



AFRH-GULFPORT

AFRH-G celebrates National Nurses Week

By Tamilla Smith | CNA, Valor Hall

Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

AFRH-G celebrated National Nurses Week by filling the week with many activities and festivities. On May 6 staff, along with residents, wore attire to represent their favorite military branch. "Adopt a Nurse" was a new event this year, where nurses were adopted and surprised by little wish list items that brought smiles to their faces. On May 7, nurses wore their best white scrubs. Other events such as the "Blessing of the Hands" took place outside around the oak trees. Pastor Gibson provided a prayer with words of encouragement, while Music Therapist Susan Bergman played the bag pipes. On May 8 the nurses were treated with a pancake breakfast and salad buffet sponsored by the CNA's, with assistance from John Cage, Howard Campbell and LaRoy Brisco. Also, later that day nurses were treated with essential oil hand massages with soothing sounds in the background. The staff wore custom shirts to represent each floor for Nurse's Week as well. On May 9 Tamilla Smith served as hostess for a special thank you ceremony. "CARING FOR ONE, THAT'S LOVE... CARING FOR HUNDREDS, THAT'S NURSING" was the theme for the ceremony and it reflected on the importance of nursing. Each nurse at AFRH-G was given thanks and appreciation with a certificate from RAC chairman Art Jones, Director of Nursing Beatrice Overby, RN and a nurse's prayer poem was read by Sirlena McMorris, LPN. Nurses who have served over 20+ years were also recognized. The Nurse Excellence Award recipients were Donna Iler, RN, MSN, PhD; Debora J. Joiner, RN, MSN; Sandra Dreher, RN; Debbie Decelle, LPN; and Cathy Coggins, LPN. On May 10 everyone dressed in fifties or roaring twenties attire. A potluck spread ended the week with a full tummy and smiles! Special thanks to everyone who was a part of the Nurses Week committee. Thank you to Janet Herren for helping out with essential oil hand massages. Thank you to everyone who helped put on the potluck, and last but not least thank you to each and every one of you who helped with making this year's Nurses Week at AFRH-G a memorable and successful week and event!



AFRH-WASHINGTON

Going once, going twice, going three times...SOLD!

By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

Photos by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs



On April 12, 2019 our annual RT White Elephant Auction was held. The Scott Community Center was packed with quality junk and some awesome merchandise. In attendance there were 98 residents, 27 volunteers, and numerous staff members. It was a family affair!

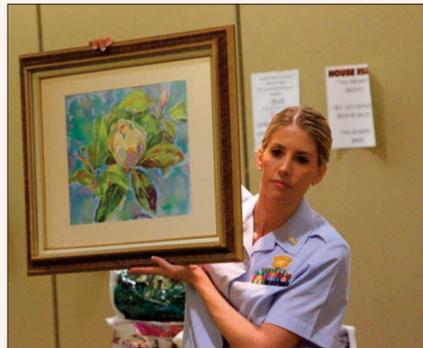
Notices were posted many months in advance for residents, volunteers, and staff to check their closets, drawers, attics, basements, and everywhere in between for odds and ends they no longer had a need for and thought the Annual RT White Elephant Auction could use. Recreation Therapy was able to also procure some nice new items to include the favorite "Booze Basket" donated by the Daughters of The American Revolution Capitol Chapter and the "Lunch with The Ladies of RT & Recreation". Residents were all provided with \$125 in Funny Money to purchase or bid on items available at the auction. They were also able to purchase refreshments such as sodas, beer, wine, pies, cakes, and fruit.

The event started off with a bang on Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. The doors to the Scott Community Center where the

event was held opened for residents to view the items going up for auction and also to view the extensive "Buy It Now" table items. Special thanks to Costco for their donation of a rack of men's and women's coats. At 11:30 am the doors closed, giving residents time to think about the items they would like to buy and bid on. Following lunch, the doors reopened at 1:00 pm for residents to find a seat and get ready for the auction to begin.

Some residents held onto their money, waiting for the auction to begin at 1:45 p.m. and others saw that there were some great deals at the "Buy It Now" table which opened early, and some residents just wanted to partake in the delicious desserts and beverages.

Items up for auction included an outdoor enthusiast package, holiday package, electronics packages, bedding packages, pillows, mirrors, lamps, and so much more! Residents had a wonderful time and look forward to this exciting event each year. Residents were encouraged to return all their money as the only place it was good at was the AFRH-W RT annual White Elephant Auction.



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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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AFRH-G Resident Highlight – Bettylu Ross Hilton Scheer Dennis

By Lori Kerns | Librarian



Bettylu Dennis was born in Aurora, Indiana. Her father was a WWI Navy veteran and worked as a chief engineer inspector of naval materials. His job required Bettylu's family, which also consisted of her mother and two younger sisters, to move around the country. As a child, Bettylu began singing and performed in her first revue at the age of seven. She fondly remembers crying after the first night because she saw the older girls getting flowers and was hurt because she did not get any of her own. On the second night, she remembers her father coming up to the stage and presenting her with a bouquet of red roses.

As Bettylu got older and began college, the young man, Stu, she was dating went into the Navy to join the efforts in WWII. Six months later, against Stu's wishes, Bettylu decided to sign up for the Navy WAVES. She was sent to Hunter College in New York for basic training. It did not take long

before her commanding officer discovered her talent for singing. She was assigned to a four-person singing group that toured the country to support the recruitment efforts of the Navy. Bettylu "sang her way through the Navy" even after the recruitment efforts were completed. She performed with different bands and orchestras and was nationally broadcast on live radio. Her talents caught the eyes of many performers and arrangers such as Count Basie and a young Frank Sinatra. She has a great memory of singing "Summertime" with Count Basie, whom she recalls as one of the nicest artists she worked with. He asked her to return the next night but she already had plans for a screen test that had been arranged by Bing Crosby's



band director. Bettylu never made it to the screen test either. Stu, who she was still dating, asked her not to go because he feared Hollywood would corrupt her.

