



## Jacobs Engineering to manage Gulfport rebuild

On March 21, 2007, GSA awarded a contract to Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for Professional Engineering Services and Construction Manager (CM) services. Jacobs is a diverse provider of professional technical services in support of industrial, commercial, and government clients across multiple markets.

Jacobs will provide services that are necessary for management of the procurement phase(s), demolition phase, design/build construction phase, project close-out phase, and furniture, fixture, and equipment purchase and installation phase of the new Armed Forces Retirement Home, Gulfport, Mississippi. See the current project schedule listed below.

If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Abarr of the Armed Forces Retirement Home at 202-730-3043 or Gary Mote of GSA at 404-331-2774.



### Timeline

- Late July 2007-Demolition start**
- January 2008-Demolition completion**
- October 2007-Design/Build start (design phase)**
- May 2010-Final completion**

## AFRH Master Plan

### Residents to benefit from development of unused portions of campus

On Friday, March 23, 2007, AFRH announced the selection of Crescent Resources LLC as its first choice to construct a mixed-use redevelopment project of approximately 4.5 million square feet on the southeast corner of its Washington campus.

The proposal includes more than 300 units of affordable housing, market-rate rental and condominium units, medical office space, a small hotel, a grocery store and other ancillary retail, as well as transitional housing for military veterans.

The project calls 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. This project will open portions of the AFRH campus to public enjoyment and recreation for the first time in more than 50 years.

"The selection of Crescent Resources marks a significant step towards raising funds needed for vital capital improvements at the Armed Forces Retirement Home," said Timothy Cox, the Chief Operating Officer of AFRH. "The income generated from this project will help us build and renovate the facilities needed to care for America's heroes today and in the future."

This selection is provisional and subject to successful negotiation of final agreements with the developer and completion of the environmental and Master Plan processes. Crescent Resources LLC is a real estate development and land management firm based in Charlotte, North Carolina. The company is a joint venture of Duke Energy and Morgan Stanley Real Estate Fund and the company's management. The company developed One and Two Potomac Yard in Alexandria, Virginia, a 300 acre mixed use development next to Reagan National Airport.

In selecting Crescent, the AFRH followed the recommendation of a five-member, multi-agency panel of experts convened by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). The panel considered design, socio-economic benefits, environmental mitigation, the financial offer and the ability of the firm to implement the proposal among other factors. AFRH intends to enter into a long-

term master lease with Crescent and retain ownership of the land.

The mixed use development will be located on 77 acres bordered by North Capitol and Irving Streets. The parcels are adjacent to Catholic University of America and the Washington Hospital Center.

Congress authorized the AFRH, an independent federal agency, to use its underutilized land to generate new sources of revenue for the Home. The Crescent proposal will help shape the final development of the Armed Forces Retirement Home's Master Plan, which is intended to guide development on the campus for the next 25 years. During the next phase of the Master Plan process, AFRH will continue to consult with its residents, the National Capital Planning Commission, the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office and Office of Planning, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, the Commission of Fine Arts, the Home's institutional and residential neighbors, and local elected officials.

Although the Home is a Federal agency, it receives no annual appropriation and relies upon a Trust Fund which is insufficient to meet the short and long term capital needs of the institution. Current residents, who are living longer, require increasingly specialized and costly long term care. In addition, the Home anticipates future veterans who are returning from Afghanistan and Iraq with severe injuries will warrant special care and services as they age.

The capital needs of the Home amount to more than \$366 million over the next 10 years and include roof replacements, fire alarm updates, security systems, wiring replacement and other necessary projects to both ensure the safety and comfort of the existing residents and plan the new facilities required in the future to meet the changing needs of aging veterans.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home is the nation's oldest continuously operating retirement community for enlisted military personnel. The AFRH currently houses about 1,100 veterans, including several hundred who were safely evacuated from the Gulfport, Mississippi, campus after it was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

## Inside this Issue



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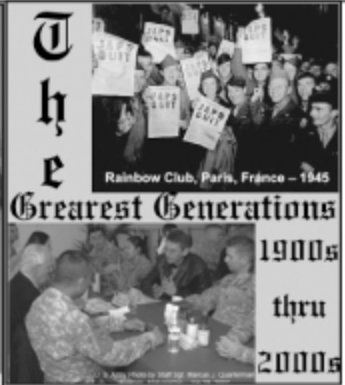
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# AFRH Editors Column



*The Greatest Generation: "...They were the generation that fought during World War II and many again in the Korean War, and went on to rebuild the world's industries in the following years..." - Wikipedi, The Free Encyclopedia.*

Well, we are in a new century now and I believe it is time for we of the Greatest Generation, whose "...swords are turned to plow shares..." to acknowledge that we have a new Greatest Generation of the 2000s. They are, of course, our Armed Forces who are now in harms way all over the world, especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Thanks to our Resident Advisory Committee and AAFES Store Manager Reggy Brockett for having made life easier for our handicapped Battery Powered Vehicle (BPV) users. **Well Done!**



Resident Fred Fayerweather on his BPV finds it easy to select a flashlight since AAFES Has lowered the shelves. **Well done Reggy!**

Thanks again to our RAC for making the wishes of "AFRH" residents known to Secretary of Defense Gates. RAC's letter to the Secretary of Defense is quoted below:

RESIDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Armed Forces Retirement Home  
3700 N Capitol St.,  
Washington DC, 20011.8400

27 February 2007

Mr Robert M. Gates  
Secretary, Department of Defense

Dear Mr. Gates,

The Resident Advisory Council Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) unanimously approved the enclosed letter, which emphasizes their collective decision to recommend that a military officer be assigned as the Director of AFRH.

DoD submitted a report to congress relating to the Leadership Management, and use of Local Board at the Armed Forces Retirement home as required by the fiscal year National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Sections 578 and 579. The report states the position of DoD as being opposed to that portion of the legislation that requires a senior military officer be assigned as the Directors of the AFRH Washington and the AFRH-Gulfport

The majority of the retired military enlisted residents and military enlisted residents of the AFRH opposes the position stated by DoD in the report that the position of the Director should not be filled with a senior military officer. Our position and rationale is stated in the attachment.

We request that DoD review the decision to eliminate a military officer from the chain of command within the management hierarchy of the AFRH and establish a recommendation that the position of Director be filled with a senior military officer.

Respectfully,

W. R. Kitson  
Chairperson  
Resident Advisory Council

The entire letter with it's attachments may be viewed on the Internet at:  
<http://www.hjs-enterprises.com/sec-def/>

**ENJOY YOUR PAPER!**

# 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.

## How to 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.**

**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 Public Affairs Office, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.**

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

# Introducing our 2007 AFRH Mardi Gras King and Queen



**King Marshall Phillips**



**Queen Edna Ast**



# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



I'm excited and pleased to announce that I have chosen a highly regarded real estate development firm to redevelop the southeast corner of our campus. This moves us one step closer to raising the

quality of life of all our residents.

In selecting Crescent, I followed the recommendation of a five-member panel of experts convened by the U.S. General Services Administration. This panel did a detailed review of proposals from a short list of three developers.

I am confident that this is a solid company with a visionary plan to build a mixed-use development that includes a grocery store, medical office space, a small hotel, transitional housing for military veterans and condominium and rental units including more than 300 units of affordable housing. The project will also include more than 20 acres of open green space including a public garden and picnic grove, a civic green, a memorial, and pedestrian and bicycle paths.

A buffer of green and a secure fence will keep the Home and its operations separate from the new redevelopment project. We do not expect construction to affect any of our activities at the Home but we will keep all of you informed of the construction schedule.

