Everyone loves freedom but everyone isn’t willing to serve our country and fight for it. On November 11th we honored those who have served our country and those who are still serving. There was no better way to celebrate our veterans on this special day than at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. The AFRH-G started the day out with the Patriot Guard Motorcycles coming through the gate with American flags blowing in the wind behind the motorcycles, trailed by three helicopter landings in front of the building. The Harrison County Sheriff’s helicopter landed first. Next, the U.S. Coast Guard’s helicopter landed and was followed by Ochsner Hospital’s Air Ambulance. The Gulfport High School band played the pre-ceremony patriotic music, and then guest speaker Major General James H. Garner (U.S. Army Retired) talked about the meaning and the importance of Veterans Day. Anniston Elementary 4th Grade students put on a nationalistic and stellar musical performance. There were an abundant number of static displays and presentations on the grounds of the AFRH for everyone to view. Paintings, arts, and crafts made by our many talented resident artists were available for purchase and the community was treated to tours throughout the day given by resident volunteer tour guides.

AFRH-WASHINGTON
First Family serves residents on Thanksgiving eve
Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

After President Barack Obama pardoned Tater and Tot, the final two turkeys of his presidency, he had another engagement to attend.

The Obama family, including the First Lady and daughter, Sasha, as well as members of Mrs. Obama’s family; arrived at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, where they were greeted by COO, Dr. Tim Kangas and Executive Officer Charles Hollings.

The First Family has a tradition of volunteering. Last year, on Thanksgiving eve, they served homeless veterans. This year, AFRH-W residents (who all served in the military) were humbled by the Presidential visit during their dinner. Resident Catherine Deitch, who served in the Army during WWII said, “It’s such a thrill to see President Obama. I’ll relive this memory when I’m alone in my room!”

AFRH-GULFPORT
AFRH celebrates Veterans Day with an Open House and Ceremony
Story & Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On Veterans Day we honored our veterans and expressed our gratitude to the brave men and women who have sacrificed everything to make this world a safer place for the rest of us. We cannot thank you enough for serving our country and protecting our freedoms.
Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi

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

By Christine Baldwin, AFRH-W Librarian

AFRH-W Veteran Highlight - Trudy Millward

Trudy Millward was born in Pennsylvania. She attended grade school in a one-room school house and ended up graduating from York Springs High School. There was no money for college, but the Hershey Company was hiring people to make K and C rations for the troops during World War 2. So Trudy got a job there. Unfortunately, due to trouble getting coca cola from South America, Hershey started laying off workers. Trudy and several other workers were laid off. Her husband could get a transfer. She worked out of New York City to the East Coast and eventually to San Francisco. She also took advantage of free tickets to see the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra on Sundays. This was a "big life for a small town girl." After two years, she accrued her allotted time off. She travelled was to New Orleans, LA. As part of her training, she was given an aptitude test that suggested she go into meteorology. Wanting to get straight to work and not attend another school, Trudy said yes. She very interested in dating her. He was her instructor for the Radio Operator class and 10 months later, she and Blaine were married. They then lived in Harrisburg and joined the Navy Reserves. Trudy was recalled to active service during the Korean Conflict and her status was changed from Yeoman to Communication Technician. She reported to Washington, DC and when asked to volunteer to go to the Far East, she replied yes. Trudy trained as a Radio Operator, learned to table and she took a class to recognize the Russian language as a Radio Operator. On duty one day, Trudy got a phone call and a man said "Will you marry me?" "No!" she replied, "I'm not getting married and who are you?" It turns out that this man was always behind her in the inspection line and was very interested in dating her. He was her instructor for the Radio Operator class and 10 months later, she and Blaine were married in a chapel at Schofield Barracks by a Methodist Chaplain. They moved into an unfinished house and shortly after Trudy got a call that her Mother had died. She flew out on the Tiger Line with GI’s flying home and half way there the plane had to go back because her mother died. Her husband could get a transfer. She worked out of Arlington Hall Station. In fact, Trudy had to get permission to move out of the barracks, when Blaine reported in, because they include surviving a typhoon in the Philippines, avoiding being evacuated in the last minute.

