

Positive changes

New RAC chairman making improvements for residents

Story by Mary Kay Gominger
Photos by Sheila Abarr

It's only been a short four months but already our new Resident Advisory Council chairman W.R. (Kit) Kitson is making a difference for our residents.

Typically, the way the RAC has always run in the past, is that they meet once a month and discuss the issues or questions residents have brought to them to address or clarify. The RAC chairman then goes to management, presents the issue and solutions are generated. At the next meeting, a month later, the chairman reports back to the group on the progress of the item brought up. The whole process, Kit found, was time consuming and after some thought, he thought of a better way.

Kit's vision is to get more residents and staff involved in the meetings, not just himself, the floor representatives, and a few staff members. He also wants to invite a guest speaker each month to address the group so that the questions can be asked directly to the person providing the service thereby avoiding miscommunication or delays in getting feedback to the residents.

So far, Kit has had the BX Regional Manager attend a meeting as well as the Food Services Manager. Resident attendance, since he was inducted, has actually doubled.

"We had 49 residents in attendance at our last meeting," Kit said. "I was very pleased with the outcome. If we come together and work as a group the issues that are important to us, we can make positive improvements to the quality of our life here at AFRH," Kit said.

According to Kit, the residents posed legitimate questions to the BX management.

"I've had residents ask me why items had to be so high on shelves. If they are in a BPV, they can't reach them," Kit said. "So they got the chance to talk face to face with the BX management and tell them the problems they have with their BPVs. It was so much more effective having the residents talk to them rather than just myself



Bill Woods expresses concerns about the new hours of operation of the Scott Lounge during a recent Resident Advisory Council meeting.

or just a staff member.

"Some residents were also asking about why the inventory at the BX appears to be getting low and why they were cutting their hours. They gave us their answers to these questions...rising prices, slumps in sales and the problems BXs are having worldwide...maybe not the answers we wanted to hear, but they got to hear it straight from BX management, not through a string of people," Kit explained.

In other areas, Kit said he and his team are looking into finding a solution to the shortage of parking around Scott and Sheridan. They've already eliminated several restricted 'taxi' spaces in front of the buildings and are looking into many possibilities to resolve the parking problem.

Kit encourages all residents to get involved in the Resident Advisory Council.

"My goal for this year is to continue to develop an effective team that works for the residents to ensure a harmonious and effective program that will benefit all concerned," Kit said. He continued, "I'm looking to lead progress in security, safety and quality of life and I recognize that there are many facets of teamwork that needs to be created for betterment of the residents, which, in turn, will encourage AFRH staff towards the fulfillment of its mission."

On an ending note, Kit emphasized that resident involvement in the RAC and in the many activities offered is crucial to the healthy vitality and growth of our resident population.

"The one most crucial need for the RAC is residents to volunteer their service to help with social events catered for their social activity. Recreation Services, along with Volunteer Services, need volunteers," Kit said.

The success of their programs is ultimately a success story for our residents.



Resident Advisory Council Chairman W.R. (Kit) Kitson documents the minutes of the meeting.

Inside this Issue



Gulfport update
Page 4



'Brain game' competitions
Pages 6



Historic rifles preserved
Page 12

Top enlisted Coastie visits the AFRH

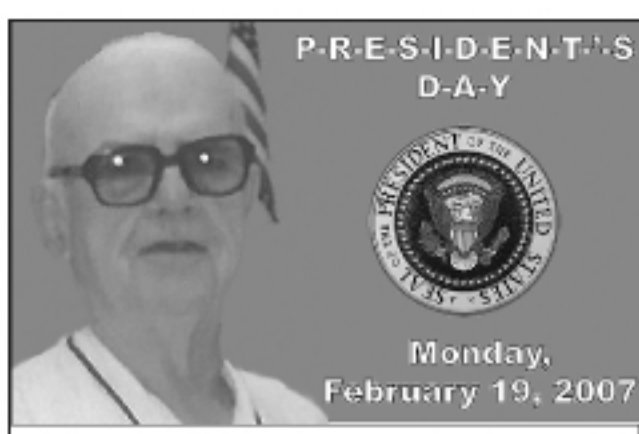


Master Chief Charles W. (Skip) Bowen, the 10th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, talks with resident Louis Spirito during a visit to AFRH earlier this month. Master Chief Bowen was accompanied by the former MCPOCG Vince Patton, who is now co-chair of the Coast Guard retiree council.

"We certainly enjoyed the visit and learned a great deal. The staff at AFRH is doing a wonderful job," said Master Chief Bowen.

The AFRH presently has about six former Coast Guard veterans living here.

AFRH Editors Column



P-R-E-S-I-D-E-N-T-'S D-A-Y



Monday, February 19, 2007

P-R-E-S-I-D-E-N-T-'S D-A-Y

In 1968, legislation (HR 15951) was enacted that affected several federal holidays. One of these was Washington's Birthday, the observation of which was shifted to the third Monday in February each year whether or not it fell on the 22nd. This act, which took effect in 1971, was designed to simplify the yearly calendar of holidays and give federal employees some standard three-day weekends in the process.



Apparently, while the holiday in February is still officially known as Washington's Birthday (at least according to the Office of Personnel Management), it has become popularly (and, perhaps in some cases at the state level, legally) known as "President's Day." This has made the third Monday in February a day for honoring both Washington and Lincoln, as well as all the other men who have served as president.

Did you know that Resident John Rumph, Scott 4214, has a one hundred eighteen pound granddaughter who flies the monstrous KC-135R "Stratotanker?" See the bottom half of page 5 for the profile of a very proud Grandpa.

Then you have an opportunity to learn a little of our "Quarterback's" history prior to joining the staff as Associate Director for Resident Services.

There are so many things that "Chuck" Dickerson has accomplished to improve the quality of life for all of us. In a way you might say he serves "...where the rubber meets the road..." One of Chick's favorite models is, "You can get anything done as long as you don't care who gets the credit for it." Indeed he is most modest as he tells how our COO made his many accomplishments possible. I will list a few:

- 1) "The Capitol Canteen," came into existence right after Chuck visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport. All residents now enjoy almost around the clock coffee and snacks in the Capitol Canteen.
- 2) "The elimination of the coin-operated washers and dryers." Many residents will remember looking for quarters in the wee hours of the morning to feed the old machines. No more, the washers and dryers no longer have coin slots.
- 3) "Automatic Doors installed at the West end of the Scott Dormitory." Any handicapped resident who uses a Battery Powered Vehicle (BPV) or a walker can really appreciate this.

So by all means absorb the profiles of pages 5 and 10. I guarantee you'll enjoy them.

ENJOY YOUR PAPER

- PERKS OF BEING OVER 70
1. People call at 9 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"
 2. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
 3. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
 4. Things you buy now won't wear out.
 5. You can eat dinner at 4 p.m..
 6. You can live without sex but not your glasses.
 7. You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.

AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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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.

How to become a resident today



AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement centers 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.

Veterans are eligible to become a resident of the AFRH if their active duty service in the military was at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer and who are:

- Veterans with 20 or more years of active duty service and are at least 60 years old, or
- Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to a service-connected disability, or
- Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to injuries, disease, or disability, and who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay, or
- Female veterans who served prior to 1948.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the following office:

AFRH at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH Admissions Office, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

Visit us on the web at: http://www.AFRH.gov

CH-99

In-house station gets new look

Our in-house television station, Channel 99, is presently undergoing a facelift and when you tune in next month, you will be able to see a newer, brighter information package.

Media Now of Scala, the broadcast multimedia manager of our already existing system, is implementing an upgrade that will improve the appearance and performance of our content with crystal clear smooth tickers and animations that will enhance the communication bulletins being transmitted to our residents.

ALL NEW
 Coming in February

The Resident's Channel
 News, Events, Menus and More!

Information being offered to the residents will be placed on attractive, eye-catching templates. The new upgrade also offers us the opportunity to upload photos of resident events for those unable to attend as well as videos of events such as dances, townhall meetings and functions residents attend out in town.

So stay tuned to Ch-99 to keep up-to-date on upcoming activities, the menu and other valuable educational information

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



As we settle into the new year, the staff is continuing the focus on improving the services we offer to you. Last year, in response to your feedback, we began to look at the length

of time it was taking to see a physician at the Health and Wellness Center. There's nothing more frustrating than sitting around waiting to see a doctor. It's something we've all experienced to some degree and most will agree that it can ruin your whole day or at least a good portion of it. With your help, we've managed to uncover some of the not-to-obvious reasons for the lengthy waits. Here's what we found.

