



Armed Forces Retirement Home

Communicator

Gulfport, MS & Washington, DC

VOLUME XVI NUMBER 10

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AFRH-WASHINGTON

Special Announcement! Madison Marquette | Urban Atlantic Selected for Development at AFRH-Washington

Project to bring housing, hospitality, retail, and park land to Northwest DC neighborhood

On November 1, 2019 the AFRH provisionally selected the team of Madison Marquette and Urban Atlantic to negotiate a master ground lease for its mixed-use redevelopment project to be located on 80 acres at AFRH-Washington.

Madison Marquette and Urban Atlantic are two of the District of Columbia's most accomplished and successful real estate firms, as evidenced locally by the \$1 billion + projects at the Wharf, the Parks at Walter Reed, and Capitol Quarter. Together, they bring market-tested experience in land development, public-private partnerships, complex ground lease transactions, and historic preservation.

"The selection of the Madison | Urban team marks a significant step towards raising funds necessary to sustain the Home's trust fund and improve the physical infrastructure on our Washington, DC, campus," said James M. Branham, the Chief Operating Officer of AFRH. "The revenues that AFRH will realize through this project will help us build and renovate the facilities needed to care for America's heroes today and in the future."

The Madison | Urban team proposed approximately 4.3 million square feet of new development and adaptive reuse in its submittal. Their plan, consistent with AFRH's vision, includes residential uses, retail, art spaces, sports and wellness venues, as well as the adaptive reuse of several historic buildings, including the power plant and hospital complex.

The project will also open portions of the AFRH campus, including almost 20 acres of green space and pedestrian and bicycle paths, to public enjoyment and recreation for the first time in more than 50 years. It will enhance the experience of AFRH's residents and neighbors by providing new retail, entertainment, and services nearby, and will contribute to economic development in the District of Columbia.

AFRH intends to enter into a long-term ground lease agreement with Madison | Urban and retain ownership of the land. The agreement is subject to successful negotiation and completion of the environmental and master plan processes. AFRH's objective in this endeavor is to leverage its underutilized land in the District to generate new revenues, reduce Congressional subsidy, and afford the needed capital investments.



Artist renderings of mixed-use development at AFRH-W.



AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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Christopher Kelly - Public Affairs Officer
Carolyn Haug - Washington Public Affairs

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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-W Resident Highlight – Leonard King

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian



Leonard King was born in Maryland. He was an only child. He quit school in the 9th grade and worked unloading products for the local A&P store. Not liking it, Leonard decided to join the U.S. Army, but his letter got intercepted by his mother and she canceled his enlistment. But when he became seventeen in 1946, Leonard was able to join without a signature. He thought the service was a good deal with the incentive of being able to retire in 20 years. He went to basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, where since he was the biggest recruit, he was put in charge of weekend duty. This ended one day, when he woke up his platoon sergeant with a concern. Leonard had to pull KP for the next month!

His first tour was in Korea (before the war), where he was a truck driver, getting bread for the mess halls. When his truck failed to pass inspection, his CO had Leonard pulling weeds in the camp. He decided to see if he could transfer, so went to the mess sergeant and asked if he could work for him. Yes! So Leonard worked the following, each for 30-day

shifts: potatoes, vegetables, meat and baking. Since the area was a replacement depot, there were up to 5,000 men at one time; lots of work!

He was sent to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas next, where he made E-6. The camp was closing and Leonard was told that he would be sent to Fort Hood, Texas; not a place he wanted to go. So Leonard left the service and went back to Maryland. But soon, he decided to reenlist for six years, which made his mother happy. Going to Fort Knox, Kentucky, Leonard was with an armored battalion heading to Korea for the war. But since he had already been there, Leonard was not sent. Instead in 1952, he was off to Germany, where he met his future wife. In fact while he was dating her, Leonard bought her a nice red skirt and white blouse from the PX. She was so thrilled that she tried them on in their car! It was also here that he made mess sergeant. It was back to New York to a Nike missile site and then a quick relocation to Winsor Locks, Connecticut. At this time, his wife was pregnant and Leonard was told that no children were allowed. So he requested a transfer to Manchester, Connecticut, which allowed quarters and families. One funny story from this time is when

Leonard was picked to be Santa Claus, arriving on a very windy day on a helicopter. When he stumbled off, his pants fell down!

Another tale is when he was in Germany, Leonard bartered for a pig. When an inspection came up, he hid the pig in the boiler room. Unfortunately, it was found and he was told to get rid of it. He gave it to his wife and she took it to her family. When he went to visit them, they told him the pig was in the basement, but he couldn't find it. His wife took him down and there, in several cans, was his precious pig! At one of his stations in Germany, Leonard was asked to cook for the 7th Corps General. Loving a challenge, Leonard said yes. The general was a tea drinker unlike everyone else, so Leonard learned how to brew a perfect cup of tea. Next, he was off to Vietnam, but while aboard the ship, Leonard severely hurt his hand and was sent to Hawaii for surgery. While there, his wife wrote a letter to the commanding general asking that her husband be stationed at Walter Reed, since she was due to have a baby. So, Leonard was able to be at Walter Reed to see his new daughter. His next tour was at Bedesbach, Germany, where he was asked to take a six-bedroom house. This worked out well since his wife's family could come a stay on the weekends! Leonard finished his military career at Fort Holabird, Maryland.

