AFRH-WASHINGTON

D.C. Mayor honors veterans at AFRH-W

By Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator
Photos by Jack Beck | AFRH-W Resident

Honored for their bravery, sacrifice and overall contributions to the United States of America, military veterans were recognized at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington's 2018 Veterans Day Wreath Day Laying Ceremony on November 11.

At the start of the ceremony, a seven-member honor guard of military volunteers from the Defense Intelligence Agency at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C., paraded and presented the Nation's colors with five flags and two rifles. The remaining military volunteers smartly set up seating, the podium and the sound system before the start of the event. Resident Advisory Chairman Billy Ray White led attendees in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, while Mrs. District of Columbia International 2018 Terri Ann Confair sang the National Anthem.

Catholic Chaplain Father Carlos Roman delivered the invocation and Public Affairs Officer Christopher Kelly served as the master of ceremonies.

In her remarks during the ceremony, AFRH-W Administrator Retired U.S. Navy Capt. Susan L. Bryhan noted that this year marks the 100th anniversary to the end of WWI. She discussed the origins of Veterans Day, talked about how it transitioned from Armistice Day to Veterans Day and delivered a stirring poem about the flowers (poppies) that still bloom in the battlefields of WWI. Graciously accepting an invitation to be guest of honor at the ceremony, Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser delivered honorable remarks praising the service and sacrifice of AFRH residents and all veterans throughout the District.

While we gather here today, on Veterans Day, we remember every day, those who gave their lives in service to our nation. We are a better and stronger city and nation because of your courage and selflessness," she said before a large crowd of residents, staff, guests and volunteers seated and standing near the flag pole courtyard between the Scott and Sherman buildings. "You teach us what it means to sacrifice for a larger cause, show us the importance of putting country before self and you show the world that an all-volunteer service is possible," she said. Bowser, a long-time friend of AFRH-W, frequently participates in the annual ceremony at the Home. This year marks at least four consecutive years in which she has faithfully attended the event.

White (a U.S. Navy veteran) and Frank Lawrence (a U.S. Air Force veteran) both delivered their own ceremonial remarks prior to the laying of the wreath at the flag pole by Mayor Bowser, Bert Spangler (U.S. Army veteran) and Billy Bowen (U.S. Navy veteran). AFRH Chief Executive Officer Retired Army Maj. Gen Steve T. Rippe attended the event. He and Bryan both welcomed and thanked the mayor and her team for supporting the AFRH-W Veterans Day Ceremony.

AFRH-GULFPORT

AFRH-G annual Veterans Day open house

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

Hundreds of people gathered on a single mission at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport on November 9, 2018 for the Home’s Annual Veterans Day Open House and Ceremony. Captain Ron Piret, Commander, Naval Oceanographic Office, Stennis Space Center was our special keynote speaker.

It’s this timeless service from all branches of our nation’s military that’s behind this open house and ceremony held each year at the Armed Forces Retirement Home when the Veterans Day holiday rolls around. The people of the community are part of the reason we open our doors once a year, to let them come in and see what we do, who we serve, and to see the beautiful resort we have for our veterans on the Gulf Coast.