To start, a team was designated to study and analyze the process residents go through to see a doctor at the Health and Wellness Clinic. Data was collected for a period of 30 days. The time the resident checked into the Clinic was recorded as well as the purpose of the visit. Upon completion of the visit, the time was once again recorded, providing the team with crucial information about how much time residents were actually waiting for service. But more

interesting was the reason most residents were coming to the Clinic every morning. Of the over 1,500 residents that checked in at the Clinic during that time-frame, the majority of them, it was discovered, were there to get a prescription refilled. A smaller number were there for sick call, to see a physician or nurse or to make an appointment. The length of wait varied from day to day, depending on what specialty physician was in for the day, but all residents were seen at some time during the day.

Upon review of the data, the team made several recommendations to improve the waiting time for residents checking into the Clinic. These were recently put into effect.

First, a nursing assistant has been assigned to monitor the flow of patients.

Residents, other than those requiring immediate medical attention, are now given an idea of the approximate wait time to see a physician and they are given the option to sign in and return at a specific time to avoid the wait in the Clinic. This allows them the freedom to take care of errands, dine or rest comfortably in their room until the appointed time.

Since most of the visits are for medication renewals, residents are now being reminded by staff and in the daily bulletin to make appointments with their primary care physicians to review and renew medications as opposed to using the walk-in clinic. It's very important for the overall health of the resident for the physician that prescribed the medication to renew it. The physician should discuss the effects of the medication and determine if remaining on the prescription is necessary and if it is accomplishing the desired results. All efforts should be made, also, to have your medications renewed prior to running out as this can cause unnecessary health concerns and compromise your current good health.

We will continue to improve the services we provide to you, in all areas. Your feedback, ideas and suggestions are welcome and crucial in our efforts toward meeting your needs.



Barbara Turner takes the names and arrival time of those waiting to see a doctor in the Health and Wellness Center. A team has been working on reducing the amount of time residents are waiting to be seen by a physician or nurse.

Tim Cox

Conversation with the Chief Financial Officer



The New Year is here and we are off and running. As some of you noticed, resident fees were pulled from the resident's checking account about a week late. This was the result of transitioning the Business Center to a new automated system for managing resident fees. Hopefully the transition was invisible to many of you, but for some it may not have been. I know some of you have stopped by the Business Center about your new resident fee questioning the amount. After working with our folks in the Business Center most of you have left satisfied. Our hope is to improve operations in the Business Center while creating a positive environment to work resident questions.

Some residents have stopped and asked me about the waiver process for resident fees. Unfortunately it has been determined that the Home does not have the authority to grant waivers. As a result no waivers were granted for CY 2007.

In my December article I mentioned about the possibility of having focus groups on resident fees or any topic about the Business Center if there was enough interest. Because many of you have shown an interest, we will have a series of focus group meetings in February. My intent is to conduct focus group meetings in both Scott and LaGarde. Families and conservators are welcome to attend. Through the focus group meetings it is my hope to help all of us better understand what paperwork is needed; why it is required; and how fees are computed. The entire Business Center staff will be introduced at the focus group meeting. This will give each of you an opportunity to meet our great staff and put a face with a name you have probably met over the phone. We will announce the focus group meeting in the weekly bulletin; place notices in your mailbox; and send letters to conservators. I believe you will find the focus group meetings informative and helpful.

A couple of the residents have asked me for an update on the Gulfport facility and funding. Here is a little information: Ninety-nine percent of the funding for the project is a reflection of two public laws. Public Law 109-234 appropriated \$176M and took unobligated Gulfport funds from Public Law 109-148 and directed them towards the rebuilding project. Further, all unobligated Gulfport funds from 1998 to 2004 were also redirected to this project. The additional one percent of funding is from Public Law 108-447 in 2005 when AFRH was appropriated approximately \$4M for a Blended Use Facility in Gulfport from the Trust Fund, which AFRH has moved for its intended purpose — Gulfport capital requirements. The table (right) reflects the funding from these public laws. General Services Administration (GSA), in consultation with the management of the AFRH and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), is the agent for planning, design, construction and contract administration related to the construction of the new AFRH-Gulfport.

A Memorandum of Agreement between GSA and AFRH was recently signed on January 5, 2007. The MOA calls for implementation of P.L. 109-234 to rebuild AFRH-Gulfport by demolishing the existing facility and building a new structure on the existing site. The plan is based on one option recommended by AFRH in its Special Report to Congress (dated February 28, 2006). Without the constraints of an existing structure, the new facility will be designed to better meet the needs of residents and staff, providing amenities found at comparable retirement facilities nationwide, yet not in the existing facility. Housing will meet health, life safety and accessibility requirements. All levels of care will be enhanced to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Ground level parking will ensure vital building systems are above flood level, for continued operations during hurricane or floods. All common areas will be located on one floor, providing greater visibility to activities and encouraging greater participation. Plus, the new construction will provide greater staff and maintenance efficiencies. Residents will return to a completed facility ready for occupancy. GSA and AFRH will work closely together to design and build a suitable residence for retirement living. The rebuild is targeted to be completed in FY 2010.

Many of the residents have comment-

Source	Description	Amount
Public Law 108-447	Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 for a Blended Use Facility, Gulfport	\$3,968,000
Public Law 109-234	Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane recovery, 2006 to rebuild Gulfport	\$176,000,000
Public Law 109-234	Unobligated Funds from 1998 to 2004	\$17,138,444
Public Law 109-234B	Unobligated Funds from Public Law	\$44,141,653

ed about the trivia highlights from last month. If you have been watching the news lately, I'm sure you have heard about how the weather has impacted certain produce items. As you can see (chart below), in the last few weeks, the market price of some

produce items has significantly increased. This will have an impact on our subsistence costs, which are already close to \$4 million. I look forward to hearing from you.

Steve McManus

ITEM (price per case)	PRICE JAN 8	PRICE JAN 15	PRICE JAN 22
Sliced tomato	\$20.94	\$20.94	\$25.56
Cherry tomato	\$12.78	\$12.78	\$14.44
Salad mix	\$14.28	\$14.28	\$14.28
Leaf lettuce	\$16.39	\$18.61	\$20.83
Oranges	\$18.89	\$20.00	\$40.00
Bananas	\$16.39	\$16.67	\$16.67
Lemons	\$26.00	\$26.67	\$43.33
Red apples	\$29.00	\$29.00	\$28.44
Golden apples	\$37.89	\$37.50	\$37.33
Cucumbers	\$18.33	\$18.33	\$22.78
Celery	\$26.67	\$26.67	\$26.67

AFRH Director's Message



This is a great time to undertake a mental workout – another way of exercise.

Just as physical fitness exercises maintain body tone, strength, and endurance, mental exercise has a positive conditioning effect for people.

Scientific evidence demonstrates that specific mental abilities believed to be associated with aging such as memory loss, sluggish thinking, and blocks in problem solving are not inevitable if the brain remains challenged.

The same advice that we follow to achieve good mental conditioning applies to mental fitness – "use it or lose it." Mental exercise over time strengthens and enhances thought processes (functions – in this context, functions are almost synonymous with processes).

There are a number of programs that AFRH currently offers to stimulate an individual's mental abilities before they slow down. They include keeping active in literature clubs, discussion groups, games, puzzles, and outside activities and programs.

The goal is to exercise perception in all five senses; sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Not generally listed as a "sense," social contact is also a significant means of maintaining an active mind. Residents have a common connection in that they have served in the military. Beyond that, they have all lived somewhat different lives in different states and in different civilian jobs. Some have traveled to foreign countries and others have lived in those countries. Their recitation of their experiences can lead one to broaden their own interests and stimulate their mind in the process. One only needs to leave their room and open their mind. Overcome monotony and routine, as comfortable as they are in our daily lives.

Take part in creating your mental health future.

Ben Laub

Catch me at me best....

Laura Fogarty, Chief, Recreation Services

I caught Laura Fogarty at her best. Laura came to the rescue as she usually does with laptop and staff support at Ethics Training. Whenever there is a need, Laura, Keith, Calvin and others from her staff come out to assist.

Carla Roberts, Administrative Officer

Adam Reza, Campus Operations

I caught Adam Reza and his crew at their best, and their still at it! I couldn't be more pleased in the efficient manner in which they have been delivering to my room my possessions stored in Building 77 that were delivered to DC from the Naval Home in Gulfport. A standing ovation accompanied by a resounding round of applause!

Al Cotta

AFRH Food Services & KHC Medical Staff

Many thanks to the AFRH food services and medical staff for giving us (the Newcomer family) a great Thanksgiving! We were fortunate enough to have all of our family together (from Tacoma, WA, St. Louis, MO and Atlanta, GA). The best part was being together including having my husband brought up from LaGarde (first time in two months). We were brought to a table where all of us sat together and we enjoyed the dinner. Thank you very much.