Leonard spent the next 24 years driving a bus. When his wife passed away, he came to AFRH-W in 2015. He is an avid Washington Capitals fan and likes to wear his 2018 Stanley Cup champion hat and carry his Ovi O's cereal (Alex Ovechkin)! He also enjoys European soccer, so you may see him wearing this jersey also. Leonard will be celebrating his 90th birthday here in November with many friends and family!



AFRH-W hosts DAV National Leaders for Briefing and Tour

Story and Photos by Chris Kelly | AFRH Public Affairs Officer

AFRH-W hosted DAV National Commander Stephen "Butch" Whitehead and Washington Headquarters Executive Director Edward "Randy" Reese, Jr. on Monday, October 21. Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Reese came to AFRH to learn more about the benefits we offer in order to better inform their members. Following a briefing from AFRH CEO Stephen Rippe, they toured the Home with AFRH-W Ombudsman Robert Pullen and then enjoyed lunch in the Scott Dining Hall. We look forward to working with the DAV to spread the word living at AFRH!



Chief Warrant Officers clean up AFRH-W upper pond

Story & Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator

Military volunteers from the United States Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officers Association stopped by the Armed Forces Retirement Home last month to beautify the pond and surrounding areas for our residents to enjoy.

About 20 volunteers showed up for the bi-annual event to dredge the pond, clear away brush overgrowth along the fence line and to make repairs to the wooden benches and barrier posts.

They brought their own power tools, rakes, brooms and other equipment to ensure the job went quickly and smoothly and without any major work stoppages. They cut and sawed pre-treated wood onsite and transformed a skeleton-of-a-bench to a usable and quite enjoyable place to sit and relax.

One brave volunteer paddled a canoe out to the center of the pond to unclog the sprinkler head and now the water flows freely and elegantly.

After hours of clearing away broken branches and tree limbs, gathering piles of foliage, the volunteers fired up the grill and had a good all American cookout with plenty of hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and beverages for all.



Marine Corps veterans volunteer at AFRH-W

Story and Photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator

A group of U.S. Marine Corps veterans took part in a community outreach event delivering smiles, camaraderie and donations to the residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C.

The visit was part of a veteran service day, which included a volunteer piano performance from the National Association of American Veterans (NAAV), a veteran caregivers organization founded by long-time AFRH volunteer Constance Burns.

"This was a great, meaningful event, a way to show our appreciation for our military veterans," Burns said.

About 15 volunteers (all who served in the Marines at some point within the past 25 years) escorted healthcare veterans to and from the performance in the Community Center, handed out athletic shirts (donated by the 2019 Marine Corps Marathon organizers) and supported Recreation Therapy's ice cream social. Evidenced by their happy faces and warm greetings, AFRH-W residents welcomed the visit and applauded NAAV's outreach effort.



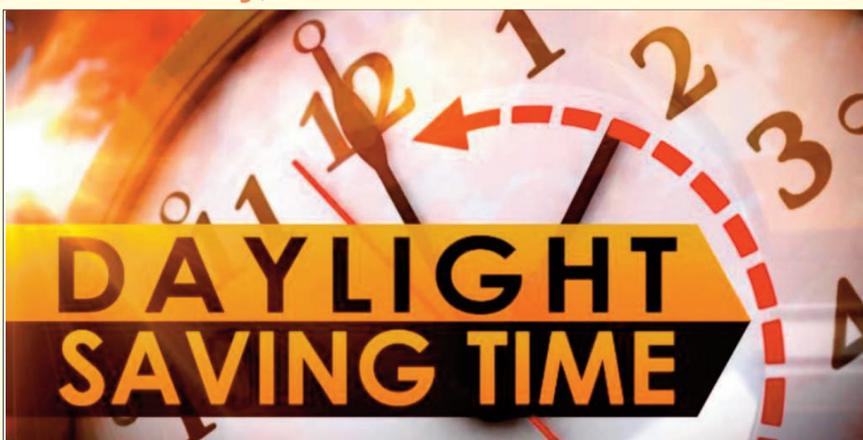
NAAVETS visit AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Amanda Jensema, CTRS | Recreation Therapist

On October 12th, the Founder of the National Association of American Veterans, Constance Burns, hosted a group of volunteers from her organization. She hosted a wonderful piano concert in the morning. The pianist was Bertram McLeish. He shared stories about the music he played, which was all in the style of jazz, as well as told jokes here and there. It was a great concert and the residents enjoyed the soulful music. After lunch, the monthly ice cream social was held. This is an event that the residents look forward to each month. Some of the volunteers went to the healthcare units to deliver ice cream sundaes to the residents, and the remaining volunteers helped serve sundaes to those who came. It was a great day full of wonderful people giving their time to be with our veterans.



Don't forget to change your clocks back on Sunday, November 3 at 12:00 a.m.