Bettylu and Stu eventually married and had two sons, Stu, Jr. and Robert. Once Stu finished the Navy, he became an FBI agent during the J. Edgar Hoover era. Stu's career was demanding so Bettylu stayed home to raise the boys. Their two sons went on to have children of their own and have provided the couple with four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Stu passed away in 1999. About three years later, Bettylu decided to move to the Naval Home in Gulfport. This is where she met resident Byron Dennis. The two fell in love and married. They continued to live at the Home and is thankful that the Lord sent them to each other. Bettylu sadly lost her soulmate in 2014.

Bettylu stays active in AFRH-G by going to exercise classes, walking and socializing with her friends. She is a founding member of the Home's Mardi Gras Krewe of NAMAC. She was also recognized as one of the "Calendar Girls" who raised over \$20,000 for charity. Most recently, the beautiful and talented Bettylu reigned as the Krewe of NAMAC's Queen for 2019.



AFRH-W Resident Highlight - Sherman Flanders

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Sherman Flanders was born in the state of Washington and spent most of his childhood there. From age five to 13, he and his younger brother were raised in an orphanage. Eager to be on his own, and just a few months shy of 18, Sherman enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in December 1945. He reported to the reception center at Camp Beal, California and was sent to Shepard AFB, Texas for Basic Training. He was then sent to Scott Field, Illinois for technical training for communications.

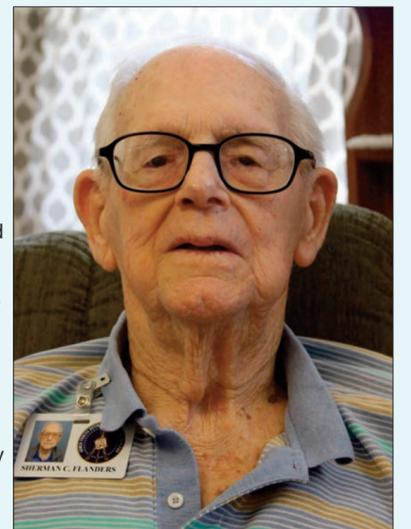
In June 1946, Sherman boarded USS Leavenworth in New York headed for Bremerhaven, Germany. The transit took 13 days because the ship exercised caution due to loose mines in the North Atlantic, left behind by combat forces. Upon arrival, he boarded a train to the Replacement Center at Furstenfeldbruck and then took another train to Paris, France for further assignment at Orly Field, France. The era of the early Cold War had begun. Sherman was promoted to corporal, while stationed at Rhein-Main Air Base in the 133rd AACSS Squadron. The base operations became much busier after 25

June 1948, when the Berlin Airlift began with U.S. aircraft from around the globe converging on Rhine-Main. Sherman separated from the Army in November 1948 and used his GI benefits at the Montana School of Mines in Butte, Montana. There he enjoyed being near his relatives, who worked in the copper mines and smelters of Butte and Anaconda. The Korean War began on 25 June 1950, when thousands of soldiers of the North Korean People's Army poured across the 38th parallel. Sherman volunteered to go back in the Army for duty in Korea. He was sent to Fort Lewis, Washington for a two month refresher training and continued training at Fort Ord, California. He then boarded a ship for Korea via Okinawa. At Okinawa, he helped rebuild the 29th Infantry Regiment, which had been wiped out in the first weeks of the Korean War. Then it was on to Korea, where Sherman was assigned to the KMAG (Korean Military Advisory Group) and as staff sergeant. He served in an isolated area in the hills of Korea, at a replacement center

run by the Korean Army.

In July 1953, Sherman boarded a transport ship headed back to Fort Lewis, Washington and the 129th Infantry Regiment, which was part of the 44th Infantry Division. They were being trained to upgrade from National Guard status and replacing one of the two National Guard units already in Korea. Sherman re-enlisted in 1954 and requested assignment to Austria. He was assigned to Company K of the 350th Infantry Regiment in Salzburg. It was here he met his future bride who later, with their new daughter, accompanied him to Italy. Sherman's assignment to Europe was completed in June 1960 and he was assigned to Fort Ord, California, where he and his wife bought their first home and welcomed a baby boy. Here, he was assigned to the CDEC (Combat Development Experimental Command). During this time, the unit changed to the 41st Armored Rifle Battalion because of the new weaponry and unit size. So, Sherman ended up serving as a platoon sergeant of a tank battalion. He then went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina for Special Forces Training and by February 1962, he was back in Korea, with the 1st Cavalry Division and was promoted to E-7. After his year there, Sherman returned to Fort Ord and served as a senior drill sergeant at basic training. He requested a transfer to an Army Military Advisory Group; took three month training at Fort Bragg, followed by the Army Language School in Presidio, California and was sent to Vietnam. Here Sherman was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division and served on a three man team at Bao Trai in Hau Nghia Province. Sherman was promoted to E-8 and was selected to participate in the in-country training for an operations NCO. It was in Vietnam that Sherman earned his two Purple Hearts, 2 Bronze Stars, an Air Medal and the Combat Infantry Badge!

Sherman retired from the Army in 1968 and went to work for the U.S. Government in Southeast Asia. Later, he worked for the Virginia and California State governments in law enforcement, education and social services. He knew about the home from 1945, when he talked with World War I veterans. They told him they would be coming to "The Old Soldier's Home" when they finally retired. Sherman came to AFRH-W in June 2017. He is a proud member of many veterans organizations.