We all should be expressing gratitude to America’s veterans every day of the year, not just on November 11, which is a national day to recognize the sacrifices of our nation’s heroes. To those in uniform serving today and to those who have served in the past, we honor you today and every day. For your bravery, hard work, and dedication to our country, we thank you.
This victory led to a promotion to staff sergeant with assignment to the 18th Airborne Corps as 105mm howitzer crew. During his assignment, he earned the 82nd Airborne Division's Artillery reassigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina as a section chief of a and airfield seizure exercises. Upon completion of his overseas assignment in 1974, he was duty because paratroopers received an additional monthly $55.00 in hazardous duty pay. units within range of enemy ground forces. While at Ft. Sill, he earned a secondary military training. Helicopter crew chiefs were not only required to be door gunners aboard helicopters included six basic, four adult NCO, and one officer's course. Roger then went to Panama for Basic Combat Training (BCT), then to Ft. Rucker, Alabama for follow-on Advanced Individual Training (AIT). After completing training, he was sent to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma for Forward Observer (FO) training. Helicopter crew chiefs were not only required to be door gunners aboard helicopters but also were required to be able to call for fire from direct and general support artillery units within range of enemy ground forces. While at Ft. Sill, he earned a secondary military occupational specialty of Field Artillery. While training, he was required to attend a mandatory presentation by recruiters looking for volunteers for airborne duty. He volunteered for airborne duty because paratroopers received an additional monthly $55.00 in hazardous duty pay. Frank was sent to Ft. Benning, GA, completed his airborne training, earned his jump wings, and was assigned to the 5th BN Field Artillery (Airborne) in Germany which was part of the 8th Infantry Division. In 1973, as airborne positions were being reduced in Germany. Frank volunteered for assignment to the 1st BN 509th Infantry, Airborne Battalion Combat Team ABCT. This was an action unit transferred to Vicenza Italy where he participated in several rapid offensive tactical parachute operations, NATO and Ace Mobile Force (AMF) forced entry, denied access, and airfield seizure exercises. Upon completion of his overseas assignment in 1974, he was reassigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, NC as a section chief and then to a 105mm howitzer crew. During his assignment, he earned the 82nd Airborne Division’s Artillery Top Gunnier title during tactical competitions over several days with 53 other howitzer sections. This victory led to a promotion to staff sergeant with assignment to the 18th Airborne Corps as an instructor at the Non-Commissioned Officers Academy. During his assignment at Ft. Bragg, he married his fiancé, the former Rita Wheatley before receiving new reassignment orders to return to the 1st BN 509th Infantry, ABCT in Vicenza Italy. While stationed in Italy, the couple welcomed the births of their daughter April and their son Frank II. Frank served his assignment as a howitzer section chief, was promoted to sergeant first class, managed to get some battalion-level staff experience as an 8-3 air NOCIC with responsibilities for scheduling and coordinating fixed and rotary wing air support for the battleground as well as air transport of personnel, vehicles, and equipment. While in that position, he set up battalion-level training for airborne Refreshers, and Jumpmaster Certification Courses. As a senior field artillery NCO in the battalion, he returned to Delta Battery with duties as the first sergeant due to an unexpected departure of the first previous first sergeant and completed his tour with the 1st BN 509th ABCT in 1982.

His next assignment sent him back to the 82nd Airborne Division. While there he held an 8-2 intelligence NCO position at battalion, was promoted to first sergeant, and planned and participated in numerous battery-level training and field exercises in support of brigade-level operations in preparation for no-repeat world-wide deployments. During his seven-year tenure, he was promoted to G5 with follow-on assignment back to Vicenza Italy, but this time to the 559th US Army Artillery Group (USAAG), which was responsible to Southern European Task Force (SETAF) for Special Weapons support to NATO. 1991 marked the beginning of the Berlin Wall coming down, the start of removing US Army tactical nuclear weapons from the European Theater by 1992, and culminated with the end of the Cold War with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. His tour of duty being cut short in Italy, with no other available assignments in Europe, Frank was ordered stateside by HQDA with assignment instructions to the US Army Force Mgmt Support Agency, a Field Operating Agency (FOA) with duties in the review and realignment of Army Force Structure, adjustments to manning and equipment, re-stationing of Army Forces, as well as troop reductions. After five years with HQDA, he retired in 1997 with 27 years of active military service. After retiring, Frank accepted a position as a contractor with the US Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM), declassifying Army records. Several months later, Frank was offered and accepted back to HQDA as a government civilian to continue the work in Army Force Structure.

In 2015, Frank sold his home and moved to AFRH-W while still working with HQDA. After approximately a year or so, he decided to assist his fellow residents by serving as RAC ombudsmen for assisted living residents, a bicycle shop manager, and the on-call after duty hours auto hobby shop manager. He continued to serve with HQDA until receiving a call from AFRH-G that his name had made the top of the list for transfer to Gulfport. Frank retired in May 2018 with 20 years of federal civilian service and transferred to Gulfport later that same month. After taking a couple of months to get settled in, he applied for the RAC ombudsmen position to support those residents in upper level care (ULC), and was recently appointed as RAC chairman while continuing his support to those ULC residents. We like to formally welcome Frank to AFRH-G and thank him for his level of commitment to his fellow residents.
Chick-fil-A gives back to AFRH-G residents

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On November 13th managers and members of the Chick-fil-A from the Edgewater Mall in Biloxi, Miss. brought residents a really nice treat to thank them for their service. Thank you to Rick Rapson and the Chick-fil-A crew for bringing hundreds of chicken sandwiches and smiles to the AFRH-G residents. Chick-fil-A wanted show their appreciation to our veterans by providing chicken sandwiches. On behalf of all the residents, we would like to thank Chick-fil-A for their huge act of kindness. It was greatly appreciated.