AFRH has always been a prime example of the military taking care of its own and this redevelopment project is part of that tradition that will keep the Home independent and self-sustaining.

We will keep updating information on the Master Plan for redevelopment and this project on the web site, [www.afrhdevelopment.com](http://www.afrhdevelopment.com) and I welcome any questions you may have.

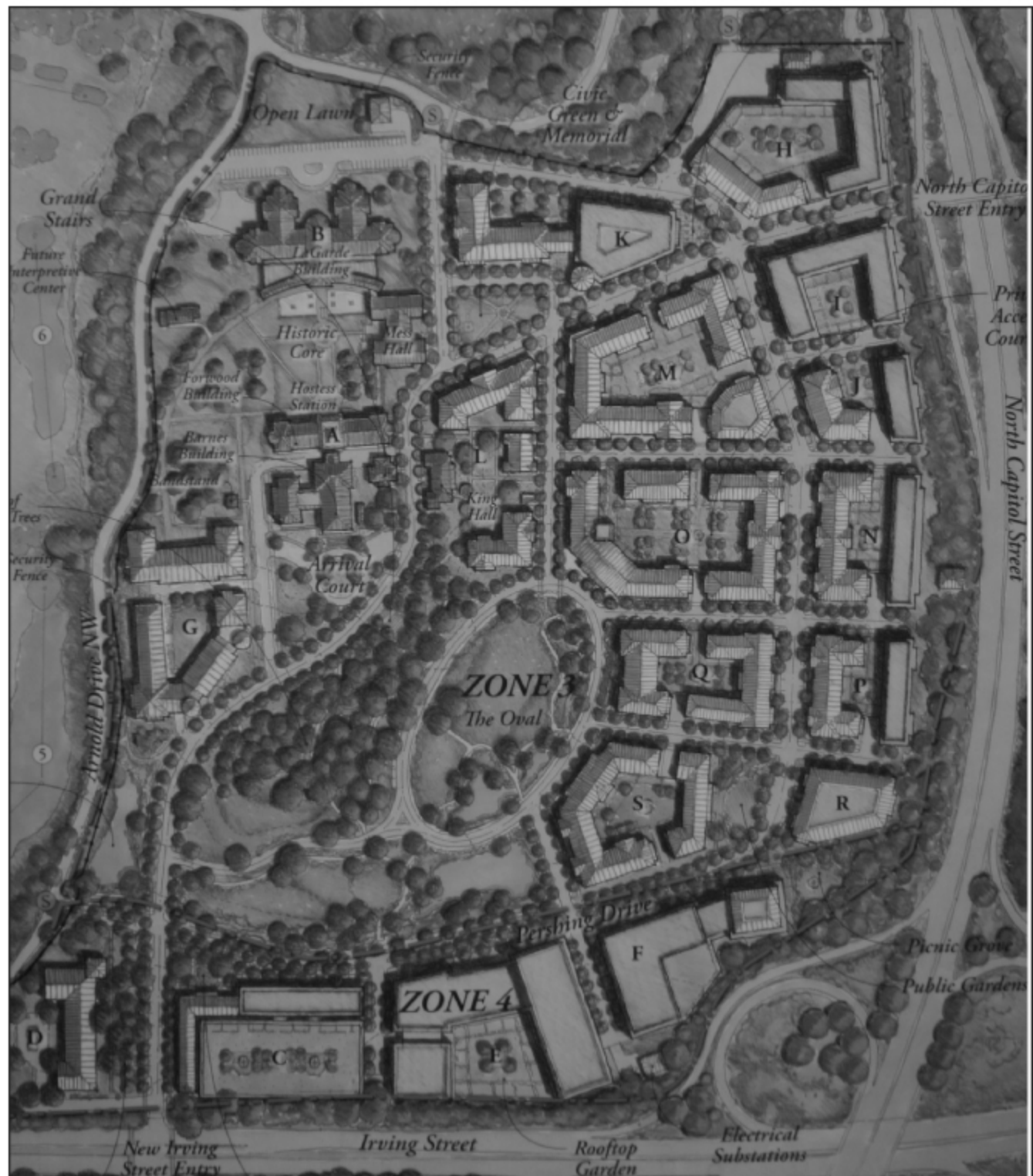
*Tim Cox*

money we need to finance repairs and improvements to our home.

Washington Crescent Resources LLC, a Charlotte, North Carolina, based real estate development and land management firm, will construct a 4.5 million square foot mixed use project on the 77 acre parcel bordered by North Capitol and Irving Streets.

This is a major milestone for our Home. This development project includes a new long term care facility to replace the King Health Center as we consolidate all of our operations on the northern portion of the campus. This consolidation will make it easier for all of you to reach activities and health care services available on campus.

The money generated from long term lease of the land will help us tackle \$382 million in capital improvements needed to repair, renovate and improve our old buildings. The improvements range from a new roof for the Scott building, an emergency generator for Sherman South, upgraded fire and security systems, and replacement of the 50-year old air handlers which circulate air in the Scott building. The units are so old we cannot obtain replacement parts. All of these projects will improve the safety and



The lower portion of this aerial view shows the 77-acre parcel on the southeast corner of the AFRH-W campus that will be redeveloped by Crescent Resources LLC.

# Conversation with the Chief Financial Officer



As I walk around the Campus many of you go out of your way to say hi or raise questions. One of the questions I often get is: "What's up with Gulfport?"

Earlier this week, GSA conducted its second meeting here at the Washington Campus since signing the MOA with AFRH in January. The intent of the meeting was to meet the selected Construction Management Team, Jacobs Engineering, who will perform all professional services necessary for management of the procurement phase(s), demolition phase, purchase and installation phase of the new facility at Gulfport. The meeting was positive and productive. The Gulfport project is still on track for completion in May 2010.

If you go to the AFRH website at [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov) and click on the Gulfport link, you can see the latest information on the project.

Some residents have asked when the new bowling alley equipment will be in. The contract was recently awarded

and we expect the new equipment to be onsite in the middle of April; hopefully in time for any tournaments scheduled in April.

Another question I often hear about is the status of both the Gulfport and Washington resident funds. Both funds are doing well. In the second week of April, the Navy Personnel Command, Morale, Welfare & Recreation (MWR) Department from Millington, Tennessee, will be at the Washington Campus conducting training on our relatively new financial system. During this onsite visit I will discuss with Millington different formats we can use to publish a quarterly statement in the *Communicator*. Our goal is to publish the status of both funds as of March 31, 2007, in next month's *Communicator*.

As a tidbit a little over a year ago the Agency initiated a 10-year long range financial plan effort. A critical component of this plan was the capital or infrastructure requirements for the Agency. Over 26 volumes of information have been developed to capture our capital requirements that aligned with the Washington Campus Master Plan. Our next step is to develop a single docu-



GSA Project Manager for the Gulfport Rebuild Steven Smith (left) and two members of Jacobs Engineering take part in a discussion about the new facility during a meeting held at AFRH on March 26.

ment that captures the essence of our capital requirements over a 10-year period. Once developed, this document will be updated annually.

The following trivia is provided about Nursing Homes and Medicare: (Note: this information was taken from Metlife's website.)

require help with five activities of daily living (ADL) and 24 percent with four ADLs.

