



Armed Forces Retirement Home

# Communicator

VOLUME V NUMBER 3

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

MARCH 31, 2008

## Breaking ground in Gulfport

Story and photos by Mary Kay Gominger

Former residents of the AFRH Gulfport facility were special guests of honor at the groundbreaking ceremony that was held here on March 3. Sixteen former residents attended the ceremony and witnessed the historic event which included a joint service color guard from the Naval Construction Training Center and remarks by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for



**Former Gulfport resident Richard Halloran does his share to speed up the construction as Gulfport Mayor Brent Warr looks on.**

Military Community and Family Policy, Leslye Arshnt, GSA Administrator Lurita Doan, Senators Thad Cochran and Roger Wicker and Congressman Gene Taylor, the Mayor of Gulfport Brent Warr and William Yates of W.G. Yates and Sons Construction Company. Master of ceremony for the event was Timothy Cox, AFRH Chief Operating Officer. Others in attendance included members of the project team from AFRH, GSA, Jacobs Engineering, and Yates Construction, the local media, some former staff and local active duty military.

"Today with this groundbreaking we are setting the foundation for a bright future for our proud veterans who were displaced following the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina," Under Secretary Arshnt said in her opening remarks.

"We all look forward to watching a fantastic Continuing Care Retirement Community take shape," she continued. "This facility will be built to today's industry standards encompassing a blend of state of the art concepts for independent, assisting living and long term care."

GSA Administrator Doan said, "This project is special to each person here. We at GSA will do whatever we can to help the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much and have put their lives on the line to defend each and every one of our personal liberties. That is a debt that a building can't repay but I just want you to know that I as well as all the 12,320 members of GSA and 47,000 contractors are enormously grateful for your willingness to put your life on the line for each and every one of us."

She concluded saying, "This project is more about deeds than words. We will deliver precisely as we promised – on budget, on time."

Members of the Mississippi delegation each spoke and shared sentiments about the destruction of the Gulf Coast from Hurricane Katrina and the importance of recovery through construction projects such as this.

"This state of the art facility for our

veterans with amenities will be a credit to the people that reside here," Senator Thad Cochran said.

Gulfport Mayor Brent Warr spoke with compassion as he described the hours before and after the storm. Mayor Warr spent time at the AFRH-G hours before the storm hit and was one of the first to stop by after the storm had passed to check on the status of the AFRH. He said he was amazed at the absolute calm resolve the veterans displayed after this tragic, life-altering event.

"I was in awe," he said. "As I looked around on the third floor where everyone was moved, away from the rising water...there was no confusion. The veterans held their post, where they were stationed, as they watched others tend to the business of helping them survive the storm. Witnessing this was so inspiring to me."

"Folks," he said addressing former residents at the close of his remarks, "this was your home, it is your home. Please hurry up and the minute that we cut the ribbon on this thing – come home."

The guest speakers then, with ceremonial shovels in hand, broke the ground, officially setting in motion the rebuild of the Gulfport AFRH.



**Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony (from left) - Resident Doris Balfour, William Yates, Leslye Arshnt, Senator Roger Wicker, Senator Thad Cochran, GSA Administrator Lurita Doan, U.S. House of Representatives Gene Taylor, Mayor Brent Warr, and Timothy Cox.**

## Air Force top enlisted stops at AFRH for tour

On Friday, February 29, 2008, CMSAF Rodney J. McKinley, the highest enlisted level of leadership in the U.S. Air Force, visited the AFRH and talked with the residents throughout his tour of the facilities.

CMSAF McKinley, the 15th chief master sergeant appointed to the highest noncommissioned officer position, serves as the personal advisor to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of the enlisted force.

His tour included stops at the bowling center, the fitness center, AAFES, the library, and general use areas in the Scott and Sheridan buildings.