Peggy Newcomer

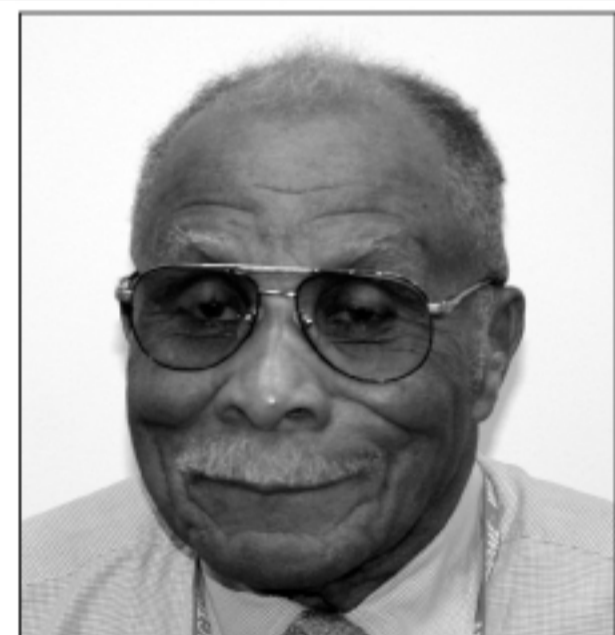
Marilyn Norris, Food Services

I caught Marilyn Norris at her best. The morning short-order chef is someone special. She makes the perfect omelet and actually cooks the eggs the way they are requested. She is friendly, cheerful, smiles a lot and always has a happy greeting. What a great way to start a day. Again, she is super special.

John D. Thomas

See how many people you can 'catch' going above and beyond to make life easier for someone. All you have to do is look!

Welcome Aboard



Name: Robert L. Cox
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: June 1942
Separation Date: July 1962
Rank: MSG E7
War Theaters: WWII, Korea & Pacific



Name: Billy J. Baker
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: May 1958
Separation Date: October 1980
Rank: GMGC E7
War Theaters: Vietnam



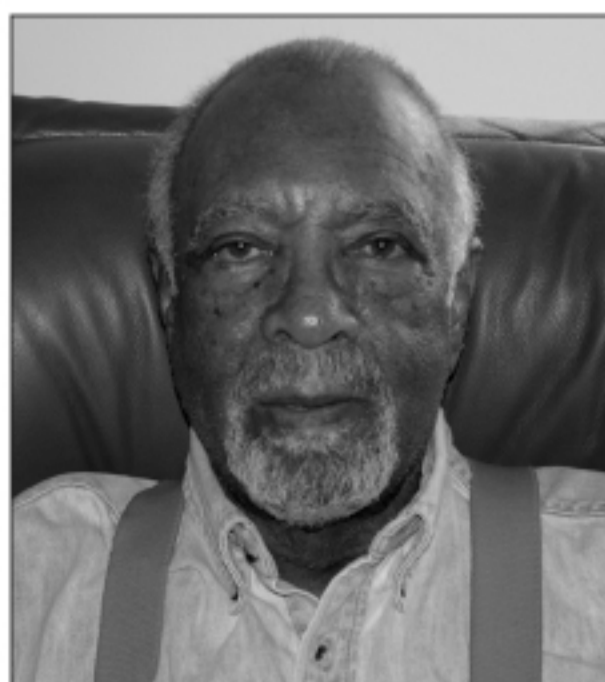
Name: Doyle Rogers
Branch of Service: USA & USCG
Entry Date: May 1948
Separation Date: Dec 1968
Rank: E5
War Theaters: WWII & Vietnam



Name: Steve C. Verish
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: March 1943
Separation Date: April 1963
Rank: SSGT
War Theaters: Pacific



Name: Douglas F. Pearce
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: August 1955
Separation Date: July 1964
Rank: SGT E-5
War Theaters: Europe



Name: James O. Hill
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: September 1941
Separation Date: September 1964
Rank: CW3
War Theaters: Korea & WWII

**If you have an interesting past...
a story to tell...
and would like to be featured in a
future issue of the
Communicator,
contact Mary Kay Gominger at
228-348-6604
or Sheila Motley at ext. 3556**

Military service may earn you extra Social Security benefits

By Al Mori, Omsbudman

I was sent an email with the website (www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm) for information on possible special extra earnings for military service; the sender thought it may benefit some of the residents. So I went to the website to check it out and found the following information regarding the extra earnings.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1940 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. Those extra savings may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of Social Security benefits.

Special extra earnings are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings are NOT granted for inactive duty training.

NOTE: Social Security cannot add these extra earnings to your record until you file for Social Security benefits.

How you get credit for Special Extra Earnings:

The information that follows applies ONLY to active duty military service earnings from 1940 through 2001. Here's how the special extra earnings are credited:

Service in 1978 through 2001 – For every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

Service in 1957 through 1977 – You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty pay.

Service in 1940 through 1956 – If you were in the military during this period, including attendance at a service academy, you did not pay Social Security taxes. However your Social Security record may be credited with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from September 16, 1940 through December 31, 1956, under the following circumstances:

1. You were honorably discharged after 90 or more days of service, or you were released because of a disability or injury received in the line of duty; or
2. You are still on active duty; or
3. You are applying for survivors benefits and the veteran died while on active duty.

You cannot receive credit for these special extra earnings if you are already receiving a federal benefit based on the same years of service. There is one exception: If you were on active duty after 1956, you can still get the special earnings for 1951 through 1956, even if you're receiving a military retirement based on service during that period.

In order to see if you qualify for the extra earnings, all you have to do is to give the local Social Security Office a copy of your DD214. The office will then research the records to see if you qualify.



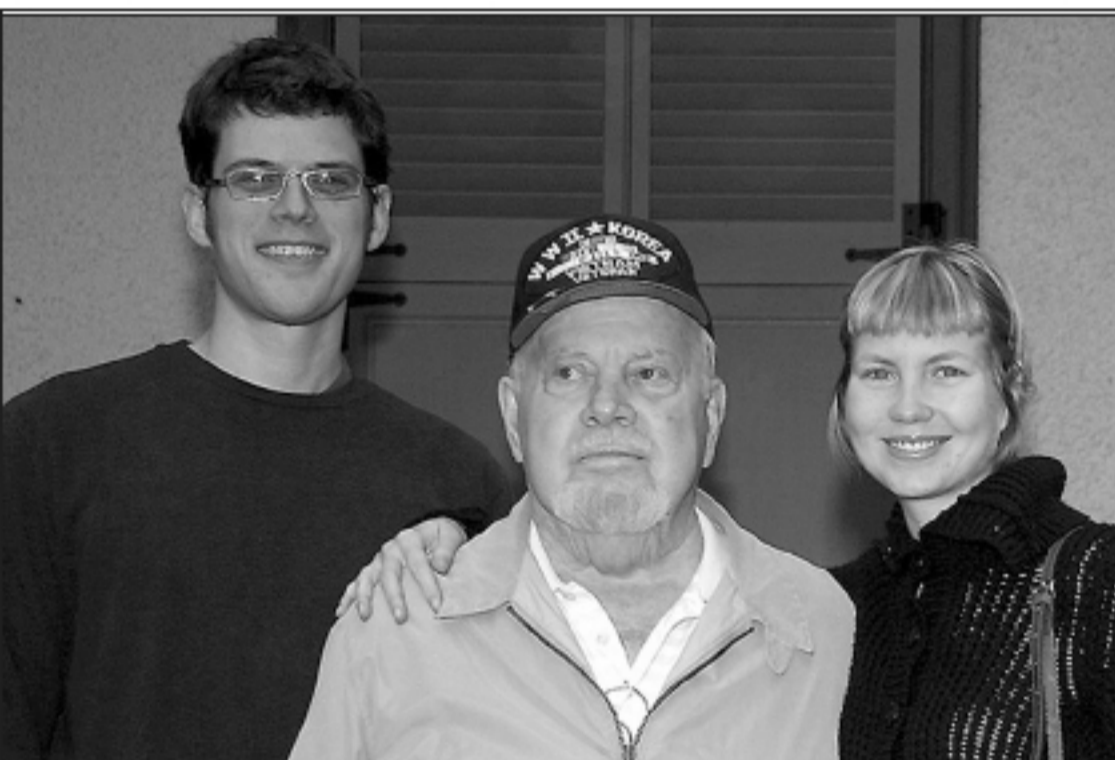
While making his daily rounds Al Mori visits John Bowery in the King Health Center.

OFFICE ADDRESS: Social Security
7820 Eastern Avenue NM
Washington, DC 20012

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 1-800-772-1213
TTY: 1-800-325-0778

Again, remember this information came from the Social Security website mentioned above.

