



Armed Forces Retirement Home

Communicator

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ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

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2010

Scott building to undergo \$70 million renovation

The year 2010 will be a big year for the residents, staff and stakeholders of the Armed Forces Retirement Home for not only will they be celebrating the opening of the new Gulfport facility (see story below) but on the DC campus, major renovations will begin on the Scott building.



Solon J. Goodno and other residents listen as they are briefed on the upcoming Scott building renovations.

The Scott building, the oldest of three operational dormitories at AFRH-Washington (LaGarde, Sheridan and Scott), accommodates resident and guest rooms as well as chaplain offices, dining services, the library, the wellness center which encompasses both medical, dental and eye clinics and resident services. It presently houses 475 independent and assisted living residents. The renovation is part of the AFRH Capitol Improvement Plan and the request for use of \$70 million from the AFRH Trust Fund was submitted along with the 2009 annual budget for approval by both the Department of Defense and the Office and Management and Budget, as well as the President and Congress.

"We are very excited about being able to improve the quality of living for our residents here in DC," said Chief Operating

Officer Timothy Cox. "This building has served its purpose very well for many years but now it's time to upgrade to meet today's standards in both senior living and energy efficiency."

Although the design phase of the Scott building won't begin until FY 2009, the AFRH management team has already conducted informational meetings with members of the Resident Advisory Council and last week staff members participated in an initial brainstorming session to discuss the strategic movement of services and residents.

"Our goal is to turn the Scott building into a new high-performance, ADA compliant, environmentally friendly, comfortable resident dormitory with as little disruption as possible for our residents," said Mr. Cox.

A Townhall meeting will be held in the Theater on Feb. 5 at 10 a.m. to update all staff on the Scott building renovations. Residents are invited to attend.



AFRH Chief Financial Officer Steve McManus addresses members of the Resident Advisory Council in a meeting on January 16, 2008 and announces the news of the Scott building renovation.

In Gulfport

Breaking ground for new facility

Gulfport, Miss. - On Monday, March 3, 2008 at 10 a.m., the General Services Administration (GSA) is hosting a groundbreaking ceremony for the new AFRH facility, replacing the former structure that was built in 1976 and severely damaged in 2005 by Hurricane Katrina. GSA was designated by Congress in PL-109-234 as the lead construction agency on behalf of AFRH and the Department of Defense.

Approximately \$240 million dollars was appropriated by Congress for the demolition and rebuild of the new facility.

The Main Building consists of: approximately 660,000 gross square feet that will provide the full spectrum of continuing care retirement living: independent living, assisted living, and long-term care. The building will accommodate 584 residents complete with controlled parking, complete landscaping of entire site, including walking paths, outdoor areas, and recreation areas.

MaChis Lower Creek Indian Tribe of Samson, Alabama, completed the demolition of the former facility in December 2007. GSA issued a Notice to Proceed to Yates Construction of Biloxi, Miss., on January 3. The Design/Build Team is made up of W.G. Yates & Sons Construction Company, URS

Corporation and SFCS. URS Corporation will provide design and engineering services and SFCS will serve as the lead architect. SFCS is recognized as experts in the design of senior care facilities in the U.S.

The timeline for the completion of the project is July 2010.

Visit www.afrh.gov for updates and the latest photos of the progress of this project.



Pictured is an architect's rendition of the new Gulfport facility currently under contract for construction. The building's completion date is set for July 2010.

Inside this Issue



Residents turn out for Book Fair

Page 5



One soldier's history

Pages 6 & 7



Resident/staff bowling

Page 8

Notes from the Resident Advisory Council



Well, I hope that you have had the opportunity to view the last Resident Advisory Council meeting on Channel 99. The comments that I heard about the meeting have been positive. So much so, that the meetings will continue to be recorded and broadcast. My main reason for recording the meetings is to insure that a larger number of people feel that they have knowledge of what is going on and to stop wholesale rumors about the RAC and just what we do at our meetings. Just for your information our last meeting was very well attended so much so that if that continues, the meeting site may have been changed.

Another change that you will notice is that I am going to be setting up shop in the RAC office (Sheridan Building, Fifth Floor, Room 5017) every Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 3 p.m., starting February 5, 2008. While mainly serving as a time when your elected (and appointed) floor representatives can meet with me to give me your suggestions or questions about problems in your daily life, You can, if needed, bypass your floor representative and offer your suggestions for improvements, directly to the Chairman of the RAC. Again this will shorten the time in getting suggestions into the system just a little faster. The quicker we can start working on problems etc., the quicker those problems can be solved.

At the last RAC meeting we had reports on many items that people had been asking about ranging from what is going to happen to the Scott Building (yes, Virginia; there will be a complete reworking of the Scott Building, starting sometime in 2010.) This area will be addressed by Mr. Steven McManus in future columns of the Communicator.

Also at the last meeting Mr. Dickerson addressed the problems with the AAFES Lounge. The RAC hopes that this problem will be resolved in the near future and that, either under AAFES or some non-governmental organization or firm, that the area of the former lounge can reopen.

Those of you who have digital television will be happy to hear that the equipment that is needed to allow you to watch channel 100 has finally arrived and will be installed and functioning soon.

I wish to take just a few moments to ask your involvement in becoming a member of our RAC team. I would really like to see two residents on each floor of both the Sheridan and Scott buildings become floor representatives, working to solve the everyday problems that happen to most of us. You know those problems - no hot water, elevators that stop working at the weirdest times and other common everyday problems, things that make no headlines but can cause discomfort to you and others. Things like going to the dining facility to eat a hot meal and finding that it is cold. Or wanting something cool and finding that the machine is broken. Or going down to wash your clothes and finding that all the machines stopped working just before you got there. I am firmly convinced that if these small problems are noted, reported, and fixed as soon as possible, we feel better not only about our home, but of those who live or work here. And as simple as these things are to solve they also increase your life span by making sure that your blood pressure does not go off the chart; lowering the chances of your suffering a heart attack.

Esker F. McConnell

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. The articles included in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the management, staff, or residents of the AFRH.

Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi



Become a resident today!

AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement communities are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

Eligibility:

Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH.

The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not active commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer), are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home:

- **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 AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH PAO/Marketing, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

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

Marines from Quantico visit residents of AFRH

On Wednesday, January 16, 2008, 47 representatives from the Retired Activities Section, Separation and Retirement Branch Headquarters in Quantico, Virginia, visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

While here, the group toured the bowling center, the wood shop, the fitness center, PX, ceramics, library, theater, and wellness center. The Marines also had lunch and enjoyed fellowship with residents in the dining hall.



Message from the Chief Operating Officer



The new year is well underway now and we have many special events and project milestones to look forward to as the year progresses. Here are a

few highlights of what you can expect this year.

On February 19, President Lincoln's Cottage, located just west of the Sherman Building, will be open to the public for the first time. Just adjacent to the Cottage is the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center. It will feature exhibits exploring the history of the Solders' Home, wartime Washington, DC, Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief and a special exhibit gallery. The cost of the restoration, sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is \$15 million. The opening of President Lincoln's Cottage is a welcome addition to our campus.