- The biggest gaps in Medicare's long-term coverage are:
- No coverage for custodial care, either at home or in a nursing home
- No coverage in a nursing home without prior hospitalization
- No coverage for nursing home care after 100 days
- Coverage only in a Medicare-approved facility
- The average monthly fee for long-term care at the Armed Forces Retirement Home is \$1,333 or \$15,996 annually. There are nine residents who pay the maximum of \$2,858 and 46 who pay under \$1,000. Our lowest monthly and annual fee received for long-term care is \$364.23 and \$4,370.76 respectively.

- The 2005 average daily rate for a private room in a nursing home was \$203 per day or annually - \$74,095. Almost all residents (95%) in a nursing home require assistance with bathing; 87 percent require assistance with dressing; 51 percent need help with eating; over 44 percent are diagnosed with dementia; and half of the residents

I enjoyed our conversations this past month. Until next month's *Communicator*, I look forward to hearing from you.

*Steve McManus*

AFRH Chief Financial Officer Steve McManus (center) gets input from members of the AFRH Capital Improvement Team during a recent meeting.





## From the Director



### Looking Ahead

First, a special thanks to all of the AFRH staff who assisted and supported our residents during the recent outbreak of NoroVirus in our community. Our appreciation and thanks to Reginal Johnson

In March we initiated the installation of a Home Free Resident Monitoring system in each resident room, building common areas, and on a significant portion of our grounds.

The Resident Monitoring system will require that each of our residents, who are concerned about their health and their movement around the Home grounds, to wear a watch pendant which contains a built in silent alarm. The alarm is activated by the resident who finds themselves in distress and cannot reach a phone to call for assistance; and for residents who will leave a secure area and find that they do not have the stamina to return or who are lost on our grounds. Our Healthcare and Security offices will monitor these alarms on a 24-hour basis.

This system is a valuable asset for our residents' personal safety and is a passive device that provides each resident who utilizes this system with peace of mind. We will have additional educational and resource information available in the coming weeks and will begin to enroll our residents as the system begins to go live.

In a personal emergency on the Home grounds, this watch or pendant feature can be a lifesaver for you in securing the needed help.

*Ben Laub*



Ben Laub listens as Jewell Poteet poses a question during a recent Townhall meeting. Townhall meetings are held regularly for the purpose of communicating information about AFRH and it is an opportunity for residents to get answers to questions they may have.

and the Healthcare leadership who activated the necessary health procedures to secure the AFRH community. We are especially grateful to our Wellness Center staff and Dalis Irish for working quickly in confining residents whose symptoms reflected the virus; to Rachael Hatten and Food Services for the interim modifications they implemented in our dining services, and who arranged for expeditious delivery of meal trays to confined residents; and to Leon Barwick who worked with the Housekeeping and Janitorial staff to insure that affected residents rooms were maintained in a sanitary condition.

I spoke with a number of residents who suffered through the illness and each one of them heaped praises on the manner in which their personal needs were addressed by AFRH. Thank you all.

## Welcome Aboard



**Name:** Thomas A. Mersing  
**Branch of Service:** USAF  
**Entry Date:** January 1951  
**Separation Date:** November 1978  
**Rank:** SMSGT E8  
**War Theaters:** Korea & Vietnam



**Name:** Delbert Brown  
**Branch of Service:** USA, USN & USAF  
**Entry Date:** November 1942  
**Separation Date:** August 1968  
**Rank:** MSgt E7  
**War Theaters:** WWII, Korea & Vietnam



**Name:** Catherine Deitch  
**Branch of Service:** USA  
**Entry Date:** August 1943  
**Separation Date:** November 1945  
**Rank:** MSGT  
**War Theaters:** WWII



**Name:** Harley D. Gingerich  
**Branch of Service:** USAF  
**Entry Date:** August 1946  
**Separation Date:** June 1967  
**Rank:** MSgt E7  
**War Theaters:**

## Arlington Ladies rep visit AFRH



Mrs. Margaret Mensch a representative of the Army Arlington Ladies visits AFRH for the first time. The Arlington Ladies and one Arlington Gentleman, represent the Army, Navy or Air Force at Arlington National Cemetery funerals.

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 202-365-4863  
or Sheila Motley at 3556



# A decorated veteran

## Army retiree spent career looking out for his fellow soldiers



*By Sheila Motley*

Boynton H. Snee joined the U.S. Army on January 5, 1951. He had recently lost his mother and he felt that with all of his family mem-

bers being located in different areas it would be in his best interest to join the military. After enlisting, Snee did his basic training at Camp Polk, Louisiana. His first tour of duty was with Transportation and then as a Mess Steward in artillery. He also served on the Inspector General team with the 1st Infantry Division, Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 33rd Artillery, in Lai Kaia, Republic of Vietnam.

While preparing meals for the troops during mortar fire, which usually occurred around 1700 hours faithfully, Snee made his mark by outstanding meritorious service in connection with military operations, against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 19 May 1969 to 30 September 1969 which earned him two Bronze Star Medals. His citation reads, in part, that Snee "consistently manifested excellent professionalism and initiative in obtaining outstanding results. His rapid assessment and solution of numerous problems inherent in a counterinsurgency environment greatly enhanced the allied effectiveness against a determined and aggressive enemy. Despite many adversities, he invariably performed his duties in a resolute and efficient manner. Energetically applying his sound judgment and extensive knowledge, he contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the United States mission in the Republic of Vietnam."

Snee also received a Bronze Star Medal for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. This second citation reads, "SSgt Snee, Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 33rd Artillery, distinguished himself through a

**Company Commander (left), Snee (center) displaying Christmas dinner.**



hail of enemy fire to a firing position within the patrol's defensive perimeter. Fully aware of the danger to his comrades, Snee unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, ensured that his comrades received meal rations."

Snee also received the Army Commendation Medal for his support of military operations against communist aggression in the Republic of Vietnam from November 1969 to December 1970. His superiors stated, "Snee astutely surmounted extremely adverse conditions to obtain consistently superior results. Through his diligence and determination he invariably accomplished every task with dispatch and efficiency. Snee's unrelenting loyalty, initiative and perseverance brought him wide acclaim and inspired others to strive for maximum achievement. Selflessly working long and arduous hours, he contributed significantly to the success of the allied effort."

"The extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by Snee, at the risk of his life, are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the U.S. Army."

When asked his motivation, Snee responded, "I am an ordinary citizen who answered my country's call to duty and performed to the very best of my ability. I pray that this article will serve to instill in the minds of generations to come the idea that the liberty we enjoy must be ever so carefully guarded, and when they are called upon to defend those liberties, they do so willingly, as I and so many others already have, in order that this nation, as we know it, shall not perish."

Snee rarely talks of his military background but he proudly did so when reflecting back to the Christmas Day he spent in 1969 and how he and his messhall crew refused to let the troops go without celebrating the holiday.

"We may not have been able to spend Christmas with our families and



**Battalion Commander of the 2nd of the 33rd Artillery (left) shakes hands with SSgt Snee (center) after presenting him with his 1st Bronze Star Medal for services provided in the fields during hostile fire.**

friends so we were determined to make the best of our situation," Snee said

Due to Snee's energy, imagination and long hours over a hot stove, the Golden Lions, 2d Battalion, 33rd Artillery did in fact have a memorable Christmas away from home enjoying a wonderful dinner which put smiles on the faces of the troops as they went through the meal line.

Snee retired from the U.S. Army in December 1971 and began his civilian

career working for the Pathoen Food Services Company located in Mt. Rainier, Maryland.

Snee has been a resident at AFRH since June 1987. He first learned about the Home after enlisting in the military in 1951. He inquired about the .10 cents that was deducted from his pay. Alson, having friends that lived here made my decision to move here much easier.



