



Immediate Release  
May 9, 2022

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## Pentagon Exhibit Features Art By Armed Forces Retirement Home Veterans

### *AFRH Public Affairs*

Residents from the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) traveled to the Pentagon yesterday to be recognized for their contributions to a military veteran exhibit currently on display there.

“Today is about the residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home,” said Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) Acting Director and Organizational Policy and Decisions Support Director Regina F. Meiners. “You have showcased your talent, and we have, with great pride, showcased it on our walls here. So, even though you’re at the Washington campus, and for those that are down in Gulfport, [know] that you are alive and well here, every morning, every evening, when people walk through. So, thank you, and I am so glad to have some of you here.”

Meiners personally thanked the Washington, D.C. residents and staff for attending the event. She asked AFRH leadership to extend her appreciation and gratitude to the residents and staff in Gulfport who were not present.

“Please let them know, even though they are not physically here, they are being remembered and lauded as well,” she said.

Meiners honored the late Miriam Rivkin, one of the D.C. resident artists whose work is featured in the exhibit.

“I want to take a moment to acknowledge and remember Miriam Rivkin, fondly referred to as ‘Mimi’,” she said. “For those of you who don’t know, Mimi was a photographer for the Women’s Auxiliary Air Corps during WWII. And so, as a photographer, she had that eye, and she streamed her photography background into her own artwork. She was a lifelong artist and talked about this exhibit. Sadly, we lost Mimi in late 2020. And even though she isn’t here, her spirit is alive and well in all of you who knew her so fondly.”

AFRH CEO Maj. Gen. Stephen T. Rippe (ret.) who thanked Meiners for hosting residents and staff at the Pentagon, said the event offered residents an opportunity to view their work in a setting outside of AFRH.

“We are glad that the resident artists are here to see what’s being done with their artwork,” he said. “It’s fantastic.”

The exhibit features paintings, veteran portraits and short biographies printed on wallpaper covering the entire length of two opposing walls and a back wall in a main atrium. The artwork includes depictions of United States Army Gen. Winfield Scott (founder of the Old Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Home), military battle scenes, a guitarist, an angel, hot air balloons, plants, residential dwellings, oceanic scenes and wildlife, to name a few.

Resident artist and retired United States Air Force veteran Fred Layman appreciated having the residents' artwork displayed at such a prominent location.

"I would not have believed in my lifetime that I would have something like this to be proud of," he said. "I mean how many people get the opportunity to have a painting hanging in the Pentagon?"

Resident artist and United States Air Force veteran Joseph Grant felt honored and pleased to be part of the event.

"It's fantastic," he said. "I was excited to come. I am really, really well pleased. I am so glad I didn't miss this."

For Gulfport residents, displaying their artwork at the Pentagon community is an honor and a unique opportunity to share their gifts with others, according to AFRH-G (Gulfport) Art Specialist Milton Williams.

"The resident artists are thankful, pleased and honored to display their art works with the active duty men and women as well as the civilians and guests at the Pentagon," he said. "It is their hope that each work of art will be an enjoyable and pleasant adventure."

Exhibit designer, Kathy McCorkle, a visual information specialist with the WHS Office of the Secretary of Defense Graphics and Presentations Division, said people, particularly active-duty military, felt something special when, on their way to a meeting, they briefly stopped in the hallway to see the exhibit going up.

"It was our connectivity with our active-duty troops saying, 'I got to go visit AFRH and see what is going on there.' It was amazing," she said.

The Pentagon and AFRH had previously met prior to the pandemic to discuss ways to showcase residents' artwork at Defense Department headquarters. However, COVID protocols and safety rules put in place to protect the public health delayed the project and its reception ceremony.

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The Armed Forces Retirement Home is the nation's premier life community for veterans of the

U.S. armed forces and their spouses. Its mission is to fulfill America's commitment to its military veterans by providing an excellent community with exceptional residential care and extensive support services. The Home is one of America's most enduring veterans' retirement homes with campuses in Washington, District of Columbia and Gulfport, Mississippi.

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