Marines celebrate 243rd birthday at AFRH-W

By Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator

Story & Photos by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

The service and sacrifice of Marine veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington were recognized in a November 9th ceremony to celebrate the 243rd birthday of the United States Marine Corps. Attendees, including residents, staff, guests and volunteers heard commentary about the history of the Marines and celebratory remarks directly from the Commandant.

“For 243 years, Marines have fought and won whenever and wherever the Nation call. In the harshest conditions, over the most brutal terrain, and against the most formidable enemies, Marines defend the ideals of freedom with grit and tenacity. Though the battlefields change and capabilities evolve, history proves that the true victory comes from the individual Marine with steeled resolve, the drive to overcome any obstacle, and the warrior spirit to fight on against all odds. It takes a steadfast faithfulness – Semper Fidelis – to Corps, country, and each other that abounds throughout our storied legacy,” U.S. Marine Commandant Gen. Robert B Neller said in an excerpt recited during the AFRH-W ceremony.

Keynote speaker, U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Edward D. Parsons (Joint Base Myers-Henderson Hall, Arlington, Va.), thanked AFRH residents for their part in shaping the Marine Corps into what it is today. “When I look across the room, and I had the opportunity to talk with the Marine veterans here, it is wonderful to know that we have some Korea (war) vets that understand what living at the edge of life really means. Some of the World War II veterans, that are here, they are the nation’s greatest generation, and not only are they within that group of folks, they also decided to put their hands up in the air and become United States Marines.”

Speaking on behalf of the Home, AFRH-W Administrator Susan E. Bryhan, Captain, U.S.Navy (Ret), presented Parsons with an agency coin thanking him and his fellow Marines for their participation and gratitude toward AFRH-W residents.

The ceremony concluded with the traditional cutting of the birthday cake by the oldest Marine (Muriel Kupersmith, AFRH-W resident) and the youngest Marine (Lance Corporal Russell). Using an NCO sword, they both simultaneously sliced the cake before singing the first verse of the Marine Corps hymn.

Bowling Tournament

Story & Photos by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist


Mystery Tournament

Story & Photos by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

Mystery Tournament AFRH-G Recreation held its Mystery Tournament and there were 14 residents who participated. The winners were Basketball Bowling. Residents were given instructions on how to play. The way to win was to knock all the bowling pins down with two shots. There could only be three winners: First place was Sam Robertson, second place was Frank Baker, third place was Woody Hilliker and fourth place was Jerry Anderson.

AFRH-W Walking Club update

By Linda Bailey CTRS | Recreation Specialist

The Walking Club is about to take a hiatus for the holidays. We have had to spend more days walking indoors than out the last two weeks. Luckily we had a great weather for our last walking trip on November 1st. The group headed out to Roosevelt Island, a National Park Service memorial to America’s 26th President. The group circumnavigated the island, walking 2.6 miles around through wooded areas and on the boardwalk above the swampy area of the island. We were rewarded with the appearance of a blue heron not 20 feet from the path, along with numerous ducks and squirrels. The week prior we headed out to Bladensburg Waterfront Park, on the Anacostia River. Along with walking the trails by the river, we took the pontoon boat tour.

We hope to resume our group walking in the spring, as it is always nicer exercising with others. There are many more waking paths waiting to be explored in the D.C. area.

AFRH-W welcomes Members of Congress

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

Photos by Barbara Bradley | Public Affairs

AFRH-W welcomed U.S. Representative Glenn “GT” Thompson, 5th District, Pennsylvania, U.S. Representative Lou Correa, 46th District, California and U.S. Representative Ralph Abraham, M.D., 5th District, Louisiana. Major General (ret) Stephen T. Rippe, U.S. Army, AFRH CEO briefed our visiting Members of Congress, which was followed by breakfast with our residents and tour of the Home. During the visit, Representatives had the opportunity to listen to our residents and staff and see what makes the Armed Forces Retirement Home a vibrant and distinctive community.

National Defense Jeong Kyeong-doo came to show his gratitude at AFRH-W on behalf of his government to our veterans who served during the Korean War. After an office call with MG (ret) Steve Rippe, AFRH’s chief executive officer, the minister met with our Korean War Veterans gifted to the Home. Concluding the visit, he spoke to our veterans in the Hall of Honors and handed out his coins to our veterans in attendance.

