the military soon after graduation. He credits John Wayne's movie, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, for this decision. For him, "there was no decision" on which branch he wanted to serve. He chose the Marines because "there's no other."

He went into service on 14 November 1951. For his entire military career he served in a rifle company. This included his tour of duty in Vietnam, where he served as a gunnery sergeant. JC proudly served as a Marine for over 20 years.

Upon his military retirement, he went to work at Pasadena High School in Texas where he taught ROTC for a few years. He left his teaching job to begin working with Brown & Root Construction as a

concrete foreman building a nuclear power plant in Bay City, Texas. His adventures took him to the oil fields where he worked as a mud engineer taking care of the chemicals on the rig.

As the oil boom began to shut down, JC found himself out of work so he made the humanitarian decision to join the Peace Corps. His first assignment took him to Gabon in central Africa. He stayed in Gabon for two and a half years building schools and housing for the schools' teachers. When his service time was up, he came back to the states to attend East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. He earned a degree in environmental science and headed back out of the country for another stint with the Peace Corps.

JC went to Nepal in South Asia. In Nepal, he worked with the locals to improve their vegetation and livestock by helping with their soil conservation and increasing the amount of trees for firewood. He returned stateside to begin working on Leech Lake Indian

Reservation in Minnesota. He served as the safety officer and also oversaw the sanitation of 13 public water systems, including the safety and sanitation of the reservation's hospital.

JC's next job was a contract position with the EPA as a lab technician in a water research laboratory. He worked here until he retired from his civilian career. He decided to take one last position with the Peace Corps, which took him to Morocco. He was appointed to work with the health administration teaching the locals how to properly sanitize their hands and purify the water from their irrigation ditches. He also assisted the medical personnel with vaccinations and the health and sanitation issues of the community. His assignment in Morocco lasted about two and a half years before he returned to America to stay. His retirement was cut short when he decided to return to the EPA lab where he had previously worked. His deteriorating eyesight forced him to finally hang up his hat at age 79! He began enjoying his retirement by living on his farm in Ada where he raised cattle and goats.

Due to his poor eyesight, JC decided to move to AFRH-G back in 2015. He stayed for a while but decided to go back to Ada where he built a cabin on his farm to live. He stayed until 2017 and resolved to return to AFRH-G. His never-ending penchant for volunteerism is still as strong as ever as he spends his well-earned retirement taking residents to church and prayer services. If that is not enough, he recently extended his generosity when he began volunteering with IMMS's (Institute for Marine Mammal Studies) education department where he helps visitors to pet the animals and also helps answer their questions.



AFRH-G presents check to Feed My Sheep

By Kristen Anzuini | WXXV

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



On May 20, 2019 residents from the Armed Forces Retirement Home gave back to the community in a big way. They spent the majority of their life serving their country, now they are giving back to their community! The Protestant Congregation at the Armed Forces Retirement Home presented Feed my Sheep with a \$3,000 check. Feed my Sheep Chairman of the Board David Lion said, "They gave the better part of their whole life in service and now in their retirement years, they are still continuing to give. It is just amazing."

Gulfport resident Wayland Webb said giving back has always been second nature to him. Webb and other residents at the AFRH-G knew they wanted to help feed the homeless population in Gulfport. "It is just a good, warm, fuzzy feeling. That is all I can say about that and it is just something I have been doing all of my life."

Donations like this help keep Feed my Sheep up and running throughout the year. David Lion said, "It goes to great use. We feed about 115,000 meals per year, half of those are in bound and half are at the establishment Monday through Friday."

Feed my Sheep is always looking for volunteers to help out. If you would like to get involved you can call or go online. "We have a very minimal staff that is there full time. We accept volunteers and we accept donations, any way people feel comfortable helping out."



WWII veterans from AFRH-G visit WWII Museum on the 75th Anniversary of D-Day

By Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Photos by Tony Langdon | Resident

On June 6 several AFRH-G WWII veterans and chaperones boarded a limo bus and headed to the WWII Museum in New Orleans to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. This trip was sponsored by a local doctor. The veterans attended a ceremony, watched a movie on D-Day in the museum's theater and were treated to lunch. They also enjoyed a Victory Belles show. On their way to the canteen for lunch, hundreds of visitors lined the hallways in the museum and were clapping, and thanking the veterans for their service. Resident Tony Langdon said, "This absolutely brought tears to my eyes. It was such a wonderful and very heartwarming experience." D-Day will always be the heart of the WWII Museum and it's why June 6, 2019, the 75th anniversary of D-Day, is being marked in a big way. It's important to understand that June 6 is not just about the men who took part in the invasion, but what that day meant to their families and to our country at large to protect our liberties and democracy.