**C Battery, 2nd of 33rd Artillery in 1969 during hostile fire.**

### Military Historical Milestones

#### U.S. Air Force

March 1962 – The crew of a B-58 Hustler assigned to the 43d Bombardment Wing set three speed records in a round trip flight between New York City and Los Angeles, California. The bomber made the trip in four hours, 41 minutes, 15 seconds, averaging 1,044.46 mph.

#### U.S. Army

175 Years Ago – The Black Hawk War ends and the Black Hawk agrees to return west of the Mississippi.

#### U.S. Marines

1942 - 1st Marine Division lands on Guadalcanal turns back Japanese attack in Battle of Edson's Ridge. 2nd Raider Division raids Makin Atoll.

#### U.S. Navy

1964 – 1968 – Introduction to the U.S. Naval Fleet of the QH-50D UAV. 377 Aircraft delivered with a more modern Boeing T50-BO-12 engine, rated at 330 PHP. Tail section removed from the earlier "C" model and the rotor blades changed to an all fiber glass blade made at Gyrodyne. During this time over 12,000 flight hours are accumulated.

#### U.S. Coast Guard

March 1943 – Approximately 100 women enrolled in Auxiliary mostly in Wisconsin.



# Recreational Services

## AFRH Computer Graduation Class of 2007



Congratulations to the graduates of the first AFRH Computer Training class: Front row - Maurice Taylor, Second row - Paul Mano, Ray Anderson, Leo Brown, Robert Macy, Marian Ritchie, Francis Scott, Catherine Dailey, Edith Blythe and Billy Blythe, Back row - Bruce Mundy and Solon Youdra.

### Computer classes a big hit at AFRH; more classes scheduled to be held

By Mary Darden

Computer class graduation was held the afternoon of Feb. 28, in the Scott Library. Approximately 50 residents attended. Director Ben Laub and Director of Resident Services, Charles Dickerson, saluted the residents with speeches, handshakes, and assisted in handing out Certificates of Merit. Laura Fogarty and Rachel Hatten assisted with the ceremony. Mr. Snow, a former Marine and a talented baker, provided a gorgeous cake, and Tracy Thompson assisted with the logistics.

The AFRH Computer Class faculty consists of: Resident Joe Wachter, Marie Wray, and Master Sergeant Morris. Marie Wray, a former Lockheed Martin engineer, is teaching basic computers, as well as a course on the Mac operating system. Marie is considered an expert's expert on the Mac and is creating her own professional journal for Mac users. Joe Wachter is one of our own. Not only was Joe a military man, he has spent 30 years working with computers. Joe's particular expertise is in genealogy, in which he has created lovely and complex electronic documents. Our newest faculty member is Master Sergeant Morris. Sergeant Morris, who is active duty and currently stationed in Washington, is teaching beginning computer classes starting this week. He is very personable. Please give him a warm welcome to the Home.

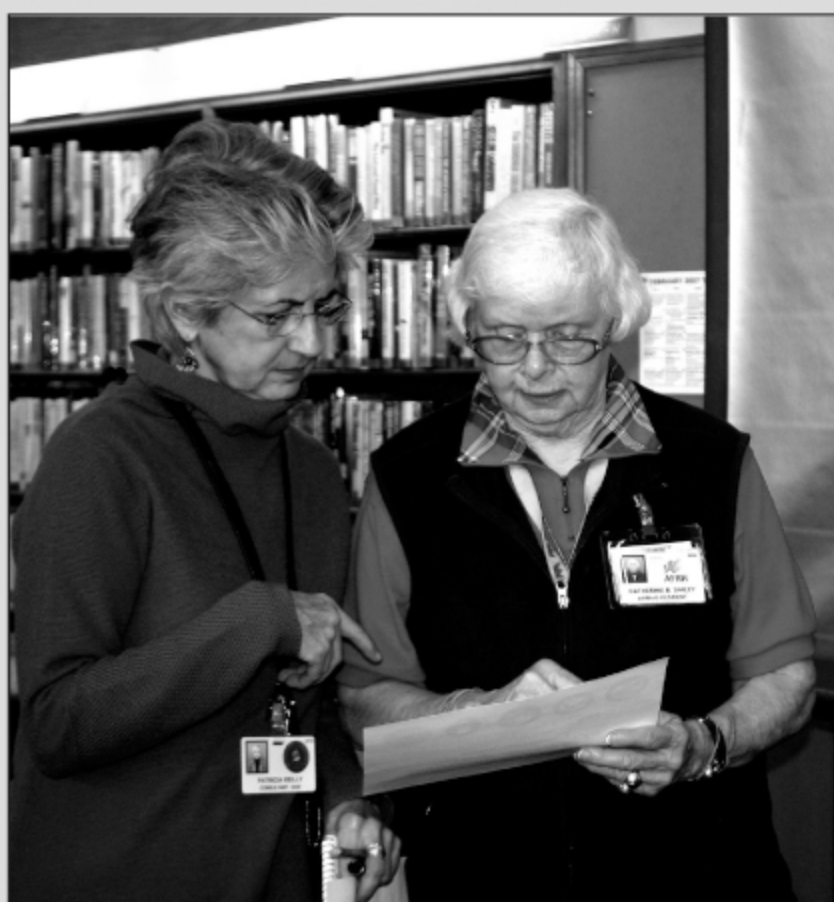
In addition to providing computer classes for the beginner, we are teaching an internet searching class, as well as a library research class. The library class will cover current technology in libraries, electronic catalogs, as well as research databases. Students in this class will learn to search for documents related to their interests. This class is computer based and designed for the beginner. So welcome! These classes are fun and we take it easy.

All classes are free; registration will be offered to those students who are currently enrolled, then extended to new- incoming students. Welcome all! We are building partner-



Mary Varva and Francis Scott enjoy refreshments after graduation.

Catherine Dailey (right) shows Patricia Riley, DoD Consultant of Social Services, her graduation certificate.



Photos by Sheila Abarr

ships with the community in order to offer additional courses, as well as inviting residents to teach! Please consider teaching service to your fellow residents—you will never have nicer students.

Thank you to all those residents who have stepped in to help us build this program. Especially thank you to Charles Bronson, Ed Clark, Les Worthen, Stan Weed, Coleman Mays, Margaret Jirak, Joe Groulx, Virginia Sicotte, Gerald Hutchins, and James Cyr. Because of their dedication to the library's core mission, these classes are possible. We also thank the Information Technology Department, headed by Mr. Stan Whitehead. His assistants, Marcus White and Marjie Smith have been instrumental in helping us as we chart new and constantly changing waters. Above all, we wish to thank the residents whose courage to take up new studies, to explore the world of computers, to ask questions and forgive mistakes, give inspiration to us all.

#### Class Statistics

- \* 240 students attended computer classes over a period of six weeks.
- \* The Computer teaching lab has eight machines and one instructor machine.
- \*The lab was used for over 30 hours of instruction.
- \*Total volunteer hours in the library for the month was 663.