**CMSAF Rodney McKinley speaks with resident Murven Holley.**



**Resident James Smalczewski (standing) talks to CMSAF McKinley as Ritchie Phillips welcomes First Sergeant Miller.**

## Inside this Issue



### Gulfport Construction Update

Page 4



### Fitness through Flexibility

Page 7



### AFRH ladies honored

Page 8

## Notes from the Resident Advisory Council



Well, it's almost summer and a time for renewal. A renewal of both mind and body. So those of you who enjoy golf get out to the club house and meet and greet others like you who enjoy walking the links and

hitting that little ball.

By the time this column is out our new Director should be on board and you either have or will soon meet him. I will be inviting him to the April 2008 Resident Advisory Council meeting so he can let us know his thoughts on making the AFRH-W better today than yesterday, but not as good as tomorrow.

As I mentioned at the last RAC meeting, with the arrival of the new Director, we will reactivate the executive committee of the RAC. The purpose of this committee is to stimulate communication, provide feedback, and provide input from the residents via the RAC.

At the last RAC meeting a request from a resident that we invite the senior enlisted members of both the Navy and Marine Corps to visit the home was voted on and approved. This request will be formalized soon after my return from my trip to California.

Soon, each of the floor representatives will have their photographs posted on their floor to make them more visible to the residents on each floor. You know that even though you may have a name posted, a photograph gives you something to remember. In addition to this we are taking steps to insure that each floor rep has a name tag to wear. The floor representatives are the key part of the RAC and it is time that they, and the work they do, be noted.

Those of you who have been at the home for six months or more are encouraged to join the RAC. There are many positions that are open or might be opened by your asking to take one of the open positions, either as a floor representative or as a committee member on one of the several committees that work with the RAC. I also want to thank all those residents who serve as committee chairman or members of a committee for their work. All of which goes into making your stay at the home an enjoyable experience.

I want to take a few moments to thank all those people who work for us. You know in our everyday life, we tend to forget that every day, every one of these workers, from food service, to those who clean the floors, dump the trash, all the people in the wellness center, and the hundreds of other people who perform the tasks that must be done to make this place function. These people make things happen for us. The work they do makes our lives easier. So just to restate - THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

The next RAC meeting will be Wednesday, April 16, 2008. Hope to see you there.

**Esker F. McConnell**  
Chairman

esker.mcconnell@us.army.mil

## We need you to Get Involved!

The next Resident Advisory Council meeting is Wednesday, April 16 at 9 a.m. in the Scott Meditation Room. Together we can make a difference.

## AFRH COMMUNICATOR

Phone: 1-800-422-9988

Web site: [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov) Email: [sheila.abarr@afrh.gov](mailto:sheila.abarr@afrh.gov)

Sheila Abarr-*AFRH Public Affairs Specialist, Marketing*  
Mary Kay Gominger-*Public Affairs Specialist*  
Charles T. Jones, Jr.-*Photographer*

*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>**

## Protestant Chaplain Fund makes donation to Ronald McDonald House

On March 6, 2008, a \$2,000 donation was made by the AFRH Protestant Fund to the Ronald McDonald House.

The Protestant Chapel Fund, according to AFRH Chaplain John Goodloe, was established by an AFRH Agency Directive and supports religious programs of the various faith groups among AFRH residents and provides contributions to other worthy causes, charities and religious organizations as approved by the Fund Council.

The Council presently consists of approximately 12 residents who are a part of the Protestant congregation. They meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month (or as needed). One of the agenda items for the Council is to decide which organization will receive a contribution from the Protestant Chapel Fund. Members of the Council suggest names of organizations to receive such contributions. It then becomes that member's responsibility to share with the entire Council why this particular organization should be considered as a recipient of the donation. The members will also vote on

the amount of the gift to send. Additionally, in the months that have five Sundays, the collected offerings will go to a particular organization determined by the Council. This fifth Sunday offering is a standing tradition within the Protestant Chapel congregation.