Ready to Par-Tea at the Ladies Luncheon

By Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant

Photos by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs Specialist

On the Monday following Mother's Day, the ladies of the Washington campus gathered together for a special luncheon hosted in their honor. In the Defender's Inn (beautifully decorated with flowers courtesy of the Lincoln's Cottage), they were treated to a variety of teas from around the world, a flurry of small dishes, and a plethora of desserts! Each lady was offered a handmade fabric brooch by the team at the instruction of Art Specialist Kayla Bennett. The ladies from recreation love putting together events like this which added laughs, smiles, and love to a luncheon filled with friends and fun. Music, games, food, and conversations to remember among the special group of ladies at AFRH-W! A special thanks to Recreation Therapist Carol Mitchell for championing our servicewomen with this event year after year.



Bourbon & Bluegrass

By Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

Our friends from President Lincoln's Cottage hosted their fifth annual "Bourbon and Bluegrass" event over the weekend of June 1-2. The event, held each afternoon over the weekend, featured bluegrass music from a variety of outstanding musicians, bourbon tasting, and fun and games for adults and children alike! Also included was a tour of the historic Governor's Mansion, located on our grounds. AFRH residents were welcomed to stop by and enjoy the festivities! Our thanks to AFRH-W resident Jack Beck for these Saturday, June 1 photos, which included his tour of the Governor's Mansion.



Fun Finals with Norwood Middle School

By Carol Mitchell | AFRH-W Recreation Therapy

Photos Courtesy of Norwood Middle School

Fond farewell to the 8th grade students of Norwood Middle School. The students provided an exciting year of intergenerational bowling with the AFRH-W healthcare residents. At the start of the school year, students and residents were paired together as a team to bowl in a league. The pairing enabled residents and students to get to know each other throughout the year while helping each other in their attempt to regain skills, learn new skills, and adapt to each other's needs. Students would arrive once a month during the school year and head to the healthcare units to assist their partner to the bowling center. The students learned how to adapt to their resident partners' needs and the residents enjoyed giving pointers on how to bowl. Many gutter balls, spares, and strikes were thrown... ok not so many strikes! A good time was had by all and with lasting memories for students and residents alike.



Supreme Group says goodbye

Story & Photo by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

What has become a tradition over the past five years has come to an end. On Saturday, June 8, Supreme Group came for one last hoorah before closing their doors. Julian Allen, general counsel and director of security at Supreme Group came to represent the organization on this last visit. He opened the day's events with a presentation in the Scott Theater on the British Military. He spoke of what he knew from what his grandfather and wife's grandfather shared with him about their time serving, as well as his personal experiences when he served in the British military in Afghanistan. Following the presentation was the buffet which was provided by Windows Catering Company. As always the Community Center looked amazing with the blue tablecloths, and of course most importantly the food was amazing. Residents were going back for seconds and thirds. The buffet consisted of fried chicken, brisket, potato pancakes, corn salsa, salad, fruit, corn bread, mashed red skin potato, macaroni, and cupcakes. For beverages they had their choice of tea, lemonade, an assortment and soda, and beer. During the lunch residents were socializing and laughing with one another and having a grand time together. Julian made his way around from table to table taking the opportunity to speak with the Veterans and hear their stories.

Bingo began promptly at 1:00pm with our librarian, Christine Baldwin, as the master bingo caller. We played a total of five games where the prizes ranged from \$150 to \$300, again thanks to Supreme Group. Our winners were Marvin Archer, Catharine Deitch, Patrick Coleman, Corinne Robinson, John Lott, and Lillian Miller.

AFRH-Washington is very thankful to the Supreme Group for their support and friendship over the past five years. They will be missed and we wish them all luck in their future endeavors.



From the AFRH-W Administrator



June began with the President Lincoln Cottage's annual Bourbon and Bluegrass festival. Those who attended had a wonderful weekend on the front lawn at the Cottage listening to great music while trying out different beverages. A few days later, we wished our Army veterans a happy 244th birthday with a traditional cake-cutting and an inspiring speech by Sergeant Major Edison Rebeck, Executive Officer to the Sergeant Major of the Army. We also witnessed the last day of school for the charter school on campus, which means summer can begin!