# monthly activities...

## Diversity Day Celebration held on Feb. 27, 2007

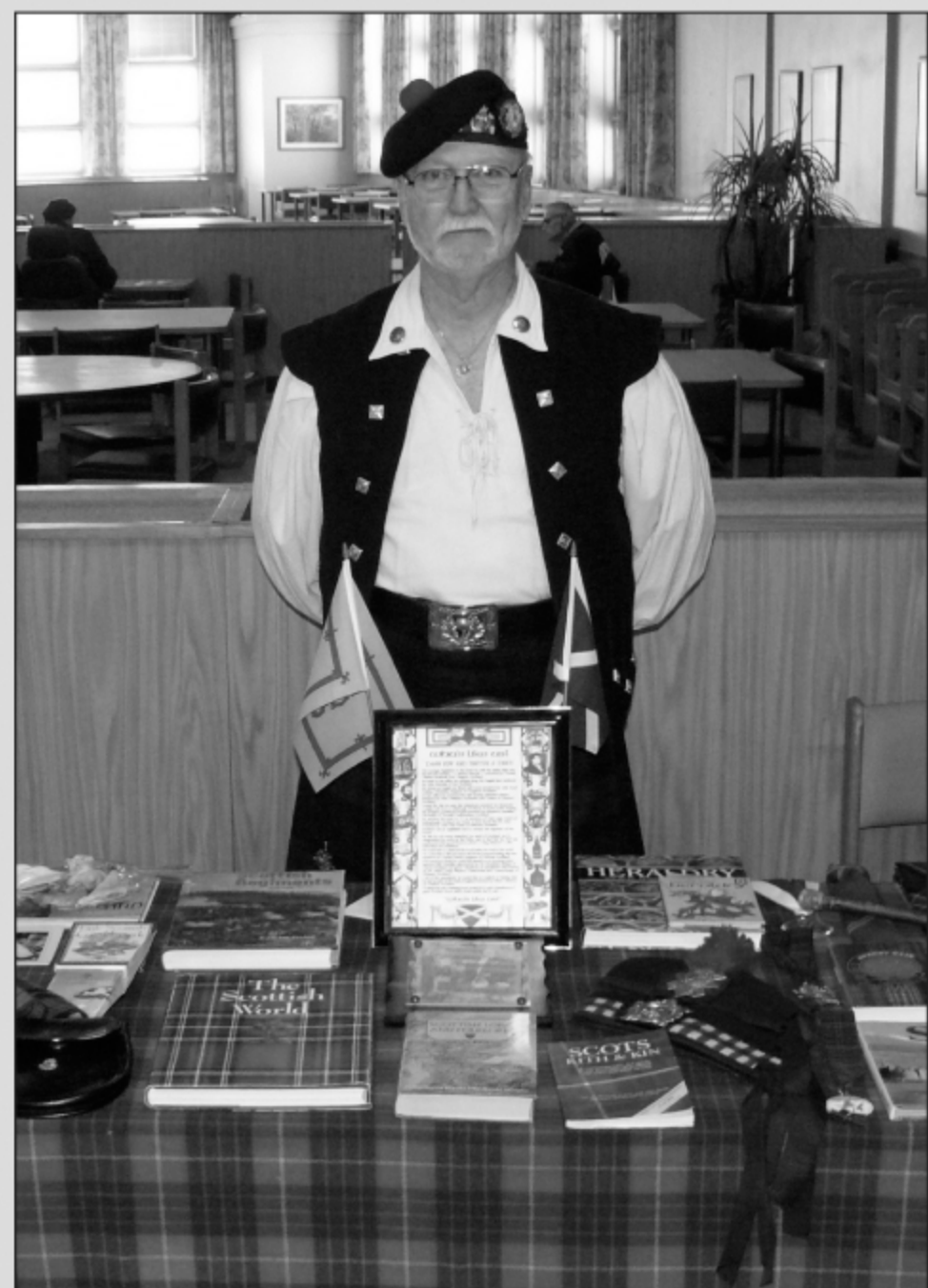
By Tracy Thomas

Dozens of residents turned out for the Armed Forces Retirement Home first Diversity Day Celebration. The event was held in the Scott Dining Hall on Tuesday, February 27th.

Entrees, side dishes, and desserts from several different cultures and ethnicities were prepared by Food Services and served. The Collard Greens and Asian Fried Rice were the big hits of the afternoon.

John Smith, a resident and member of the Alexandria National Tartan Day Society, adorned a traditional Scottish Kilt and set up a wonderful table with various Scottish cultural displays. These items will also be available for viewing in the Scott Library during the month of April. A traditional Greek dress, provided by Admissions staff member Angela Karabatsos, was also on display.

Recreation Services and Volunteer Services would like to thank John Smith, Angela Karabatsos, and Food Services, as well as everyone who helped decorate for the event and serve food.



John Smith displays his Scottish Military memorabilia.



AFRH COO Tim Cox (standing) stops by to visit with Donald Rowe (left) and Marvin Taylor as they sample some of the food offered at the Diversity Day celebration.



Chuck Jones and Al Guinta enjoy some lively conversation.



Marie Townsend, Mary Varva and Anna Marie Anderson take a break after a lovely multicultural feast.



Harry Casino and Alice Garrymore try ethnic foods from various cultures that were available during Diversity Day at AFRH.

Photos by Chuck Jones and Sheila Abarr



# WAVES' children, grandchildren continue the military tradition

## Four sons served, seven grandkids served

By Mary Kay Gominger

When Evelyn 'Ann' Whittaker decided to join the Navy Waves in 1944, little did she know she was starting a chain reaction within her family that would last through two more generations.

Ann and her brother both served in the Navy during World War II. After the war, Ann went on to raise four sons. All four of her sons served in the military – one a Marine and three in the Army.

"They were all in during the Vietnam era," Ann said. "I remember having two in Vietnam and two in Germany at the same time. I learned, though, that you couldn't obsess about it and worry all the time."

They all came home safely and all took advantage of the GI Bill to continue their education.

One of her sons beat the odds though...he and his wife had seven children, six sons and one daughter. All seven of her son's children have served or are still serving in the military.

"I don't know why they all chose the military," Ann said. "I do know that my son

told them as they were growing up that there was no way he could put them all through college, that they needed to come up with their own plan. He told them he had used the GI Bill but whatever they did, they needed to figure it out for themselves."

And figure it out they did. Six of Ann's grandchildren, the boys, are going or have been to college using the benefits of the GI Bill. Her granddaughter just completed basic training and plans on using the same benefit to get her education.

"My son's father-in-law was career Marine also," said Ann. "So the grandkids grew up hearing a lot about the military."

Ann has been a resident of the AFRH since 1991. She lived in Gulfport until the closure of that facility in 2005. Ann said she had never heard of the (then) Naval Home but was a member of Waves National Unit 52 in Pensacola, Fla., and they took a tour of the Gulfport home in 1989. That was the first she had heard of the place.

Ann recalled, "I immediately inquired about entry but at the time they were doing some work on the building so they said it would be about 18 months before I could come in. And sure enough, they called 18 months later and I moved in."

Her life now in DC, she says, is really no different than it was in Gulfport.

"We have everything we had there," Ann said. "Some things were, of course, a lot closer and more convenient. But I'm settled in and am enjoying living here. When the Gulfport home reopens, I'll move back. But until then, I have no complaints."



Jilisa



Joseph



Jerik



Jon



Jack



Jeffrey

## Two stand out in the Pinochle Masters of Lincoln's Hall Fame

By William Adams "e" Gunn USMC-Ret.

Among a growing appreciation of the gentleman's art form called Partnership Pinochle, some of the denizens of the jumble, of all the Armed Forces, there exists a few that surpass, excel, dominate, and they have proven themselves to be the best of the AFRH crowd. Let's just call them Jim and Charlie, for after their little escapade at the February 20th Pinochle Tournament, their full names and photos should be prominently posted in any future Hall of Heroes. Of course, it should also be remembered that it took a crusty ole' Marine to lay down the rules for a gentlemanly game of partnership first and foremost.