Monday, March 3, is the date established by GSA for the official groundbreaking for our new facility in Gulfport. Yates Construction is on site now and will perform the design/build portion of the project. We will continue to provide you pictures and updates on our website and in the *Communicator*.

This summer AFRH will undergo an Inspector General (IG) Inspection. As required by law, every three years the Inspector General of a military department inspects the AFRH, including the records, to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations pertaining to nursing care, long-term care, and medical facilities. The Department of the Air Force IG inspected the AFRH in 2005. The Department of the Army's IG Inspection Team will be performing the inspection of AFRH in 2008. The exact date and schedule has not been determined. We've already hosted a few members of the team on campus for pre-inspection visits and look forward to having the whole team aboard later this year.

The Triennial Inspector General inspection will focus on the overall administration and management of the AFRH. A civilian accrediting agency will inspect and accredit the AFRH medical services. The military Inspectors General will review the accreditation report from the civilian agency to ensure appropriate AFRH follow-up. The accreditation report will accompany the Inspector General inspection report.

Governing legislation mandates that the triennial inspection be scheduled after the medical services triennial accreditation has occurred and AFRH has received the accreditation report. The medical services

triennial accreditation visit shall be scheduled in advance to allow sufficient time for the Triennial Inspector General inspection to be conducted within the required three-year period. The triennial inspection will last approximately 30-60 days.

In 1998, the Army led the Triennial Inspector General's inspection of the AFRH and recommended many changes. The AFRH adopted and implemented most of the changes. In an effort to better prepare for the upcoming Army-led Triennial Inspection, the AFRH IG recently attended the Army's Inspector Training in Ft. Belvoir, Va. The training

was a three-week high intensity course, covering all areas of inspections conducted by the Army. The AFRH IG completed the course and is now certified as an Army IG.

In the midst of all these upcoming events and activities, we are also staying focused on our Washington Master Plan. Here's an update: In late March 2007, AFRH announced the selection of Crescent Resources, LLC, as the preferred entity to re-develop 77 acres of the AFRH campus. The proposal envisions approximately 4.5 million square feet of mixed use development, including; market-rate rental and condominium units, medical office space, a small hotel, a grocery store and other ancillary retail, transitional housing for military veterans, and more than 300 units of afford-

Visit www.afrh.gov for the latest updates and news at AFRH

able housing. A major requirement of the project is for the adaptive reuse of nine historic buildings and includes approximately 20 acres of open green space which will include a public garden and picnic grove, a civic green and memorial, and pedestrian and bicycle paths.

At this time, AFRH is nearly finished completing its Final Master Plan based on the selected developer's design concept and extensive stakeholder feedback. AFRH has issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for its selected development alternative, and is in the final stages of negotiating a Programmatic Agreement related to Historic Preservation between AFRH, the National Park Service, the DC State Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Master Plan will be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission in early 2008 with NCPC approval expected in the first quarter of 2008.

AFRH is also currently negotiating a Development Agreement and Master Lease with the selected developer, Crescent Resources, LLC. These agreements will govern the development protocol for the site and will outline the responsibilities of both parties as the development proceeds. Negotiations are expected to conclude in early 2008.

These are some highlights to expect in 2008. Next month I'll continue the update on future Scott Building renovations and information about the new Home Free System, a Wireless Resident Monitoring System that we will implement in 2008.

Tim Cox

Conversation with the Chief Financial Officer



We are into a new year and it looks bright. This month the President will deliver his State of the Union Address to the Nation followed by submission of his budget for Fiscal Year

2009 to Congress. The Home's Budget is one small piece of the President's Budget and goes forward to Congress at the same time. Both Department of Defense and the Office of Management and Budget have approved the renovation of our Scott Dormitory and \$70 million from the Trust Fund has been earmarked for the renovation in FY 2010. Our Budget Submit for FY 2009 includes the necessary funding, \$5.6 million to begin the planning and design for the renovation.

As many of you may know, I spoke with the RAC on 16 January about the renovation starting in 2010. It was a great discussion and served as the initiation of our communication plan. Hopefully your RAC representative has shared our conversation with each of you. Our intent is to work closely with the RAC and use them as a source of communication with each of you on the renovation. Through this type forum we hope to keep our information consistent and free following. We will also use C99/100, Weekly Bulletin, and the *Communicator* to keep you informed. If you have specific questions about the renovation please pass them to your RAC representative so your questions and the appropriate answers can be shared with all residents.

On a different subject, one of the residents was concerned about the Gulfport Resident Fund. Others have also raised concern in the past. After some thought and discussions with the resident, I told him I would do the following to keep residents better informed on the status of our Resident

Funds for both Gulfport and Washington:
 - Provide Quarterly updates to the RAC via the Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF) Council;
 - Provide an End of Year update to the RAC; and
 - Discuss the status of the Gulfport Resident Fund in my January article in the *Communicator*.

The Funds are both managed by the Department of the Navy's Morale, Welfare and Recreation organization in Millington, Tennessee. The funds are in good hands in Millington. The Gulfport Resident Fund is only touched once a year when funds are

moved from it to the Washington Fund as discussed in my *Communicator* article below.

The first time I addressed the Gulfport Resident Fund was in my November 2006 *Communicator* article. If any of you are interested you can find the article at the following website: http://www.afrh.gov/afrh/news/newslet/newslet_1106communicator.pdf. Computers are available in the Scott Building Library. If you need assistance, please let the staff know.

There was some belief that the Gulfport Fund was approximately \$1.5 mil-

lion prior to Hurricane Katrina. This is not true; here is some background information and a few numbers as reference points:

Conversion of Gulfport Resident Fund to Navy MWR on Sep 03:

Balance -	\$1,107,851.81
Balance end of FY05 -	\$1,181,776.95
Balance end of FY06 -	\$1,188,495.49
Balance as of December 31, 2007 -	\$1,247,855.56

I hope this helps clarify the status of the Gulfport Resident Fund. If you have any further questions please let me know. Keep your questions coming.