PLEASE COME OUT TO AFRH-G ON NOVEMBER 8 FROM 0800 - 1300

Armed Forces Retirement Home- Gulfport

VETERANS DAY OPEN HOUSE

Friday, Nov 8th

Gates open from 8am to 1pm
OPENING CEREMONY @ 9:30AM

Facility Tours	Helicopter Landings	Band Performance
Demonstrations	Military Ceremony	Veteran's Art Displays
Special Guest Speaker CMSgt David Pizzuto, USAF	Interactive Displays	Thank a Veteran !!!

Located at: 1800 Beach Drive, Gulfport, MS 39507
For more information Email: Sean.Campbell@afrh.gov

From the AFRH-W Administrator



Happy Fall to everyone! As I look out my window, I can see my favorite tree in splendid color. The weather has also taken on a cooler feel, so we are definitely moving on in time. The DC area is all abuzz with the Washington Nationals being in the World Series. Go Nats!

Our VIP visitors this month included the DAV National Commander, Butch Whitehead. We were also honored to host a visit from the newly inducted Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Troy Black. He had a great time seeing our facility and sharing lunch with some of our Marine Corps and Navy residents. We hope to see him back soon.

We started the month hosting the local Leading Age annual conference. The attendees came from many other senior homes in the area. All were impressed with our beautiful Home.

We closed out our fiscal year last month and have been busy preparing for this year's annual budget which has been keeping our staff very busy. Also keeping the staff busy was attending military retiree appreciation day events throughout the area in hopes of recruiting new residents. We are finding a lot of interest and that is now starting to show in the number of calls that our public affairs office is receiving, which is great news. We also announced our Employee of the Quarter, Lamont Burton, who leads our business center. Well done!

This month also kicked off the annual Combined Federal Campaign. Once again, the Old Soldiers Home Foundation is one of the many charities available for donations. We are hoping for a good year to perhaps exceed our goal of \$12,000. There are events planned throughout the next few months to bring attention to various charities. Thanks to Bob Pullen and his team of volunteers! Some of us were also invited to the First Muster for the Foundation, which was a great way to introduce our Home.

October would not be complete without some wonderful activities. Our Recreation team held a Fall Harvest Fest on the patio with a live band, seasonal food and activities. Halloween was also celebrated in style with a spooky costume party. The Recreation Team worked hard to put these wonderful events together. The highlight of the activities was the arrival of our new bingo machine that was donated by Sarah Nordlinger, the president of the local unit of the Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.) who raised funds to be able to purchase some much needed equipment for the Home. Thanks Sarah for your strong support!

And finally, I must wish my fellow Navy veterans a Happy 244th Birthday! Some of us were fortunate to attend the celebration at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency at Ft Belvoir. We also had a great celebration with the Navy Ceremonial Guard and guest speaker Master Chief Anthony Lark from the Defense Health Agency. Happy Birthday!

Susan Bryhan

C.A.R. Project with Sarah Nordlinger

Story & Photos by Carol Mitchell | Recreation Therapy

For the last year and a half our AFRH-W residents have been dealing with a broken down, well-loved and used bingo machine. They were wishing for the day we would get a new one. Thanks to Sarah Nordlinger, president of the D.C. chapter Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.) that day has come! Through Sarah's excellent efforts in fundraising for the Home the much anticipated bingo machine was received. The new machine came in on October 17th... just in time for the RT Friday Night Big Bucks Bingo. Sarah, fellow C.A.R. members, Daughters of the American Revolution members, family, friends and staff participated in this exciting night. For those who love playing bingo, it was a sight to behold! The flashboard not only told us what number we just called, it also showed the game design the residents were playing. As an added bonus when someone won, we could press a button and all the lights would start to flash. Some residents were almost brought to tears with wonder and joy.

We started the night for volunteers attending with a tour of our new healthcare facility. After the tour, they enjoyed a dinner with our residents before beginning our RT Big Bucks Bingo event. Our COO, Mr. Branham, presented Sarah with a plaque and AFRH official coin, thanking her and her family for making this great contribution. With that introduction and a round of applause, the first bingo game using our new machine began.

Again, this was all made possible by 16-year-old student Sarah Nordlinger, a junior at Washington-Liberty H.S in Arlington, Virginia. When her mother told her of our need, she made the decision to help raise funds so we could purchase a new bingo machine for the veterans of AFRH-W. The Home also provided Sarah with a wish list for our gardening programs and with the available funds she purchased three new American with Disabilities Act-compliant picnic tables; gardening tools; a shed; and much more.

Thank you Sarah and C.A.R. for keeping the veterans of AFRH-W in your thoughts and heart!



Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



On September 24 the Washington Nationals clinched a playoff spot by beating the Phillies and 11 of the Armed Forces Retirement Home's finest residents were there to be part of history. One of our great Air Force retirees, John Lott, decided to go down for a beer and he told us it cost him fifteen dollars; after that not one resident went down for a hot dog, soda, popcorn or anything. We became glued to our seats.

On September 28 the American Gold Star Mothers' Banquet and Celebration had a wonderful evening for some of our distinguished veterans at AFRH. We had a delightful meal with wonderful people and a great presentation from keynote speaker General David Berger, the 38th Commandant USMC. If you missed this, you really missed a treat. This event was held at the Spates Community Club, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall by the American Gold Star Mothers' national executive board. The annual Auto Show was held on September 29 followed by our Fun Fest event; what a beautiful fall day to watch so many kids of the future having such a great time.