One of the highlights of the month and perhaps year, was attending the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the 69th anniversary of the Korean War at the Korean War Veterans' Memorial. We were also honored to be invited to the Ambassador of Korea's residence for a wonderful traditional Korean meal and entertainment.

Probably the most fun I had this month was when 3 busses rolled in from the US Naval Academy carrying the football team. After greeting them, they broke into working parties, cleaning up the ponds, golf course and walking trails. It is a wonder we had any food left after hosting them for lunch! They were amazed to speak to residents who participated in the events they learn about at the Academy. Go Navy!

Finally, we were honored to host the Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) senior staff for an off-site led by WHS Director Tom Muir. They held a day-long meeting and enjoyed lunch with residents.

We've had a busy month with staff events. I would first like to thank Chief of Healthcare Services Mike Bayles, who retired after four years of dedicated service here at the Home. Fair Winds and Following Seas, Mike! You'll be missed. I'd like to welcome Sergeant Major Bob Pullen to the Home as our new Ombudsman! Bob comes to us right out of active duty after serving 30 years of distinguished service in the Marine Corps. He has already made a great impact here in just a few weeks. Welcome to Bob and his wife Melissa! I would also like to thank AFRH-Gulfport's Director of Nursing Beatrice Overby, for spending a few weeks with us to help during some critical leadership gaps.

We also honored our certified nursing assistants and nurses in a combined celebration with a breakfast and dinner meal. These staff members are integral to the care we provide to our veterans, it was a small gesture of appreciation for the work they do each day. And finally, we had our first inter-departmental (Campus Operations and Resident Services) potluck in response to a staff survey recommending better communication among the staff. We shared wonderful food and also a game of corn hole. Fun!

I hope that everyone gets a bit of time this summer to spend time with friends and family. Enjoy!

Susan Bryhan



Celebrating 244 years of the U.S. Army

By Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

Military birthdays are always special events at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington. And the Army Birthday, coming in as the first of the calendar year, and with 37 percent of our residents having served in the Army, it takes on a more special significance.

This year our guest speaker was Sergeant Major Edison M. Rebeck, currently the XO to the Sergeant Major of the Army. He spoke about how the Army influenced his view, and the view of his family, of country, value and tradition. Army tradition was so much a part of the lives of his children, that they would stop and salute the flag during colors, even when no one prompted them to do so.

The traditional cutting of the cake was done by Sergeant Major Rebeck and Katherine Deitch, our oldest Army veteran, at 99 years of age. Katherine talks fondly of what she was able to accomplish in the Army, and the places that duty took her. She is proud to represent the Home in any way she can.



Memorial Day Ceremony

Story & Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer



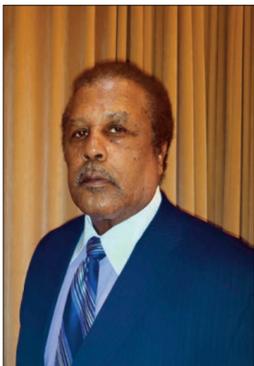
President Lincoln's Cottage hosted the annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony on Monday, May 27, at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. The cemetery, established in 1861, is the first national cemetery and is the final resting place of Major General John Logan, who formalized Memorial Day celebrations in 1868.

Speaking at the event were Erin Carlson Mast, chief executive officer and executive director of President Lincoln's Cottage; Rod Gainer, chief curator, Arlington National Cemetery; and Rod Ross from the Illinois State Society. AFRH-W chaplain John Goodloe offered the invocation and resident Frank Lawrence placed the wreath

at Major General Logan's tomb. Our thanks to the Honor Guard from the Metropolitan Police Department for the Presentation of the Colors.



Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Club rolled up to AFRH last month to volunteer during the Memorial Day cookout where I was the DJ, playing three hours of the best music from the 1950s and 1960s to make the event one to remember.

On May 4, AFRH hosted a murder mystery activity and there were eight residents who should be in Hollywood with their great acting skills.

Recently we honored D-Day, a very important time in our country's history. We attended the United States Army birthday celebration at Fort Belvoir on June 11 which turned out to be a very moving experience. Linda Bailey from Recreation Services took six residents over to the base. The residents were Charles Daniels, Harry Miller, Sheldon Shorthouse, Chuck Felder, Rafael Lopez and me, Billy Ray White.