Steve McManus

American Legion visitors welcomed at AFRH

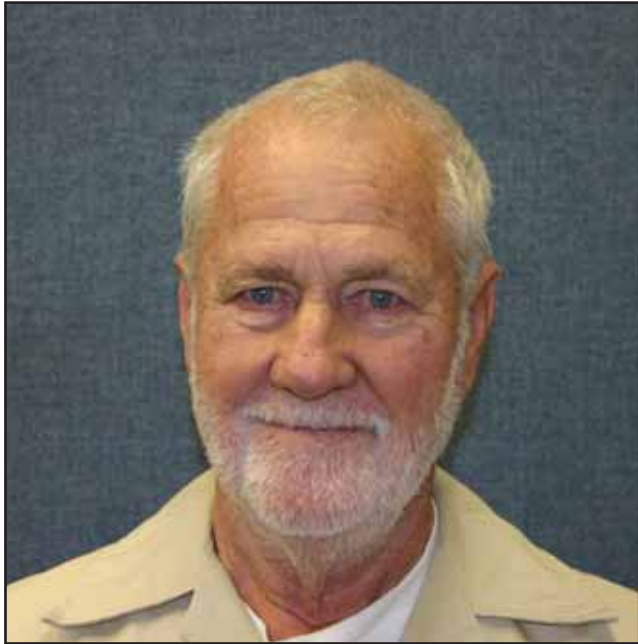
Although not part of the VA System, the American Legion members were interested in the operation of the AFRH. In 2003 the American Legion Past National Commander (PNC) Ronald F. Conley initiated a series of visits to Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) Medical Centers throughout the VA Healthcare System. The result was the acknowledgement that this is indeed, "A System Worth Saving."

As a note: At the American Legion National Convention in 2006, Resolution 206, the "Annual State of VA Medical Facilities Report," was again passed which authorizes a continuation of these visits. To fulfill the intent of this resolution, current National Commander Martin F. Conatser has appointed an American Legion Task Force to continue the review of VA facilities.

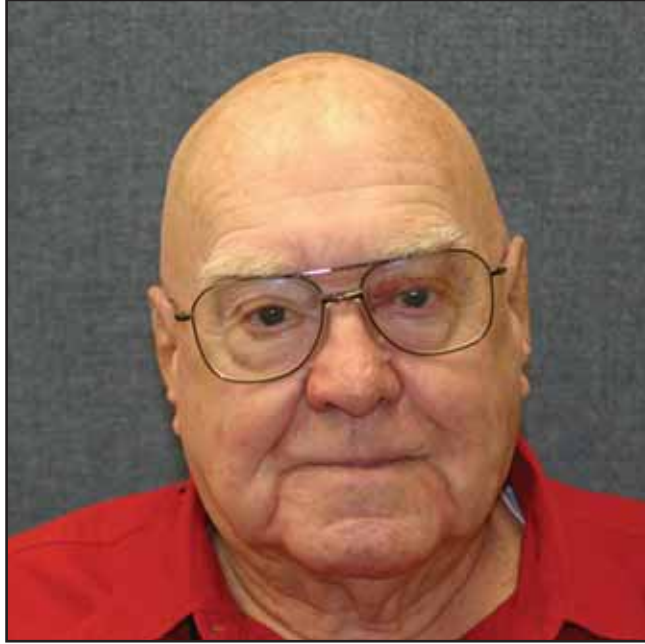


From left - Representatives from the American Legion National Headquarters John Hickey, Joseph Wilson and Denise Williams talk with AFRH staff member Brenda Samuels during a visit to the AFRH on January 24, 2008.

Welcome Aboard



Name: Felix J. Cormier
Branch of Service: US Air Force
Entry Date: 1944
Separation Date: 1966
Rank: E-7
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Routhal V. Ray
Branch of Service: US Navy
Entry Date: 1939
Separation Date: 1964
Rank: E-7
War Theaters: WWII, Korea & Vietnam



Name: Donald A. Wylie
Branch of Service: US Navy
Entry Date: 1943
Separation Date: 1964
Rank: E-6
War Theaters: WWII & Korea



Name: Alberta R. Jones
Branch of Service: US Navy
Entry Date: 1943
Separation Date: 1945
Rank: E-6
War Theaters: WWII



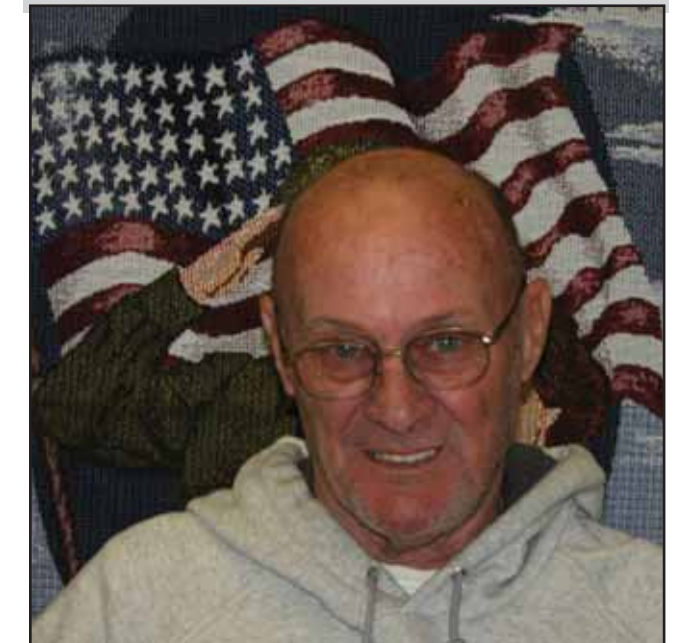
Name: John M. Taylor
Branch of Service: US Air Force
Entry Date: 1941
Separation Date: 1963
Rank: E-8
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Henry A. Gillard
Branch of Service: US Air Force
Entry Date: 1946
Separation Date: 1967
Rank: E-6
War Theaters: WWII, Korea & Vietnam



Name: Robert Aldridge
Branch of Service: US Army
Entry Date: 1955
Separation Date: 1979
Rank: E-8
War Theaters: Vietnam



Name: John C. Bolduc
Branch of Service: US Air Force
Entry Date: 1956
Separation Date: 1976
Rank: E-6
War Theaters: Vietnam



Name: Rosemary Tully
Branch of Service: US Navy
Entry Date: 1943
Separation Date: 1945
Rank: E2
War Theaters: WWII

Chaplain's Corner

WISDOM – A RARE ART

God appeared in a dream and said, "Solomon, ask for anything you want, and I will give it to you." Solomon answered, "Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to rule Your people."

Probably today our leaders would ask for a high-speed computer and other high tech instruments which access information without limit. Solomon was a wise man. He could discourse on everything, from the mighty cedars of Lebanon to the moss which grows on the wall. But all Solomon's legendary wisdom and knowledge pales in comparison to that which is at the fingertips of today's schoolchild. No longer must we study and ponder and toil and "burn the midnight oil." It is all there at our touch of the keys. Even obscure documents in ancient idioms are available without toil.

But computer skill is not the same as wisdom. The end product may be the same, but the process is quite diverse. To think, to ponder, to study, to research, to translate are all very human actions:

they add to and enhance the life of the thinker, the ponderer, the student. We are more fully alive when we are thinking and learning. The information obtained from the computer is not really "ours" – it is not "alive" in our intelligence unless we make a deliberate effort to make it so. We must take care that we do not become robotic transmitters of knowledge and information which has lost its human dimension.