1939 – 1963 U. S. Army Air Corps – U. S. Air Force – “Retired and still serving”



By John Bowery

This story begins some two years before the horror of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. John Rumph was stationed on Pope Field and was a member of the Army Air Corps attached to the 2nd Balloon Squadron. In the early days of his career he was an enlisted Tech Sergeant and had a license as a balloon pilot. In those days there were two branches in the Air Corps, one was lighter than air (balloons) and the other was heavier than air (planes). He was assistant line chief of the flight line. He made chief of aircraft maintenance September 1941, three months before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was in the air when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. He was the only mechanic in the Air Force. He was sent to set up Air Force bases, because we did not have any at that time.

He formed three Air Force bases; the first one was Mitchell Field, New York, the second at Charlotte, N.C., and the third at Lincoln, Nebraska. He set up Camp Davies, N.C., and built an airfield for women pilots. Their mission was to fly the planes that towed targets for the Coast Guard.

His mission was the acceptance of planes for the Army Air Corps from Boeing, Lockheed, Douglas & North American, and his job was to test fly those planes. He tested aircraft from many manufacturers. He took a reduction in rank to be able to fly in combat. He was one of

many that were enlisted and flying in combat. General Doolittle knew him and he wanted John to fly lead aircraft for the Air Force. This was the first time this had ever happened for the Air

Force. General Doolittle told him that he could fly as many missions as he wanted and that he could choose to quit at any time. By May 1945 he had 42 missions and he was credited with two fighters shot down and for each enemy aircraft shot down he was awarded the Air Medal. He chose at that time to return home. He was sent to Liverpool, England, where he boarded the Isle de France, the largest ship afloat. It was two feet shorter than the Queen Mary.

He was discharged when he arrived in the States. He was sports minded and had good contacts around the country and he became active in baseball. He had the good fortune to scout out Hank Aaron when he was playing for a high school in Mobile, Alabama (this was 1947). It was about this time that he received a letter from the Air Force telling him that they were very interested in mechanics with his training and experience. They were offering a commission to

Chief Mechanics like John that had flying experience to go to Europe and survey to locate and retrieve enemy planes that were shot down during the war.

John's story goes on from there and when you meet him he will be more than willing to fill you in as he is a good story teller and will keep you entertained and glad that you met him. It is at this point in my story that I am inserting a story within a story. A very proud granddad gave me this opportunity. His granddaughter and her husband were with John the day that I interviewed him for the Communicator.

We pick up her story right here with the introduction of this very attractive couple. Graham, Viveca's husband is a sculptor of some note, with his own studio and he is doing quite well. Viveca is 28 years old and I swear she looks like she is 16 years old. She is very petite and when you find out what she does for a living, you will be as impressed as I am. Viveca is a pilot in the Kansas Air National Guard. She got her college training in the Guard and is now flying smaller aircraft in training for

the larger job she will attain at Scott AF Base and she will be flying the monstrous KC-135. Seeing Viveca and her slight frame of 118 pounds and then looking at a picture of the KC-135 you cannot help being impressed with her and her ambitions. I know that I am. I am a private pilot and she is doing exactly what I wanted to do



John Rumph will gladly tell you that his Granddaughter Lt. Viveca Lane is the greatest. This stout-hearted little lady is now flying a KC-135R "Stratotanker" as a regular duty.

when I was young and eager, fly one of the Jumbo Jets. Interviewing her and her family makes me aware of just how fortunate we are to have people like John Rumph and his granddaughter coming up to take over where he left off to carry the tradition forward with honor and pride.



Grandpa Rumph exclaims, "Seeing Viveca and her slight frame of 118 pounds and then looking at a picture of the KC-135 you cannot help being impressed with her and her ambitions."

KC-135R "Stratotanker"

Recreational Services Brain Games

Unable to dethrone the champion....

By Howard Turner

The AFRH put on its second annual Speed Mathematics Contest with the returning champion, Ernie Fowler, set to take on all comers.

"Anyone coming to try and take my title away from me will get their money's worth," Ernie said.

Ernie had eight challengers sign on to take the SMC championship from him and claim it for themselves. The challengers had all arrived before the champ stepped in the section. As the game time grew closer, the room became crowded with spectators and the excitement filled the air. Finally, the returning champion entered the section and, almost immediately, two residents dropped out before Ernie could add them to his "knock out list." As the games began and the contestants fell by the side one by one, a few surprises caught everyone's eye. Edith Ellington and Carl Grau had slam dunked their opponents in a very impressive way. This was the making of a great championship round. When the championship round began, Ernie Fowler made sure he took his game to another level, and how. He jumped out so far in front to start the game off that he decided to cruise for the final points. In "speed math," it's not just knowing the answer, although the answers are easy, but how fast can you hit the bell and then give the correct answer. Edith Ellington was on the mark with her answers but couldn't beat Ernie to the bell. And as the sun began to go down for our challengers, they were all happy taking away second and third place rewards. Hey Ernie, here's a message for you. Your toughest competitor a year ago said he would be taking the title away from you at the third SMC. It's the man who wears the golden smile, and they call him "Mike Longwell." That's going to be a match to see folks.



Two heads are better than one - Carl and Ruth Grau team up to give Ernie Fowler a run for the championship.

Working quickly
Adell's quick thinking earns her two points.



Concentration - Paul Schlegel gives a valiant effort against the reigning champion.



Sitting on ready - From left, Edith Ellington, Birdie Gelfer and Adell Cordon listen eagerly for the next math problem.



Show me the money - Ernie Fowler holds up the cash he won as he retained his Speed Mathematics championship title.

Awesome matches in the Concentration Game Show

Story by Howard Turner

Photos by Sheila Motley

This is always a great game that matches great opponents against on another. The "Concentration Game" is a card game that starts off with all of the cards face down. Each contestant will turn four cards over when his/her chance come around and they will see if they can find any two cards that match. It takes a little luck and a lot of memory, or at least we thought so. Robert Cavanaugh and Doris Jones showed that a lot of luck can take you a long ways. Cavanaugh went on a lucky streak that wouldn't end until he reached the semifinals and ran into Ernie Fowler. They fought their way through three draws until finally Cavanaugh's luck decided to part ways and get on Ernie Fowler's band wagon.

Doris Jones and Dolly Smith came into the game and actually said that they were going to beat all of the men who came to challenge them, and they backed up their words. They didn't lose until the bracket reached the point to where they finally had to meet one another. Doris had been extremely hot all day, starting each game off with commanding leads, and so it continued against her buddy, "Dolly." The championship match was set between Ernie and Doris, and what a championship match it was. Both contestants kept battling from behind to take the lead but finally Ernie squeezed it out to take home the "Memory Championship Title." The top four places were: Robert Cavanaugh-4th place, Dolly Smith-3rd

place, Doris Jones-2nd place, and first place went to Ernie Fowler.

"First time I've ever played this game, beginners luck, let's do it again. It's a lot of fun," said Doris Jones.

"I think it was great, though kind of nerve racking in a competitive way," said Dolly Smith.

"It's friendly competition, I always enjoy this. I like participating even if I don't know how to play because I learn a lot. Keith has designed events to where they help the mind or help the body physically and that's what we need," said Robert Cavanaugh.

"I think all of these games are helpful to the residents, it helps in so many ways, to keep their mind active and competitive. I think Recreation does a fine job designing things like this because it takes a lot of time to put these things together. More than you would think," said Ernie Fowler.



Robert "Lucky" Cavanaugh's winning streak continues.



Jewell Poteet searches for another match.



Ernie Fowler and Doris Jones display their winnings as 1st and 2nd place winners in the Concentration Game.



No match this time for Dolly Smith while Elijah Faunteroy awaits his turn.

Advance showing of The War

Noted film maker Ken Burns discusses making historic movie, calls it the richest archival event in the history of country

Story by Wilfred McCarty and Sheila Motley

Photographs by Sheila Motley

On January 22, residents attended an advance showing of noted film maker Ken Burns' latest film, *The War*. *The War*, a Ken Burns' series about the American experience in World War II, will premiere on PBS stations nationwide in September 2007. Burns stated that this time around talking heads will be limited to eyewitness testimonies even though the eyewitnesses are thinning rapidly. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 1,000 World War II veterans die every day. Burns indicated that only people who lived through that period were interviewed, not historians and high ranking military officials.

"We wanted it to be about the soldiers who were on the ground fighting the war, particularly people who saw serious combat," Burns said. The seven-part, 14 hour series will focus on the grunts on the ground and the gals (and loved ones) they left behind in four localities - Mobile, Ala., Sacramento, Calif., Waterbury, Conn., and Luverne, Minn. The producers chose towns to provide both variety and a cross-section of American types akin to the G.I. platoons of old World War II flicks.