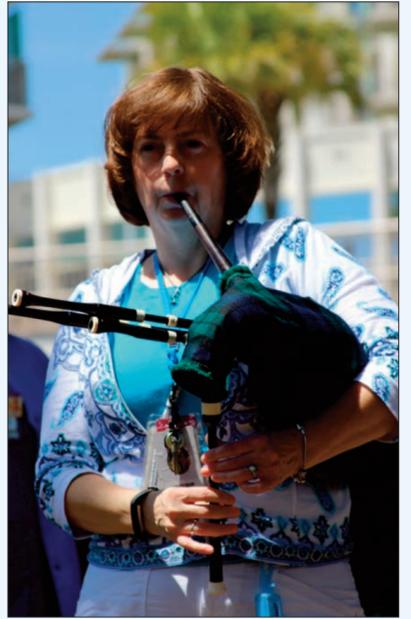


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AFRH-G Nurses Week – Blessing of the Hands

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

In honor of our nurses at AFRH-G, Chaplain Gibson officiated the Blessing of the Hands ceremony. He said, "Oftentimes some of the first hands that touch us are nurses, and some of the last hands that touch us are nurses." Also, in celebration of nurses and their many talents, Susan Bergman, MT-BC, board certified music therapist in Recreation Services, performed "Simple Gifts", "Amazing Grace" and "Ode to Joy" on Scottish small pipes. Thank you to all the nurses for giving back to our veterans every day.



Painting with Hayden Hall

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

The residents in our art class were treated to four painting sessions with nationally known artist, Hayden Hall, from Clarksdale, Mississippi. The subject matter was a photo of a Green Heron he had gotten permission to paint from photographer, Vonnie Frengel, a Gulf Coast wildlife photographer.

The class got to paint along with Hayden and listened as he shared his many stories and the insightful techniques he has developed. It's always a fun art adventure with Hayden. Thanks for supporting our veterans and sharing the gift God gave you with us. Residents are looking forward to your next visit.



Mississippi Water Fowl Photographer, Vonnie Frengel

Story & Photos by Milton Williams | Art Specialist

Vonnie Frengel, a Gulf Coast wildlife photographer, graciously gave the residents permission to paint from one of her photographs of a Green Heron. The class, led by artist Hayden Hall, also got to see a slide show of the many amazing "snaps" she has taken of various sea and land birds. Vonnie said she took up photography seven years ago in order to see more of the unique colors, patterns and movements, that are "frozen" in each picture. Only when viewing the images does one discover what was happening in plain site. How true! In one of her photos of a pelican that had just gulped a bill-full, a small fish can be seen jumping out of the bird's still-open beak. Really beautiful images and the residents mentioned there were several each wanted to turn into a painting.

Thanks again Vonnie and we hope to see more of your pictures in the future.



Greater Korea Foundation entertains vets at AFRH-W

Story and Photos by Dillon Jace-Turner | AFRH-W Student Volunteer, Bishop McNamara High School

On Saturday April 20, 2019 the Greater Korea Foundation performed at AFRH-W's Scott Theater. This music performance proved to be very amusing and entertaining to the veteran audience. The performers used a variety of instruments for music along with singing to go along with the vibes of the music.

Five singers and musicians did well and succeeded in their mission, which was to show their appreciation to those who have served their country when called upon. They entertained them with a music performance for the approximately twenty veterans who attended.

The Greater Korea Foundation has been performing at AFRH-W for a long time and we will continue to appreciate and welcome them into the AFRH-W. Michelle Misook Won, the founder of this organization, describes the foundation's backstory.

"They are a military veteran support group, but their main focus is on Korean War veterans because they need to be noticed and appreciated as much as American veterans. Each performance is different because the performers are different every time, but they show the same Korean tradition," she said.

For almost a year, what keeps the Greater Korea Foundation coming back to AFRH-W is not just to entertain, but to honor Won's deceased father. Seeing all of these veterans reminds her of her father who had served in the military, showing that her love for doing this will never end.

The experience was a great success for the AFRH-W and the Greater Korea Foundation overall. Applause was heard after every performance showing that this was an event the veterans will remember. This was very enjoyable and the veterans know that the young students had taken time to come perform in front of them, which means a lot.



Thrift Shop adds to recreation budget in a significant way

Story & Photo by Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist

Here at AFRH Washington, on Wednesdays from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., and on Fridays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., there is a chance to find a bargain and a treasure at our thrift shop. The thrift shop has several purposes. For shoppers it is a way to find vintage treasures or lightly used items for a bargain price. For the sellers it gives residents a convenient way to dispose of property. Selling items instead of tossing them into the trash, and from there to a landfill, is earth friendly. Residents can choose whether to keep the money from their sale or donate it to the Home.

The most important benefit is that the money from sold items that go to the Home goes into the non-appropriated funds (NAF) account. This account helps to fund recreational activities that can be enjoyed by all our residents. For example, wine for the birthday dinner is purchased with NAF funds. And any supplies, from art materials to sports equipment, can be purchased with NAF funds.

While the shop is small, the benefits to the recreation budget can be significant. During the first quarter of this year, from January to March, NAF contributions from the shop exceeded \$1,800.00.



From the AFRH-W Administrator



As I write this, we are having one of the warmer days of the year. I think we may be past the rainy, cool days we've had up to now which brought us new growth and beauty to our campus. Our golfers are back on the golf course, so life is good here in DC.

As usual, May has been a busy month filled with lots of resident activities. We began the month with a festive Mexican Fiesta with a Mariachi band and samplings of guacamole, quesadillas and other treats that the staff prepared right before our eyes. What a fun time! Cinco de Mayo and an evening at Defender's Inn rounded out the weekend. We all remembered our moms as we celebrated Mother's Day the next week. And our hard working Recreational Therapy staff hosted our lady veterans at the Ladies Day Luncheon and Tea. All of our ladies were decked out wearing their finest hats as they feasted on traditional tea sandwiches and bite sized desserts. Other events this month included a wonderful concert by the Salvation Army band and a trip to the Andrews Air Show. We ended the month with a Memorial Day picnic and the annual Memorial Day guided tours led by staff of the President Lincoln's Cottage at our United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

SEAC Troxell brought the vice director of the Joint Chiefs of Staff so he could see the DC Home firsthand. We also had our local elected official, Ward 5 Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie stop by to see how he and the District can help us with our recruiting efforts. Lastly some U.S. Senate senior staff members met with our leadership team to see how they can assist us to get some much needed legislation passed.