Two of our residents received a very special award. Lopez and Miller are D-Day veterans who participated in those combat operations 75 years ago. The awards were given by Lieutenant General Darrell K. Williams (U.S. Army) and

Lieutenant General Thomas Seamands (U.S. Army).

Father's Day weekend at AFRH was nothing but great. After serving T-bone steaks on Sunday and having a birthday dinner on Tuesday, one of the residents said all of this attention makes him want to reenlist. I had the opportunity to witness a Flag Burning Ceremony at the VFW, Clinton, Md.

In June, we held our 5th Veterans Day Workshop at Fort Foote Baptist Church in Fort Washington, Md. The workshop discussed benefits, retirement and AFRH.

Billy Ray White



From the AFRH-G Administrator



This month has been filled with events. On June 14 we held our Flag Day Ceremony outside by the flag pole. Our guest speaker was Major Christopher De Back, of the Investigations Division at the Biloxi Police Department. This was such a nice and touching ceremony. The Gulfport Fire Department raised an American flag atop the firetruck ladder, which served as a beautiful backdrop to the ceremony.

On the afternoon of June 14 we also celebrated the 244th Birthday of the United States Army. First Sergeant LaVander N. Talley was our guest speaker. The youngest active duty Army in attendance, Private Titan Campbell, cut the cake along with Ernest "Ernie" Pain, the oldest Army resident in attendance. Thank you to our recreation staff for doing such a wonderful job putting both of these events together and thank you to the residents for participating.

We held our annual summer kick-off pool party the evening of June 21. Residents got in the beautiful pool to cool off with temperatures reaching 90 degrees. On June 25 recreation planned on holding the second "Dive-In" movie, where "Jaws" was to be shown outside by the pool. Unfortunately mother nature had a different idea. Thunder, lightning, wind and rain started around the same time the movie was supposed to start. "Jaws" will be re-scheduled outside by the pool on Tuesday, July 30. With the start of summer and the heat wave going on in South Mississippi, consider taking a dip in our beautiful salt water pool or attend the water aerobics classes on Monday and Wednesdays at 1000. And always remember to stay hydrated.

Since the start of hurricane season was June 1 let us all get prepared now, just in case. Everyone should have a hurricane plan in place. Keep all your important papers together in case you decide to evacuate and make sure you have bottled water and non-perishable food in your apartment. At AFRH-G we plan to shelter-in-place in the event of a hurricane. If you decide to evacuate on your own, make sure you have a destination plan.

With our census increasing, please welcome the new residents. If you see a resident you haven't seen before it only takes a minute to introduce yourself. For some new residents this is a life-changing move, so please be courteous, welcoming and friendly to your neighbors. A little bit of effort goes a long way. Be genuinely interested in everyone you meet and everyone you meet will be genuinely interested in you! Thank each of you, our defenders of freedom, for serving our country!

Jeff Eads



Administrator Jeff Eads with 100-year-old James Windham at the Army Birthday Celebration.

AFRH-G 244th Army Birthday Celebration

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



Happy 244th Birthday to the United States Army! On June 14 AFRH-G held a birthday celebration in honor of the Army in the Community Center. Administrator Jeff Eads was the emcee and introduced our special guest speaker, First sergeant La Vander Talley, U.S. Army. A special video presentation "Birthday of the U.S. Army" was shown along with the Army tribute video, "America's Army: Ready to Fight and Win." The cake was cut by the AFRH-G's oldest Army resident, Ernest Pain, and the youngest Army active duty in attendance, Private Titan Campbell. Thank you to all our incredible volunteers who assisted in making this celebration such a success.

The United States Army (USA) is the land warfare service branch of the United States Armed Forces. It is one of the seven uniformed services of the United States, and is designated as the Army of the United States in the United States Constitution. As the oldest and most senior branch of the U.S. military in order of precedence, the modern U.S. Army has its roots in the Continental Army, which was formed June 14, 1775 to fight the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) - before the United States of America was established as a country. Army's motto is "This We'll Defend." Defend remains our Army's main mission.