Burns showed excerpts from the series that he feels are the richest archival event in history. Sheila Motley, Public Affairs Officer, took 13 home members to see this special event from a personal invitation from Mr. Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Burns had made a famous series about the Civil War and had not wanted to make more war films, but he discovered that some young people thought we fought the Russians in WWII and that Germany had been on our side! In the meantime he made films on baseball and jazz and such.

The War will also be markedly noisier than previous Burns films. "We're using surround sound, we're mixing in a digital environment, and on top of that we're adding explosion upon explosion," says Novick. "The sound will make the film much more nuanced, much more detailed, and very intense both emotionally and neurologically."

Burns said, "this is the richest archival event in history. If you were in the 11th Armored Division, hold on to your hats. One of the veterans' filmed was in the 11th Armored Division so watch for this series and especially about our five weeks at Mauthausen. I discovered we were included when I spoke to Lynn Novick, Co-Director and Producer, when I asked the question, "did you include anything about Mauthausen." With so much to cover in WWII, I really didn't expect this to be covered as well. I almost fell over when she said, "11th Armored Division" and she mentioned Private Miller from Minnesota who was in the 11th Armored Division. So, some of you historians in the 11th Division, see if you can locate or find more information on our comrade, Private Miller. Novick said there is quite a bit about Mauthausen in the film so all you 11th Armored members watch for this and tell everyone else to watch. Coming from an outfit that many people never heard about made this a double surprise. Wish I had listened more closely but I will watch the film. There were no surprises for me in the portion of film I saw but it did bring back memories and I was glad I was given the opportunity to attend.



Secretary of Veterans Affairs James Nicholson introduces Ken Burns for his presentation for the evenings' event.



Director Ken Burns addresses questions from veterans from various organizations concerning his latest film.



Wilfred McCarty expressing his appreciation to Ken Burns for the exceptional work in making the TV series, *The War*.



AFRH residents Carrol Collins, Mary Vara and Charles Felder, along with other veterans, pose with Ken Burns after the evenings event.



L-R - Movie director Ken Burns and Hugh Wingo discuss the making of the film *The War*.



Thomas Moore asking Mr. Burns where his hometown is located.

Meet Chuck Dickerson – our Quarterback

By John Bowery



Chuck Dickerson joined the Air Force in 1973. He was living in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, at that time. He wanted to join the Army, but his father talked him out of it. His father knew that it would be better for him career wise, since he was in recruitment in the Air Force before retiring. His dad took him down to the recruiting station to enlist in the Air Force. It was really the best thing he could do. His father had traveled all over the world in the Air Force and this helped Chuck later in his enlistment and tours of duty.

He met his wife, Mitsuko "Miko" Kiyuna, from Okinawa, Japan, on his first tour there. He had to chase her quite a bit before she agreed to a date. On that date he had the chance to meet her mother, and he proposed to her shortly thereafter. They came back to the states to Hopkinsville, Kentucky, and were married there. Their marriage has lasted 28 years and Chuck tells me that she is his best friend and life long companion. He also told me that she is the best thing that has ever happened to him. He served 27 years on active duty in the Air Force and retired in 2000.

Chuck was the Command Chief Master Sergeant at Eglin AF Base and had the opportunity to work with the Enlisted Widows Home down there. Jim Binnicker, CMSAF(ret.) A Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Chuck talked to him quite a lot while he was there. One day he saw Chuck walking through the club (he knew Chuck was getting ready for retirement). He said, "Chuck come sit a spell, I want to talk to you." They sat down and he said, "Chuck there is a job at the Old Soldiers Home up in Washington, DC that is open and I think you should apply for it." Chuck knew about AFRH in Washington, DC. He had visited it a couple of times as a Command Chief, in fact he knew Norm Parnes, who used to have the job as Chief of Resident Services. Jim said due to the tragic loss of Norm they were searching for a new person to fill the position. Needless to say he applied and traveled up to Washington twice to be interviewed by General Hilbert. He was hired on December 23rd, 2000, and arrived here on the 24th. His first official duty was to attend the Christmas dance here at AFRH and he has been here ever since.

There is very little known about Chuck and his background in the service and his qualification for his position here. (he has never been interviewed and nothing has been made public about him). His background is wide and varied, he spent

seven years as a First Sergeant and held the position of Command Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. He attended the University of Texas and learned the fine points of the Health Care side of the job (CCR) continued care retirement, which is in place here today. He is also a Resident Housing Professional, also learned at the University of Texas.

He is well pleased with the team that is in place here and feels that the Security, Food Service, Recreation, Volunteer Services, Religious Activities, and Admissions people are all doing an excellent job and are easy to work with. Most of us don't know that Chuck is the head of and in charge of everything all these people do for the home. He has a tremendous job and he does it so well that we don't even know that he has all the strings in place and pulls them in concert with our wishes and desires. Chuck knows that he cannot please all of us, all the time, but he tries. He feels that he has a great team with great leadership and is very proud to be associated with them and all of us.

Here are some of his qualification here so you can see that he really is very well educated and a true professional:

1. He has an AA (Associate of Arts from Saint Leo College, Saint Leo, Florida)
2. AA in Personnel Administration, Community College of the Air Force, Gunther Air Force Base, Alabama

3. BA Human Resource Administration, Saint Leo, Florida, Magna Cum Laude

4. MS Human Resource Management and Development, Chapman University, Orange County, California

A few of the major awards and decorations he is proud to claim from his active duty in the Air Force are: Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal, and Air Force Achievement Medal.

His position here at our home makes him responsible for employees that provides support to some 1,200 residents that live here, including Administration, Admissions, Recreational Service, Volunteer Services, Religious Activities, Resident Affairs, Security and Investigations and Food Service. He holds professional certifications as a Retirement Housing Professional (RHP)..

Chuck is very easy to talk with, even though he is very busy in his work as Chief of Resident Services. He will tell you when he is busy and that is most of the time - he will set a time and date when he can talk to you so that he can devote his full attention to your situation. Make a note on your calendar to sit down with him and be prepared for a pleasant time, well spent.

What better way to reach out to your community....

By Sheila Motley

Photograph by Melodie Menke

On January 9, 2006, Melissa Wells, Volunteer Coordinator of the DC Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, visited AFRH to provide our residents the opportunity to participate in their Volunteer Program. The response was overwhelming. Approximately 70 residents inquired but 10 signed up to be volunteers at the Air Space Museum for the Visitor Services Program.

Prior to setting up the display table, Ms. Wells briefed the residents on the history of the National Air and Space Program and the services they will provide in the Visitor Services Program which include greeting visitors, distribution of museum information, observe visitors' needs and taking the initiative to

meet them and answering general questions. All volunteers are asked to commit at least two 4-hour shifts per month.

After the briefing, Ms Wells raffled off four books and two John Glenn lapel pins. Melodie Menke, Director, Volunteer

Services, indicated that she was impressed with the turn out and the participations of our residents and that "this is a great first step to increasing our residents' choice to volunteer in the community and AFRH." The residents really

seemed to enjoy the brief.



Residents being briefed on the services they will provide as volunteers for the National Air & Space Museum.

Chaplain's Corner Make it a year of change!!!

By Chaplain Ronald Austin

As we journey into the New Year, 2007, we need to see that we have before us a fresh opportunity in life. It is a new beginning, a chance to cast off from our old way of thinking that was filled with disappointments, frustrations and heartaches, and to start anew. What a blessing it is to have this opportunity that God has given to us!

You might be saying to yourself "What is this chaplain talking about!?! This year is only going to be the same ole thing all over again!" My answer to you is, "No, it's not, if you change your attitude about yourself and about your environment."

We have to shake off those negative feelings of anger, resentment, and unforgiveness that we carried around in the year 2006 and replace them in this new year. Change your attitude; replace anger with joy; resentment with understanding; and unforgiveness with genuine forgiveness. When you do these things, the year 2007 will be a much better year for you and for those around you.

How can you accomplish this mammoth task? You can do it one day at a time. Work your way up to 21 days straight and see what a difference it will make! Keep your mind filled with positive thoughts and cancel out the negative ones. You will be surprised again at the wonderful difference this change will make in your entire life!

Put a smile on your face and see how much better you will feel. Give a helping hand to someone and see what joy comes your way. Take all of this to heart with consistent actions, and journey into this year with hope and great expectations.

Commander of Walter Reed visits AFRH

Major General George W. Weightman, Commanding General of the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center, spent an afternoon at the Armed Forces Retirement Home recently, visiting with residents in the Fitness Center and talking with residents and staff in the Health and Wellness Center and touring other areas on campus.



Above - Dr. Sissay Awoke (left) and Dr. Linda Rader give Major General George Weightman a tour of the Health and Wellness Center during his recent visit of AFRH.

Left - Major General Weightman enjoys talking to residents in the Fitness Center.



Resident artist explains the joy of wood carving

Story and photos by Sheila Motley

When asked when he first began wood carving, Tom Lewellen stated with a sheepish smile, "I've been doing it since I was a small child."