In the first hand in the tournament James "Jim" Grant had a club double run and Charles "Charlie" Robinson had every "A" to cover every losing bids. Charlie: First place with the winning score of 1,153 total points (USN Retired) and Jim: second place had 1,081 total points (USAF Retired).

Remember: The purpose of the AFRH Pinochle games is to share humor, laugh and have fun. Come one - come all, but no sniping from the peanut gallery.



Charlie Robinson (left), the first place winner with a score of 1,153 total points and Jim Grant, second place, had 1,081 total points in the Pinochle Tournament.

## High school choir performs for KHC residents

*From Texas to DC, group enjoys performing at AFRH*

Story and photo by Jeff Anderson

On March 12, 2007, the residents of King Health Center enjoyed the vocal talents of the Marshall Texas High School Choir. They serenaded the residents with various patriotic songs and then spent a brief period socializing with the residents, prior to attending a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.



Students from Marshall High School perform a medley of songs for our residents.

## Bowling Night with Marines a big success

By Jerry Carter

On Thursday, March 15th the Henderson Hall Marines participated in a bowling match with our residents in the Sheridan Bowling Center. The Marines and residents joined teams resulting in several fun filled games of bowling.

Single Marine Program President Cpl. Tristen Krug stated, "I love coming out to bowl with the retired military residents, they have the best stories to share with all the Marines."

Resident Buron Noel bowled a high game of 154 and Marine Steve Flores had a high game of 143. For the high game series of two games, Marine Jeff Plateo bowled 273, resident Buron Noel 269, Marine Alex Strewig 272 and resident Emil Byke closed out the series scoring 261. Recreation Services would like to thank the Single Marine Program/Henderson Hall for visiting the AFR campus. Also thanks to the volunteers who worked in the bowling center and all the residents who participated in the bowling match.

You don't want to miss the  
**2007 AFRH Talent Show**

April 27, 6:30 p.m. Scott Theater



# Veterans gather to protect 'sacred ground' in DC

By Al Mori, USA (Retired)

It was a very cold early morning on the 17th of March when my wife and I and 38 other Rolling Thunder members climbed aboard a bus headed for DC and the Gathering of Eagles. We were a part of the counter-protesters to the anti-war protest that was being touted to want to deface the Vietnam Memorial and whatever else. The major reason for our being there was to protect the very sacred ground that the memorial and monuments stand on. A fellow veteran told me that the sacred and hallowed ground was the only place he could come and feel again as one with his brothers that he lost in Vietnam. Additionally, we wanted to make sure that the young service members of today know they are supported and appreciated for the sacrifices they and their families are making.

I was surprised at the large number of different organizations that showed up

on this very cold day. Just to share a few of them with you, we had the Nam Knights of America Motorcycle Club, US COMBAT Vets, US Military Vets, Legacy Veterans, Boozefighters, 2nd Brigade; and of course Rolling Thunder. There were also your plain veteran on the street or mothers of current service members that also wanted to come out and show their support. The anti-war protesters were very loud, but from my perspective, they were outnumbered. I am not sure how the police make their attendance estimates, or the local newspapers, but I felt that the Gathering of Eagle supporters outnumbered the anti-war protesters. It was kind of ironic but I met one of the individuals that I mentioned in my November 2006 article, "Chance Encounter," his nickname is Double D and it stands for designated dancer. He is a member of the US Military Veterans from Woodbridge, VA.

The main location prior to the protesters march to the Pentagon was Constitution Avenue NW and 23rd St. and Harry Bacon Dr. My wife and I were positioned around the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for most of the day and had a good view of both sides. As you may have read in the newspapers, the Gathering of Eagles



The Nam Knights of the East Coast. The gentlemen in the kilt, 1st row, right is not a member.

pretty much surrounded the Lincoln Memorial and the anti-war protesters were on the north side of Constitution Ave. The police were really out in force. They were very noticeable and, from my observation, did an excellent job of controlling things before they got out of hand. There were a few verbal altercations that brought the police to quickly intervene and get control of the situation. I am told there were some incidents with police and anti-war protesters at the Pentagon that caused some arrests, but they were few and minor. So all in all, I would say that the counter-protesters did what they set out to do and no memorials were vandalized. The troops know there are a lot of folks that do stand behind them regardless of what their personal view of the war is.

Also, if you notice the picture of the Nam Knights which accompanies this article, I got to speak with members from New Jersey, Maryland, DC, North Carolina and Florida. This club is represented all over the East Coast.

While we are talking about clubs and you are all thinking about motorcycle clubs

as this was one of the comments in the news, all the guys with biker jackets on. I would like to pass on the mission statement of Rolling Thunder. One of the first things they make known to you prior to joining is they are not a **motorcycle** club, I know that many people think of Rolling Thunder as a biker club because of the ride on Memorial Day Weekend through DC. The major function of ROLLING THUNDER®, INC. is to publicize the POW/MIA issue. Also to educate the public that many American prisoners of wars were left behind after all previous wars and to help correct the past and to protect future veterans from being left behind should they become prisoners of war/missing in action. We are also committed to helping American veterans from all wars. With this in mind, some of you may recall that it was Chapter 3, from Virginia, that made a \$5,000 donation when our Gulfport residents were evacuated here after Katrina. They truly do look out for all veterans past and present with their charitable donations to help them in any manner that they can. And this is ongoing across the country.



Counter-protesters show their support and emotions.

## 'The Early Days at The United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home' / 'Armed Forces Retirement Home'

Submitted by Wilfred McCarty

Resident James E Abrams gave me a Special Founders Day Edition of the Bugler dated June 1986. Our newspaper, The Communicator, used to be called The Bugler. In 1986 Abrams was the editor of the Bugler, and George H. McKee, LTG USAF Ret, was the Governor. William G. Bainbridge, SMA Ret, was the Director of Member Services.

I recall talking to him while he was still in the Pentagon and told him that establishing a cafeteria service at the home would never work as the lines would go too slow with elderly people trying to make up their minds on what to eat. I was wrong. The lines moved faster than I expected

Bainbridge wrote a book about the home, which I hope is in our library. I would like to reread it. In this issue there was a very long biography of General Winfield Scott written by home member Beryl X. Smith who some might remember as a volunteer historian of the home.

erected to provide shelter for visitors and residents when it rained. Residents could hear the daily paper read aloud by a fellow member who received a few dollars a month for this service. Some of this information is from the Preservation Plan, United States Soldiers and Airmen's Home, Washington, D.C. Volume Two dated March 1, 1985.



Our Home Newspaper has continued to evolve as shown by the different mastheads through the years. The flags above and dates approximate of their use are:

1. 1986 to early 1988
2. 1988 to about 1995.
3. 1995 to mid-2003
4. July 2003 thru September 2006
5. October 2006 to present



He [Smith] wrote that a heroic statue in bronze of Lieutenant General Winfield Scott by Launt Thompson was erected in 1874 on the most commanding point of the grounds of the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home.

I copied down some dates from this issue. The name Soldiers Asylum was changed to Soldiers' Home in 1859. Expansion slowed dramatically from 1877 to 1914 because of a smaller standing Army which provided a smaller steady income. Nevertheless there was an increase in small fruit production and the Home produced a variety of vegetables also hay and grain. They also had cows for milk. Farming operations ceased in 1953 and total acreage shrunk more than a third.

The Scott Building and Pipes building were both built in 1954 (I came to the home in 1967). Gazebos were



A large gazebo [right foreground] called the "Summer House" was a gathering place for informal debates. A Water Tower [background] became operational in 1895 and boasted an intake of 25,000 gallons a day.