We will always remember

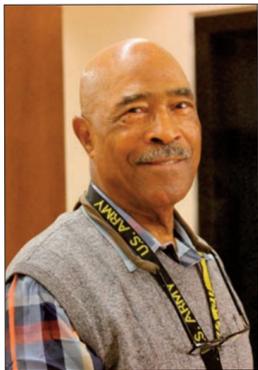
By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist
Photos by Lee Corban | Recreation Services Supervisor



Memorial Day at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport was acknowledged with a ceremony for residents and guests in the Community Center on Friday, May 24. Special Guest Speaker Senior Chief Matt Carpenter from the TRIPOLO (LHA-7) stationed in Pascagoula spoke eloquently about the purpose and reverence of remembering those our country has lost in battle. In honor of the ceremony, AFRH-G residents Keith Van Doren and Dale Bulter presented poems entitled "In Flander's Field" and "For the Fallen" respectively. While we do not necessarily "celebrate" on Memorial Day, we do remember the sacrifices of the fallen, and acknowledge that the freedoms we enjoy today are a direct result of those sacrifices.



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The month of June is a month of celebrations. First we remembered June 6 as D-Day. Seventy-five years ago on this date, the allied nations gathered in England to begin the invasion of Europe. Under the codename "Overlord" the allies landed on Normandy beaches to start the liberation of northwest Europe from German forces.

The 14th of June is a dual holiday. It is the birthday of the U.S. Army and Flag Day. On June 14, 1775 the Continental Congress authorized enlistment of riflemen to serve the Thirteen Colonies for one year. From that meager beginning, the U.S. Army has morphed into one of the strongest, integrated fighting forces in the world today. The birthday party was held in the community center and the guest speaker was First Sergeant LaVander N. Talley, C Co. 169th Engineer Battalion.

The United States flag is also celebrated on the 14th of June. In 1777 the Continental Congress approved the stars and stripes. That first flag resolution read: "Resolved that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes in alternate seven red and six white; that the union be thirteen white stars, on a field of blue that would be a symbol of the United States of America; that each star would represent a state in this new nation. The number of stars have grown over the years to 50. Today this flag not only represents the United States, but is a symbol of freedom for all the world. A ceremony was held outside in front of the building with the assistance of the Biloxi Fire Department. They provided a garrison flag attached to a ladder truck. The guest speaker was Major Chris De Back with the Biloxi Police Department.

The residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home can and should recognize the kindred spirit, that unending line of sacrifices that have endured over the years. It is a calling, a "standing in the breach" to which all have said SEND ME. To the Army veterans HAPPY BIRTHDAY, to all of us, GOD BLESS THE USA and the flag that represents it.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-Washington

Don't be a wet noodle – Join us!

Story and Photo by Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant



Residents David Kaetzel, Ino Sylman, and Recreation therapist Carol Mitchell on Mr Sylman's first day in the pool.

The Recreation Therapy team at the Washington campus kicked off their summertime pool program with a splash. Once a month, they will host an open Pool Day followed by an outdoor picnic for residents needing or wanting individual attention for aquatic therapy. Warm and inviting, the water is heated to a therapeutic 92 degrees – ideal for folks with arthritis, balance concerns, or weight bearing issues. With the first event behind us, we're happy to report that it went swimmingly with some new faces joining us in the pool!

For all you folks wondering, no, we haven't gone off the deep end yet, but remember, no diving in the pool!

Special exhibit

Story and Photo by Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Displayed outside the AFRH-W Wellness Clinic is a special exhibit from resident Don Marsh, containing some of his police badge collection.

Don had been in the military police during his U.S. Army career and later worked for Central Texas College teaching law enforcement classes.

He highlighted donated badges from Washington DC residents Lewis Haight and John Lott, and Gulfport resident Larry McAnally.

'50s Sock Hop Murder Mystery Theater Luncheon

Story & Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer

On June 4, AFRH-W residents were treated to a " '50s Sock Hop Murder Mystery Theater Luncheon," thanks to the great folks from AFRH-W's Recreation Therapy staff and the terrific actors from the Murder Mystery Company in Baltimore, Md. Our Veteran residents entered the 1950's era "juke box"-decorated community center ready for a lot of fun and a great meal. In addition to taking on different roles at their "1957 high school sock hop" - some couples competed for the King and Queen of the Hop - while others emerged as potential suspects in the "murder" of their class president. Hilarity ensued as the investigation got underway - and the culprit was finally identified! All in all everyone had a sock-hopping great time!