So while we necessarily utilize modern technology, we give priority to the "human." Like Solomon, we ask for wisdom and we embrace the toil involved in learning and in knowing so that our lives may be enhanced by that knowledge described as "immanent." We hold in high esteem all those who study and think. In earlier times the older generation "philosophized" more. They sat around and discussed the profound questions from deep within the soul – everyone's soul. Granted, it is much easier and more entertaining to tune into Judge Judy, but not much growth in wisdom results from such pursuits. So back to philosophizing, back to pondering, back to thinking, lest we become mere robots among robots.

Chaplain J. Isidore Dixon



Two residents check out a brand new vehicle at the Washington Auto Show.

Resident trip to Washington Auto Show

A group of residents took the opportunity on January 25 to see the latest and greatest in the car world by attending the Washington Auto Show, a trip sponsored by Recreation Services. Residents spent the afternoon peering under hoods and admiring high dollar vehicles that normally are seen only on tv or in magazines.

Check out the February Trip and Special Events calendar to see what's planned for next month. Sign up sheets are located in the Sheridan Libby, outside Room 1010, between 6:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.



A new Jeep goes through some maneuvers to show auto enthusiasts what it can do.

Good friends, good books and a sleepy conscience: this is the ideal life.
~Mark Twain

Residents benefit from Armed Forces Foundations' generous gift of books

By Mary Kay Gominger

It was Christmas in January for the residents of the AFRH. On Wednesday, January 23, 2008, the Armed Forces Foundation delivered \$21,000 worth of brand new books, DVDs and CDs to the residents.

"We are very pleased to host this free book fair for the residents of AFRH," said Lindsey Brothers, Director of Public Affairs for the Armed Forces Foundation, headquartered in Washington, DC. Nearly 100 residents attended the event and sifted through the many books and books on tape to make a selection.

"It was a huge donation," Lindsey said, "but everything we brought was taken by the residents and that is what we wanted. If they want to, in turn, donate these items back to the AFRH Library for someone else to enjoy then they can do that as well."

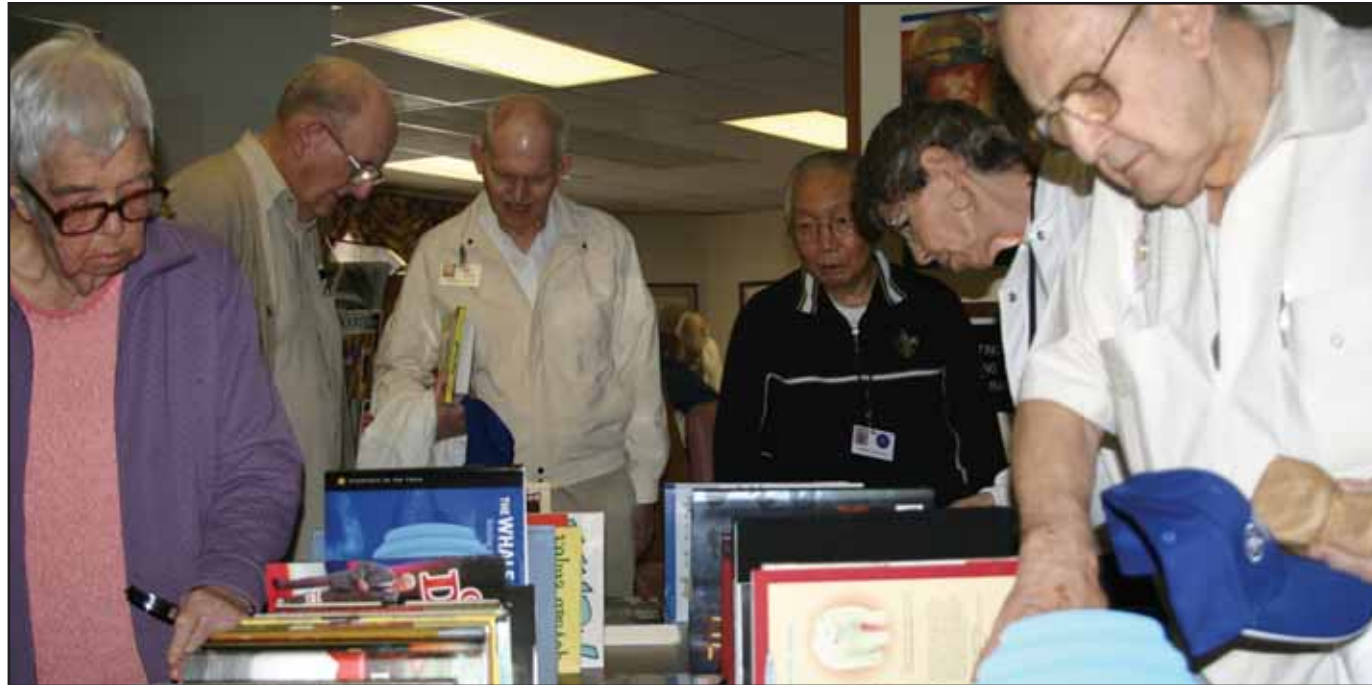
The Armed Forces Foundation is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization that was established in 2001 to promote the morale, welfare, and quality of life of the United States Armed Forces community, including active duty and retired personnel, National Guardsmen, reservists, and their families. The Foundation received the large donation of books and other material from USA Today and decided that it would be a perfect thing to give to the retirees and veterans of the AFRH.

Resident Robert Cornell said, "I thought it was great! I'd like to see something like this once a month."

For more information about the Armed Forces Foundation and the work they do, go to www.armedforcesfoundation.org.



From left - Creig Crippen and Edward Hyland browse through some books during the Book Fair. The Armed Forces Foundation donated \$21,000 worth of books, CDs and DVDs to AFRH residents.



From left - Althea Gramacke, Frank Nelson, Charles Modde, Minoru Nagaoka, Bernice Goldstein, and Robert Cornell sift through the many books donated to the residents.

AARP Income Tax Aide Program returns to AFRH

By Melodie Menke, Volunteer Services

In April 2007, AARP Income Tax-Aide program assisted 264 AFRH residents with their income taxes. This year again under the team leadership of John Willging, AARP DC State Coordinator, AARP Income Tax Counselors will be back to offer free income tax assistance to AFRH residents. Starting Saturday, February 2nd and every Saturday till April 12 and starting Thursday, February 7th and every Thursday till April 10, from 9 a.m. until noon in the Scott Building, Main Floor, Rooms 1301, 1304, 1306.

AARP Income Counselors have been certified by the IRS and will be electronically filing (E-File) your tax returns. Please note - AARP will file both federal and state or just federal but cannot file just state income taxes only.

Please bring the following items:

Last year's (2006) Federal and State Return 1099 - R Pensions Form
W-2 Forms if Applicable
Any 1099 Misc forms
1099 - Div- Dividend Forms
1099 - Int- Interest Forms
and a copy of blank or voided check if direct deposit of refund is requested.

Valentine's Day

On February 9 at 10 a.m., VA Valentines for Vets will visit the AFRH. More than 200 valentines will be delivered by the VA Board of Appeals and community volunteers will play cupid and deliver valentines to residents.