One of our very own residents, Barbara Dannaher, was the star of the show at the U.S. Navy's 244th Birthday Celebration. She will be turning 99 in November 2019. I want to be just like her when I grow up, do all the right things, eat the right food, sing all right songs and pray every night before I go to sleep.

I would like to thank our guest speaker Master Chief Petty Officer Anthony T. Lark and his wife for being with us at this 2019 celebration. The awarding of the coin was by Susan Bryhan, Administrator, AFRH. This event was held on October 11, 2019 with Ombudsman Bob Pullen serving as master of ceremonies and Chaplain John Goodloe delivering the invocation.

From the workshop at Fort Foote Baptist Church in Fort Washington, Maryland a few months ago, two female veterans turn in their application to live at AFRH-W. From that same workshop, a sergeant major turned in his application this week.

On October 10, I spoke at the Ward 4 monthly meeting on what it takes for veteran spouses to come into the Home and my phone has been ringing off the hook. If we keep talking someone will listen.

Billy Ray White



From the AFRH-G Administrator



October was another busy month at the AFRH-G. On October 8 the Louisiana hot rod club, Swamp Neck Rodz, presented the Home with a magnificent American Flag made from cypress wood and a very generous \$1,500 donation to the resident fund. The presentation happened right before the gates opened to over 350 classic cars and hot rods from Cruisin' the Coast. We appreciate all the Cruisers coming out in support of our veterans. The residents really enjoyed seeing all the old classic vehicles. We celebrated the U.S. Navy's 244th Birthday in the Hall of Honors on October 11. I would like to thank our special guest speaker, Petty Officer 1st Class Rodney Sikes, U.S. Navy (BU1) NMCB 1.

We also held our Quarterly Employee Meeting this month and announced the new Employee of the Quarter. Congratulations to Resident Services Administrative Specialist Deanna Johannsen for exceptional service to the Armed Forces Retirement Home during July, August, and September 2019. Deanna had a discussion with a 93-year-old resident who told her he was an orphan and had been adopted, but had always wanted to know who his biological parents were before he died. Deanna worked with a friend who does genealogy and within a few hours was able to find pictures of his father and some of the family he never knew. The resident shed tears of joy and was so excited to be able to see a picture of his dad and know where he came from. Deanna's care and compassion resulted in what can be considered the ultimate act of Resident-Centered Care. Ms. Johannsen's dedication is commendable and reflects great credit upon herself and the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Congratulations also to Dental Hygienist Julia Luzenberg and RN Tracie Farley for receiving Honorable Mention.

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) was here last month and they spent three days reviewing work of the healthcare team. The team from DHA spoke very highly of the caring concern all of the AFRH team show the residents. As I've said before and told the numerous guests who have toured, inspected, and/or surveyed us, "It's always business as usual. Nothing changes. We take care of our residents and we give our best because the residents gave their best when serving our country."

We reached a final agreement with the union in August. I want to thank Michael Mando for working to make this happen to complete the Collective Bargaining Agreement and for his work with Monica Fragello on 20+ SOPs that were held up for review. Most of those SOPs were in limbo prior to my arrival in January 2016. Mr. Mando realized the importance to get the SOPs approved and issued so we can all do our jobs to meet the needs of our residents.

We will have flu shots made available for each of us as soon as possible. Our goal is to have 90% participation. We received a memo from our Chief Operating Officer Jim Branham dated September 27, 2019 announcing the max fee and the percentage freeze for next year. I have copies available at the front desk in administration if you would like one. Mr. Branham also visited Gulfport on October 22-23.

Coming up on November 8 we will be holding our annual Veterans Day Open House at AFRH-G. Gates will open to the public at 0800, and the opening ceremony will begin promptly at 0930 with special keynote speaker CMSgt David Pizzuto, USAF. Three helicopters will be landing in front of the building by the flag pole (Harrison County Sheriff's Office, Ochsner's Med Flight, and the U.S. Coast Guard). There will be numerous static displays, presentations and performances. Fantastic artwork and crafts created by our residents will also be for sale. Please make plans to attend this spectacular event.

Representative Kim Grady spoke to the employees on this year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). This is a program in which Federal employees give to non-profits and charities in the region. A representative from CFC will be at the Home on November 20 to speak with the residents about the Combined Federal Campaign, giving them an opportunity to donate. I haven't seen it, but I heard the Home is listed as a non-profit agency in this year's campaign.

The more you know about the people you serve, the better you serve the people you know.

Jeff Eads



Thank you Swamp Neck Rodz for the beautiful cypress wood flag and for the monetary donation to our resident fund.



Congratulations to our Employee of the Quarter, Deanna Johannsen.

AFRH-G celebrates 244 years of the Navy

By Sean Campbell | Lead Recreational Specialist

Photos by Lori Kerns | Librarian

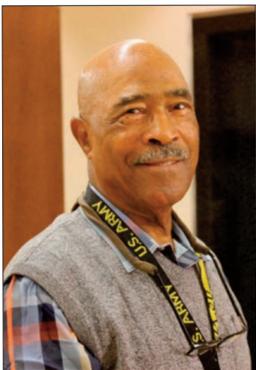
On October 11, 2019, the AFRH-G Hall of Honors was transformed into a ceremonial space for AFRH residents and active duty to celebrate 244 years of the U.S. Navy.