Some of the other groups that have received donations from the Fund are as follows: So Others Might Eat (SOME),

Doctors Without Borders, Healing Waters, a Lutheran Church in Gulfport (whose outreach program was strained by Hurricane Katrina), Clark Elementary School, and Feed the Children. Corrine Robinson was the Council member who recommended The Ronald McDonald House. The Ronald McDonald House provides housing for the families of critically ill children being treated as area hospitals.



**Corrine Robinson hands a \$2,000 check to Ronald McDonald House representatives Cortney Kelly and Celia Holland.**

# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



You ask 10 people the definition of 'customer service' and you will mostly likely get 10 very different answers. Most definitions will include phrases such as

'meeting the customers' needs' or 'helping others'...maybe the 'customer is always right.' None of those answers would be wrong but the fact is, everyone has their own idea about what good customer service is and it's our job, as AFRH leaders and staff members, to figure out how to provide excellent customer service to each and every person we come into contact with-- be it a resident, a prospective resident, a visitor to our home or fellow staff member.

Exceptional service is so important to us, in fact, that it is listed as one of our Strategic Goal areas in our Guiding Business Principles that we, as a team, developed last

May at the AFRH offsite. The goal, one of five, reads - Exceptional Service: Enhance the AFRH experience to enrich the quality of residents' lives.

Enriching the lives of our residents on a day-to-day basis is everyone's job and should be the focus of each of our tasks as we go through the day. It might be something as simple as pointing someone new in the right direction or spending a few minutes helping a resident find the right person to answer their question. Every problem we encounter won't always have an immediate solution but every person should walk away feeling their individual need has been heard and properly addressed. We all have busy 'jobs' that eat up most of the hours in our day at work but taking time to listen and help out someone with a complaint is just as much a part of that job.

It may sometimes feel like every time you turn around someone is handing you a survey to fill out about the service you received. For those that take the time to complete them, thank you. These surveys are one way we measure how we are doing. Verbal communication is good too, but with the survey form we can document and chart your responses and know exactly where we excel and where we need improvement. In April

we will be conducting a survey, through a random sampling, which will cover the areas of health care, resident services and campus operations. The response we get from these surveys will determine our focus in the following months and will help identify any training or specialty care needs. We will also be asking, in that survey, what area(s) in which we excel. By determining areas where

we are doing good, we can learn from each other and implement those practices throughout the Agency. Everyone that works at the AFRH, civil service employees and contractors are responsible for excellent customer service. It is my job to ensure that is what you receive. Working together, we will continue to enrich the living experience at the AFRH.

*Timothy Cox*

## AFRH - Washington Master Plan 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 affordable 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 has completed its Final Master Plan based on the selected design concept and extensive stakeholder feedback. AFRH has issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for its selected development alternative, and has a finalized a Programmatic Agreement related to Historic Preservation between AFRH, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCP), the National Park Service (NPS), the DC State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). The Master Plan was submitted to NCP in late February for consideration at the May 2008 NCP meeting.

# AFRH Gulfport Groundbreaking photo recap



Former Gulfport residents gather for a photo after the groundbreaking ceremony.



The staging area just prior to the ceremony.



Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy Leslye Arsht answers questions from a reporter from Mobile, Alabama.



Members of the Joint Service color guard from the Naval Construction Training Center in Gulfport take part in the AFRH-G groundbreaking ceremony.



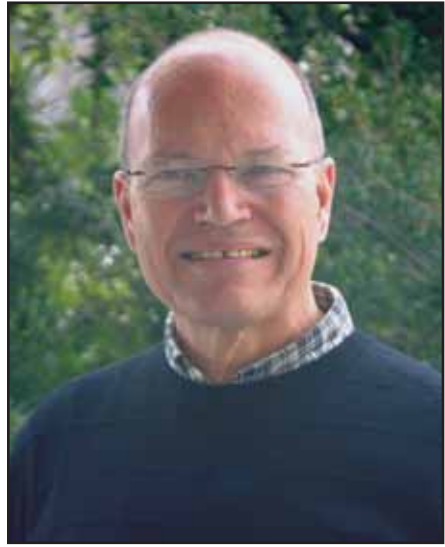
A group of ladies, members of the WAVES National Association, wait for the ceremony to begin.