Our AFRH Advisory Council meeting was held with a renewed focus on maintaining and improving the Homes into the future. Our annual Spring Fling, hosted by Friends of the Soldiers Home (FOSH), was on a beautiful Saturday and included food trucks, a great band and events for kids. It was a wonderful time in the sun with our neighbors from outside the gate.

Lastly, I would be remiss not to mention some of the ways we celebrated our hard working staff this month. Nurses Week kicked off with a prayer and some treats with more to come in June with a combined event for Certified Nursing Assistant Week. And we also remembered our security staff on Peace Memorial Day. Both of these groups work around the clock to ensure our health and safety needs are met. Thanks and well done to all!

In closing, I hope that everyone enjoyed a safe and peaceful Memorial Day as we honored those veterans who paid the ultimate price in defense of our great country.

Susan Bryhan



Meet AFRH-W Catholic chaplain, Father Carlos

Story & Photo by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

Many residents and staff of the Armed Forces Retirement Home benefit from having chaplain services available on site. During this Easter Season we continue to introduce our pastors at AFRH-Washington. In this issue, we feature our Catholic pastor, Father Carlos R. Roman Toro.

Q: Where were you born/raised?

A: I was born in Yauco, Puerto Rico, May 14, 1958.

Q: What was your home life like as a child?

A: My parents were married in the Catholic Church, and I was raised in the Catholic Church with Catholic observance.

Q: What is your educational background?

A: Immediately after high school graduation from Holy Rosary School in Yauco, Puerto Rico, I went to Regina Cleri Seminary. I studied there two years mainly of philosophy. After that I went to Spain to take habit with the Dominican friars. I didn't persevere there. I came back to Puerto Rico and finished my BA degree in philosophy.

I went back to the seminary in October of 1985, and my bishop sent me to the Angelicum in Rome. The proper name in English of the Angelicum is Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome. There I studied the theological courses necessary to be ordained priest.

I was ordained a priest March 9, 1989.

After ordination, in 1995, I was sent to the Catholic University of America in Washington DC. There I finished the licentiate degree in Canon Law in 1997.

In the year 2000 I began studying a masters in Guidance and Counseling, which I finished in 2004. After that I passed the exam for the LPC, licensed professional counselor, from Puerto Rico. I was granted the said license in 2008.

Q: What did you think you were going to be when you grew up?

A: I thought I was going to be a psychiatrist.

Q: What influence did the military have in your life?

A: My grandfather joined the Army in 1942, when he was already in his 30's. He was sent to the Pacific, but fortunately never first-hand action, although suffered lots of hardships concomitant to being combat ready. My father joined the Army in 1953 and was sent to Korea at the very beginning of the armistice. Most of my male teachers were Korean War veterans, for which Korean War was mentioned very often in my environment.

Q: When and how did you receive your call to take up your vocation?

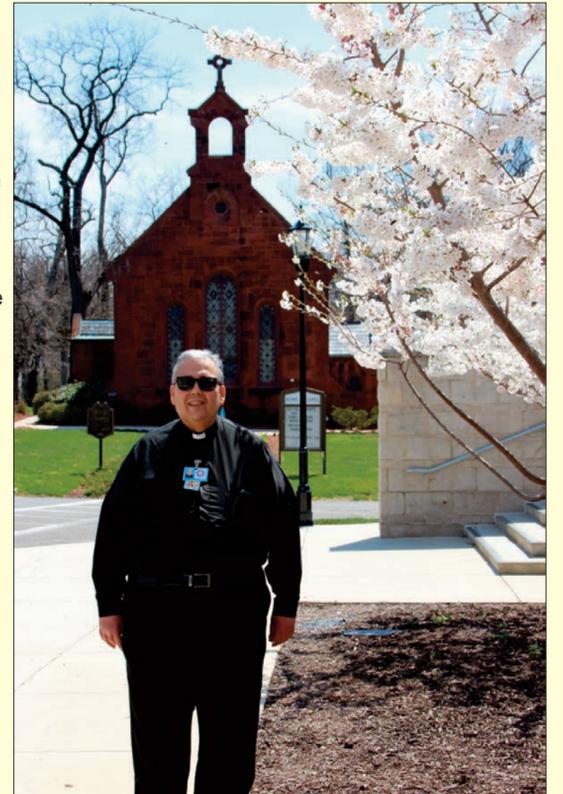
A: During a conference about vocations to the priesthood, when I was in my first semester of senior year in high school.

Q: What would people be surprised to learn about you?

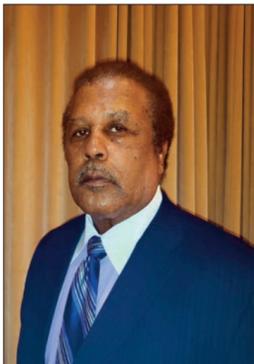
A: That I like martial arts, to watch practitioners, not that I engage in fights anymore.

Q: What are your favorite books/spiritual readings?

A: The Bible is always there. The life of saints. I enjoy reading biographical materials of all kind, including non-religious subjects. Reading the Bible is always powerful. Each day you get the chance of paying attention to little details that give you a renewed inspiration and commitment to follow the will of God. The biographies of the saints give you a better idea as to how to better follow the steps of Jesus Christ. The good example of the saints encourage us to imitate the life of Christ.



Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



Greetings from AFRH-W! Last month's Mexican Fiesta was a smash! The food, drinks and music were great. There were a lot of pictures taken. We all enjoyed watching resident Emmy Lu Daly and "George Washington" dance the afternoon away.

Community Outreach

On May 9, we met with District of Columbia's Ward 5 Council Member Kenyan McDuffie along with our Chief Operating Officer James Branham, AFRH-W Administrator Susan Bryhan and Carolyn Haug from Public Affairs. We also met with Ward 4 who also held a meeting on that day. Ward 4 provided 12 referrals for potential residents to AFRH-W. Thank you to Ward 4 Chairperson Ms. Veronica Ingram for this outreach. Ms. Ingram is also a longtime friend of mine.

On May 12, we met with Dr. Larry Blaed and retired U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Michael J. Eason (Commander of local VFW Post 9376) to discuss ways to raise awareness about AFRH to veterans within the local DC area.

Coming Up

Next month, the RAC will host an informational workshop in Fort Washington, Md. to educate veterans about benefits and make them aware of AFRH here in Washington, D.C.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the residents and RAC members for participating in the survey. It was a real success. Thank you for all that you to make our home a premier retirement community for America's veterans.

Billy Ray White



From the AFRH-G Administrator



The month of May was very busy and we had many celebrations including the Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, Nurses Week, Mother's Day, the May Birthday Dinner Celebration and our annual Memorial Day Ceremony and Cook-In. The Memorial Day Ceremony was very touching as we remembered veterans who have lost their lives so we can have our freedom in the United States.

I would like to mention how nurses play an increasingly important role at the AFRH-G. It takes a special person to choose this profession. We celebrated Nurses Week with activities starting on May 6. The CNAs really planned some incredible events. Every day was a different theme starting with Military Monday, All White Tuesday, Mellow Out Wednesday, Thank You Thursday and 50's Friday. Thank you to everyone who participated in making Nurse's Week such a success. Nurses bring compassion and expertise, provide education and prevention, listen, provide support, use their knowledge and skills in direct care but most of all they support and care for our veterans at AFRH-G. A nurse is a person strong enough to tolerate everything and soft enough to understand everyone. Thank you to all the nurses for what you do every day.

Every year the veteran Protestant congregation at AFRH-G donates to multiple charities. This year they presented a check to the Feed My Sheep Chairman, David Lion, for \$3,000.00. Feed My Sheep is a non-judgmental, faith based program dedicated to providing nourishment to the homeless, homebound and needy in the Gulfport area. 100% of the money raised makes this mission possible. Thank you to all the residents who made this possible.

To promote AFRH I ventured to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for a Retiree Appreciation Day event on May 18. Resident Services Chief Chris Alexander also represented the Home on May 18 at the Retiree Appreciation Day event held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. The attendance was great and the flow of retirees was steady throughout the day. There was a lot of interest in the Home as well as questions regarding fees, spouses, and availability. We have brochures about both Homes complete with photos, information about the Homes and qualifications to enter the Home. The material provided was well received and appreciated. I look forward to the next event in the fall.

June 1 is the start of hurricane season. In preparation for the 2019 season, AFRH has been in close communication with local military installations and have fostered essential collaboration among our community partners. To further prepare, our Safety Officer and Emergency Manager Frank Bermudez hosted Resident Hurricane Preparedness Focus Groups to help residents get ready for any tropical event. The leadership (command) staff is scheduled for the first week in June to take part in an in-house table top exercise with the main focus on incident command methodology, Emergency Management Directive 7-2 and Emergency Operations Plan Chapter 3 Hurricane Plan. We have also arranged to meet with the Harrison County Emergency Manager along with other community partners in the Emergency Support Function-8 (Public Health and Medical Services) to review how we will integrate our response with the county's plan. We continuously review our emergency plans to ensure we're prepared to respond appropriately with our mission always in mind to provide a premier retirement community.

As always, I am grateful to be your administrator and I look forward to serving you for many more years to come.

Jeff Eads



Caring is sharing

By Debora Joiner | Chief of Healthcare

At the closing of Nurse's Week celebration a group of us at "The Home" received an e-mail that follows. The content and sincere appreciation that is expressed reminds me of what we do here at AFRH-G; as we care for our deserving residents, we also genuinely care for each other. I think at times we are so busy doing what we do that we don't recognize it until something happens and we each have time to reflect. Recently a member of our team had a serious car accident, the genuine response from those that were aware was heartwarming and very much appreciated by this writer. To be clear, not only the nurses are caregivers at AFRH, we also have compassionate souls throughout the workforce that make up the dynamic team that I am honored to work with each day. When our teammate was discharged from the hospital, the very first thing she did was pen this letter:

Good Morning,

I would like to thank you for seeing my car "kissing" a tree, helping EMR staff transfer me to an ambulance with the "right" techniques, and informing management team about the unexpected accident (May 3, 2019) that I was involved. Thank you so much for rushing to Merit Health Biloxi on your day off to be with me when I needed you the most. Thank you for being a little bit "bossy" to assign Father Uko to keep an eye on me all the time while you needed to be in the office to finish your job. Thank you for coordinating "socks donation project," after a couple of hours a bag full of socks with different styles, colors, and designs reached me at emergency room #3. Fresh flowers, fruits covered with chocolate, snacks, my favorite candies, mochie, Asian healthy pudding, fruit juice, drinking water... from you... can feed both Biloxi and Gulfport communities. Thank you for PJs, night gowns, sleepers, toothpaste, toothbrush, lotions, etc. God probably tells you my styles, colors, brand names, and medium size petite not "short" 100% woman. Thank you for your iPhone, charger, reading glasses... I am able to communicate (at any time and at anywhere) and most importantly with my family in Vietnam, which is approximately 10,000 miles away from AFRH-G. Sorry to let you know that your iPhone is being "abused" as I have never used mine day and night and as much as these days.