Since its establishment in 1775, the United States Navy has been serving in harm's way protecting our way of life. To celebrate this occasion Petty Officer Rodney Sikes from NMCB1 spoke to attendees about the history and honor of serving in the U.S. Navy. PO1 Sikes is a regular volunteer at AFRH-G and supports the veterans in many capacities.

PO1 Sikes joined one of the oldest Navy residents at AFRH-G, Lois Hogan, as well as the youngest Navy attendee in cutting the cake and singing "Anchors Aweigh."



Notes from the AFRH-G Resident Advisory Committee Chairman



On October 5 a group from AFRH-G visited the Gulfport Naval facility for the commissioning of the USS Cincinnati, a Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). This LCS was created in Mobile, Alabama and will homeport in San Diego, California. We wish her "Fair Winds and Following Seas."

The annual "Cruisin' the Coast" vehicles came through AFRH-G on October 8. This event brings thousands of antique vehicles and hot rods to the Gulfport/Biloxi area. This year, before the cruisers came through the gates, The Swamp Neck Rodz of Louisiana presented the Home with an American Flag made of cypress wood and a monetary donation to the AFRH-G resident fund.

On October 11 we celebrated the birthday of the U.S. Navy (USN). The USN originated over 240 years ago as the Continental Navy. Then the Continental Congress authorized two armed vessels to search for ships supplying the British army with weapons and ammunition during the American Revolutionary War from 1775-1783. When the war ended, the Continental U.S. Navy (BU1) NMCB1 Navy was dismantled, but pirate threats to American merchant shipping led President George Washington to establish the Naval Act of 1794, creating a permanent standing U.S. Navy. The guest speaker was Petty Officer 1st Class Rodney Sikes, US Navy (BU1) NMCB1. Happy Birthday Navy.

The monthly town hall meeting took place on October 16. In that meeting, there was some discussion about a change in the fee structure dated September 27, 2019 that supersedes the letter of March 5, 2019. Copies of that letter are available at the front desk in the Administration office. I urge all residents to obtain a copy and understand the changes that may affect you.

The second half of the month was just as busy. The pool party on the October 17 was really great. While the weather was cool, at least there wasn't any rain. We had live music by the Silver City band and a wide variety of food and drinks. The residents responded in large numbers and a great time was enjoyed all. On October 21 the U.S. Air Force Quintet performed a concert in the community center.

Finally, the AFRH-G Halloween Carnival and Costume Party will be on the 31st of this month. What a month! Truly there was something for everyone. As we move towards the end of the year, things are gathering speed. It is time to shift gears, to reflect on the past months and look forward to a season of thanksgiving. Some of you will have visits with family and friends, others will travel to far away places. Many will stay here at the Home. Whatever your plans, give thanks and enjoy the season.

Arthur "Art" W. Jones



AFRH-Washington

Veteran stories encourage local youth

Story and photos by Robert W. Mitchell | Volunteer Coordinator

Reaching out to military veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. is a rewarding experience, one that encourages and inspires local teenagers to stay in school and stay focused throughout life, according to Officer Jay Thomas, a 30+ year veteran of the Metropolitan Police Department here in the nation's capital.

"It is a history lesson for the young folks to come here and be able to sit down with them and enjoy the enriching history," Thomas said. "They get a chance to meet folks who served in different branches of the military from different parts of the country and hear his or her story."

Thomas and other police officers escorted about 20 students to AFRH-W for a community outreach/social visit with military veterans.

During the visit, residents told stories about how they joined the military (whether they voluntarily enlisted or were drafted) and what part of the world they traveled to. The youths and their escorts were amazed by the military jobs some residents performed so long ago. Overall, everyone enjoyed learning probably as much as the residents enjoyed sharing.

"They get to visit with folks who are in their eighties and nineties and learn how they were able to preserve their bodies and minds throughout the years," Thomas said.

The biannual visit to AFRH-W is part of the city's Youth Creating Change activity, a program under the Youth Family Services Division.



CMI Chameleon Robotics Team visits AFRH-W

Story & Photos by Marla J. McGuinness | Recreation Specialist

The last day of September children from the Creative Minds International (CMI) Charter School, specifically their CMI Robotics Team the Chameleons consisting of seven student members, visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington. These team members were young adults from seven to 12 years of age.

The team provided an overview of their program, eagerly demonstrated their skills and knowledge of robotics to our residents, and further explained how the technology works and performs.

Their coach and mentor Mr. Thom Peng led the Chameleon Robotics Team. Thom has done a remarkable job bringing the excitement of science and technology to these bright young students. They were all very passionate about the field of robotics and could not wait to share and show off their science with the AFRH residents.