When her husband retired from the Navy, they both worked for the National Security Administration. They were stationed in Alaska, where Trudy remembers being in the famous Good Friday earthquake in 1964. When they both retired, they moved to Albuquerque, NM, where they lived for the next 30 years. Trudy has always been an active person. She learned to ice skate and golf in Alaska and square dance in New Mexico. Also, she and her husband kept a dark room in their mobile home in New Mexico for their photography. She took courses in Parliamentary Rules when she was a WAVES and used them in many different organizations. In fact she was the parliamentarian for the National Association of WAVES for 30 years. She had also written the by-laws for the Boozer Club. Trudy also became State President of the New Mexico Chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees and was also a member of the Mexican Mobile Home Owners. She also belonged to the "Young at Heart" choir. Her most enjoyable non-work trip was to The Holy Land in 1996. Trudy came to AFRH-G and it became her favorite place to live.

AFRH-G Veteran Highlight - Helen Cassanova Bieda

By Karl Ferm, AFRH-G Librarian

Helen Cassanova Bieda was born and raised locally in Biloxi, MS. Her father was one of the earliest automobile painters and her mother was a 'very good' housewife. Helen was the first born of three siblings. She attended Biloxi High School and worked at the local newspaper during her senior year. After graduation in 1941, she began working with the Biloxi News as an administrative assistant. Some of her friends began talking to her about helping with the war effort. One of the posters she saw really caught her attention. It read, "Be the gal, behind the guy, behind the gun." Her chief operator at the phone company found out and told her that she would not release Helen because she was essential personnel to the company. She moved her number, that Monday morning she signed up for the Navy as a WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service). Helen was sent to boot camp in Bronx, NY. Before this, the furthest she had ever travelled was to New Orleans, LA. As part of her training, she was given an aptitude test that suggested she go into meteorology. Wanting to get straight to work and not attend another school, Helen opted instead to work in Cleveland, OH for the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts. She served in the War Bond Issuing Department. Living in the area was a great location for her to visit her other three siblings. Having met her husband, and kept as her lover, she also took advantage of free tickets to see the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra on Sundays. This was a "big life for a small town girl." After two years, she accused her allotted points and was discharged from the Navy.

Once home, Helen decided to use the GI Bill to attend Newcomb in New Orleans and pursued a career in leisure services. Upon graduation, she took a job as a recreation director with Occupation Forces in Tokyo working with the 7th Calvary Regiment. It was in Tokyo that she met her first husband, who was a medic. The couple eventually had four children. Her marriage did not work out so as a single mother she returned to Biloxi to work at Keesler Air Force Base to support her children. She met her second husband, Louis, who also worked on the base. She was so happy to find someone who loved her children enough to treat them as his own. Soon after, the couple added two more children to their family.

Because Louis was in the Air Force, the family had to travel. Helen decided to stay home with the children to raise them and have time to devote to her children’s various school and extracurricular activities. Once her children were old enough, she began working as the state coordinator for TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) where she stayed for twenty years. Eventually the couple retired to enjoy their life in Ocean Springs.

One year before Hurricane Katrina, Louis sadly passed away. When the hurricane hit, he destroyed his house and car. Within a year’s time, Helen lost her husband, house, and vehicle. Two of her children came to help restore the home. Louis always had thoughts of moving to the Naval Home but Helen always felt as though the rooms were too small. When AFRH-G had its groundbreaking, she was excited to put her name on the list to move in. Because Helen had always served on various church councils and choirs, it was ideal that she has volunteered at the community projects that raised $20,000 for Feed My Sheep. Presently, she enjoys daily workouts in the fitness center to stay in shape. She is enrolled in Enrichment Story, a creative writing class offered to residents by a local editor, for them to work on their life story. Helen says that the class is a blessing and one of the great reasons she enjoys living here at AFRH-G.
November has always been one of my favorite months (more to come) and now it will also be one of my most memorable. AFRH-W was privileged to host the 44th President of the United States, President Barack Obama, the First Lady, Michelle, their daughter Sasha, and other members of their family. Wednesday, 23 November. The First Family served a pre-Thanksgiving dinner to the AFRH-W Residents, while other friends and family of the President built care packages and holiday cards for the troops in the military. The First Family greeted our Residents with gratitude for their service and a magnificent meal made by the Dining Staff. It was certainly a day I won’t soon forget.