Gulfport Mayor Brent Warr talks with Biloxian Brig. Gen. E.B. Kitchens, (USA-R), after the ceremony.

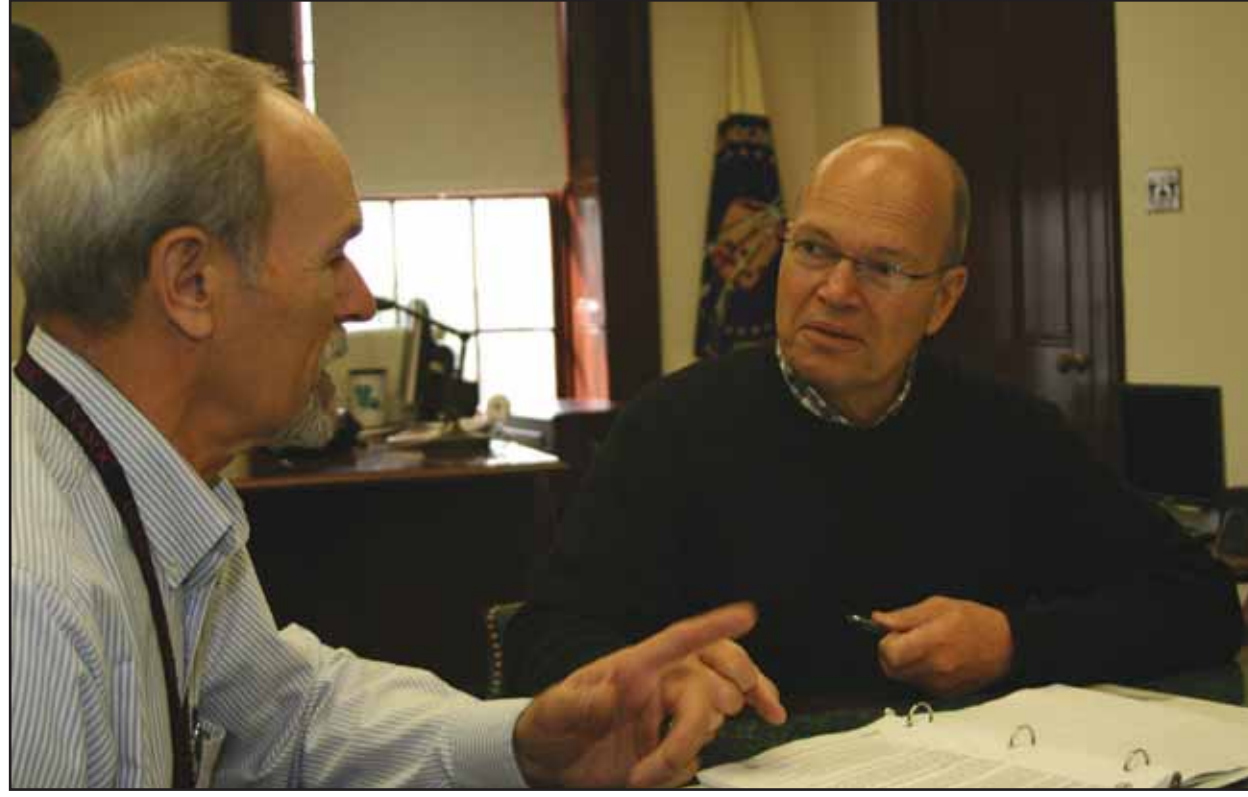
*Photos by Mary Kay Gominger*

## From the Director



I am thankful to be here with you at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. I visited the home's museum and discovered pictures and keepsakes