The CMI Chameleons have traveled to Kentucky to perform in VEX Worlds Games and were put into team cooperation matches (called "alliance matches") with other schools from across the globe. International groups such as the X-Ray team from Cundinamarca, Columbia and Shanghai and Nanjing team from China, where the children did not speak the same language but still were able to convey what their robotic machine greatest strength had to offer. The goal of the competition was to work together and use problem-solving technics to overcome the balance on the robotic board. The Chameleons totaled the highest scores: 29 and 30 points. In the end, the CMI Chameleons outscored the other elementary teams representing Washington, D.C. The goal of the program teaches children to work together, problem-solve, even if the language barrier could be an issue.

The CMI Chameleons have invited the AFRH residents to view their next robotic meet on Saturday, December 7th at the Creative Minds Charter School. They are looking for volunteers to help with judging or just being part of the audience. If you are interested in going, please contact Marla McGuinness at (202) 541-7637 for more information.



Fall into poetry

By Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Photo by Jack Beck | Resident

To celebrate the coming of autumn, a group of AFRH-W residents and staff entertained everyone with a wide range of poetry and recitations. The afternoon started with a poem titled 'The Uniforms I Wore,' which had been written by a friend of resident John Smith. This was followed by two poems read by Richard Walk and written by Robert Frost, 'After Apple Picking' & 'October.' Next, Linda Bailey read a humorous poem 'Dried Apple Pies,' followed by the famous 'October's Bright Blue Weather' by Helen Hunt Jackson. To go hand in hand with fall, Norma Rambo inspired us with 'I am the Autumnal Sun' by Henry Thoreau. Next, Marla McGuinness, new to the recreation staff, read 'Fall Leaves.' This was followed by 'Barbara Frietchie' by John Greenleaf Whittier and read by Bill Opferman. Next, Ernest Janes recited his 'Ali Couplets.' Paul Grimes finished the program with two memorable poems 'The Land of Beyond' and 'The Fool' both written by Robert W.

Service (a favorite author of the gathering). Refreshments featuring fall apple snacks and drinks followed, as everyone enjoyed sharing memories together.



Ugliest building on campus ever?

Story by Christine Baldwin | Librarian

Photo Courtesy of Parkview DC

Library services started in 1858, seven years after The Old Soldiers' Home opened. This old library building was the work of John L. Smithmeyer and Paul C. Peltz (who had won the nationwide competition to construct the Library of Congress building). Built in 1877, it's an example of American Stick style, punctuated by gables, spired cupolas, and wrought metal crestings. It was located behind the Sherman building, right next to what we call today the Stanley Chapel. Demolished in 1910, after the commissioners decided to build Grant Hall, the only ones deploring its loss were visitors. This was due to the popularity of it as a photo subject!



AFRH-Gulfport

Navy 244th Birthday Ball

By Tony Langdon | Resident



On October 12 2019, AFRH-G residents were invited by the Navy at Stennis Space Center to attend and celebrate the Navy's 244th Birthday Ball at the Bay Waveland Yacht Club. AFRH-G resident military

retirees were recognized by Vice Admiral Brian Brown, who thanked us for our contribution and service in the military. We received a warm welcome and a standing ovation from the attendees. AFRH-G resident Tony Langdon presented a military coin to LTJG Angelica Perkins for our appreciation for the invitation to the Navy Ball.



The witches brew

By Jen Biernacki | Recreation Therapy Assistant
Photo by Susan Bergman, MT-BC | Recreation Therapy

On October 16, 2019, the healthcare residents enjoyed and participated in the "Witches Brew" social... a social to share witch and Halloween stories and trivia. The social began with the serving of the brew... a green beverage garnished with a worm to enhance the flavor. The brew was quite tasty... as it refreshed those within the witches circle while the conversations gave way. All enjoyed the afternoon with laughter and fun.

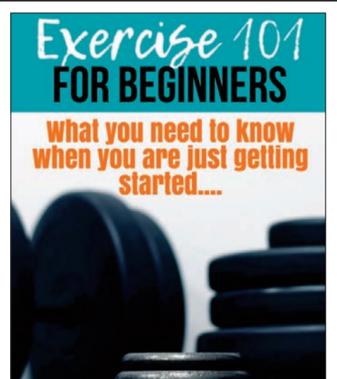


Intro to exercise

By Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

Thinking about trying the exercise class but not sure if it's a good fit for you? "What if I can't keep up? What if I can't do the exercises?" If these are questions that are keeping you from joining our classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, then I have an answer for you. On November 5 and 7 (Tuesday and Thursday), I will be offering introductory exercise sessions. I will show you all of our stretches and exercises that we do in our classes, and I will gladly answer any questions that you may have.

So, if you've been thinking of joining us but you aren't quite sure, feel free to come to the "beginner" classes in the Exercise Room at 0900 on Tuesday, November 5 and Thursday, November 7.