As I said, November is one of my favorite months; my two favorite holidays occur this month, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. For me, it is a time of reflection, granted, my thinking has evolved over the years. I believe it is a time to give thanks to those who have sacrificed for our freedom and democracy. As I said, November is one of my favorite months (more to come).

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As I said, the sentiment reads:

Let each of us reaffirm our mutual respect and friendship that they may endure for generations to come.

It is a great honor and pleasure to express the everlasting gratitude of the Republic of Korea for the service you and your countrymen have performed in restoring and preserving our freedom and democracy.

We cherish in our hearts the memory of your boundless sacrifices in helping us reestablish our Free Nation.

In grateful recognition of your dedicated contributions, it is our privilege to proclaim you an "AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE" with every good wish people of the Republic of Korea.

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Dear AFRH-W residents, staff, families and friends, November has been a historic month for all AFRH-W stakeholders! As always, Washington campus employees have remained diligent as we seek to complete our service mission for our veteran residents. In these days shortened days, we still found time to welcome distinguished visitors, check-in with the Advisory Council, and celebrate Thanksgiving AFRH-W style. Thanksgiving is many perks to living in the Nation’s Capital. One perk is being close to the legislative and executive headquarters of the United States Government – the U.S. Capitol and White House. Residents were invited to visit both, recently. Then, on November 23rd, the First Family came to visit us! The 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, First Lady, Michelle Obama, and their daughter, Sasha, as well as other family members and friends, visited the campus to spread holiday cheer. For many staff members and residents this was a once in a lifetime event, made possible in part by being close neighbors to the Head of State. The President served turkey in celebration of the Thanksgiving Holiday as a way to give thanks to the veteran residents here at the AFRH-W.

Additionally, the highest ranking enlisted mariner brought his family to the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, to volunteer on Thanksgiving Day. Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Green served bear, carrots and rolls with a hearty greeting for each resident. Veterans Day was also celebrated in a big way on November 11th. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser addressed veterans during a ceremony here at the Home. Thank you to our Ombudsman Robb Webb for being the master of ceremonies and our Combined Federal Campaign manager. Through Robb’s efforts of getting the word out, we have been able to raise nearly $12,000 for various charities participating in the CFC. It was very touching to see the significant generosity of the Federal Workforce at AFRH-W who turned out to “Show Some Love.”

The Advisory Council convened November 17th to discuss matters important to the home’s operation. I had the opportunity to brief the council on the accomplishments achieved during the previous six months. Most notable is the re-accreditation and initial accreditation of two of our programs. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities re-accredited our continuing care retirement community. Then, the Independent Living Plus program was surveyed and accredited by The Joint Commission. Also during the council meeting, our Resident Advisory Committee Chair, Sheldon Shorthouse, briefed the Council on work concerning the residents.

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the residents, employees, contractors, volunteers and other stakeholders for making AFRH-W such a wonderfully vibrant place to work and thrive. We have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season.

Shaun Servais

241st Marine Corps Birthday Celebration

By Constance Maziel, Lead Recreation Specialist

On Friday November 4th, 2016, AFRH-W celebrated the 241st Marine Corps Birthday in the Scott Hall of Honors. The Ombudsman, Mr. Robb Webb was the master of ceremonies for the event, and provided a delightful sense of humor and engaged everyone present! The celebration was brought to attention by the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the National Airmanship. The event continued as Chaplain John Goodloe provided a heartfelt invocation, which also consisted of a personalized message to every Marine present. The ceremony continued with the guest of honor, 1st Sgt. Jimmy F. Richard Jr. Richard’s personal decorations include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award. In August 2015 1st Sgt. Richard received orders to Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. where he currently serves as the first sergeant for Company A. Richard was delighted and honored to be a part of the celebration and to share his past and present experiences with all AFRH residents. The celebration proceeded with the traditional U.S. Marine Corps Cake Cutting, honoring marine veteran recipient Mrs. Norma Rambow, and the youngest Marine present Lance Cpl. Darius Mick. The ceremony concluded with expressions of admiration to all Marines and all veterans across the globe. A special thanks to 1st Sgt. Richard, Mrs. Norma Rambow, Lance Cpl. Darius Mick and all the participants for making the 241st Marine Corps Birthday celebration a success. Happy Birthday Marines and Semper Fidelis!