Republic of Korea Minister of National Defense Visit

By Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs

Photos by Barbara Bradley | Public Affairs & Jack Beck | Resident

Earlier this month, the Republic of Korea (ROK) Minister of National Defense Jeong Kyeong-doo came to show his gratitude at AFRH-W on behalf of his government to our veterans who served during the Korean War. After an office call with MG (ret) Steve Rippe, AFRH’s chief executive officer, the minister met with our Korean War Veterans and toured the facility. A donation of four leg massager machines was gifted to the Home. Concluding the visit, he spoke to our veterans in the Hall of Honors and handed out his coins to our veterans in attendance.

NOVEMBER 30, 2018

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

NOVEMBER 30, 2018

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME
From the AFRH-W Administrator

Hoping everyone had a great Thanksgiving. The leaves have changed colors and have mostly fallen and we had a bit of snow; guess we’d better get our coats out as we begin a very busy time of year. Take a moment to count your blessings and enjoy the season. This can also be a time of sadness for some, please reach out to a social worker, nurse or friend if you are feeling sad.

By Susan Bryhan | AFRH-W Administrator

Notes from the Administrator at Veterans Day celebration

Words from the Administrator at Veterans Day celebration

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We live, feel dawn, saw sunset glow,

Take up our quarrel with the foe;

The torch; be yours to hold it high.

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow.

The day is bright; the sun is high

To you from failing hands we throw

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow.

To your arms we entrust our country and for making

To your country and making

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow.

Thank you veterans for your service and sacrifice to your

May God bless you!

AFRH-W leads the flu campaign!

The CEO, COO and DDCO were the first to receive their flu immunizations on the Washington campus this year, setting the example for the rest of us. Every year, health experts recommend that nearly all people six months and older get the flu vaccine, yet only about 50 percent of eligible people in the United States actually get vaccinated. When people forget to get the vaccine, they also reduce their community’s “herd immunity,” the protection that occurs when a high proportion of people are vaccinated against a specific virus or pathogen. Getting a flu shot often pays off for military families, but even if some immunizations or treatments can’t always provide total protection, it’s worth getting.

This year’s annual flu shot will offer protection against three or four of the influenza viruses expected to be in circulation this flu season. We are providing the high-dose flu vaccine for maximum protection. The flu vaccine is your best defense against the flu, but there are additional steps you can take to help protect yourself from the flu and other viruses. These steps include:

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Use an alcohol-based sanitizer on your hands if soap and water aren’t available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth whenever possible.
- Avoid crowded places if you’re feeling ill.
- Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, exercise regularly, drink plenty of fluids, eat a nutritious diet and manage your stress.
- You can also help prevent spread of the flu by staying home if you do get sick. Do it for our residents, your co-workers, your family, for yourself! All government employees can get vaccinated against influenza at the Wellness Center.

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman

Greetings AFRH-W! We had a busy time last month, but we are building things moving - taking care of our residents and fixing what needs to be fixed. We are moving forward in the business of making our Home a premier retirement community for us and military veterans.

Inside AFRH-W - At the Nov. 14th RAC meeting, I introduced new members on our RAC team. They are: ‘PK’ King, ‘Frank’ Frankel, ‘Mel’ Melchiori, ‘Ellen’ Ellen, ‘Rudolph’ Rudolph, ‘Max’ Max, ‘Frank’ Frank, myself. So, if you see me or my floor reps (wearing yellow name badges), greet them with a warm hello, thank them for taking care of our Home and voice your concerns if you have any. They will be professional and dedicated in receiving your concerns.

Also, I learned that many residents are having problems getting their medications at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) because they have no military I.D. This should not be the case for our veterans who, I believe, have earned the right to access any military installation for health care. However, sometimes policies do not sit up with the work best in real life. So, if you need to get to Walter Reed for a medical appointment follow this recommendation from AFRH-W: Get a signed form from the AFRH-W Outpatient Medical Office and then bring it to the Bobst Web. Ask that form with you when you go to Walter Reed. Present that document to security (or whoever is requesting a military ID needed to authorize access). Please let me know if any questions come up with this process.

Outreach - Your RAC Chair continues to reach out to the community helping veterans learn about AFRH and the benefits of being a resident. Last month, I along with “PK” went to a veterans benefits seminar at Fort Foote Baptist Church Veterans Ministry in Fort Washington, Maryland. We met with veteran service organizations and put out information about AFRH. I invite any resident interested in going to this monthly outreach event to come about it.

Also, I stopped in on a Veteran’s Caregiver Conference held at the DC Mayor’s Office of Veterans Affairs. I met with veteran caregiver groups (Wounded Warriors, Elizabeth Dole Foundation) and Mr. Eli Ross, Director of the Office of the Veterans Affairs. Mr. Ross is the representative who set up the DC Mayor’s participation in our Veterans Day wreath-laying ceremony. I thank you for that, Mr. Ross.