The Defense Intelligence Agency will host a Valentine's party on Feb. 12.

Bowling and Billiards

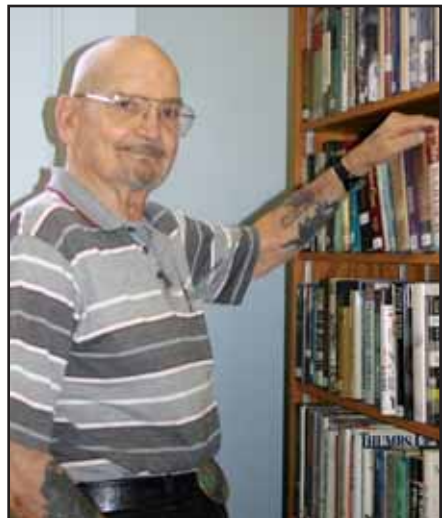
The Washington Gas Company Tournament event with bowling and billiards is scheduled for Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. Everyone is invited to come out and give our volunteers a warm welcome.

Military trivia

By the book

By Miles Medearis, ETC, USN(Ret)

I used to write for the library at the Naval Home and have really missed it. I went to the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home with the rest but had already fallen in love with the Gulf Coast and could not resist returning. I've been living in Theodore, Ala., since late 2005 where an extremely



gracious family took me in, waiting, somewhat impatiently, for July 2010.

So here I am again. Let's have some fun. I'll come up with a con-

troversial subject concerning the military, chew on it for a bit and then I invite your comments. Mary Kay and I will review and post a summary the following month.

What do you think about inviting the "heroes" back from Canada and the "All Volunteer Military?" It's been a few years and seems to be working well. I've sort of had mixed emotions about it. In the beginning, I was all for it; the military was underpaid and I believed that a professional military, paid on par with civilian counterparts, would solve a lot of problems. My

first retirement check as a Chief Petty Officer in May 1965 was \$197.50, after nineteen six and a day. Several years later, while serving as a Tech. Rep. for AirNavAids at the Naval Station, Keflavik, I voiced this in a personal conversation with the C.O. of the Marine Detachment. He said, and I remember his words, they were: "Miles, this great country of ours was founded on the Minute Man, the CITIZEN SOLDIER. Every citizen must be ready to pay the ultimate price for living free."

He changed my mind and almost every person I meet reflects that. I can talk to a person for five minutes and know if he has served in the military. Can anyone experience patriotism without having served their country? Women too. Those of you who lived at the AFRH-G a few months before Katrina must remember Jody, who tended bar in the Fiddler's Green, was in the Army Reserve and went to Saudi Arabia in 1991, and you could tell it just by talking to her. I truly believe that we are denying a large portion of our population the opportunity to learn what it means to be an AMERICAN! What say you?

History question of the month: What two officers were conferred ranks by congress of "Admiral of the Navy" and "General of the Armies," respectively.

Submit your comments to marykay.gominger@afrh.gov. See you next month.

History question of the month: What two officers were conferred ranks by congress of 'Admiral of the Navy' and 'General of the Armies' respectively?

February Trips and Special Events

- Friday, Feb. 1** - Mardi Gras party, 7:30 - 10:30 p.m. in the Scott Dining Hall.
- Sunday, Feb. 3** - Super Bowl XLII Pizza Party, 4 p.m. pre-game, 6:15 kickoff, Scott Theater
- Monday, Feb. 4** - National Geographic Museum, D.C. and Union Station, depart 9:30 a.m., return 3 p.m.
- Friday, Feb. 8** - Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Inner Harbor Food Court, Baltimore, Maryland. Cost \$6 payable at the door. Departs 9:30 a.m., returns 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 12** - NRA Firearms Museum & Cafe, Fairfax, Virginia. Departs 9:30 a.m., returns 1:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Feb. 14** - Valentine Ice Cream Social, 1:30 in Scott Dining Hall
- Monday, Feb. 18** - Mt. Vernon Estate, Virginia. Departs 9 a.m., returns 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 19** - AFRH Birthday Dinner, 4:30 p.m. Scott Dining Hall
- Friday, Feb. 22** - The National Great Blacks Wax Museum, Baltimore, Maryland, cost \$11 payable at the door. Departs 9:30 a.m., return 2 p.m.
- Saturday - Feb. 23** - Washington Gas Company vs AFRH Bowling and Pool tournament, 10 a.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 26** - Black History Day Celebration, 9 a.m.
- Thursday, Feb. 28** - Paramount Jazz Orchestra Concert, 6:30 p.m. in Scott Theater

There are many more trips and events scheduled during the month of February. See the February 2008 Trips and Special Events calendar to get a full listing. Don't forget, the Trip Selection Meeting is the first Wednesday of every month for the following month (this month it's Feb. 6). If there is a trip that you would like for Rec Services to check out, attend the monthly meetings and give your input.

Quote of the Month

On volunteering...

"Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love..."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Medal of Honor recipient

Army veteran paves the way for African Americans in the military

By CSM James Clifford, USA-Retired

The streets of Baltimore were abuzz on 17 September 1863 with word that a new Union regiment was marching from Camp Belcher on the western outskirts of town to the harbor. After two and a half years of war, the sight of soldiers in the city should not have caused great excitement. Not since 19 April 1861, when a secessionist mob brutally attacked the 6th Massachusetts and caused the first hostile deaths of the war, had there been such a stir. But on this day, the mere sight of the regiment caused some spectators' blood to boil. Even though Maryland was a Union state, its largest city was still a center of secessionist sympathies and racial intolerance, hence the excitement. Unlike the 6th Massachusetts, these soldiers were mostly black men, members of the 1,000-strong 4th United States Colored Infantry Regiment. In its front rank marched one familiar to many – fellow Baltimorean Christian Fleetwood.

Fleetwood was born in Baltimore on 21 July 1840 into a family of free blacks. He was raised in the Tyson Street home of John C. Brune, chairman of Baltimore's chamber of commerce and a wealthy sugar merchant. Fleetwood was expected to assume his father's position as the majordomo, or head butler, of the Brune house. The childless Mrs. Brune took personal charge of Fleetwood's upbringing and education, teaching him to read and write and allowing him free access to the family's ample library, where he honed his lifelong reading habit. As his education progressed, it became obvious that his talents would be wasted as a butler.

He was the clear choice to be chief West African representative for the Brune's sugar business. To prepare Fleetwood for such duties, Brune set him on a tour of the West African nations of Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1856. Upon his return, Fleetwood learned business under the tutelage of Dr. James Hall, director of the American Colonization Society, until he went to Oxford, Pennsylvania, to attain a formal education. As a student from 1857 to 1860 at the Ashmus Institute, later Lincoln University, he pursued a program of classical and business studies. When he returned to Baltimore, he began a three-year apprenticeship with the Baltimore shipping and commission agents G.W.S. Hall & Company, conducting business with Liberia and England.