Three strikes and you're out! ...Three strikes of lightning that is

Story & Photo by Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant

Our first Nationals baseball game of the season was bound to be exciting not only for the peanuts and home runs, but also because Mr. John Baker and Ms. Phyllis Bradford were scheduled to be a part of the night's Anthem Buddies group during the pre-game activities. A group of veterans from around the Washington DC area were asked to be a part of the National Anthem ceremony prior to the start of the game in honor of the 75th anniversary of the G.I. Bill. Unfortunately, the night was burdened by heavy thunderstorms and after almost two hours of delays, it became clear that the game would not begin in a regular time frame. Alas! Despite the rain and thunder, we had some good laughs in the locker room and it was worth the effort, if nothing else, to see fellow veterans and interact with the community in such a unique way. Special thanks to Veterans Affairs for keeping us in mind!



Looking forward to July: The Revolution mini-series

By Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist

How much do you remember from history class about The Revolutionary War? During the month of July, we will be refreshing your memory with The History Channel's 13 part series on this war entitled "The Revolution." The Revolution is a series of one hour episodes, covering what led up to the war to the aftermath of our victory. With a cast as familiar as Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton and Adams, to those less well known such as Generals Gates and Gage, this mini-series covers the war from beginning to end. Look on the calendar for this starting July 1, with two or three episodes per week in the theater at either 10:00 AM or 1:30 PM.

AFRH-W residents enjoy a day out at the dances!

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

Holiday Park Senior Center located in Wheaton, Maryland offers a weekly dance and social for seniors living in the community. When our guys heard about dancing with pretty ladies and food, they wanted to attend. So on Friday, May 31, John Baker, Chuck Daniels, Bill Kinard, Ken Wright, Leonard King and Frank Lawrence all put on their dancing shoes and we drove out to the dance hall. What a time, there was a combination of oldies and ballroom music played and our guys hit the floor running! There were lots of men and women there from the local community in attendance but when the ladies heard the veteran's from the Soldiers' Home had arrived, well they naturally came over to introduce themselves. It was a great time for all, lots of dancing and conversation. Everyone at the center invited us to come back as often as we can and our guys promised to do so.



Twilight Tattoo

Story and Photo by Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant

Several residents were invited to attend the Twilight Tattoo at Ft. Myer in Arlington, Virginia. Twilight Tattoo is a live-action military pageant featuring soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), The U.S. Army Blues jazz ensemble, vocalists from The U.S. Army Band Downrange and U.S. Army Band Voices, The Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, and The U.S. Army Drill Team. Afterwards, members from each of the performing groups greeted the residents to thank them for their service and learn more about their careers.



Oh, the places you'll go!

Story & Photo by Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist



One of the best things about living near our nation's capital are the wonderful opportunities we have to visit so many interesting places. Whether by invitation to a special event, or just playing the tourist, our choices when it comes to outings are vast and varied. Looking back over the calendars from the past several months, and forward to July, here are just some of the outings offered: The National Zoo, Arlington National Cemetery, The U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Reception Rooms, Kenilworth Aquatic Park, The Air and Space Museum, the musical "Oliver!", The National Arboretum, The gardens of the Franciscan Monastery, The Library of Congress, The Hirschhorn Museum, Wreath Laying at the Korean War Memorial, Twilight Tattoo at Ft. Myer, veterans fishing tournaments, and more than one baseball game at Nationals Park. This is just a partial list of what we offer.

For some events we receive invitations, such as the Library of Congress or the Wreath Laying at the Korean War Memorial. For some events we are donated free tickets, such as the National games and theatrical events (Thank you Fenwick Foundation!). Some events honor our residents, such as the invitation to the Army Birthday Celebration at Ft. Belvoir, and the Korean War Memorial event. Two of our residents were invited to be honored as part of a group of veterans at a Nationals game on the field at Nat's park, but the game was rained out.

Recommendations for outings come from residents at the monthly trip planning meeting held on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM in the theater. Some are invitations, and some come from research done by staff into free or low cost events or places of interest. Residents vote on where they would like to go for many, but not all of these outings. We are looking forward to many more interesting outings in our nation's capital.

AFRH-Gulfport

Keep calm and swim on

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

With temperatures already approaching 90 degrees in Gulfport, Mississippi, it's no wonder the pool was crowded! Every Monday and Wednesday water aerobics classes are held at 1000 followed by fun in the pool. It's a fact that swimming regularly can help decrease anxiety, improve stress management and boost your overall state of mind. Don't miss out on all the fun during these hot summer months. See you by the pool. And remember, life is better when you're swimming!