DCOO John RisCassi

Thank you for your service and sacrifice to your country and for making this world a better place.

May God bless you!

Billy Ray White
From the AFRH-G Administrator

November was an extremely busy month at AFRH-G. We had numerous activities scheduled for November and the highlight of the month was our Veterans Day Open House on November 9. Rain was in the forecast but held out for the ceremony. However, the three helicopter landings were cancelled because of high winds. There were hundreds of people in attendance, ranging from school-aged children, to active-duty military, prospective residents, and people from the community who stopped by to see the resort we have for our veterans. We also hosted several static displays, a K-9 demonstration, performances by the Gulfport High band and a musical tribute by Lynn Meadows “Wings” plus so much more.

The thank you goes to RAC members that continue in supporting all the residents as best they can. Resident ideas, suggestions, recommendations, comments, and complaints will certainly take longer to respond to and address with our staff.

The Draft AFRH Directive 8-12-C that covers the composition and duties of the RAC, although not yet formally released by the DoD, in some ways, already implemented regarding floor representatives and stipends. The resident fee increases scheduled to take effect in January 2019 has had a direct effect on remaining residents, not only their pocketbook, but volunteerism as well.

One of the important issues presented by several of the residents not only in upper levels of care, but residents in independent living and independent living plus, was about getting transportation for personal errands, such as to the bank, post office, the occasional restaurant, shopping, casinos, and other places as well.

The holiday season is here, and most residents have family members that they want to purchase gifts and gifts to but are hampered by not only the lack of resident transportation volunteers, but vehicles that can accommodate their PMD, rollator, and wheelchairs needed by them to conduct these personal errands.

Resident Patricia Kirchner, your RAC upper levels of care ombudswoman, has been at the forefront of addressing this issue. Her direct coordination with local taxi cab companies has identified a cab company that has vehicles that can arrive, pick up, and transport residents with their belongings to their destinations and return you home. This capability identified a cab company that has vehicles that can arrive, pick up, and transport residents with their belongings to their destinations and return you home. This capability.

Notes from the AFRH-G Interim Resident Advisory Committee Chairman

Thank you for having me as your interim RAC Chairman. I will attempt to do the very best I can to meet your expectations. I find myself in an unexpected position. The resignation of Ray Ross due to health concerns was certainly sudden and caught everyone by surprise, me included.

This month marks six months here in the Gulfport Home since my transfer from the Washington D.C. Home. After getting somewhat settled in with Melodie and the RAC, I asked the volunteer office to unfilled positions and decided to continue the volunteer work as a resident Ombudsman in support of the residents in the upper level care (ULC) areas.

Previously, Ray and I had conversed numerous times regarding support of a volunteer program. On one such occasion, he asked me to be his vice chairman. After metabolizing for some time, thinking that an occasional stepping in to attend a meeting during his absence should be an easy thing to do, I agreed, and as I mentioned previously, certainly unexpected.

As I humbly make my way around the PAC office spending time attempting to get better organized, going through various files, reviewing various committee reports, monthly minutes, motions, and recommendations, it further strengthened my recognition of the value of residents providing input, recommendations, asking questions, volunteering, and identifying almost anything at all that the Home could or should be responding to, or assisting those residents in getting an individual response in a timely manner.

Members of the RAC as well as resident volunteers have certainly been reduced in size, composition, and amount. However, over 100 residents have been on the remaining RAC members that continue in supporting all the residents as best they can. Resident ideas, suggestions, recommendations, comments, and complaints will certainly take longer to respond to and address with our staff.

The AFRH-G celebrated the United States Marine Corps 243rd Birthday on November 8 in the Community Center. Following the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance, Administrator Jeff Eads welcomed First Sergeant Michael Croft, who was the guest speaker.

We also held our monthly birthday celebration and the AFRH Chief Operating Officer Jim Bratton and Chief Financial Officer Nancy Anne Baugher also volunteered to help out in so many ways in order to make this day fantastic.

November was an extremely busy month at AFRH-G. We had numerous activities scheduled for November and the highlight of the month was our Veterans Day Open House on November 9. Rain was in the forecast but held out for the ceremony. However, the three helicopter landings were cancelled because of high winds. There were hundreds of people in attendance, ranging from school-aged children, to active-duty military, prospective residents, and people from the community who stopped by to see the resort we have for our veterans. We also hosted several static displays, a K-9 demonstration, performances by the Gulfport High band and a musical tribute by Lynn Meadows “Wings” plus so much more.