The AFRH-G Protestant congregation donates to those affected by Hurricane Dorian

By Pastor Michael Gibson | Protestant Chaplain

Serving here at AFRH-G there are many words that are brought to my mind on a daily basis. Honor... service...sacrifice...just to name a few. Indeed these words are embodied here each and every day. However, sometimes we get to see these words take on life and action. Recently, the Eastern Caribbean Islands were devastated by Hurricane Dorian causing the death of many and many thousands to be homeless. We know a thing or two about hurricanes and their aftermath living here on the Gulf Coast. The Protestant Committee was compelled to take action to help. While physically going to help in the relief efforts was not feasible, they did the next best thing...they GAVE! They were moved to have compassion on those who were hurting so very deeply and put feet on their faith by giving \$6,000 towards Hurricane Dorian relief through Franklin Graham's organization Samaritan's Purse. Samaritan's Purse was among the first to come to the aid of these islands and their inhabitants. Their work continues on through generous gifts such as what the Protestant Committee gave. Every day we are given opportunities to help those in need and I am thankful that this group of residents chose not to sit idly by and let someone else do it, but rather take the initiative and give of themselves.

AFRH-G celebrates Disability Awareness Month

By Susan Orr | Dining Project Manager
Photos by Mike Brown | Dining COR

On October 16 Global Connections to Employment (GCE) had a bang-up party to celebrate Disability Awareness Month. All Global Connections to Employment contractors, nationwide will come together during the month of October to bring awareness and celebrate National Disability Awareness Month. All AFRH GCE employees celebrated together with food, fun and prizes in the community center.



Chillin' at the pool party

Story & Photos by Carol Davis | Recreation Assistant

The weather on the Mississippi Gulf Coast has been hot and steamy this summer. However, on the day AFRH-G had a pool party planned, the temperatures dropped down into the 60s (which is pretty chilly when you've had temps in the 90s). That didn't stop us from having a good time, though. Residents enjoyed the tunes of the Silver City band while savoring a beautiful evening on the Gulf Coast. And, as always, there was plenty of good food and wonderful fellowship by all who attended. This pool season may be coming to an end at AFRH-G, but we are already looking forward to the next one.



USS Cincinnati Commissioning

Story & Photo by Jen Biernacki | Recreation Assistant

On Saturday October 5, 2019, the independent living residents departed AFRH-G to witness the Commissioning ceremony of the USS Cincinnati (LCS20) at the Port of Gulfport.

The USS Cincinnati (LCS20) is the fifth named ship for the "Queen City" that holds the motto, "Strength in Unity." The USS Cincinnati is one of the Navy's newest Littoral combat ships that is capable of shallow and deep water operations.

With state of the art equipment and crew, the ship will defend this nation's freedom around the world. Tears swarmed my eyes as I was honored to witness such a historical event.



GULFPORT

What do you do when the plans change? Go bowling and play trash can curling!

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

On Friday, September 27, 2019, residents from Valor, Allegiance, and Loyalty Hall were gathered at the front lobby reminiscing with volunteers and awaiting buses for their trip to Walmart and Edgewater Mall. When the news came that the buses were not arriving, the recreation team and volunteers quickly shifted gears, jumped into action, cheered on residents, and escorted them to the Bocce Center for bowling fun.

Residents brightened up with the chance to spend time with Keesler Air Force Base and Seabee Navy volunteers. More residents were escorted down to fill up the bowling alley while others sat outside on the front patios overlooking the grounds on a beautiful breezy day. After wrapping up the bowling games, the groups moved to the community center joined by more residents for Trash Can Curling, chips, and treats. What is Trash Can Curling? Invented by Recreation Specialist, Dennis Crabtree and played earlier in the morning as an IL Fall Game Event, garbage cans were taken off their rolling bases. The wheeled bases were then pushed over a finish line with broom stick handles.

Up next was lunch where military volunteers continued to greet and thank residents along the way. The feedback was, "What a phenomenal team....semper Gumby (always flexible)!" We thank all involved for turning lemons to lemonade. "What else would you do if your plans changed unexpectedly? Why, of course...go bowling and try out a new game like trash can curling!"



WASHINGTON

RT Intergenerational Bowling with Norwood Middle School

By Carol Mitchell, APC | Recreation Therapist

Photos by Chris Kelly | Public Affairs Officer

Norwood Middle School is back! The school year has started and with it brings a new group of 8th grade students. AFRH-W is one of Norwood's favorite sites to do community service. The students and residents are paired together as a team to bowl in a league. The pairing enables residents and students to get to know each other throughout the year while helping each other in their attempt to regain skills, learn new skills, and adapt to each other's needs.

Students will arrive once a month during the school year and head to the healthcare units to assist their partners to the bowling center. The students learn how to adapt to their resident partners' needs and the residents enjoy giving pointers on how to bowl. This year the students' first day of orientation included an interesting segment on the history of AFRH by our Recreation Therapy Assistant Marine Robbins. The students then went on a tour of the facility meeting residents along the way and ended in the Sheridan bowling center. Students were provided training on adaptive bowling equipment and given the opportunity to practice using the equipment. Norwood Middle School students have been joining the residents at AFRH-W for 10+ years and we look forward to many more!