I have learned that the U.S. Embassy Officials in Hanoi, Vietnam were very impressed with your writing skills and supporting documents (police report, medical records, sponsoring letters). Without hesitations and a single question, visa to the U.S. have been granted to my son (Minh) and his wife (Hang).

Best regards and the most grateful from my father (91 y/o) and my extended family from Vietnam to you all! Thank you!

Very Respectfully,

Minh Chau Nguyen

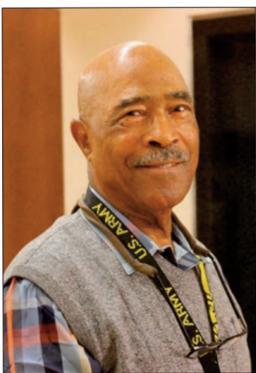
PS. No more gifts and/or donations of any kinds will be accepted. Please know that gifts and donations from residents as well and they must strictly followed SOP's guidance. I am just very grateful that you all think of me! Thank you!

UPDATE: Minh Nguyen has decided to retire from AFRH-G in mid-July. She will be moving back to Vietnam to be with her family.



Everyone at AFRH-G wishes Minh Chau Nguyen a speedy recovery.

Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



The month of May was a busy month indeed. On the 8th of the month I attended the first of the bi-annual meetings of Armed Forces Retirement Home Advisory Council. The meeting evolved around an in-depth review of where we are in our efforts to restore solvency to the trust fund and to achieve 90% occupancy in both the DC and Gulfport Homes. We also looked at the vision for the future, in terms of expanding current revenue and identifying new opportunities. Discussions included more visibility to potential residents, expanding entry requirements to include Wounded Warriors, National Guard, Reserve Retirees and Gold Star widows. Another point of discussion was fundraising. We, together with the newly formed Armed Forces Retirement Home Foundation, are now 501C3 organizations, authorized to solicit funds through donations from individuals and corporate America. To assist in these efforts, a development officer has been added to the staff. This meeting clearly defines our mission and vision for the next fiscal year.

May 12 was Mother's Day. It was a wonderful celebration of motherhood. We experienced a full house in the dining facility with approximately 50 guests. After lunch, people lingered to visit with family and friends. A great time was had by all.

On May 14 we held our RAC meeting. The meeting focused on old business, in which we discussed the results of the brainstorming conducted by floor representatives with the residents to solicit ideas, suggestions and complaints of how we can improve the quality of life here in the Home. We developed a list of items to be addressed in the coming weeks. The number one idea focused on improvements in the dining room. This suggestion has many parts to include: seating, menus, entrees and others. The RAC agreed this suggestion should first be investigated by the Food Committee.

At the end of the regular RAC meeting, we held a special meeting at the request of Chief Operating Officer Jim Branham. He spoke to us about the possibility of Wounded Warriors, National Guard and Reserves becoming residents at the two Homes. He also talked about resident retention. This meeting was followed by a Town Hall meeting the next day. I want to thank Mr. Branham for his visit and extend an invitation for other visits in the future.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-Washington

Joint Base Andrews Air & Space Expo

Story & Photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

The morning looked dreary as the weather report called for rain and scattered thunderstorms beginning in the mid-afternoon. Thankfully we had a beautiful sunny sky with no rain clouds in sight. Residents had been looking forward to this trip for several weeks and it did not disappoint. When we arrived on base, we had a police chaperon who escorted our bus to the flight line where the show and displays were set up. When we departed the bus we made our way toward the C-17 Globemaster III and the C-5 Galaxy, which are the two largest U.S. military transport aircraft. After viewing and learning about them, we made our way to the vendors for lunch. We all enjoyed hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken tenders, and soda. After lunch we were able to watch the Blue Angels performance, which was as exciting as ever! That truly was the highlight of our trip. We would like to thank Maj Daniel Ramirez who assisted us with making the arrangements to get on base and to the show location. He worked tirelessly and his efforts came through with flying colors. We would also like to thank the 11th Wing Commander, Colonel Andrew Purath who graciously gave us access to one of the VIP tents for our residents to sit and have lunch in the shade as well as to watch the show. We look forward to attending the next Air & Space Expo at Joint Base Andrews.



AFRH-W vets get "Owner's Suite" at double A game

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator

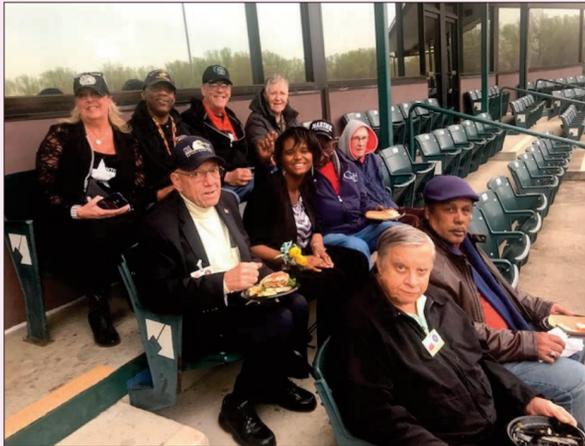
Take me out the ball game! A few lucky residents from the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. got a chance to enjoy a cool night of hitting, pitching and running at the Bowie Baysox Baseball home opener in Maryland last month.

About ten residents took the evening trip to Bowie, Md. to see the Baysox (the Baltimore Orioles double A minor league affiliate) battle the Harrisburg Senators (the Washington Nationals minor league affiliate). The Senators defeated the Baysox 2 to 0.

Residents enjoyed the game from the owner's suite which included catered food, beverages and superb hospitality. Fellow baseball fans and families at the game honored AFRH residents by greeting and thanking them for their service and sacrifice.