Retiree Appreciation Day

By Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) are designed to be a source of the latest information for retirees, providing an opportunity to hear developments in benefits and services from guest speakers, check ID cards, get medical checkups, and various other services like the fantastic possibility to live at the Armed Forces Retirement Home- RADs occur from installation to installation throughout the year.

Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs Specialist and residents Frank Lawrence and Patricia Knorr recently visited the RAD at Fort Meade. Between the three, they personally spoke with close to four hundred retirees, answering questions and providing brochures. Plans are in the works to attend more local events, promoting the Home. Stay tuned.

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

The Marine Corps 241st birthday was the 10th of November. On the 4th of the month, AFRH-W celebrated in the Hall of Honors. The guest of honor was 1st Sgt. Jimmy F. Richard, Jr., USMCR. A short ceremony was followed by a cake cutting, and the Marine Corps Birthday was pronounced to the oldest and youngest Marines present. A birthday celebration was later held in the Defenders Inn. Veterans Day observance included the traditional wreath laying at the flagpole, by Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, and residents James Kidd and David Kaelzel. Other festivities included an ice social and karaoke at the Defenders Inn with visitors from Zeta Phi Beta sorority. On November 11th residents were entertained by the U.S. Navy “Country Current” Band at our RT Dance and Social.

The Marine Corps 241st birthday was also celebrated in the Scott Hall of Honors on November 4th. The Ombudsman, Mr. Robb Webb was the master of ceremonies for the event, and provided a delightful sense of humor and engaged everyone present! The celebration was brought to attention by the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the National Airmanship. The event continued as Chaplain John Goodloe provided a heartfelt invocation, which also consisted of a personalized message to every Marine present. The ceremony continued with the guest of honor, 1st Sgt. Jimmy F. Richard Jr. Richard’s personal decorations include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award. In August 2015 1st Sgt. Richard received orders to Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. where he currently serves as the first sergeant for Company A. Richard was delighted and honored to be a part of the celebration and to share his past and present experiences with all AFRH residents. The celebration proceeded with the traditional U.S. Marine Corps Cake Cutting, honoring marine veteran recipient Mrs. Norma Rambow, and the youngest Marine present Lance Cpl. Darius Mick. The ceremony concluded with expressions of admiration to all Marines and all veterans across the globe. A special thanks to 1st Sgt. Richard, Mrs. Norma Rambow, Lance Cpl. Darius Mick and all the participants for making the 241st Marine Corps Birthday celebration a success. Happy Birthday Marines and Semper Fidelis!

My Pokémon GO experience

By Joe Frogge, AFRH-W Resident

I first discovered Pokémon GO in July 2016 after seeing it on a news program as the most downloaded game with millions playing it. It didn’t take long for me to become obsessed by it. It is not just about finding Pokémon, but has several strategies of what to do when you find them. A mathematical decision must be made with each find. Aside from that, it is a game of visiting poke stops and poke gyms. This requires a lot of walking. I average about 4.5 miles a day visiting poke stops. It is good for health and good for meeting people. Each poke stop has information about the individual stop. I am far advanced in the game. Of 40 levels, I am currently at level 34. I have caught all 142 of the available Pokémon. Now it is about powering up for gym fighting. I may be the first 75-year-old to catch all 142. My personal goal is to be the first to complete all the levels. Pokémon Go is a free reality game developed by Niantic that uses location-based technology for iOS, Android, and Apple Watch devices.