Thank you First Sgt. Michael Croft for guest speaking at the AFRH-G’s 243rd Marine Birthday Celebration.

AFRH-G celebrates the USMC 243rd Birthday

By Becki L. Zschiedrich / Public Affairs

The AFRH-G celebrated the United States Marine Corps 243rd Birthday on November 8 in the Community Center. Following the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance, Administrator Jeff Eads welcomed First Sergeant Michael Croft, who was the guest speaker. Marine residents Fredi Van Pelt and James Tootle cut the cake along with First Sgt. Croft.

"Semper Fidelis” (“Always Faithful”) is the motto of the Corps. That Marines have lived up to this motto is proved by the fact that there has never been a mutiny, or even the thought of one, among U.S. Marines. Semper Fidelis was adopted about 1883 as the motto of the Corps.

In closing, I look forward to all the upcoming festivities, the joy and excitement this holiday season will bring, and the expectation of a great new year with a great and supportive staff.

Frank “Z” Zupko
AFRH-W National Family Volunteer Day 2018
By Amanda Jensen, CTRS | Recreation Therapist
Photos by Jack Beck | AFRH-W Resident
National Family Volunteer Day is an annual day of service, designed to demonstrate the power of families who choose to volunteer together to support the communities in which they live and serve. Volunteering as a family provides quality time for busy families, strengthens communication and bonds, and positively impacts local communities across the nation. Each year we have military families who sign up to volunteer at AFRH-W to do a variety of service projects. This year we had 178 volunteers representing each branch of our military. Projects that they worked on included cleaning up the golf course of leaves and branches, organizing and creating an inventory in multiple storage areas, washing wheelchairs, cleaning and organizing the library, and visiting with the healthcare residents. For those who brought young children we had a craft area set up for them to make cards for Veterans Day, Christmas, or Thank You for your Service. This event has an impact on our Home. When the hours and number of volunteers are added together, it is projected that the volunteers saved the home this year approximately $16,200.

Before the service projects started we had an opening ceremony that included a coin presentation to recognize a resident from each branch who had the most volunteer hours this year. They also received a certificate from our administrator, Susan Bryhan. The resident volunteers honored this year were:

- U.S. Army: Roberta Spangler
- U.S. Air Force: Frank Lawrence
- U.S. Navy: Richard Walk
- U.S. Marines: Norma Rambow

Leisure World Chorale returns
Story & Photo by Amanda Jensen, CTRS | Recreation Therapist
Leisure World Chorale returns and residents look forward to their next performance here at AFRH-W. Just sing either. Four ladies did a tap number and did a wonderful job. They Maryland returned and put on a performance for the residents. They don’t have to be in the performance every year. This is a performance the residents look forward to every year. The thirty-person choir from Leisure World which is located in Silver Spring, Maryland returned and put on a performance for the residents. They don’t just sing either. Four ladies did a tap number and did a wonderful job. They sang songs such as “Sentimental Journey,” and “Impossible Dream,” as well as a medley of songs from both “The Music Man” and “South Pacific.” The residents look forward to their next performance here at AFRH-W.

An autumn fishing trip
By Steven Briefs, CTRS | Supervisory Recreation Specialist
On November 3rd the Fishing Community organization invited our AFRH-W residents to Lake Fairfax in Virginia for a day of fishing and fellowship. This volunteer organization has been around since 2012 and their mission is to “promote recreational fishing in a manner to create harmony between the human element and our aquatic habitats.” Although they also serve the youth of our communities, it is especially geared towards our wounded and retired veterans in all branches of our military. Ernie Rosas was our contact and he and the members of his team provided all the fishing rods, bait, and expert advice and helped take off any fish that we caught. The day was sunny with a cool autumn breeze blowing. It looked like the leaves were at their peak in color. On this lake there were many ducks and geese flying about, “quacking and honking,” making it a real adventure for us. A delicious lunch of barbeque beef and pork, coleslaw, baked beans, green beans and fresh rolls were provided for lunch. There was also a raffle and AFRH-W residents Terry Tackett and Billy Bowen each won a new fishing rod and reel.

It was a great day for our guys to get out in nature, meet new people and take part in the American pastime of fishing!