Debi Blevins, director of client relations from the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of the Secretary reached out to AFRH extending an invite to the game.

AFRH truly appreciates the support from the VA in helping to improve quality of life for our distinguished military veterans.



Safari silhouettes

Story & Photo by Kayla Bennett | Art Specialist

On May 9, we continued our painting class series by learning the secret for painting silhouettes. The silhouette has long been part of our culture. Dating back to the 18th century, these images, representing a solid portrait, object, animal or scene, are a striking way to create layered scenes. Our residents created silhouette paintings inspired by African landscapes. This painting technique is a simple and fun way to incorporate animal figures in artwork.



A Passover Seder Celebration

By Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist & By Marine Robbins | Recreation Therapy Assistant
Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

Passover is celebrated by the Jewish people all over the world and it lasts for eight days. It began at sundown on Friday, April 19. On the first night of Passover, families gather to have Seder and retell the story of Passover - the freeing of the Jewish people from slavery.

On the Tuesday during Passover, two programs were held in Assisted Living to honor this holiday. The first was a kosher cooking group in the morning where residents made a fruit & nut kugel, similar to a bread pudding. The second was an educational Seder and food tasting held in the afternoon. Rabbi Elizabeth Goldstein of Congregation Ner Shalom shared the story of how Moses freed the Jewish people and explained the significance of the foods eaten during this holiday and what they symbolize.

Afterwards, the residents were able to sample some

of these foods. One such food was matzo, which is unleavened bread. During Passover, the Jewish people eat unleavened bread because when they were freed they were rushed to leave Egypt and did not have time to let their bread rise. Another food sampled was called charoset, which is a sweet mixture of apples, walnuts, sugar, cinnamon, and sweet red wine. When placed on top of the matzo it's a nice treat! Last but not least was homemade matzo ball soup. Other food offered were hardboiled eggs, and gefilte fish, which is a mixture of different white fish (You either love it or you hate it!) In the end the residents explained that they enjoyed the program and really learned a lot. Many of them knew parts of the story of Passover, but not the entire story. They all went away with smiles on their faces and a full belly!



AFRH-Gulfport

National Apple Pie Day!

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist



National Apple Pie Day, America's favorite dessert, is observed annually on May 13. The first apple pie recipe printed was in England in 1381. The list of ingredients included apples, spices, figs, raisins, pears, saffron and cofyn. Cofyn is a pastry crust. With help from the Ice Cream Ladies, residents enjoyed apple pie with vanilla ice cream on Apple Pie Day. Did you know that the phrase "as American as apple pie" has been around for more than 100 years?

Corn Toss Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 10, 2019 residents competed in the Corn Toss Tournament in the Bocce Room. Wolf Kiessler and Doris Denton competed against each other. The rest of the residents watched them play and took notes. There were 10 players that played in the tournament but there could only be three winners for that day.

Wayland Webb took 1st place, Ernie Fowler took 2nd place, Frank Baker took 3rd place and Doris Denton took 4th place.



Mystery Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On April 29, 2019 Recreation held its Mystery Tournament. The Mystery Tournament was not given out until 0930. There were 14 residents who participated in the Mystery Tournament. The Mystery was Checker Slide. Residents were given instructions on how to play. The way to win was to get the three checkers closest to the wall to advance through to the double elimination bracket.

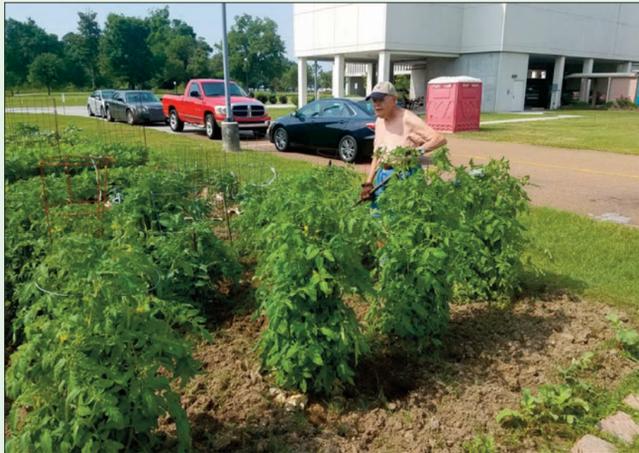
There could only be three winners for this Mystery Tournament. First place was Wolf Kiessler, second place was Jerry Anderson, third place was Fred Schultz and fourth place was Doris Hopper.



Gulfport veggie garden

Story & Photos by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 9, 2019 Keith Van Doran attended to his vegetable garden on the grounds of AFRH-G. Keith started growing his vegetables from seeds back in February. He stated that he does not buy vegetable plants from the store because you do not know where they are always grown. He has better turn over from the seeds. By the way the vegetables are growing and he will have a good crop this year. Vegetables growing in the raised beds are from John McDermott.



Horseshoe Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 9, 2019 residents competed in the Horseshoe Tournament at the beginning of summer. It was a nice cool morning with the sun peeking in from the east to invade the residents' shade. Doris Hopper made a point with Jerry Anderson looking on in amazement. Doris Denton and Wayland Webb watched closely at the competition coming up. There were a total of 14 ringers for the tournament. There could only be three winners for that day.

Ernie Fowler took 1st place, Wayland Webb took 2nd place, Doris Denton took 3rd place and Doris Hopper took 4th place.



Bowling Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On April 24, 2019 residents competed in the Bowling Tournament at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport. Jimmy Smith, Jim Hayden, Eugene Allison, Grant Lapointe, Bill Havens, Jim Haynes and Earl Gassery were all bowling in a friendly tournament. Grant Lapointe took 1st place, Eugene Allison took 2nd place, Jimmy Smith took 3rd place and Earl Gassery took 4th place.