After the passing of his mother, Tom was raised by his paternal grandparents who introduced him to wood carving. When he was six years old, his grandmother gave him a pocket knife. Tom stated, "Oh, I was out of this world. I was so delighted because I had been using broken pieces of glass to carve with." Tom would break a bottle and work with a piece of the glass until the edges were dull and then he would get another piece until his carving was finished.

While walking two and a half miles to school one day, his pocket knife fell out of his pocket. Tom was devastated after realizing that his knife was gone and with a child's determination he searched to find the knife. That caused him to be late for school for one month but he did not care, he was determined to find the knife. One day he crossed a little log at a creek, took his shoes off, and got into the water and felt around to see if he could locate his knife, but he was unsuccessful. Tom's cousin was watching him. Realizing the importance of the knife to him, he gave Tom his pocket knife that was broken but would still allow Tom to carve. This is when Tom first realized the importance of the size of the blade to use while whittling. This was the true beginning of his love for wood carving.

One day while whittling, Tom realized that he was carving a knife and to his surprise it was a replica of the very same knife that he had lost earlier. Once the knife was finished, people would look at it and try to open it because it looked that much like the real

thing. Tom made small knives that women like to wear around their necks or more complex larger Tom has been blessed with the ability to carve just about anything he can perceive.

Of his 20 years of service, Tom served on the USS Ticonderoga from June 1944 through September 1945. Tom served as a Plank Owner on the USS Ticonderoga which was a person who was aboard the ship when it was first commissioned. He was on the Ticonderoga for its entire Pacific tenure; one month before it was commissioned and two months before it's decommissioning. Tom was officially inducted into the Silent Mysteries of the Far East, having crossed the 180th Meridian at 2135 on 21 October 1944 on

"...the real payment is the pleasure of giving his wood work to others so that they too can appreciate the joy of just looking at it as he does."

board the USS Ticonderoga (CV14) by the Imperial Domain of Golden Dragons. During his tour on the ship, Tom's hobby was wood carving. Tom's shipmates were so impressed with the quality of his work that they asked Tom if he would carve items for their family members for Christmas presents due to their inability to purchase anything to send home to their loved ones. He stated "when



The replica of the USS Ticonderoga Tom carved while serving aboard the ship.

someone said that they would like one of his carvings for his sister or other family members I felt at that moment that I was handing the carving to the family member myself." Today, Tom has a replica of the USS Ticonderoga that he made while

aboard the ship proudly displayed in his room.

Tom skillfully makes ships of various sizes; little ones that could be placed on the office desk and larger ones to be displayed on mantels. He makes the parts separately (i.e., wooden sails, riggings, mast and anchor) and when the time is ready he glues the pieces together for completion. To the untrained eye, it appears that the ship was literally carved out of one piece of wood. Tom does various forms of carving. He also creates works of art that would totally surprise you. He has in his room a beautiful circus wagon with an elephant inside the wagon. After viewing the wagon, I was surprised to find out that the entire cage with the elephant inside was made from one piece of wood. Tom, softly stated, "I reached through the bars to carve out the elephant."

While in his room sitting at his desk, for relaxation, he makes pocket knives. Tom has been blessed with the ability to carve from wood and says, "If I can see it in my mind, I can carve it." He says it's like oil painting. Most oil painters set up their easels out along the stream or woods and they look and they paint each tree and bush. The wood carving and oil sculptures are different. You don't have to have anything to look at. It has to be in your mind and you have to already know what it's going to look like. Sometimes I'm asked, "how did you do that" and tell them that I looked at that piece of wood until I saw the giraffe and I just whittle the rest of the wood away.

Tom was recently approached during lunch by a resident requesting that he restore a ship that had been destroyed in the Sheridan Building. She knew that Tom possessed the skills needed to repair the ship after viewing his craftsmanship on the sailing ship located in the library of the Scott building that he had restored to perfection. Tom, without hesitation, said that he would restore the ship but stated that he would like a bracket placed on the wall so that this type of accident would not reoccur.



Tom's proudly shows his wood carvings displayed in his room.

Over the many years of wood carving, he stated that his real payment is the pleasure of giving his wood work to others so that they too can appreciate the joy of just looking at it as he does.



This is a circus wagon with an elephant inside that Tom carved from one piece of wood.

Army veteran's goal is to learn something new everyday

By William Tobin

YES, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus! Those words are printed in many papers around the country at this time of year. They epitomize the worries of a young girl, approaching womanhood, who needs assurance that things are really all right in her world. It's a feel good story, and neatly apropos at this time of year. And it's a sentence that I'm sure Gracie Carpenter (her given, maiden name, although she prefers Grace) would like to tell all of us

She has unwittingly done so already by her actions, demeanor, and fortitude in her daily life, as many of us, who have come in contact with her have found to be true.

Grace was born in Fort Worth, Texas in ????. (Women really DO NOT want their age revealed). Her father was involved in the construction of missile silos around the country at the time, (The Cold War Era), and her family moved around a lot. In her travels she found that she liked Abilene, Kansas, the best. She graduated from high school in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1967, and, following a few nondescript jobs, she enlisted in the Army in 1968. It was off to Ft. McClellan, Ala., for basic training, followed by being posted to Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, where she became a clerk and worked in COMMO. Then it was on to Colorado

Springs, and back to Ft. McClellan where she became a Drill Sgt., wearing the WAC's equivalent of the Australian bush hat with the upper flap on the opposite side of the head. Was she a mean, bad a--? She doesn't think so, and so conjecture will take over. This was a two year tour followed by a transfer to Morehead State University as an ROTC instructor. She was the first female ROTC instructor at that university. This lasted for four years and was followed by a posting to Mannheim, Germany, which lasted for six years. While there she married a British subject, then moved to Atlanta, Ga., for a year. Next it was back to Mannheim where she retired from the Army. It was also there that she was separated, and divorced, from her husband.

From Germany it was back to Ft. Worth to live and work until 1987 when she went to Oklahoma City to work for the state tax commission. She did this until 1992 when she retired "totally" and took care of her mother for the next 10 years until her mother's passing in 2000. In 2002 the roof fell in when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a nasty, debilitating disease. In April of 2003 she applied for admission to the AFRH's "home" in Washington, DC, and was approved for admission in June. At that time she could hardly walk and went to Walter Reed for physical therapy

(whirlpool) which really helped her mobility. She was inspired by the attitudes of the young GIs there who had been injured in Iraq and her own inner fortitude and determination came to the fore. Today she is admired by all who know her, and has progressed from a wheel chair to a BPV (which she uses on long trips from her room in the Lady Sheridan to the Dining Hall) and her best liked "Shoe Leather Express." At present she is enrolled in ITT Tech where she's majoring in Computer Drafting and Design. Every 12 weeks a new term starts. When the first quarter ended she had a GPA of 3.0. Classes are three days or nights each week, which suits her just fine as she feels she has to learn something new every day.

The school is in Springfield and to get there she drives herself. Already she has several



Grace Carpenter slows down a moment to have a photo taken. Grace is busy going to school three days a week, majoring in Computer Drafting and Design. She has been a resident here since 2003.

job offers in the wind for the future. But she says her future is now and her ideology and philosophy at present is, No Complaints!

The dangers of alcohol consumption in the elderly

*Dr. Sissay Awoke, Medical Director
(Extracted from Senior Health – NIH)*

Is drinking alcohol harming your health now? Or, will it be harmful to you later in life? Should you stop drinking alcohol? Are you a binge drinker?

Most adults who drink alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, liquor) consume safe and healthy amounts; however, studies show that 1 in 13 American adults abuse alcohol or show alcohol dependency, which can cause considerable harm to their health and disruption in their lives.

1. What is a drink? A standard drink is:

- a. One 12 ounce container of beer, or
- b. One 5 ounce glass of wine, or
- c. 1.5 ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits

But, do you know that even moderate drinking, under certain circumstances, is not risk free? The associated risks in consuming alcohol are:

1. Creating problems with family, friends, and co-workers, like--
 - a. Arguments with or estrangements from your spouse and other family members.

- b. Strained relationship with co-workers
- c. Absence from or tardiness to work with increasing frequency
- d. Loss of employment due to decreased productivity
- e. Committing or being the victim of violence

2. Health problems: Alcohol affects many organs of the body. Long-term, heavy drinking of alcohol may put you at risk for developing serious health problems, such as:

a. Liver Disease: More than two million Americans suffer from alcohol-related liver diseases like:

(1) Hepatitis: An inflammation of the liver. Alcoholic hepatitis can be serious and fatal. If you stop drinking, this condition can be reversed.