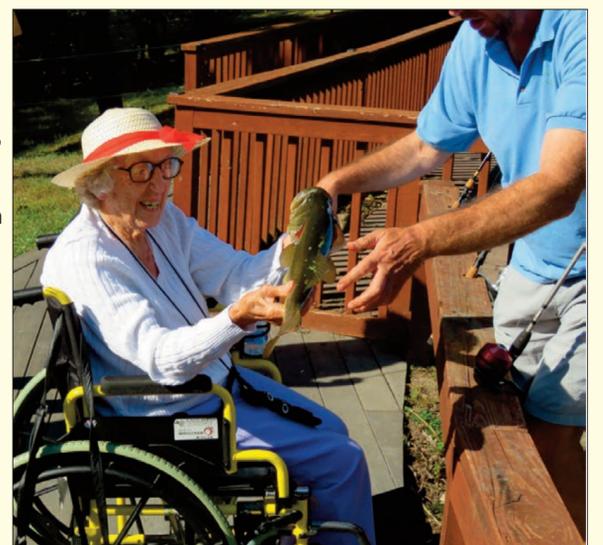
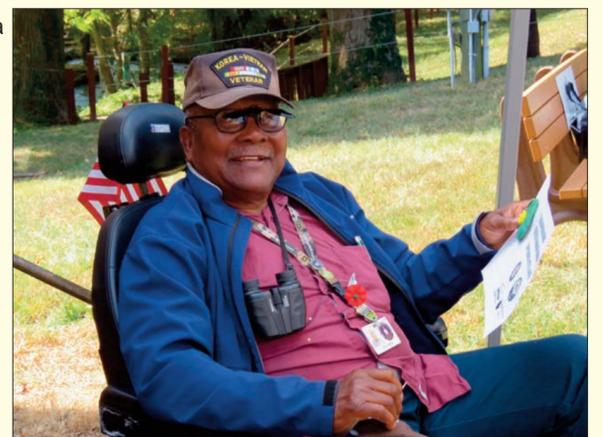
Fishing on an autumn day

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

Well once again the Fishing Community, the Fisheries for Veterans and the Bureau of Land Management organizations teamed up to visit AFRH-W for a morning of fishing with our residents. They hosted this event on September 27th on a delightful sunny day. Lots of sounds of nature surrounding us, the weather was warm and everyone said it was a perfect day to spend with your friends and go fishing. In addition to catching a variety of fish, everyone enjoyed a lunch menu that included fried catfish, cod, hush puppies, baked beans, cole slaw and oatmeal cookies for dessert.

As the residents fished, the volunteers from the Fisheries for Veterans kept track of the types of fish caught and their sizes. (All fish were returned back into the pond). They also provided the prizes such as a new rod and reel, hats, a nice rugged fishing shirt, sunglasses and tee-shirts. These were distributed to Catherine Deitch, who caught the first fish, Lee Smith, who caught the smallest fish, Joe Grant, who caught the most fish, Billy Bowen's son-in-law, who caught the longest fish at 21.5 inches, and Lou Spirito, who caught the ugliest fish.

Thank you Joseph Weiler, David Hu, and Ernie and John from Fisheries for Veterans for making this a great day for our residents.



AFRH-GULFPORT

The cruisers triggered memories for the veterans of AFRH-G

Story & Photos by Becki L. Zschiedrich | Public Affairs

On Tuesday, October 8 more than 350 hot rods and classic cars rolled through the gates at the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport revving their engines and handing out American flags and Mardi Gras beads to the veterans.

Before the gates opened to the Cruisers, members of the Louisiana hot rod club, Swamp Neck Rodz, presented the Home with a magnificent American Flag made from cypress wood and a very generous monetary donation for the resident fund. Swamp Neck Rodz member Gene Seymour said they were so touched by our veterans last year during Cruisin' the Coast that they wanted to show their appreciation to our heroes.

"We built a cypress flag, and we want to give it to them as a token of our appreciation because that's why we're here because of veterans. If we didn't live in this country, we couldn't do the things that we like to do, which is to build hot rods and ride," said Gene Seymour, a member of Swamp Neck Rodz. This flag was also signed on the back by all the hot rod members.

The AFRH-G would like to express our sincere appreciation to Swamp Neck Rodz and everyone who took the time to come out to the Home so our veterans could enjoy Cruisin' the Coast. We hope to see y'all again next year.



AFRH-WASHINGTON

The 61st Annual Antique Auto Show and Parade at AFRH-W

By Linda Bailey, CTRS | Recreation Specialist

Photos by Jack Beck | Resident

Some events are so enjoyable we like to repeat them every year. One of our favorite is the Annual Antique Auto Show and Parade, held on the grounds of AFRH-W since 1958. Each year in the early autumn, the weather is just perfect to stroll among the memories these cars bring back. Whether it is a model T Ford, that would have been before most of our time, to a Woodie Station wagon, which would have been a familiar sight back in the day, to sports cars from the 1960s we would have driven ourselves, cars can bring back memories of good times in our past.

Our auto show gives our residents an opportunity to choose their favorite cars. This year we included two new categories for trophies: the car I would most like to take someone out on a date in, and the car most likely to get a speeding ticket. Other prizes were awarded for best modified car, best motorcycle, and director's choice, plus runner-up in that category.

We had beautiful weather for strolling amongst the cars while music was playing by DJ Billy White. There was a performance by The Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, and a petting zoo. A lot of our neighbors joined us. After the prizes were awarded and the parade of cars rode off, there was still the Friends of the Soldiers Home Fun Fest to visit in the afternoon.