Cooking pumpkins to educate during “Eat Better, Eat Together Month”
By Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist
October was “Eat Better, Eat Together” month, and in order to educate our residents on some healthful benefits of October’s most-seen, but not always most-eaten fruit, the pumpkin, we held a cooking demonstration and tasting. Recreation Specialist Linda Bailey and Dietician Leslie Boggus prepared pumpkin soup and pumpkin macaroni and cheese. Leslie spoke about the benefits of eating pumpkin, with its high fiber content and Vitamin A benefits. The pumpkin soup was enjoyed the most, as it contained those spices most associated with autumn. The pumpkin mac and cheese was certainly different and filling, and much healthier than the standard variety. Linda talked about the advantages of eating together and using meals as a chance to socialize.

The pumpkins we cooked with had been used as decorations during the Halloween parties. They were the smaller baking type, not the large ones used for jack-o’-lanterns. During the cooking demonstration, we had difficulty opening a can using the hand can-opener. A resident in the group pulled out his keychain and used a “John Wayne” to replace the larger hand tool. Once again it goes to show how helpful it is to have a Marine around.

AFRH-W Iron Chef
By Amanda Jensen, CTRS | Recreation Therapist
Photos by Carolyn Haug | Public Affairs
AFRH-W Iron Chef Cookoff was set for the perfect time. The residents and staff look forward to what has become a semi-annual event. Each year a different food is selected. This year our chefs had to prepare chili soup. Our reigning Iron Chef Champion, Amanda Jensen, was the emcee for the daylong event. In the morning residents and staff were able to come to the Community Center to watch as each team prepared their chili. In the afternoon we had the tasting. We had three teams who created three very different chili recipes. Our first team was Team LTC & MS. Our head chef was Carol Mitchell, with assistance from residents Santo DiBella and Ray Anderson, who made a “Texas No-Bean Chili.” Our second team was Team AL, with head chef Linda Bailey and assistance from residents Chuck Felder and Lewis Haught made “Grandmom’s Chili con Carne.” Our final team was Team AL. Head chef Marie Robbins was assisted by residents Bill Fowler and Vere Hotchkiss who made “Creamy White Bean Chili.” Of course you cannot have an Iron Chef competition without judges. Our returning judges were Ron Kartz, Chef of Resident Services, Teresa Hui, Supervisory Dietitian, and Cleophus Snow, Dining Hall Manager. After tasting all three chili soups the judges totaled up their scores and announced the winner.

1st Place: Grandmom’s Chili con Carne
2nd Place: Texas No-Bean Chili
3rd Place: Creamy White Bean Chili

Veterans Day Bingo
By Amanda Jensen, CTRS | Recreation Therapist
Veterans Day this year started out with a heartfelt “Thank You” and a fun filled game of BINGO. The Lambda Gamma Gamma Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity hosts a lively game of BINGO on Veterans Day every year. They not only provide a fun way of celebrating and honoring our veterans, but they also provide a delicious cake and special prizes that include watches, gift cards, hats and more. Their military alumni chapter is located out of Ft. Meade, Maryland. Several games of BINGO were played and then they socialized with the residents and enjoyed cake and punch together. Our residents look forward to their visit every year.
Alzheimer’s Walk for Awareness
By Carol Davis

The residents, staff and guests who attended the AFRH-G open house on November 9th were treated to a great display of art, photography, crafts, leather work, wood working, pottery, fabrics and literature. Our resident artisans have a following of patrons and many happy customers were glad they could make this special event. The resident artists had fun meeting with the guests and showing off their treasures. Join Witt, his first time participating at the home, set up his display table and actually demonstrated how he prints and fashions his collection of “witty” quotes on t-shirts.

The residents set off on a long day of adventure to the Vicksburg National Military Park, with me in tow!! SUPER EXCITED! With the weather in question, the three-hour bus ride turned longer as we traveled slowly for safety. As soon as we arrived in Vicksburg, the weather cooperated with no rain and a cool breeze. The residents enjoyed a quick lunch at the visitors’ center then everyone boarded the bus with the museum guide for a journey around the park. The guide shared stories, legends and facts as we traveled around the parks using maps as references that kept us all eager to learn more. The tour went up to the Battery De Golyer to the Shirley House, the 3rd Louisiana Redan, other major battle stops to the USS Cairo Exhibit. The USS Cairo Exhibit is an Iron Clad Warship that sank in the Yazoo River in 1862, raised from the Yazoo River in 1964. The ship’s parts were brought to Ingalls Shipyard on the coast in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Ingalls restored the ship and many artifacts. Upon finishing the restoration, the ship was brought back to Vicksburg, Mississippi for the opening of the USS Cairo museum in November of 1980. The bus parked at the museum to allow residents to wander around through the ship’s hull and view artifacts inside the museum. To finish up the tour, the guide navigated the bus through town sharing many present and historical events as we made our way back to the visitor’s center. The guide disembarked the bus following many expressions of gratitude from the residents who were glad they could make this special event. The guide and showing off all AFRH-G has to offer to our nation’s veterans.