from previous Directors. I wondered about what kind of people they were and what they accomplished here in this historic and venerable place. I am not here to copy their ways. Even if I wanted to, it would be impossible because the way in which they carried out their work was a result of their lives . . . their upbringing, personalities, experiences, education, knowledge, wisdom, successes and failures. I assume this significant responsibility and my work will result from my life experiences. My objective is to lead by example in a way that brings tribute to all that the Armed Forces Retirement Home represents, our magnificent country



and the God I live for. To meet that goal my first regard must be to honor you, the veterans who helped make this country what it is.

Thank you for your service, loyalty and for the sacrifices you made. Thank you for choosing to make the AFRH your home. And, thank you for your welcoming me.

*David Watkins*

**AFRH-W's new director, Mr. David Watkins, is briefed by Al Mori, the Ombudsman.**

## Honor an Army veteran with a Freedom Team Salute

Freedom Team Salute is an official program sponsored by the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff. The program is funded through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA).

This is not a fund-raising project. There is no cost to participate. Anyone can honor a U.S. Army Veteran. Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers can honor their parents, spouse, and employer.

Freedom Team Salute gives Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers the opportunity to recognize and honor a parent's service, a spouse's commitment, and an employer's long-standing support with a Commendation tailored to their contribution.

Freedom Team Salute also gives everyone the opportunity to recognize U.S. Army Veterans with a Commendation for their dedicated service and continued support of today's Soldiers. The general public and civilians, as well as all service members, can submit the names of an unlimited number of U.S. Army Veterans to Freedom Team Salute.

Additional information regarding Freedom Team Salute can be obtained on line at [www.freedomteamsalute.com](http://www.freedomteamsalute.com)

## Welcome Aboard



**Name:** Anthony Balsamo  
**Branch of Service:** U. S. Army  
**Entry Date:** May 1950  
**Separation Date:** June 1971  
**Rank:** E-6  
**War Theaters:** Korea & Vietnam



**Name:** Helen Pfeiffer  
**Branch of Service:** U.S. Navy  
**Entry Date:** June 1945  
**Separation Date:** October 1964  
**Rank:** E-6  
**War Theaters:** WWII, Korea & Vietnam



**Name:** Terry Sawyer  
**Branch of Service:** U.S. Army  
**Entry Date:** February 1970  
**Separation Date:** March 1973  
**Rank:** E-5  
**War Theaters:** Vietnam



**Name:** Muriel Kupersmith  
**Branch of Service:** U.S. Marine Corps  
**Entry Date:** April 1941  
**Separation Date:** April 1946  
**Rank:** E-5  
**War Theaters:** WWII



## Gulfport Update



### Columns are going up

*These photos were taken at the Gulfport site on March 26, 2008. Go to [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov) to view the earthcam and for weekly photo updates.*

Analog to digital

# What is digital tv conversion?

By Al Mori

What is going on with the analog to digital conversion with our TV's? COMCAST is meeting the requirements of the law that was enacted by Congress in 1996. This was done to authorize the distribution of an additional broadcast channel to each broadcast TV station so they could start a digital broadcast channel while simultaneously continuing their analog broadcast channel. Later, Congress mandated that 17 February 2009 would be the last day for full power television stations to broadcast in analog. Broadcast stations in all U.S. markets are currently broadcasting in both analog and digital. After February 17, 2009, full-power television stations will broadcast in digital only. To better understand what this means I have gone to the DTV.gov website and pulled a few questions and answers that I think may help in clarifying what this means to you.

**Why are we switching to DTV?**

An important benefit of the switch to all-digital broadcasting is that it will free up parts of the valuable broadcast spectrum for public safety communications (such as police, fire departments, and rescue squads). Also, some of the spectrum will be auctioned to companies that will be able to provide consumers with more advanced wireless services (such as wireless broadband).