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Happy 241st Birthday U.S. Marine Corps

Photos by Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

The AFRH-G held a 241st birthday ceremony on November 10th in honor of the U.S. Marines. The USMC official birthday message video was shown. Administrator Jeff Eads welcomed everyone to the ceremony. After an invocation by Pastor Michael Gibson, guest speaker General William L. Nyland, USMC Retired spoke to the residents and visitors.

Guest speaker General Nyland, the oldest AFRH-Marine resident Paul Hoffer, and the youngest active duty Marine in attendance cut the cake.

Keesler Retiree Day

By Christopher Alexander, Chief Resident Services

On November 4th, AFRH-Gulfport Public Affairs and Admissions staff participated in the Keesler Air Force Base Retiree Appreciation Day. The morning was dedicated to providing valuable information to retirees and their family in the area. Over 100 attendees were able to learn about health resources in the area and skills to stay healthy. While most retirees were aware of the Home, there were many questions answered about eligibility, cost, and services. This was the third consecutive year the Home has participated and this year shared information about the Veterans Day Open House. What a great chance to let the residents of the Gulf Coast know about both Homes.

Volunteers with wagging tails

By Melodie Menke, Volunteer Coordinator

On any given day you can spot one of our four-legged community volunteers wagging their tails and trotting down the hallways. Lucy, Sassy, Eve, Mickey, Bella, Prince, Charlie, Riley and our newest addition, Chewy, visit the Residents and staff at different times during the month. Many of the dogs have been visiting for years and lead the way on each floor, stopping to visit and greet old friends and make new ones. Pet Therapy is known to have a positive influence on one’s health with improved energy levels, reduced anxiety and lowered blood pressure. For staff and Residents, the jingles of the collars are just happy sounds that our extended fur-family is visiting at AFRH-G.

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

A simple definition of Advocacy: the act or process of using words, sounds, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else.

A simple definition of Communication: the act or process of using a cause or a proposal. How in the world am I going to tie that together you ask? One of the key tasks that we perform daily is listening; whether it is in the dining hall, while eating, while walking down a hallway, while enjoying a moment of respite in the hallway, while enjoying a moment of respite, or in numerous other places we find ourselves with other residents. We strive to hear what is on your mind and then become your voice to the administration and agency.

Last month I wrote that your voice absolutely matters. While we strive to keep a feel for the pulse of the campus and gather an understanding of issues of importance to us, the residents, we cannot do it without you doing your part. To tell us "I do not want to be involved," "I don't go to meetings," and then say "I have no idea what's going on around here," seems pretty contradictory.

Communication is a two way street. I can honestly say I do not have time to tell 500 plus residents everything going on via a personal daily briefing. Behind the scenes your Floor Representatives and I are hearing what you are saying. We meet with the appropriate staff to discuss issues of importance to you individually or collectively. We hope we can find a common ground that will satisfy you. When you feel you are not getting an answer or a result acceptable to you we are available to assist. We are not a panacea that solves everyone's issues but we do strive to make sure our home is, and remains, a premiere retirement facility.

Thoughtful dialogue goes a long way. We want to hear what is on your mind and ask that you listen and hear the reply. It may not be the reply you wanted but we will be honest and do what we can for you. Often, an answer is not immediate. Your patience is appreciated while we wait for a reply. If it is critical we can escalate an issue. Seldom is any issue so critical that an immediate reply or action is needed. We understand the urgency to you and hope you understand that there are over 500 residents who feel their issue is urgent as well. Please work with us as we work for you advocating ideas, suggestions, recommendations and often heard we should count our blessings but for me that would be impossible. The blessings we have are continuous. We hope we can find a common ground that will satisfy you. When you feel you are not getting an answer or a result acceptable to you we are available to assist. We are not a panacea that solves everyone's issues but we do strive to make sure our home is, and remains, a premiere retirement facility.
Arts and crafts updates