(2) Cirrhosis of the Liver: 10 to 20% of heavy drinkers develop alcoholic liver cirrhosis, which is scarring of the liver and the liver shrinks in size and loses its normal texture. This condition can

lead to death or predisposes you to a type of liver cancer. Although liver cirrhosis is not reversible, if you stop drinking, the chance of survival improves considerably.

b. Heart Disease: Alcohol consumption can create severe heart disease known as alcoholic cardiomyopathy. Alcohol causes a weakening of the heart muscle, i.e., the heart becomes weak and unable to pump blood to be circulated. This will cause multi-organ failure and leads to death.

c. Pancreas: The pancreas is an organ which regulates blood sugar levels of the body by producing insulin. It also secretes other enzymes, which help in digesting fat. Alcohol causes an inflammation of the pancreas known as Pancreatitis. When it is inflamed, it may reduce or stop secreting insulin and other enzymes, which can cause diabetes, diarrhea, and weight loss. An inflamed pancreas can later develop into pancreatic cancer, which is a very aggressive and fatal cancer. Once you develop pancreatic cancer, the life

expectancy is no more than 6 months.

d. Interaction with Medications: Alcohol interacts negatively with more than 150 medications. Most commonly taken drugs, like antihistamines, when taken with alcohol, can cause more drowsiness and confusion. Tylenol, when taken with alcohol, can cause liver disease, which can be fatal.

Other side effects of alcohol, when taken regularly and in excess, are impotence or sexual dysfunction, nerve damage, and memory loss or dementia.

In general, more than two drinks of alcohol in males and one drink in females can be harmful. You should respect alcohol as a drug and stay away from it !!!!

World War II Museum announces plans for major expansions, expects to draw 250,000

By Bruce Egger
Newhouse News Service

New Orleans - Building a \$300 million museum in post-Katrina New Orleans is no walk in the park, but then neither was Iwo Jima.

After Hurricane Katrina, many people expected the National World War II Museum to abandon the ambitious expansion program it announced three years ago, its president said last week.

The museum's board of trustees felt differently, museum President Gordon "Nick" Mueller told the New Orleans City Planning Commission.

"This museum is about the American spirit, and we thought we had to display a little bit of that spirit," Mueller said.

"Things were tough during World War II, too," he said.

As a result, even before fund raising is complete, the museum is ready to begin demolishing several buildings and constructing the first phase of an expansion that, once complete, will quadruple its size and help attract as many as 750,000 to 1 million visitors a year, three to four times a year as many as it was drawing before Katrina.

Officials hope to put the work out to bid by March or April.

The brainchild of historian Stephen Ambrose, the Warehouse District attraction opened in June 2000 as the National D-Day Museum and was renamed six years later. It has been designated by Congress as the country's official World War II museum.

The museum was drawing about 260,000 visitors a year before Katrina shut it down for three months. Attendance has revived to just under half the former level.

Eighty percent of the visitors come

from out of town, Mueller said, and as many as 72,000 a year have cited the museum as their No. 1 reason for visiting New Orleans, making it one of the city's major "destination attractions."

The targeted deadline for finishing the \$300 million expansion, originally set for 2011, was pushed back to 2014 after Katrina. Mueller said he expects the completed museum will bring 250,000 destination visitors a year to the city.

The expansion - eight buildings totaling about 245,000 square feet, all grouped around a central "parade ground" - will cover all theaters of the war and the U.S. military services involved. Scholarship will be facilitated by a national center for research on the war.

(Reprinted, with permission, courtesy of the Times Picayune)

Military Historical Milestones

U.S. Air Force

2 January 1942 - Gen. H.H. Arnold directed the establishment of a new numbered Air Force, later designated the 8th Air Force.

U.S. Army

150 years ago - Fort Randall, South Dakota, was built to replace Fort Pierre. Soldiers posted there helped maintain peace among Sioux, Ponca, and other tribes, in addition to protecting settlers.

U.S. Marine Corps

19 February 1945 - 4th and 5th Marine Divisions invaded Iwo Jima after a somewhat ineffective bombardment lasting 72 hours. The 28th Regiment, 5th Division, was ordered to capture Mount Suribachi. They reached the base of the mountain on the afternoon of February 21, and by nightfall the next day had almost completely surrounded it.

U.S. Navy

7 January 1963 - The USS Buck (DD 761) while operating off San Clemente Island, California, completed Ships Qualification Trials and became the first United States warship to receive operational drone helicopters, which were delivered by flying them from the Island out to the ship.



When the World War II museum expansion is complete, the site will have eight buildings, totalling 245,000 square feet, all grouped around a central parade ground. The museum will cover all theaters of war and the military services involved.

**You don't want to miss the
Old Guard Museum Tour - Fort Myer
on Monday, Feb 26th. Sign up begins Tuesday, Feb 20th.**



Deal me in...

Bert Huff, left, enjoys a game of cards with Norman Godfrey. Bert was diagnosed over 10 years ago with macular degenerative eye disease and, with the help of his fellow residents, still plays cards and he especially has enjoyed learning how to play bunco and plays every week. Though he is legally blind, Bert still finds time to volunteer and this past holiday season helped to hang decorations in Scott and Sheridan.

What is bunco?

Bunco: Strictly speaking, bunco is a game of dice, played in rounds. Players take turns rolling the dice and trying to accumulate as many points as possible to win each round. The game is played at tables of four in competing teams of two.

Players score points by rolling three dice and trying to match the number they're supposed to roll for that round. They get a point for each die that rolls the number, and if all three roll the number they score 21 points. They also score 5 points for rolling three of a kind of any other number. They get to keep rolling as long as they score one or more points with each roll. Once they fail to score they pass the dice to their left and the opposing team gets a chance to score.

During each round the teams at the Head Table try to score 21 points. The first team to score 21 points wins the round and play stops. At all other tables play stops when the Head Table play stops and the team with the highest score at each lower table wins the round.

At the end of the round players change seats, the winners at each of the lower tables move up a table, and the losers at the head table move to the lowest table. Players also switch partners at the end of the round, so you never play with the same partner twice in a row.

During play, players track the number of rounds they win and lose as a team, and the number of Buncos scored individually, on their personal scorecard. At the end of the night wins/losses and Buncos are tallied and prizes awarded.

Excerpted from the website www.bunco-roles.com.

He could easily do nothing

Story by Mary Kay Gominger

Photo by Sheila Abarr

Someone not so famous once said, "the problem with doing nothing is not knowing when you're finished." If you think about that statement, well, it sure says a lot. That is a problem with doing nothing. It so easily leads to doing more nothing. And therein lies the problem...nothingness can lead to loneliness, inactivity (both mentally and physically), isolation and depression, which in turn can create health problems such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease...the list goes on and on.

Meet, if you haven't already, resident Bert Huff. Bert, a 22-year Army retiree, has lived here for 19 months. The 86-year old was diagnosed nearly 10 years ago with dry macular degenerative eye disease, a condition for which there is no known cause or cure and which has left him legally blind. Bert also has complications with his leg that requires him to use a walker or other walking aid. For most people, the combination of these two challenges might lead to a life full of a lot of nothing. But not Bert – he wasn't ready to sit back and let life pass him by. He faced the challenges head on and today enjoys volunteering to help his fellow residents and participating in the many activities offered by Recreation Services and he weekly boards the bus and goes out into town to shop or attend a function. One thing he really enjoys too is playing bunco (for more on bunco, see accompanying article) with his fellow residents where he relies on them to read the dice to him.

"We have a ball playing bunco," Bert said. "My fellow residents are extremely helpful and there have been times when I've walked away with a little money in my pocket," he said with a laugh. "Those Gulfport residents know bunco and they make sure all the rules are followed and we all just have a great time."

Bert explained that he went through a period of denial when he first started noticing his failing sight. Eventually, though, he realized that he had to accept the reality of his condition but that he didn't have to succumb to the limitations one might imagine comes with losing your sight. With a little research, he found a course offered in Connecticut to help people afflicted with sight loss in coping with their environment.

"I attended this school for six weeks," said Bert. "It was the best thing I ever did for myself. They taught me skills to adapt to the community including how to safely navigate my walker and how to use public transportation. I get around better and feel more secure now than ever."

Volunteering is another way Bert stays involved with others and does his part to help.

"I really never thought I could make much of a difference by volunteering, what with having my problems," said Bert. "But a friend asked me at church to help out after I'd been here about six months and I enjoyed it so much I've been volunteering ever since."

Bert spends a lot of his time at King Health Center helping with parties and sitting with the residents. He also was instrumental in decking all the halls this past holiday season, sorting ornaments by the shape and feel of them.

"It took us about a week to decorate each floor in both buildings," said Bert. "I worked about 40 hours that week but the place looked great."

Looking at Bert's life now, volunteering, playing bunco, shopping...sure sounds like someone that has decided to do the opposite of nothing. And that's the problem with doing something – you never have the time to get it all done. But it sure is fun trying.