In the Mexican War, in lieu of customary looting of those days, General Scott levied a \$150,000 fine against the City of Mexico, confiscated tobacco and miscellaneous items belonging to the Mexican government. He spent \$63,747.57 for the purchase of blankets and shoes for his troops, \$10,000 for extra supplies for the hospital, \$10 for each crippled man discharged or furloughed and some \$60,000 for secret service. (Some of the money he acquired instead of looting went to the establishment of our home.) A balance of \$100,000 for which he submitted a draft specifying that it should be used to establish an army asylum."



# Wreath laying ceremony held to honor historic Buffalo Soldiers

By Mary Kay Gominger

A wreath laying ceremony was held at the Soldiers' and Airmen's Cemetery on Feb. 27 in honor of Black History Month. Washington, DC Mayor Adrian Fenty took part in the ceremony as well as the Eastern Senior High School JROTC. The Honorable Harry Thomas Jr. laid the wreath. A member of the DC Buffalo Soldier Chapter led the riderless horse, symbolic of a fallen warrior. Two white doves were released by Horton Funeral Home at the close of the ceremony, symbolizing the spirit of the Buffalo soldier ascending to the heavens.

Buffalo Soldiers is a nickname originally applied to the members of the U.S. 10th Cavalry Regiment of the U.S. Army by the native Apache Indians, which was formed in 1866 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The term eventually came to encompass the following units: U.S. 9th Cavalry Regiment, U.S. 10th Cavalry Regiment, the 24th Infantry Regiment and the 25th Infantry Regiment.

Although several black regiments were raised during the Civil War to fight alongside the Union Army, the Buffalo Soldiers were established by Congress as the first peacetime all-black regiments in the regular U.S. Army.



District of Columbia Councilmember Harry Thomas laying the wreath at the U.S. Soldiers' Home National Cemetery.



Photos by Jeannie Beasley

## RECREATIONAL EVENTS

### At a glance

#### Women's Glee Club from the Naval Academy

By Tracy Thomas

Recreation Services kicked off a performance packed spring entertainment season at the Scott Theater with the wonderful ladies of the Women's Glee Club from the U.S. Naval Academy on Monday, March 26th. This unique and diverse concert was a mix of folk songs, patriotic music, popular tunes, and Broadway excerpts. Residents were delighted by inspiring and moving arrangements such as the "Armed Forces Melody" and "Waves of the Navy" and toes were tapping to selections like, "We Saw the Sea," and a Doo Wop melody sung by the specialty group, "The Sirens."

The U.S. Naval Academy Women's Glee Club is enjoying its 30th year of service to America. Founded in 1976, when women were first admitted to the Academy, this ensemble has performed across America and internationally, including tours to California, Florida,

Hawaii, New York, North and South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Rome, and London. Monday's performance was the last stop on a whirlwind tour of the D.C. Metro area that began the week prior.

After this outstanding start to the spring season, be sure to check the calendar for the dates and times of the numerous performances coming in the next couple of months to the Scott Theater, including the Navy Sea Chanters on Thursday, April 6th at 6 p.m. and several school orchestras and choirs. This spring the Scott Theater will be "the" place to be!

#### ALP Residents Celebrating Mardi Gras

By Sarah Kenan

At the annual Mardi Gras celebrated on Friday, February 16th, the residents of ALP enjoyed all the festivities of great food and dancing. Twenty residents came to the party and our own Mr. Marshall Phillips received the crown as king. He is ninety-nine this year. Mrs. Edith Jackman also from ALP passed the crown on to a new queen Edna Ast who is ninety-six and will be ninety seven in August. Everyone enjoyed the refreshments and many residents wore funny hats and masks. Mr. William Mouser was seen dancing with lots of pretty girls and singing along with the music.

# APRIL 2007 TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sign up Tues. Mar. 27 <sup>th</sup>   <b>1</b> <b>Giant Foods &amp; Target @ Beltway Plaza Mall, MD</b> DPT: 12:30 p.m. RTN: 4:00 p.m. <b>BUNCO</b> @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Dining Hall Sign up Tues. April 3 <sup>rd</sup>   <b>8</b>	Sign up Tues. Mar. 27 <sup>th</sup>   <b>2</b> <b>Harley Davidson Manufacturing Plant Tour, York PA.</b> DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 4:00 p.m. 1425 Eden Road, York PA., 17412 <b>Charlestown Casino, WV</b> BPV's Trip DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 6:00 p.m. Sign up Tues. April 3 <sup>rd</sup>   <b>9</b>	Sign up Wed. March 28 <sup>th</sup>   <b>3</b> <b>Potomac Mills &amp; Wal-Mart, VA (2 Buses)</b> DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 3:00 p.m. <b>The Singing Sensations,</b> Brooklyn, NY performance @ 10:00 a.m. in the Scott Theater Sign up Wed. April 4 <sup>th</sup>   <b>10</b>	Sign up now Sheridan 1010   <b>4</b> <b>Trip Selection Meeting</b> @ 9:00 a.m. in the Scott Theater 1 <sup>st</sup> Day to begin signing up & paying for "Medieval Times" Dinner & Tournament Theater for May 5 show. Cost: \$47.00 Sign up Fri. April 6 <sup>th</sup>   <b>12</b>	Sign up Fri. Mar. 30 <sup>th</sup>   <b>5</b> <b>Andrews AFB, MD</b> DPT: 10:00 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m. <b>U.S. Navy Sea Chanters, performance @ 6:00 p.m. in the Scott</b> Sign up Fri. April 6 <sup>th</sup>   <b>12</b>	Sign up Mon. April 2 <sup>nd</sup>   <b>6</b> <b>D.C. ZOO BPV's Trip</b> DPT: 8:30 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m. <b>AFRH Talent Show Rehearsal @ 9 a.m. in the Scott Theater</b> <b>Laurel Race Track &amp; Mall, MD</b> DPT: 11:00 a.m. RTN: 5:30 p.m. Sign up Mon. April 16 <sup>th</sup>   <b>20</b>	Sign up Tues. April 3 <sup>rd</sup>   <b>7</b> Group Walking begins @ 10:00 a.m. behind the Scott Building <b>National Tartan Day @ Market Square, Old Towne Alexandria</b> DPT: 11:00 a.m. RTN: 4:00 p.m. <b>Blob's Park, Jessup MD "Rheinlanders"</b> DPT: 7:00 p.m. RTN: midnight Sign up Tues. April 10 <sup>th</sup>   <b>14</b>
Sign up Tues. April 10 <sup>th</sup>   <b>15</b> <b>BUNCO</b> @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Dining Hall <b>Andrews Sunday Brunch Retirees ONLY</b> DPT: 10:15 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m. Sign up Tues. April 17 <sup>th</sup>   <b>22</b>	Sign up Tues. April 10 <sup>th</sup>   <b>16</b> <b>St. Charles Mall &amp; Golden Corral Restaurant Waldorf MD</b> DPT: 10:00 a.m. Leave @ 3:00 p.m. arrive @ Golden Corral @ 3:15 p.m. & RTN: 5:30 p.m. Sign up Tues. April 24 <sup>th</sup>   <b>30</b>	Sign up Wed. April 11 <sup>th</sup>   <b>17</b> <b>Air &amp; Space Museum &amp; Imax Theater, Dulles Airport, VA</b> BPV's ALSO DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 2:30 p.m. <b>Ice Cream Social @ 1:30 p.m. in the Scott Dining Hall</b> Sign up Wed. April 18 <sup>th</sup>   <b>24</b>	Sign up now Sheridan 1010   <b>11</b> <b>Residents Golf Clinic</b> 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. @ the golf course <b>BINGO @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Theater</b> Sign up Fri. April 20 <sup>th</sup>   <b>26</b>	Sign up Fri. April 6 <sup>th</sup>   <b>12</b> <b>Forest Glen, MD Trip #1</b> DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 11:00 a.m. <b>Trip #2</b> DPT: 1:00 p.m. RTN: 3:00 p.m. <b>Du Pere High School Choir, Du Pere, OK performance @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Theater</b> Sign up Fri. April 20 <sup>th</sup>   <b>26</b>	Sign up Mon. April 16 <sup>th</sup>   <b>20</b> <b>North Hills H.S. Orchestra, North Hills, PA performance @ 10:00 a.m. in the Scott Theater</b> <b>AFRH Talent Show Rehearsal @ 9 a.m. in the Scott Theater</b> Sign up Mon. April 23 <sup>rd</sup>   <b>27</b>	Sign up Tues. April 17 <sup>th</sup>   <b>21</b> <b>Cherry Blossom Festival, DC</b> BPV's ALSO DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 12:30 p.m. Sign up Tues. April 24 <sup>th</sup>   <b>28</b>
Sign up Tues. April 24 <sup>th</sup>   <b>29</b> <b>FT. Myer Brunch, VA (PX / Commissary included)</b> BPV's ALSO DPT: 10:15 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m.	Sign up Tues. April 24 <sup>th</sup>   <b>30</b> <b>D.C. ZOO</b> DPT: 8:30 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m.	Sign up Wed. April 18 <sup>th</sup>   <b>24</b> <b>Quantico Marine Base, VA. Includes the new museum Retirees ONLY</b> DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 2:00 p.m. <b>Springfield Mall, VA</b> BPV'S ONLY DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 3:00 p.m.	Sign up now Sheridan 1010   <b>11</b> <b>BINGO @ 1:00 p.m. in the Scott Theater</b>	Sign up Fri. April 20 <sup>th</sup>   <b>26</b> <b>Bev's Ceramics trip &amp; lunch</b> DPT: 9:30 a.m. RTN: 3:00 p.m. <b>Jenks H.S. Choir, Jenks OK performance @ 1:30 p.m. in the Scott Theater</b> <b>U.S. Army Blues Jazz Ensemble</b> 7:30 p.m. @ Kenmore Auditorium, Arlington VA	Sign up Mon. April 23 <sup>rd</sup>   <b>27</b> <b>Wegmans &amp; Lunch</b> BPV'S ALSO DPT: 9:00 a.m. RTN: 1:00 p.m. <b>**** AFRH 2007 ****</b> <b>***TALENT SHOW***</b> beginning @ 6:30 p.m. in the Scott Theater	Sign up Tues. April 24 <sup>th</sup>   <b>28</b> <b>Golf 4-Ball Stroke Play</b> 12:00 noon @ the golf course <b>Leisure World, MD</b> ( Sign up Tues. Mar. 20 <sup>th</sup> for Leisure) <b>"Jay and Jingos"</b> DPT: 6:45 p.m. RTN: 10:30 p.m.
			<i>It is not permitted to sign anyone else's name on a trip sheet.</i>	Please do not scratch your name or anyone else's off any sign up sheet. If you see someone scratching a name off a sheet, please report them to Sheridan Rm. 1010.	Emergency cards must be carried with you on every trip, please make sure you have one. The trip caller has these cards if you need one	The "Same Seat" rule is required and enforced for departing and returning on all trips. Please be considerate of others and take notice of your seat selection when entering the bus. Please return to the home in your same