This is the 12th year that the AFRH-W has hosted the Joint Services National Military Family Volunteer Day. Every year we bring in 150+ volunteers of all ages, and that year was no exception. The volunteers are split into groups that complete multiple service projects around the Home. It starts with an opening ceremony every year where all the volunteers and residents gather in the Community Center. This year our Ombudsman, Robb Webb, welcomed the volunteers, and for the third year in a row, Amanda Jensema sang the National Anthem. Administrator Shaun Servais presented an Administrator coin to the servicemembers representing each branch. What made this year’s opening different, was an Honor Salute. Once the ceremony was over the volunteers were whisked off to their service stations. This year’s projects included a wheelchair wash, cleaning the dining room chairs on the Healthcare units, autumn decorating the Sheridan lobby and Scott Community Center, raking leaves, winterizing the ponds and gardens, dusting and organizing the library shelves in Scott and Sheridan, visiting Healthcare residents, and for the kids: they made cards. All service projects were completed in record time this year because we had so many volunteers! I would like to thank staff members Adrienne Dawkins, Matthews Roberts, Jerry Carter, Christine Baldwin, Steven Briefs, and residents Sheldon Shorthouse, David Kaetzel, and Bill Stephens who all were project leads this year. Thank you for all your help and I look forward to next year!

Leisure World Chorale visits AFRH-Washington

It was a great afternoon for AFRH residents when the Chorale singers from Leisure World in Silver Spring, Maryland came down to our Home and performed a wonderful variety of songs from such composers as, Irving Berlin, Paul Simon, Rogers and Hammerstein and many others. This was the fourth year in a row they have shared their talents with us, and each year gets better than the previous one. Afterwards, members of the group came and greeted our residents, thanking them for their service to our country. It was very moving to see the camaraderie between them and our residents. We are already looking forward to next year!

Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps serves residents on Thanksgiving Day

Story & Photos by Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs

In the spirit of the season, the highest ranking enlisted Marine brought his family to the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, to volunteer on Thanksgiving Day. Ronald L. Green has served in his current role since 2015, and has visited both campuses of AFRH on many occasions. Sgt. Maj. Green served up beans, carrots and rolls with a greeting and a smile for each resident.

Arts and crafts updates

By Lori Thompson, Art Specialist

Well folks, it’s that time of year again: when the elves are working hard around the clock, in preparation for the Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair (as well as creating our National Creative Veterans Festival entries)! This year the Fair will be held on Tuesday, December 6th from 12:00-2:00 and 4:00-6:30 PM. In front of the Scott Community Center. We have many unique items for your holiday gift list! You may also want to mark your calendars for our annual Holiday Card Making Social on Tuesday, the 13th at 1:30 PM in Ceramics. Additionally, we have a new volunteer in the arts and crafts shop: Virginia Dietrich. Virginia is a long-time crafter and has recently gleaned new ideas from area workshops. She is sharing her new techniques with residents (and volunteers)! In Virginia’s first workshop on November 29th, we created mosaic glass jewelry. This was an exciting new method. Virginia is also assisting with our Ceramic Pouring classes. Thank you Virginia for sharing your enthusiasm for the arts with us!

RT Halloween Happy Hour and Poker Run

By Carol Mitchell, Recreation Therapist and Sarah Konan, Recreation Assistant

On Tuesday, October 25th the AFRH-W Recreation Therapy Department hosted the “RT Halloween Happy Hour & Poker Run” in the Scott Community Center. The event kicks-off the Halloween season! Approximately seventy-five Healthcare and Independent Living residents attended. Special thanks to the thirty volunteers from Nam Knights, Friends of the Soldiers Home, Chevy Chase DAR Chapter, Navy, and other community volunteers.

Residents and staff came out in a variety of costumes including, witches, clowns, an Indian, vampire, king, ladybug, 50’s wear, skeleton, cow, Elvis, and more. One of the exciting activities held at the event included a Poker Run. Residents went to the first station table and registered their first card picked with resident Bill Jentarra a.k.a “Skelton Man” then proceeded to the next three stations to pick up their next cards. They returned to “Skelton Man’s” station for their fifth and final card. The best poker hand was won by resident Bill Vecsey with a Poker Hand of four Kings Ace High! Another activity held at the event was Guess the Number of Candies in the Tub and Guess the Weight of the Pumpkins. Residents guessing the closest number of candies was resident Jane Carroll. Her guess was 535 pieces and the actual number of pieces was 529. The combined weight of the pumpkins was 39.4 pounds. The Resident coming closest to the actual weight of the pumpkins was Vere Hothickiss with a guess of 37 pounds. Chief of Resident Services, Ron Kartz graciously donated the pumpkins from his gardens. All the stations passed out candy.