While working at G.W.S. Hall, Fleetwood also became active in a literary organization, The Galbraith Lyceum. In 1863, Fleetwood founded the society's weekly journal, *The Lyceum Observer*, the first newspaper south of the Mason-Dixon Line owned and operated by (and for) African Americans.

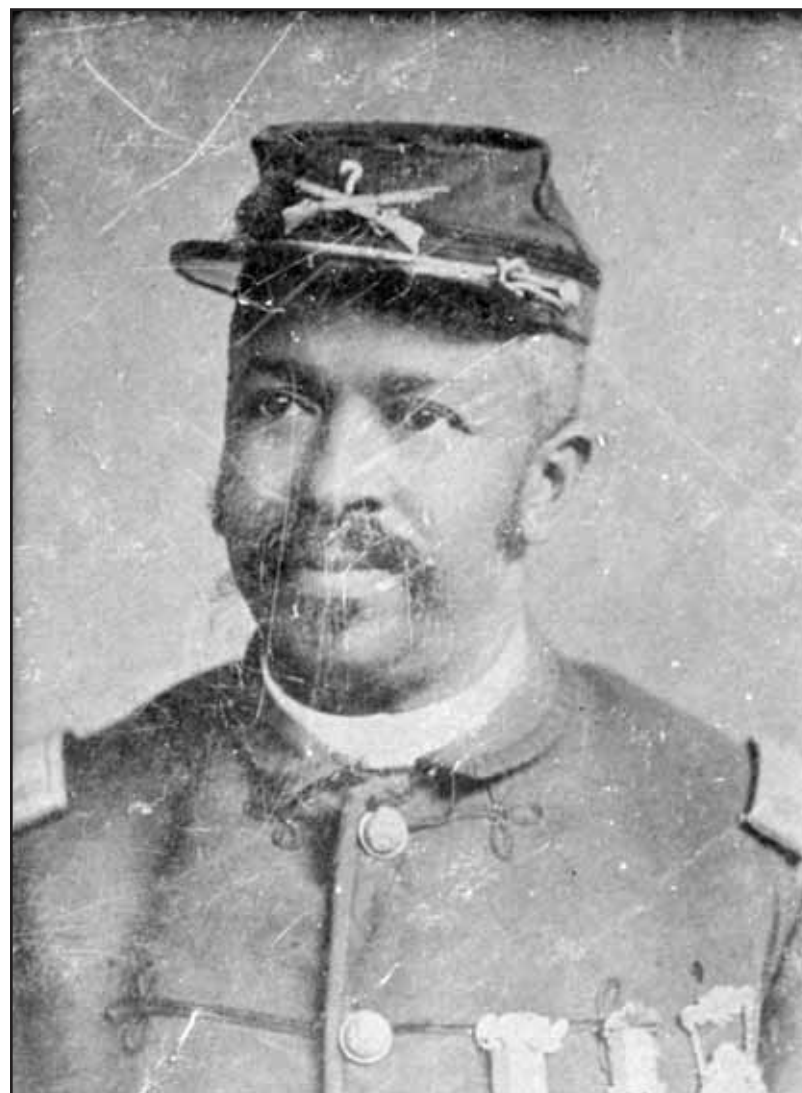
The Civil War created a unique opportunity for free blacks in America. By the summer of 1863, the Union Army, desperate for manpower, began mustering black volunteers into formations known collectively as the United States Colored Troops. One of those was the 4th United States Infantry, which was being raised in Maryland. After deliberating his options for several weeks, Fleetwood enlisted on 11 August. Eight days later, due to his intelligence, education, and experience, the mustering officer, COL William Birney, appointed Fleetwood to the rank of sergeant major – highest rank a black man could hold by law at that time.

On 28 September, the 4th U.S. colored Infantry shipped out of Baltimore on the transport *Milli Penty* bound for Hampton Roads, Virginia. Under the command

of COL Augustus Duncan, the regiment disembarked at Yorktown, Virginia.

Much is known about Fleetwood's activities as a soldier because he was an articulate and prolific writer. Like many soldiers throughout history, he kept a diary and wrote detailed letters of his experiences. Of his time on the Peninsula he wrote in an 1865 letter to Dr. Hall: "Leaving Baltimore in September 1863 we reported at Yorktown, Va., and in less than a week were ordered on a raid, making 30 miles per day, with no stragglers. We remained at Yorktown until 1/64 engaging in similar expeditions once or twice in every month." In addition to writing, Fleetwood spent his spare time reading books and newspapers. One of the books he read in the spring of 1864 was a biography of the Union Army's new commanding general, LTG Ulysses S. Grant.

On 9 April 1864, the 4th was ordered to Point Lookout, Maryland, site of one of the Union's largest prisoner of war camps. The transfer created a mountain of



Christian Fleetwood, shown here in a 1900 photograph, proudly wearing his Medal of Honor and other medals. (Library of Congress)

paperwork that kept Fleetwood busy. "Oh Lord! The details!" he exclaimed on the day after arrival. Point Lookout was gaining a notorious reputation as a POW camp. Assaults, shootings of prisoners, and fights were regular occurrences. Furthermore, as in all such camps, health and hygiene were extreme challenges. As the regiment's senior noncommissioned officer, Fleetwood was responsible for establishing duty rosters and work details for the camp, and keeping order among his soldiers. This he did well during the regiment's short stay at Point Lookout. On 25 April, the 4th was unexpectedly ordered back to the Peninsula. But as a reward for a job well done with no prisoners harmed in their custody, the regiment was issued beer rations on the return voyage aboard the transport *George Leary*. Fleetwood may have questioned

the wisdom of issuing the beer, as he had to break up at least one fistfight among his soldiers during the trip back to Virginia.

By 4 May, Fleetwood's regiment moved up the Peninsula toward Richmond. There it participated in MG Benjamin Butler's botched attempts to break the Confederate lines between Richmond and Petersburg. Fleetwood and the 4th settled into operations during that confusing time when the Army of the Potomac was struggling unsuccessfully to take Richmond through a series of brutal battles now known as the Overland Campaign. When that campaign failed, Grant set his sights on the important rail center of Petersburg south of the James and Appomattox Rivers. The 4th would play a role in that operation.

On 7 June, the soldiers of the 4th were issued ammunition. Rumors of an impending battle ran rampant, but Fleetwood had none of it. In his diary he wrote, "Ammunition issued and talk of on to Petersburg. Doubt it." He was right to question the conventional wisdom. Changes in the order of battle brought about by MG Quincy A. Gilmore's distrust of black troops saved the 4th from the embarrassment of failing to capture Petersburg, a failure that set the conditions for a nine-month siege.

The 4th occupied the siege lines outside Petersburg in a summer of tedium broken only by occasional rifle and artillery exchanges. On the early morning of 30 July, the regiment occupied trenches left vacant by another unit that had earlier moved closer to the front. At 0445, Fleetwood was abruptly awakened as the ground trembled beneath him. Before his eyes, he watched as great volumes of earth rose up from an explosion that threw earth, men, and equipment far into the air before slamming them back down to the ground. The rumors of a great mine being constructed under the Confederate lines were apparently true.