# From veterans home to training site

# A building that keeps on giving

## FBI gains valuable training at AFRH Gulfport

Story and photos by Mary Kay Gominger

The deserted hallways, lounge areas and rooms of the Gulfport Armed Forces Retirement Home saw plenty of action earlier this month when special agents assigned to various divisions of the FBI used the building to train.

The Gulfport facility stands vacant now awaiting demolition. All residential and government property has been removed from the 11-story high rise and the FBI, always looking for unique training opportunities, got approval from GSA to proceed. The timing was right, as demolition is expected to start in the very near future.

Stephen Gomez, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Mississippi, said, "the AFRH has always worked to serve the needs of the veterans who have protected the security of the U.S. Now, before the AFRH is demolished to make way for the new structure, it will once again serve the people who worked to protect our nation. By affording this unique and realistic training opportunity to the very people who now serve on the front lines to protect the security of the U.S., the AFRH will stand as an invaluable partner in better preparing FBI Swat Teams to carry out their mission in a safer, more effective manner."



Geared up and ready to start training, this FBI Special Agent gathers agents in front of the AFRH to discuss strategic tactics and scenarios for the first training exercise to go down for the day.



Agents check their weapons during a short break. The Gulfport AFRH building provided a perfect place for FBI agents to train as it is empty awaiting demolition.



The empty Gulfport building provided ample doors and windows for the FBI to practice breaching.



On the roof of the second floor, FBI agents wait for the smoke to clear. Breaching, from both inside and outside the building, was part of the training.



A special agent with the FBI climbs up a ladder and secures the second deck of the AFRH-Gulfport facility during a training exercise. Units from all over the country came through for training during the month of March.



# The Mississippi Gulf Coast At a Glance March 2007



## Recovery slow, rebuilding even slower as Mississippi Gulf Coast begins to mend

Story and photos by Mary Kay Gominger

Well, here it is. Eighteen months later. A lot of you, I'm sure, are wondering how the Coast looks since the storm. Many of you have called or stopped me in the halls when I'm working in DC to ask about how the recovery is going and what the Coast looks like. So instead of just telling you, here are some photos of what we are looking like now.

Recovery was slow and halting all along the Gulf Coast and it is proving to be the same thing with rebuilding. The drive to work each morning down Highway 90, from Pass Christian to Gulfport, is still a mind-blowing experience. It's hard to imagine, now, what we looked like before the hurricane. But when you see an old picture or someone reminds you of something that used to be on the beachfront, it still seems impossible that in one 24 hour period so much of our area could be wiped out.

Casinos and major developers of condos and that sort of construction are predominant along Hwy. 90. There are sprinklings of residential homes, few and far between, but slowly some homes are being rebuilt. Huge slabs with barren trees where home sites used to be are still the majority. There are no gas stations, convenience stores or shopping areas along the beach until you get into Biloxi and east of that. A couple of fast food restaurants have opened or will open soon on the beach. Most of the nicer restaurants have relocated inland and have been reopened for business.

Spring is in full bloom already down here and in case you forgot about the pollen and no-see-ems, well they are in full bloom too!

The Gulfport campus looks good and stands ready to take on our new AFRH facility. Check for updates on our website ([www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov)) and in our monthly newspaper.



A home on Scenic Drive in Pass Christian has been rebuilt to its pre-Katrina beauty. Houses along Hwy 90 are slowly beginning to take shape but the area is still predominantly empty slabs where stately homes once stood. Many have decided to move inland, to leave the area, or are waiting on insurance issues to be resolved.



The Pass Christian harbor is slowly making a comeback. Here you can see an assortment of fishing and shrimping boats.



These new condos are located between Pass Christian and Long Beach. They aren't open yet but should be opening soon. Housing is very hard to find on the Gulf Coast.



Trailer parks such as the one in this photo have become an all too familiar site up and down the Gulf Coast. This particular one is located at the intersection of Hwy 90 and Broad Avenue.