Many residents, staff, and volunteers thought it was a wonderful program and look forward to next year… BOD!
A Happy Hour we will never forget
By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant

On Wednesday November 2, 2016, the Coast Guard Chiefs being indoctrinated spent part of their day volunteering with our residents on Valor Hall, Loyalty Hall and Allegiance Hall. The group of twenty-one volunteered during the resident’s Happy Hour. Music, by our very own and talented Susan Bergman, was played while the group sang along to songs associated with Veterans Day. Susan played songs such as America the Beautiful, The Marines Hymn, God Bless America, You’re a Grand Ole Flag and This Land is Your Land, just to name a few. But the most memorable song she played that day was the Coast Guard’s theme song, “Semper Paratus.” As the music from the song began, all twenty-one Coast Guard volunteers quickly stood and sang proudly touching the hearts of all in the room. As this group of Coast Guard indoctrinated Chiefs, return to duty stations in Florida, Mississippi and Alabama, we, here at AFRH-G, will always remember that day. A special thank you to all.

A winning experience with KAFB 81st Medical Diagnostic
Submitted by Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

On Thursday, November 17, 2016, residents from Valor, Loyalty and Allegiance Hall joined together for a winning bingo with KAFB 81st MDOS. As part of their teambuilding and training day, Keesler Air Force Base 81st Medical Diagnostic Squadron Cardiopulmonary Department decided to visit the veteran residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. They joined in with residents to double their odds of winning bingo, reminisced, and brought smiles to all for an afternoon of fun. KAFB has two main training days, a Warrior Day in the spring and a Dragon Day in the fall. The military volunteers stated how they thoroughly enjoyed the chance to spend time with residents as they often treat many residents of the Home at the hospital.

We look forward to a return visit as it was a winning experience for all involved.

It was a winning day!

Thank you to the 81st MDOS Bingo volunteers.

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Made by a caring heart
By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant

Jeanette Easter is sharing her talents each year by crocheting quilts, blankets and shawls for the residents on Valor Hall, Loyalty Hall and Allegiance Hall. For the last three years, the handmade creations were made in various colors, sizes and lengths and then given out to the residents for Christmas. “It gives me something to do for the year,” stated Ms. Easter. “I enjoy doing them,” she added. We sincerely appreciate her generosity and time for our residents.

A Happy Hour we will never forget
By Jen Biernacki, Recreation Therapy Assistant

On Wednesday November 2, 2016, the Coast Guard Chiefs being indoctrinated spent part of their day volunteering with our residents on Valor Hall, Loyalty Hall and Allegiance Hall. The group of twenty-one volunteered during the resident’s Happy Hour. Music, by our very own and talented Susan Bergman, was played while the group sang along to songs associated with Veterans Day. Susan played songs such as America the Beautiful, The Marines Hymn, God Bless America, You’re a Grand Ole Flag and This Land is Your Land, just to name a few. But the most memorable song she played that day was the Coast Guard’s theme song, “Semper Paratus.” As the music from the song began, all twenty-one Coast Guard volunteers quickly stood and sang proudly touching the hearts of all in the room. As this group of Coast Guard indoctrinated Chiefs, return to duty stations in Florida, Mississippi and Alabama, we, here at AFRH-G, will always remember that day. A special thank you to all.