Jewelry crafting with Sharon Price

Once a week during the month of November, resident Sharon Price has generously donated her time, materials and knowledge to help residents make some nice, creative jewelry. As with most crafts there are a few techniques to learn and then it is pure imagination, application and fun. Afterwards, you have a pretty bracelet, necklace, earrings or a Christmas ornament. Several residents have made these and a few are using this opportunity to make gifts for friends and family. Thank you, Sharon for sharing your gifts so others could make memories, treasures and, in turn, gifts too.

Many employees volunteered to make the day a success, as many have been affected by Alzheimer’s directly impacting their lives forever. It is a disease that disrupts our memories and leaves those lost and forever dependent on those who care. This was a special day for a special cause and a promise to all.

Spare-Time Bowlers
By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Come join our Spare-Time Bowlers group on Tuesdays at 1330 in the Bowling Center. This is just a group of people wanting to bowl and have fun. This is not a tournament.

Peter Anderson Festival
By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

On Sunday, November 4, the residents of AFRH-G took a short trip to the beautiful city of Ocean Springs for the 40th Annual Peter Anderson Arts and Crafts Festival. More than 400 artists, crafters and food vendors set up their booths on the oak-lined streets of downtown Ocean Springs. Last year the festival entertained an estimated 150,000 people. The residents could shop from the many festival vendors, from locally owned shops and galleries, or just sit and enjoy the live music. This festival has become an AFRH-G favorite through the years.

Indoor Shuffleboard Tournament
Story & Photo by Dennis Crabtree | Recreation Specialist

On Tuesday November 6, 2018, residents competed in the Indoor Shuffleboard (Horse Collar) Tournament in the Bocce Center. Carol Harmes was looking for that perfect slide to get her points. Wolf Kiessling hoped Carol Harmes did not get any more points. The rest of the players watched Carol Harmes’ technique on scoring points. There could only be three winners that day. Wolf Kiessling took 1st place, Woody Hilliker took 2nd place, Bill Jossensdial took 3rd place and Frank Baker took 4th place.
Halloween at AFRH-G

On October 31st AFRH-G held its Halloween Carnival. Residents and employees dressed up in their favorite costumes; some were unique, some were cute and some were very scary. As laughter and Halloween music filled the room, residents participated in games in the Community Center followed by plenty of delicious snacks and punch. Special thanks to recreation, the dining staff and all the volunteers. A fun and spooky time was had by everyone.

USM History Honors Society kick-off the holidays!

Started in 2012 and now in its seventh year, the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Phi Alpha Theta (History Honors Society) visited on Friday, November 16 for the annual Decorate-a-Stocking Holiday Project. The history students and alumni reminisced with residents while adding personalized hand-painted designs to each stocking. The person-centered stockings will be secretly filled by the Adopt-a-Veteran Stocking Project with Keesler Air Force Base’s 81st Communication Squadron on December 12, and handed out to healthcare residents on Christmas Day. Thanks for the history memories and holiday cheer!

RT Halloween Happy Hour & Poker Run

Halloween Happy Hour and Poker Run is always a fun and exciting event. Over 80+ residents attended and 30+ volunteers came out to help out for the event. Residents, staff and volunteers enjoyed dressing up in Halloween attire for the program to include witches, bumblebees, cows, bikers, mummies, and more. Upon entering, residents were encouraged to participate in the Poker Run which was won by resident Jim Riordan. They also participated in the “Guess the Weight of the Pumpkins,” won by resident Santo Dibella and “Guess the Number of Treats in the Tub,” won by resident Donald Stout. In addition, the strolling blackjack dealers passed out candies to “Beat the Dealers” winners. As the night progressed, residents enjoyed dancing to tunes by DJ Billy White who played a variety of music for all to enjoy. Food Services provided a wonderful spread of chicken wings, taco dip, fresh fruit and assorted cheese platters, and delicious deviled eggs. Of course, all the residents received a helping of Halloween candy! The night provided an opportunity for the residents of AFRH-W to mix and mingle and have a great time!