Consumers also benefit because digital broadcasting allows stations to offer improved picture and sound quality, and digital is much more efficient than analog. For example, rather than being limited to providing one analog program, a broadcaster is able to offer a super sharp "high definition" (HD) digital program or multiple "standard definition" (SD) digital programs simultaneously through a process called "multicasting." Multicasting allows broadcast stations to offer several channels of digital programming at the same time, using the same amount of spectrum required for one analog program. So, for example, while a station broadcasting in analog on channel 7 is only able to offer viewers one program, a station broadcasting in digital on channel 7 can offer viewers one digital program on channel 7-1, a second digital program on channel 7-2, a third digital program on channel 7-3, and so on. This means more programming choices for viewers. Further, DTV can provide interactive video and data services that are not possible with analog technology.

**What do I need to do to be ready for the end of analog TV broadcasting?**

Because Congress mandated that the last day for full-

power television stations to broadcast in analog would be February 17, 2009, over-the-air TV broadcasts will be in digital only after that date. If you have one or more televisions that receive free over-the-air television programming (with a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears" on the TV), the type of TV you own is very important. A digital television (a TV with an internal digital tuner) will allow you to continue to watch free over-the-air programming after February 17, 2009. However, if you have an analog television, you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to continue to watch broadcast television on that set. This converter box will also enable you to see any additional multicast programming that your local stations are offering.

Cable and satellite TV subscribers with analog TVs hooked up to their cable or satellite service should not be affected by the February 17, 2009 cut-off date for full-power analog broadcasting.

**How do I know if I already have digital programming through my cable or satellite TV service?**

You may receive digital programming if you subscribe to a digital or HD package from your provider and you are viewing the digital programming on a digital set. However, the digital cable tier and satellite TV service are not necessarily DTV. Your cable or satellite TV system may be using digital technology as a more efficient way of delivering analog programming to you. If you have an analog television set, then you are probably not getting digital, even though the reception may be somewhat improved. Check with your cable or satellite TV provider to find out what kinds of programming you can receive, and what equipment you need to receive it.

**If I have an older analog television, will I have to throw it away after February 17, 2009?**

No. A digital-to-analog converter box will allow you to continue using your existing analog TV to watch over-the-air digital broadcasts. You do not need to get rid of your existing analog TV. In addition, analog sets should continue to work as before if connected to a subscription service such as cable or satellite TV. Also, analog sets should continue to work with gaming consoles, VCRs, DVD players, and similar products that you use now.

**How can I be sure that I am buying a digital TV (DTV)?**

By law, beginning March 1, 2007, all television reception devices (including TVs, VCRs, DVRs, etc.) imported into the U.S. or shipped in interstate commerce must contain a digital tuner. Retailers may continue to sell analog-only devices from existing inventory, but must prominently display on or near the analog-only device a Consumer Alert label. Therefore, all television equipment being sold should contain a digital tuner, or should be identified at the point-of-sale as not having one. Be aware of this label and the limitations of analog-only devices if you are purchasing a new TV or other TV equipment.

**How do I know if I already have a digital TV (DTV)?**

Many DTVs and digital television equipment will have labels or markings on them, or statements in the informational materials that came with them, to indicate that they contain digital tuners. These labels or markings may contain the words "Integrated Digital Tuner," "Digital Tuner Built-In," "Digital Receiver," or "Digital Tuner," "DTV," "ATSC," or "HDTV" (High Definition television). If your television equipment contains any of these labels or markings, you should be able to view digital over-the-air programming without the need for a digital-to-analog converter box. (Remember, you do not need an HDTV to view free over-the-air digital programming. As long as your television equipment contains a digital tuner, you can view over-the-air digital. An HDTV is only necessary if you want to view High Definition programming in full HD quality.) You should also check the manual or any other materials that came with your television equipment in order to determine whether it contains a digital tuner.