A winning experience with KAFB 81st Medical Diagnostic
Submitted by Susan Bergman, MT-BC, Recreation Services

On Thursday, November 17, 2016, residents from Valor, Loyalty and Allegiance Hall joined together for a winning bingo with KAFB 81st MDOS. As part of their teambuilding and training day, Keesler Air Force Base 81st Medical Diagnostic Squadron Cardiopulmonary Department decided to visit the veteran residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. They joined in with residents to double their odds of winning bingo, reminisced, and brought smiles to all for an afternoon of fun. KAFB has two main training days, a Warrior Day in the spring and a Dragon Day in the fall. The military volunteers stated how they thoroughly enjoyed the chance to spend time with residents as they often treat many residents of the Home at the hospital.

We look forward to a return visit as it was a winning experience for all involved.

It was a winning day!

Thank you to the 81st MDOS Bingo volunteers.
Residents experience flight of a lifetime

By Becki Zschiedrich, Public Affairs

On October 31, 2016 AFRH-G Veterans experienced a flight of a lifetime through the Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation (AADF). The AADF is a non-profit organization established and dedicated to honoring seniors and United States military veterans. Its mission is to “Give Back to Those Who Have Given” so much toward the freedoms we enjoy today. Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation President Darryl Fisher restored the Foundation’s airplane, a 1940’s Boeing Stearman, with the goal of recognizing veterans living in retirement communities around the United States. Through its many donors, the foundation provides memorable Dream Flights in the Stearman biplane - the same aircraft used to train many US military aviators in the late thirties and early forties. The pilot for this plane was retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Tim Newton who said, “We do this because it’s the right thing to do and we love doing it.”

Residents Gordon Wegener, Doris Jones, Thomas Adams, and Jack Oyster all got to experience this flight of a lifetime thanks to the AADF. Air Force World War II Prisoner of War Jack Oyster said, “I haven’t been in an open cockpit plane for I don’t know how many years. I’m looking forward to doing it again.”

“It was the perfect day, we had beautiful weather, everybody flew, and had a blast”, said Lead Recreation Specialist Sean Campbell. “It was an extreme pleasure to participate with them. The Ageless Aviation group and the Million Air folks along with the Supercuts girls, who were sponsors of the foundation, were so helpful and made the experience great for our veterans,” Campbell said.

The AFRH veterans look forward to doing this again next year. The Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation gave each veteran a signed hat and memories that will last a lifetime. Thank you AADF for giving back to the men and women who sacrificed so much for us.

Veterans Day at AFRH-W

By Amanda Jonsense, CTRS

To our veterans here at AFRH-W, I would first like to say THANK YOU! We should thank our veterans every day, but especially on November 11th. Over the years traditions have been kept in how we honor our veterans who live here at the Home. The day began with Recreational Therapy Bingo, which is hosted by the Lambda Gamma Gamma military chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. They have been hosting Bingo for the past eight years and plan to continue this tradition for many years to come. Every year they bring cake and punch for the residents, and also provide the prizes and gift cards. The Riverdale Baptist High School boys basketball team also joined them this year.

After Bingo, residents were invited to attend the Wreath Laying Ceremony. This year our emcee was Ombudsman, Robb Webb. Mayor Muriel Bowser was one of our honored guests, and she also spoke. She made remarks about the number of veterans who live in Washington, D.C. and what the District offers veterans. She also talked about how much AFRH means to her.

Residents David Kaetzel and James Kidd were also honored guests. Kidd wanted to remind everyone that there were also veterans from the wars that were fought prior to World War I, which is when the holiday started. Kaetzel spoke about his time in the Navy, and his family history within the military. Afterwards, the Mayor, Kidd, and Kaetzel together placed the wreath in front of the flagpole. One thing that made this year’s ceremony unique was a flyover by a military helicopter. It was definitely a sight to see!

In the afternoon we had two groups who come every year for our veterans. The Knights of Columbus have been coming, bringing cake and ginger ale, to visit the Healthcare and Assisted Living residents for over fifteen years. We also had the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority sponsor an Ice Cream and Karaoke Social. This was the third year that they have sponsored this event, and as always it was a hit! Residents all enjoyed coming out for ice cream and camaraderie, but they also enjoyed listening to their fellow residents, staff, and guests sing songs with the karaoke machine. There were a wide range of genres, generations, and artists. This has truly become a fun way to end the day the United States has set aside to honor our veterans.