From his vantage point, he watched as Union troops poured into the crater created by the explosion but failed to exploit the opening in the rebel lines. In fact, the Confederates responded quickly, repulsed the advance, and inflicted heavy losses on the attacking Union forces. The fact that another black regiment was involved in the debacle concerned Fleetwood. He worried that what appeared to be poor performance by one regiment would damage the reputation of the entire United States Colored Troops. "Broke and run! Devil blame them!" he wrote in his diary. He need not have worried. It soon became clear that poor planning and leadership were responsible for the fiasco.

By September, the 4th Regiment moved to a secure location on the James River. Later that month, Grant decided to simultaneously attack the Confederate trenches to the south at Petersburg and those to the north at New Market Heights. The results were the battles of Chaffin's Farm on 29-30 September and Peebles' Farm on 30 September-2 October. Fleetwood and the 4th U.S. Colored Infantry participated in the fighting at Chaffin's Farm. It was a brutal affair with nearly 5,000 casualties. When a series of color bearers fell, Fleetwood braved a fusillade of lead and stepped forward to ensure that the regimental colors would not hit the ground.

Higher headquarters put out a call for the names of those whose performance had been noteworthy. Among those names was SGM Christian Fleetwood. Seven months later, Fleetwood, in what must have been the most understated award presentation in the U.S. Army history, received the Medal of Honor in the mail.

The Medal of Honor was created in 1862 when President Abraham Lincoln approved an award "to such noncommissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action, and other soldier-like qualities, during the present instruction," but it did not enjoy the universal prestige it does today. Getting a medal was nice, but in those days, there was only one worthwhile reward for good performance—promotion. Even though others were promoted, none was forthcoming for Fleetwood. He already held the highest rank possible for a black soldier. His chain of command submitted requests for an exception on Fleetwood's behalf to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. Despite having already made two other black soldiers lieutenants, no exception was granted this time.

Fleetwood was sorely disappointed but continued to serve with distinction. After Chaffin's Farm, the 4th moved with the rest of the Army of the James down to the Atlantic Ocean. After some harrowing experiences aboard ships at sea, the 4th participated in the assault on Fort Fisher, which protected the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, in December 1864 and January 1865, and then moved inland to join MG William Sherman's operations

against Confederate GEN Joseph E. Johnston.

In April, Fleetwood was laid low by a case of typhoid and was a patient at the U.S. General Hospital for Colored Troops in Wilmington when his Medal of Honor was delivered in the mail. The citation simply read, "Seized the colors, after two color bearers had been shot down, and bore them nobly through the fight." Later he had a relapse and was readmitted to the hospital, but he soon left his



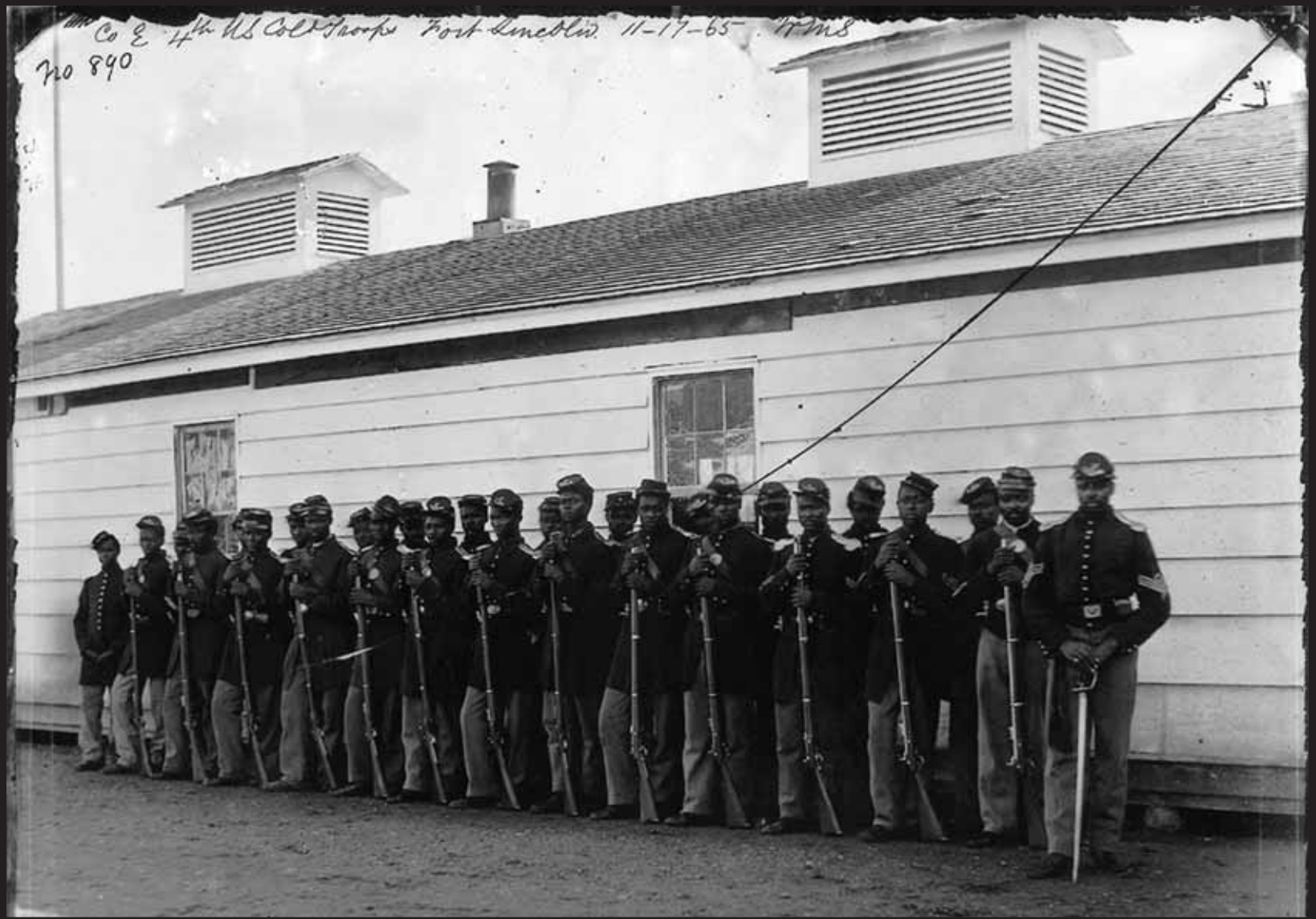
Fleetwood's Medal of Honor is now part of the collection of the Smithsonian's Institution's National Museum of American History. (National Museum of American History)

sickbed and walked back to his unit without permission. As a result, Fleetwood was briefly listed as a deserter. After serving over a year and a half, Fleetwood was not about to be separated from his troops for long.