Gardens galore!

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

On May 14 residents enjoyed a garden makeover on the Loyalty Hall patio. The large concrete planters were topped off with new soil while loving hands added a variety of flowering plants and vegetables. Mary Nelson lit up with "Oooh...Awe..." as she felt the larger leaves of the fig trees and the upcoming fruit on the new blueberry bushes. The project was arranged through our very own Susie Baumunk of Ability Works. Susie, Loretta and Kim along with gardener, Mary Nelson separated the Wandering Jew plant to add to a purple themed planter. Other residents came out to watch the busy bees, they stopped to smell the rosemary and took in a beautiful morning. Thanks to all involved for making a morning full of "Gardens Galore!"



Hook and Ring Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 7, 2019 residents competed in the Hook and Ring Tournament in the Bocce Center. The object of the tournament was to throw the six rings and hook them on the hooks for points. Whoever had the most points at the end advanced in the double elimination bracket. All the residents were concentrating for all the points that they could get in their throw. There could only be three winners that day. Wayland Webb took 1st place, Ernie Fowler took 2nd place, Jerry Anderson took 3rd place and Frank Baker took 4th place.



Outdoor Shuffleboard Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 16, 2019, residents competed in the Outdoor Shuffleboard Tournament at the basketball court. The morning was cool, crisp and the bugs were not biting. Harry Rhizor and Jean Rhizor competed against each other. This could not be good for Harry. Doris Hopper, Jim Hayden, Wayland Webb and Wolf Kiessler waited for their turn to play. There could only be three winners that day. Wayland Webb took 1st place, Wolf Kiessler took 2nd place, Doris Hopper took 3rd place and Harry Rhizor took 4th place.



Spades Tournament

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 8, 2019 residents competed in the Spades Tournament in the 2nd floor Club Room. The residents played 20 hands. The two players with the lowest hand moved to the next table after four hands. The top four scores were then counted to determine the winners. There could only be three winners for that day.

Jerry Anderson took 1st place, Doris Hopper took 2nd place, Frank Baker took 3rd place and Mary German took 4th place.



Yahtzee

Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On May 17, 2019 residents competed in a "Yahtzee for Fun" game in the 2nd floor Club Room. Yahtzee is a dice game made by Milton Bradley (now owned by Hasbro), which was first marketed as Yatzie by the National Association Service of Toledo, Ohio, in the early 1940s. The objective of the game is to score points by rolling five dice to make certain combinations. Residents were testing their skills for a future tournament.



WASHINGTON

Let's taco 'bout it

By Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy
Photos by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

On Friday, May 3, 2019 our annual RT Mexican Fiesta was held. The Scott Community Center was packed with 100 residents. The atmosphere resembled a lively cantina... the AFRH-W Cantina. Colorful decorations were everywhere. Authentic live music from East Coast Entertainment's "Mariachi Estrellas" three piece band had residents humming, dancing, singing along, tapping toes, mixing, mingling, and partaking in libations! It is an annual event that residents, staff, family, friends, and volunteers all enjoy and look forward to every year.

Residents were greeted, seated, and served by staff and volunteers that joined in to give a helping hand for this fun-filled event. Sheldon Shorthouse, AFRH-W's resident bartender had residents enjoying fresh-made strawberry margaritas with and without a kick, Mexican beers, sodas, and some H2O. Librarian Chris Baldwin and Art Specialist Kayla Bennett worked the quesadillas stand, Recreation Therapist Amanda Jensema had residents' palates in delectable overload with table-side guacamole service. Staff members Marine Robbins, Bill Striegel, Sajurnia Harris, and Linda Bailey held the appetizer table under control with orders for a house favorite taco pie dip, churros, fresh fruit, and assorted cheese and crackers. Special thanks to Mr. Snow and all the food service staff for all the delicious foods... there was not a single churro left! To top off the event was the "taco" piñata which was filled with candies and a few donated bucks from resident Chris Engle. Many residents took a good swing at the piñata with the final swing being taken by resident Peter Martinek.

Special thanks to all the staff, volunteers, and of course the residents of AFRH-W who made this such a wonderful celebration to kick off Cinco de Mayo. Till next year... adios!



GULFPORT

Fun fiesta history and celebration at AFRH-Gulfport!

By Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy Services
Photos by Becki Zschiedrich | Public Affairs



The fifth of May or Cinco de Mayo celebrates the date of the Mexican Army's victory over France in 1862 at the Battle of Puebla. The battle occurred during the Franco-Mexican War and lasted from the break of dawn until early evening. The French lost 500 soldiers by the time they retreated while the Mexicans lost fewer than 100. Cinco de Mayo is considered a small holiday in Mexico compared to their Mexican Independence Day held on September 16 to commemorate the call to arms against the Spanish colonial government in 1810, over 50 years prior to the Battle of Puebla on Cinco de Mayo. In the United States, Cinco de Mayo has evolved into a larger celebration to commemorate Mexican heritage and culture.

On Friday, May 3, 2019, AFRH-G residents celebrated a fiesta lunch filled with festive foods, music and friends. Earlier in the morning, residents in health-care joined together for a Fiesta Drum It Up! Drumming group and added rhythms to "Mexican Hat Dance", "La Cucaracha", "La Bamba", and "Cielito Lindo", just to name a few. Residents tried out new instruments of the region including maracas, claves, and guiros (a notched hollowed out gourd in the shape of a fish) along with a variety of drums, too. "Ay...Ay...Ay" could be heard throughout with Hola (Hello), Por Favor (Please), Andale Arriba Arriba (Come On, Let's Go), Gracias (Thank You), De Nada (Your Welcome) and Adios (Goodbye). Valor, Loyalty, and Allegiance Hall residents continued the celebration on Sunday, May 5th with their favorite float socials!