The melodic music of the Gulf Coast Wind Ensemble

Story and Photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant

On Tuesday June 4, 2019, the Gulf Coast Wind Ensemble shared their talents with our residents, playing many songs that had feet tapping, hand waving and faces smiling. The music was heard echoing down the halls, and had some residents joining in to experience the event first hand. After playing approximately 45 minutes, the group ended with medleys of the U.S. military songs, bringing those in each branch to their feet allowing others to recognize their branch and to honor their service. Thank you Gulf Coast Wind Ensemble for a very enjoyable concert.



AFRH-G's dive-in movie is a splash!

Story & Photo by Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist

While temperatures and heat indexes for the day soared along the coast, the sunset provided a relaxing breeze for AFRH-G residents as they enjoyed the Dive-In Movie "Blue Hawaii." The first ever poolside movie event at the Gulfport campus received a lot of positive feedback and plans to become a monthly event during the season. Residents and guests enjoyed a variety of concession stand themed snacks and, of course, a mixed drink called "Blue Hawaiian." And just when you thought it was safe to get back in the pool.....Recreation Services has already planned another Dive-In movie event featuring "JAWS." Gulfport residents are encouraged to come out and enjoy the beautiful coastal weather and cool breezes in the evening and enjoy the pool and a movie.



AFRH-G Low Vision/Hearing Expo

By Lori Kerns | Librarian

Photo by Stevie Kerns

AFRH-G's annual Low Vision/Low Hearing Expo was held in the Community Center on June 6, 2019. With almost sixty residents in attendance, the expo was organized to provide residents with information on the low vision and low hearing services and equipment for which they may be eligible. The Gulf Coast VA Audiology Department, VA Blind Rehab Center, MS Library Commission, and Sprint-CapTel were all in attendance. The representatives from these agencies travelled 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 chapstick, ear plugs, pencils, and pens! Many thanks to those who participated!



Do you have a fear of falling?

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Photo by Thania Averett

The Mississippi State Department of Health offers a falls management program, A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls. This program has been taught at AFRH-G in the past and meets once a week for eight weeks. On May 21 and 22, resident Jack Horsley (pictured 3rd from right) and Recreation Assistant, Carol Davis (Pictured 4th from right) were given the opportunity to achieve certification to instruct future classes here at AFRH-G. Jack and I attended two days of training at the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District in Gulfport. We met several new friends throughout the district who will be beneficial in our success as instructors. Not only did we cover a substantial amount of material and learn from each other, but we were also educated to be able to address your questions and concerns during the course of the program. We are excited to be able to bring this program to you, so be on the lookout for the next class to be scheduled!



Disney table top center pieces

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

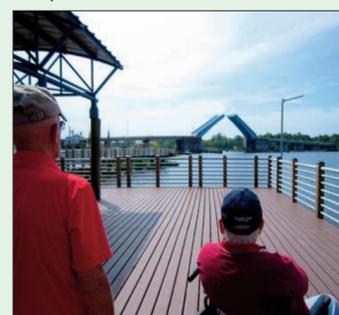
This July, during our Ice Cream Social, the residents will have a double scoop of treats. Ice Cream with all the trimmings and twelve Disney-themed table decorations. We called for volunteers to come and make Walt Disney cartoon character table center pieces. Linda Siebert, Sharon Price, Dan Ellis, Doris Hopper, Clyde Hairston, Sandra Whitaker and Karen White came and had a fun time. Walt Disney would be proud of these delightful and unique pieces. Hope y'all can come to the social and see if you can identify all these iconic cartoon center pieces, and get an extra scoop of your favorite flavor ice cream. Remember, art is an adventure.



Picturesque pool stroll & trip to Popp's Ferry Park!