You've got mail!

The gateway to new means of communicating only a click away

Story by Mary Kay Gominger

Photos by Sheila Abarr

Are you one of those people that would like to learn about computers but just don't know where to start? Or maybe your kids or grandkids would like to send you emails full of photos and news about their lives but you don't have a computer and even if you did, you have no idea of how to send or receive emails. And what is the big deal about the internet, you might be asking yourself.

If you see yourself in one of these scenarios then read on, there's an easy solution for you. Beginner computer classes are now being offered at the library, and are available for any resident that is interesting in learning about computers.

The course is sponsored by Recreation Services and according to Computer Instructor Marie Wray, the two classes underway now are full with 32 residents attending.

"We have classes on Monday and Friday, at 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., and they last for six weeks. So far the response has been very encouraging," she said. "Many residents say their kids want to buy them computers so they can email them but that just doesn't seem possible for someone that knows little or nothing about a computer. So they put off getting the computer. At the completion of this class, the stu-

dents will be able to understand the basic operation of a computer, they will have an email address and will know how to send and receive emails. They are very excited about learning," she added.

Marie is a graduate of Howard University and has over 16 years experience in electronics. She's worked at several jobs that required her to train others on the computer, one being with Apple Retail, which she did for two years.

Recently, Marie got involved in caring for her sick mother and this experience gave her a sensitivity to the fact that senior citizens have specific needs and through working with seniors she has learned to speak to their needs and teach at their skill level, which is not the same as a generation that grew up with computers at their schools and in their homes.

"I know that enhancing ways they can communicate with their family and friends will improve their quality of life and add a connection to their families that they don't have now," Marie said. "I've heard some of the residents in my classes say things like, 'my son is so happy I'm learning how to receive emails,' and 'my daughter has been begging me to let her get me a computer so we can email back and forth but I just didn't know how.'

Classes underway now will finish up in mid-February. If you are interested in signing up for the next series of beginner

computer classes, you can do so at the library. If you know computer basics but are interested in advanced computer skills, stop by and talk to Marie. She is interested in teaching an advanced computer skills course, if the interest is there.

Right - Phillip Smith learns the basics of getting around the computer.

Below - Instructor Marie Wray helps Frances Scott set up an email account.



“Joining the Navy was the best thing I ever did...”

Resident spent life giving, now enjoys retirement

Story by Mary Kay Gominger

Photos by Sheila Abarr

Imagine, if you will, how much collective knowledge of, well, just about everything, that we have right here at the AFRH. The group of veterans that live here have served in all branches of the service, in places all over the world, performing jobs that cover every possible task imaginable. If there was a way to count the number of years experience all the residents have together, the figures would be staggering.

Take for instance, resident Anna Marie Anderson. Anna, 83, has lived here almost a year. She's retired Navy (10 years active, 10 years reserve), and the list of jobs she has held since her retirement is impressive. Check this out: Anna worked 10 years as an Adult Business Education teacher; two years as manager of a business school for Spanish-speaking students in California; one year as principal of the Business College in Norfolk,



Anna Marie displays some of her favorite memorabilia from her days in the Navy. Her shipmates bronzed her senior chief cover when she retired.

California; over two years as secretary to an Air Force general at the American Embassy in Germany; one year as secretary to the president of Sea World, a year as secretary to 28 aerospace engineers at NASA in San Diego; two years as manager of a business college in Virginia Beach; four years as Dean of Adult Education at Community College, New Bern, N.C.; six months as the first civilian manager of a Navy women's barracks at NAS Norfolk;

Educational Services Coordinator, Naval Air Station, Point Mugu, Calif.; and Public Relations Specialist at Point Mugu.

Anna said she moved around so much following her husbands' career.

“I never had any trouble finding a job when we moved,” the retired yeoman senior chief petty officer said. “I loved all of them, especially my years in the Navy. I'd go back tomorrow if I could.”

When Anna enlisted in 1944, she said she did so out of patriotism and it was what all her friends were doing.

“Actually I initially wanted to join the Coast Guard but I couldn't get a ride to Long Beach (California) to sign up so I found the local Navy recruiting station and joined up.” Anna said.

Anna said she would tell all young ladies today that joining the Navy was the best thing she ever did.

“I'd say go for it. You can be anything you want to be. The educational benefits alone are worth every minute of your time in the service,” she said.

Her awards include American Campaign, National Defense, World War II Victory, Naval Reserve Meritorious Service, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Navy Achievement and Navy Commendation.

Anna was also involved in many national organizations and held offices in most of them. Because they are so lengthy, her membership associations are listed below.

These days, Anna spends most of her time reading books.

“We have such a lovely library here and such a large selection of books. I just get in my scooter and browse the isles. Coming here was the best thing I could have done,” she said.



Anna Marie Anderson holds up a picture of her in uniform. Anna Maria retired from the Navy as a senior chief petty officer.

Anna Marie Anderson's lifetime involvement in variety of service organizations

Alpha Iota Int. Honorary Business Sorority, life member

Member of American Legion since 1950

Member of Navy League, San Diego, Norfolk and Point Mugu

Past member of Business Professional Women's Club

Member of Women of the Moose

Instrumental in organization of Silver Salts (Navy Women) San Diego

Chapter and life member of WAVES National Corporation, National First Vice President, 1983-84; National President 1984-88

Life member of Naval Enlisted Reserve Association since 1968

Life member Fleet Reserve Association

Life member Navy Club, Ships Writer-Ship 34

14 years active membership in National Association of Parliamentarians

Served as secretary of the Navy Retiree Committee, 1991-93 – first woman and first reservist

Charter member and officer of Navy Women's Foundation. Served 1987 as State Volunteer with AARP in California, last three

years as State Director. Was State Coordinator for Widowed Persons Service in Illinois

Charter and life member of National Chief Petty Officer Association, National President 1984-88

AFRH-G's historic relics safe with Navy gunnersmates

Story and photos by Mary Kay Gominger

Two active duty Navy enlisted gunners mates from the 20th Seabee Readiness Group, headquartered at the Naval Construction Battalion Center (Seabee Center) located several miles west of the AFRH-G, have spent and will continue to spend many tedious hours laboring on a project for the residents of the AFRH.

For those of you that lived at AFRH-G prior to Hurricane Katrina, you will remember the antique rifles and swords that were displayed in the main lobby and in the dining room area on the south wall (for those who never visited the home, read on, you'll enjoy the story too). We had 20 1870 Springfield rifles with bayonets and 40 cutlasses. These historic and valuable pieces of weaponry came from the original Naval Home located in Philadelphia and transferred to Gulfport when the Home was relocated in 1976.

The antique weapons, along with nearly all of our treasured memorabilia located throughout the 11 stories of the building, were saved by AFRH staff and hard working Seabees that worked continuously in the months after the storm, retrieving these items and relocating them to save them from the heat and humidity of the south Mississippi summer. The weapons arrived at the Armory of the Seabee Center several months after the storm, unharmed but definitely showing wear and tear from the ravages of south Mississippi weather. That's where the Seabees have come to our rescue.

GMC(SW) James King and GM1(SCW) Brandon Miles received the AFRH-G's antique weapons at the Armory and upon inspection of them, they knew they wanted to try and restore them to the original state.

“We don't get to work on things like this normally,” Chief King said. “So when I saw what we had, I went to work researching what solvents and cleaners to use for metals and wood used back in that era. It was interesting to read about the history of those weapons and I've enjoyed being involved in this project.”

Chief King said he discovered in his research that the Navy only had 10,000 of the 1870 Springfield rifles made. These 20, he said, are real collector's items.

“There just aren't that many of them in circulation anymore,” he said, “especially ones in the good condition these are in.”

Chief King and CM1 Miles anticipate that each weapon will take about three days to completely tear down, clean, condition and



CMI(SCW) Brandon Miles (left) and GMC(SW) James King look over the row of 1870 Springfield rifles they are cleaning and storing for the AFRH. The antique weapons will remain safely stored at the Seabee Center Armory until the Gulfport facility reopens.

put back together. That's if they were only working on this project.

“We are spending an hour here and an hour there as we have to continue to perform our regular duties here at the Armory,” CM1 Miles said. “So it's going to take awhile for us to get this done. But we don't mind, it's been interesting and we'll keep working until we get them all finished.”

In addition to restoring the 20 1870 Springfield rifles, the two Seabees are also restoring the 40 cutlasses, spending countless hours cleaning and buffing them to their natural beauty.

The antique weapons will remain secured at the Seabee Center Armory until it's time for them to be returned to our new facility where they will once again be on display for all to see and enjoy.



Chief King displays some of the parts of a rifle he has taken apart for refurbishing.