If your television set is labeled as a "Digital Monitor" or "HDTV Monitor," or as "Digital Ready" or "HDTV Ready," this does not mean it actually contains a digital tuner. Thus, you still will likely need a separate set-top box which contains a digital tuner in order to view over-the-air digital programming. Over-the-air digital set-top boxes for Digital or HD "Monitors" can be purchased at retail stores. Cable and satellite TV providers also sell or lease digital set-top boxes for their specific services. (Note: the digital set-top box described here is not the same as the digital-to-analog converter box, described above, used to convert free over-the-air digital broadcasts for viewing on an analog TV set.)

If your television set is labeled as "analog" or "NTSC," and is NOT labeled as containing a digital tuner, it contains an analog tuner only.

If you cannot determine whether your television set or other television equipment contains a digital tuner, you are advised to check your equipment for the manufacturer name and model number, and then contact your consumer electronics retailer, or the manufacturer, to determine whether it contains a digital tuner. This information also may be available online through the manufacturer's website.

Because most broadcast stations in all U.S. television markets are already broadcasting in digital, consumers can watch DTV today. You can contact your local broadcast stations to determine the channel numbers on which the stations are currently broadcasting digital programming. You should then ensure that your television is set up to receive over-the-air programming (as distinguished from being connected to a paid provider such as cable or satellite TV service), and then tune to the over-the-air digital channels to see if your set can receive the digital broadcast programming.

The website has loads of useful information if you have further questions about the digital conversion. These questions are just a few that I have been asked about the conversion.

## Extreme Tank Makeover



Sergeant Brian Coffee, President of the BOSS (Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers) at Fort Myer, spray washes the tank at the AFRH. In addition to the wash job, Sgt. Coffee and his crew painted division numbers on the tank and spruced up the area around the tank.

## 21st Signal Brigade tour



Greg Moore of the Public Affairs and Marketing Office gives members of the 21st Army Signal Brigade, a major subordinate command of the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/ 9th Army Signal Command, from Fort Detrick, MD, a tour of the Fitness Center during a visit to the AFRH on March 13. The group of 25 active duty soldiers had lunch with the residents after their tour of the facilities.

## Veterans news

### DD-214's now available online

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214's online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>. This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and

the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site.

Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mailroom and

processing time.

### Veterans Appreciation Day in Maryland

Military veterans from WWII to Iraq are invited to attend the Third Annual Veterans Appreciation Day at the Isaak Walter League of America - Wildlife Achievement Center, Mt. Airy, Maryland, on Saturday, May 10 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The AFRH will be providing a bus for transportation for any veteran interested in attending.

Activities scheduled for the day include a static display including military vehicles, equipment, combat gear and gadgets

from WWII to present; WWII reenactment activities including live fire exhibitions and interactive displays; the opportunity to shoot firearms from WWII through Vietnam to Iraq on the rifle and pistol ranges. Hearing and eye protection will be provided to all participants.

Food and refreshments will be served and all displays, reenactments, activities, food and refreshments will be provided at no cost to the veterans.

Sign up information will be made available in the near future.

**Army Operation Rations****Feeding the Troops - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

Story by Mary Kay Gominger

Photos by Greg Moore

Nutrition, the Army determined, can have a great impact on a warfighter's performance. The Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) rations, standard military ration developed to support the individual warfighter in all Armed Forces, replaced the C ration in the early 1980s, and since then it has been continually updated. Since the early 1990s, improvements have focused on replacing items based on troop input to make the ration more acceptable and to expand variety. All changes are warfighter recommended, warfighter tested and warfighter approved.

On Wednesday, March 5, a group of Army retirees from the AFRH were invited to the Pentagon to participate in the Army's Operation Rations, a look into the history of Army chow and a sample of the rations of the present and future, into the year 2010. The event was hosted by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren.

During Operation Rations, residents in attendance had the opportunity to view and taste displays of food throughout the history of the Army from the Civil War, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam through to the modern era.