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

On May 24 & May 31, 2019, residents from Valor, Loyalty, and Allegiance Halls enjoyed two outdoor outings to take in the beautiful weather. On Friday, May 24, residents strolled down to the AFRH-G swimming pool to watch the water aerobics class and take in the clear blue water along with blue skies and a cool breeze. As pictured, Lew Wehunt took a sip of ginger ale as he soaked up the sun. On Friday, May 31, residents went on a nature stroll to the newly-opened wheelchair accessible Popp's Ferry Park in Biloxi. The picturesque sights included kayakers, motor boats, and a larger shrimp boat that required the bridge to be raised. Charles Sivits wore his red hair-do for the outing, reminisced with Navy volunteers, and put his feet up, leaning back to take in the surrounding nature filled views of the bayou. Hobert "Woody" Wood with resident volunteer Jack Horsley and Jim Brogan with community volunteer, Roy Cook strolled through the new winding boardwalks to reach the covered pavilions. After the trip to the park, residents headed to Keesler Air Force Base for lunch at the food court and shopping at the exchange and commissary. We thank our many volunteers that assisted in our picturesque pool and park adventures!



June 6 was the 75th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. On June 6, 1944, Allied forces launched a combined naval, air and land assault on Nazi-occupied France. Codenamed Operation 'Overlord', the Allied landings on the Normandy beaches marked the start of a long and costly campaign to liberate north-west Europe from German occupation. Over 425,000 Allied and German troops were killed, wounded or went missing during the Battle of Normandy. This figure includes over 209,000 Allied casualties, with nearly 37,000 dead amongst the ground forces and a further 16,714 deaths amongst the Allied air forces. The memory lives on. On June 6 we reflected on this momentous occasion to celebrate peace, liberty and reconciliation.

GULFPORT

Sweet sounds of the symphony

By Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant
Photos by Jack Horsley | Resident



On Saturday May 25, 2019 the AFRH-G residents attended the annual "Sounds by the Sea" Memorial Day Concert at Jones Park in Gulfport, Mississippi on the beach. The residents were honored guests during the event with special seating, food and drinks. Upon arrival, the Coast Big Band was playing creating energy throughout the park. People were seen dancing and singing along to songs such as "Ride Sally Ride," "Pretty Baby, and "Can't Take My Eyes off You." Our very own Keith Van Doren danced around the tables using his cane. Following the Coast Big Band, the Gulf Coast Symphony filled our ears with favorites such as "Yankee Doodle," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "America the Beautiful" and "Victory at Sea," just to name a few. As the symphony played "Stars and Stripes Forever," the fireworks

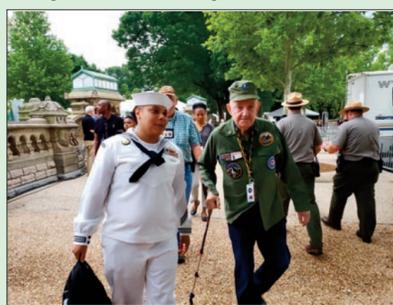
blasted through the air creating a light show for our eyes. Colors danced through the air creating bursts of beauty. A special evening to honor all those fallen who have made it possible for such an event to take place.



WASHINGTON

AFRH vets honored at National Memorial Day Concert

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | AFRH-W Volunteer Coordinator



Sharing the stage with the likes of Gen. Colin L. Powell (U.S. Army retired) and Sam Elliott (Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, 1969), Vietnam veterans from the Armed Forces Retirement Home were honored and recognized on May 26 at the 2019 National Memorial Day Concert in Washington, D.C. This year's celebration marks the 30th anniversary since the show began broadcasting live from the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol. The program, featured on PBS,

presented a montage of music, singing and acting performances by Hollywood stars and top-notch military bands. This year's theme highlighted the service and sacrifice of Vietnam War veterans and AFRH residents who served during that period had the opportunity to walk across the stage and shake hands with Gen. Powell. Thank you to U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Kendra Garrett for volunteering to assist residents during the event.

Mr. Harry Miller receives the award of the Belgian Fourragère of 1940

By Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant
Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer

On May 31, in a small ceremony, Mr. Harry Miller was visited by the Defense Attaché of the Embassy of Belgium, Brigadier General Franchomme, for the award of the Fourragère 1940 cord. The Belgian fourragère of 1940 was created by Prince Charles of Belgium, Regent of the Kingdom, to honor certain military formations that distinguished themselves during the Second World War. It consists of three cords terminated by a knot and a metal tag, and is braided in red and green; the colors of the Belgian Croix de Guerre of 1940. Seventy-five years after his experience as part of the tank auxiliary to the 82nd Airborne division, Mr. Miller received the physical award that his unit was awarded in 1944 for their bravery in the Battle of the Bulge. We congratulate Mr. Miller on this high honor and thank him for his dedicated service.