Had he gotten the promotion that he deserved, Fleetwood might have continued his military career after the war. He left the Army on 4 May 1866 and traveled to Columbus, Ohio, where he became a bookkeeper in a wholesale grocery firm. In 1867, he moved to Washington where he held jobs with the Supreme Court, the Freedman's Bureau, a realty company, and the District of Columbia government. He stayed in government employ until he began a 10-year stint as a bookkeeper in the Washington, DC, branch of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company. In 1881, he began a clerkship at the War Department, a job he held until his death.

In 1869 Fleetwood married Sarah Iredell, one of the first African American nurses of the era. The Fleetwoods were a popular couple and led an active social life among the leading members of Washington society.

In 1880, Fleetwood organized a group of high school boys into a quasi-military organization known as the Washington Cadet Corps. Under Fleetwood's mentoring, the Cadet Corps grew to battalion size. It was outfitted with uniforms and rifles and featured a 30-piece band. After seven years of drilling and parades, it became the Sixth Battalion of D.C. National Guards, America's first African American National Guard unit, with Fleetwood, holding the rank of major, as its commander. In 1891, the Sixth was consolidated with another unit and Fleetwood left but continued as an instructor of military subjects with the Cadet Corps until 1897. Many recommended Fleetwood to command the 50th United States Colored Volunteer Regiment during the Spanish-American War. The War Department neither gave him the command, nor did it use the 50th in



Fleetwood served as the sergeant major of the 4th United States Colored Infantry Regiment. Here, Company E of the 4th Regiment stands in formation while posted at Fort Lincoln, Maryland, November 1865. (Brooklyn Public Library)

the war.

Fleetwood was an intelligent and dedicated man of character who struggled nobly in the face of socially accepted discrimination. He would never gain true acceptance as would be expected of a man of accomplishment, but he did attain a certain level of respect in his community. On 28 September 1914, Fleetwood died of heart failure. He was buried at the Harmony Cemetery after services at Saint Luke's Episcopal Church. His funeral was well attended, with the First Separate Battalion serving as escorts. Those acting as honorary pallbearers at Fleetwood's funeral included his fellow officer MAJ Arthur Brooks, and prominent Washingtonians Daniel Murray, Whitefield McKinlay and Judge Robert H. Terrell.

Despite being only five feet, four and one-half inches tall, SGM Christian Fleetwood was a man of great stature who should serve as an example for all soldiers today.

About the Author: CSM James Clifford, USA-Ret., retired from the Army in 2006 after thirty years of service in the Military Police Corps and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). At the time of his retirement, CSM Clifford was the Army's senior EOD NCO and Command Sergeant Major of the 52nd Ordnance Group (EOD). He is a veteran of Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. An AHF Life Charter Member since 2001, CSM Clifford resides with his wife in McDonough, Georgia.



Fleetwood earned the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Chaffin's Farm, Virginia, depicted here in a sketch by William Ward, on 29 September 1864. According to the citation accompanying his Medal, Fleetwood "seized the colors, after two color bearers had been shot down, and bore them nobly through the fight." (Library of Congress)



Fleetwood's regiment took part in the Union effort to capture Fort Fisher, North Carolina, which lasted from 24 December 1864 to 15 January 1865. (Capture of Fort Fisher, by J.O. Davidson, Library of Congress)

Winter is good time to prepare for spring

By Mary Kay Gominger

The temperatures may be hovering near the freezing mark these days but before you know it, spring will be here and it will be time to get out and participate in outdoor recreational activities. According to Matt Kayson, AFRH's golf pro, staying in shape during the winter months will help not only your golf game but will keep you fit for any other spring activities you might be interested in.

To help residents retain their fitness over the winter months, Matt is offering a golf exercise class on Monday,

Wednesday, and Fridays at 10 a.m. in the Fitness Center.

"So far one of the guys is reporting that he feels better with his range of motion when he swings the club," said Matt. "Of course it is winter and not all of them are coming



Curtis Young and Donald Kirouac go through a series of floor exercises with Golf Pro Matt Kayson.



Curtis Young uses resistance training to keep his arm toned and ready to take on the golf course.

down to the course to play. There have been three to four in each class so far and even though it's billed as "golf" fitness, the class is open to any and all who want to get a little stronger and feel better. And have some fun doing it!"

Stop by the Fitness Center and join in with those getting a jump start on spring.

You don't want to miss the AFRH Mardi Gras Dance on Friday, February 1, 2008

Resident and staff social

Afternoon of bowling enjoyed

On Tuesday, January 22nd a group 27 residents and staff members took a few hours to get together and have some fun at the bowling alley. To start the afternoon off, they played a few challenge games of high ball and low ball and then started regular team bowling.

According to Keith Turner of Rec Services, the resident/staff bowling afternoon is held once a quarter. And you don't have to be a bowler, or even bowl - everyone is invited for an afternoon of fellowship and friendly competition. The date of the next Resident/Staff bowling social will be announced in the plan of the week and in the monthly Trips and Special Events calendar.



Resident and staff bowlers listen as Keith Turner explains the rules of the challenge play.



Emil Byke attempts to roll a strike during the bowling social held with residents and staff members on Feb. 22.



This is how its done - Willa Farrell throws a strike with the ease of a pro.

Competition fierce in battle of wits

Winner welcomes all comers

By Keith Turner

The old saying, "The mind is a terrible thing to waste" is a true statement and the residents at the AFRH seem to apply that statement to their lives. They proved that when they participated in the famous card show game 'Concentration.' After the rules and how to play the game were explained, the residents were eager to get started.

With a full house of participants, the games began with some very serious surprises. Harlan Jacobson totally dominated his first match against Mr. Cavanaugh and Paul Schlegel was too hot to be stopped by Harry Casino. Sally Brooks defeated Elias Solomon to move on to the playoff rounds, and Richard Heinrich concentrated enough to eliminate Mr. Woodham. In the 2nd rounds, Paul Schlegel eliminated Harlan Jacobson, Richard Heinrich shut down Clarence Stone, and Ernie Fowler stopped Sally Brooks from moving into the finals.

The highly anticipated match between Heinrich and Fowler came sooner than people had expected. These two

great warriors, in which Fowler has taken most of the victories, battled like true Vikings. In the end, it would be Heinrich prevailing to move on into the Championship round against Paul Schlegel. Heinrich and Schlegel battled with two very different, but productive, strategies. The final match went like a championship match should go, with both contestants taking the lead from the other. After witnessing a very exciting match, Richard Heinrich finally pulled away at the end to wear the title 'Concentration Champion.'

Congratulations to Richard who is now 'the man to beat.'

And for those who are thinking about taking the title away from him the next time 'Concentration' comes around

again, beware, if Richard is 'in the zone' he's a very tough opponent to beat. Richard says he welcomes all comers.



Keith Turner explains the rules of Concentration as a group of residents get ready to play.