

# GLORY ON THE GULF

## THE AFRH-GULFPORT HOMECOMING CELEBRATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **AFRH ON-TRACK TO REOPEN IN A BRAND NEW GULFPORT FACILITY AND WELCOME HOME RESIDENTS AFTER FIVE LONG YEARS**

**Washington, DC, September 3, 2010** — The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport is on-schedule to reopen for occupancy on Monday October 4, 2010. The Gulfport facility has been closed since August 2005 due to damage from Hurricane Katrina. Since then, the residents from Gulfport, Mississippi have called the Washington, DC facility home. Over the past three years, a new and modern community has been under construction featuring the latest in senior health and housing.

Now it is time for the Gulfport residents to return home. Several residents have elected to drive to the new facility from Washington, DC and those residents will check in on October 4 at 8:00 a.m. However, for the majority of residents, AFRH has chartered commercial air transportation to return them home to Mississippi. These returning residents will be departing from Reagan National Airport on October 4. Residents will arrive at Reagan at 9:00 a.m. Their chartered flight leaves at 11:10 a.m. arriving in Gulfport, MS at 12:35 p.m.

October 4 is a day that marks a long-awaited return back to the Gulf Coast. Residents will arrive to discover a brand new facility they can once again call home. The new community is located on 47 acres of prime waterfront land on the Mississippi Sound. It features a new multi-tower complex with full amenities such as dining, social, recreational, and therapeutic activities, plus a swimming pool, hobby shops, a wellness center with basic dental and eye care, a bank, a barber and beauty shop, bowling center, movie theater, a computer room, library, and a pedestrian bridge to the beach.

Henry Pike, Resident Advisory Chairman, is looking forward to moving back to Gulfport, a special place that he can truly call "home." "All along, I've posted new construction photos and updates on the new Home and the residents have literally been counting down the days", Pike said. Several hundred residents, including Pike, experienced firsthand the wrath of Hurricane Katrina – and were swiftly relocated to our Washington, DC facility within 72 hours of the Gulfport facility closing.

"The new Gulfport Home is an incredible advance in how AFRH provides senior housing for our nation's heroes", stated Tim Cox, Chief Operating Officer for AFRH. "In addition to providing state-of-the-art facilities we have also partnered with the local community to provide additional services for our residents". These combined services will provide an even more rewarding retirement for our former service men and women who faithfully served America.

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### **MORE ON AFRH-GULFPORT**

With the support of Congress, funds were appropriated to rebuild AFRH-Gulfport with modern engineering capable of mitigating the effects of a Category 5 hurricane. Throughout the design and construction process, Management held resident focus groups, performed extensive research, and integrated new ideas in environmental design and Green technology. The new Gulfport Home, like the current Washington facility, has adopted a new philosophy of care: Aging in Place. It calls for extensive support that revolves around the residents' personal needs. To mark the historic opening of the new AFRH-Gulfport, a daylong celebration will take place November 9th called "Glory on the Gulf". Formerly called the "US Naval Home", the Gulfport facility merged with the "Soldiers' Home" in Washington in 1991 – and both were renamed AFRH. Prior to 1976, the Naval Home was located in Philadelphia, PA and from 1833-1899 it was called the "Naval Asylum". To learn more about AFRH or "Glory on the Gulf" contact Sheila Abarr, Public Affairs Officer, at 202.730.3043 or [sheila.abarr@afrh.gov](mailto:sheila.abarr@afrh.gov).

### **ABOUT AFRH-WASHINGTON**

In 1851, a Trust Fund was created to establish the Soldiers' Home so it would not rely on taxpayer dollars. Since then, US enlisted and warrant officers have made small monthly paycheck contributions so they may live at the Home and enjoy a comfortable retirement. Today, the Trust Fund is the Home's primary source of funding. Both communities can house 1,323 residents in five levels of care (Independent Living, Independent Living Plus, Assisted Living, Long Term Care and Memory Support). AFRH-Washington, like AFRH-Gulfport, offers residents a range of amenities like a 9-hole golf course, fitness center, walking trails, hobby shops, weekly entertainment, bus trips, and more. AFRH is operated exclusively for war veterans and retired service members from all branches of the US military. For more information on AFRH and its longstanding commitment to US veterans, visit [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov).

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