



Armed Forces Retirement Home  
Office of Public Affairs  
1800 Beach Drive  
Gulfport, MS 39507  
228.897.4429  
800.422.9988

**March 1, 2018**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Contact: Becki Zschiedrich, AFRH-Gulfport Public Affairs  
Phone: 228-897-4429  
Email: [becki.zschiedrich@afrh.gov](mailto:becki.zschiedrich@afrh.gov)

**ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME-GULFPORT  
WWII Veteran & Oldest Resident at AFRH-G Turns 101**

**Gulfport, Miss. – (March 6, 2018).** On Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at 1400, the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport will celebrate a huge milestone for one of its veterans. Ms. Marian Ritchie will celebrate her 101 birthday. The Gulfport Fire Department will be on hand to celebrate going along with the "101" Dalmatians theme for the event. After a ride on the fire truck at 1345, Ms. Ritchie, along with her fellow residents, will enjoy ice cream and a special birthday cake at 1400.

**WHO:** Local Media  
Governor Bryant  
Senator Cochran  
Senator Wicker  
Congressman Palazzo  
Mayor Hewes  
Mayor Gilich

**WHAT:** WWII Veteran Marion Ritchie's 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday

**WHEN:** Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at 1345

**1345 – Gulfport Fire Department will arrive to take Ms. Ritchie for a ride around the AFRH property.**

**1400 – Ice Cream and "101" Dalmatian Themed Birthday Social**

**WHERE:** Armed Forces Retirement Home  
Community Center  
1800 Beach Drive  
Gulfport, MS 39507

Visit our web site at <https://www.afrh.gov>  
Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>



Armed Forces Retirement Home  
Office of Public Affairs  
1800 Beach Drive  
Gulfport, MS 39507  
228.897.4429  
800.422.9988

Marion (who prefers the nickname of “Ritchie”) was born and raised in Oakland, Calif. After graduating high school and attending junior college, Ritchie made the decision to work at a Navy medical supply office in San Francisco. One day during her lunch break, she had the impulse to join the Navy.

Ritchie was sent off as a WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service) to boot camp at Hunter College in New York. After boot camp, she asked to be stationed on the East Coast since she had never really seen the area. However, she was sent right back to the West Coast and only twenty miles from home, at that. Once in San Francisco, she began working as a Captain’s Yeoman at Shore Patrol Headquarters with the 12<sup>th</sup> Naval District.

Ritchie’s next duty station was in Norfolk, Virginia. By this time, WWII was winding down. She had been in the Navy around three years. Not caring too much for Norfolk, she made the decision to take a discharge and begin her life as a newlywed with her husband, Norman. The couple decided to live in Lafayette, California where they raised their three children. Ritchie became a stay at home mom and Norman worked for the post office.

Ritchie decided to make plans in 1998 to move to what was now AFRH-G. She enjoyed life at AFRH-G until Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005. A vivid memory of the catastrophe is when she was looking out her eighth-story window and saw cars floating by in the storm surge. Like many other residents, she relocated to AFRH-W and returned to the Gulf Coast when the new AFRH-G facility opened in 2010.

Ritchie has enjoyed and stayed active throughout her many years at both homes by quilting, volunteering, going on trips, reading, and doing word puzzles. She has donated many of her handmade quilts to warm babies in the NICU at the local hospital. She also enjoys attending socials and going out to dinner with her good friends. However, her most thrilling endeavor has been the two occasions she has gone parasailing with her daughter and great granddaughter. The last time she went she was 98-years old! The event was even covered in the local news.

**FUN FACT:** In Ritchie’s family history, she has five generations of military that have served during war time. Her grandfather was in the Civil War. Her father fought in the Spanish-American War. Her stepfather served during WWI. Ritchie was a WAVES during WWII. Her daughter, Katie, served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Ritchie remains very proud of her family’s military service.

Visit our web site at <https://www.afrh.gov>  
Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>



Armed Forces Retirement Home  
Office of Public Affairs  
1800 Beach Drive  
Gulfport, MS 39507  
228.897.4429  
800.422.9988



Visit our web site at <https://www.afrh.gov>  
Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AFRH.gov>