(Above) - Woodrow Senkel gets a tray with a variety of new food items that the Army is including in the Meals Ready to Eat.

(Right) - William Kelley talks to some active duty Army personnel during Operation Rations, the Army's look back into the history and future of military chow.

**Old soldiers C rations vs chow of the future**

By Wilfred McCarty

I appreciated the Secretary of the Army inviting some of us old soldiers from the Armed Forces Retirement Home to the Pentagon today to show us the MREs and food they are going to serve the military in the future plus what was served in the past. I now have a supply of Jalapeno Cashews coming to MRE in XXX (not sure what year that is) some chocolate covered coffee beans coming to MREs in XXV111 (maybe that is the roman numeral for 2008 (why use roman numerals?). They also had caffeine supplement chewing gum (100mg per piece), sugar free white tea (for tea breaks), and they also had cranraspberry (combination of cranberries and raspberries?) energy bars (they are trying) and mocha nutritious energy bars. What surprised me was that they now have very very tiny bottles of tabasco sauce in their MREs (meals ready to eat). Some unfairly refer to them as Meals Refused by Ethiopia.

Wearing a WWII cap I was asked how these offerings compared to WWII ready to eat fare. Not as bland as some of the things we got. In fact some of the items were kind of spicy but with enough different items that it kind of looked like they had something for all. With the many samples I picked up I won't need to go to chow tonight. But I will. I appreciated and enjoyed the outing.

**Music man performs for residents of King Health Center**Story and photo by Amanda Jensema  
KHC Recreation Specialist

The residents of the King Health Center had a special visitor come and play music for them on the morning on Thursday, March 6th. His name is James Ogden and he truly is a prodigy of music when it comes to the piano, accordion and harmonica. He has been playing the piano since he was 6 years old. He is mostly self-taught on the accordion beginning at the age of 10. He has been playing the instruments ever since.

Mr. Ogden lives in Washington State but was in Washington, DC for a very special reason. He had the opportunity to play the piano at the National Press Club. What is so

special about this piano you may ask? In 1945, President Harry S. Truman, whom at the time was Vice-President, played that very piano. While he was playing, Lauren Bacall was placed on the piano by her agent.

The residents of KHC were raving about this performance throughout as well as afterwards. He played songs all by memory switching between the piano and accordion. Mr. Hill, a resident on the 3rd floor stated, "He is one of your best!" After the concert he walked around and spoke with the residents.

The residents were mesmerized by his skill and fluidity of each song. We were honored to have him play for our residents. It genuinely was a treat.



Musician James Ogden plays the accordion during his performance for residents of King Health Center. James also played the piano and harmonica while here at the AFRH.

**Girl Scouts enjoy resident sponsored Easter Egg hunt, donate cookies**

By Melodie Menke, Volunteer Services

The 2nd Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Lincoln's lawn took place on March 22 with 10 residents hosting the event for the Girl Scout Troop 1871 of Virginia. The leader is an active duty Air Force Dad.

It was a brisk and windy time but the residents hid over 150 plastic eggs filled with goodies for the girls ranging from 5-10 years of age. After the hunt, we took a group picture on the steps of the Lincoln Cottage and then we all came inside to the Sheridan Lobby and put the fireplace on and watched the girls open some of the eggs and with 20 more residents participating, resident CJ Stone had prize bags for the girls in exchange for an

answer to his state trivia questions.

Troop 1871 donated over 10 cases of girl scout cookies and also brought a beautiful huge woven basket filled with edible gifts. The basket will be put on display at LaGarde in the Dining Room for Easter Lunch. We have a small group of resident volunteers decorating the tables and taking polaroid pictures for Easter Sunday.



**Filled to the brim** - This young Girl Scout, from Troop 1871 of Virginia, has a basket full of brightly colored Easter eggs. Residents of AFRH, pictured to the left with the children, hosted the 2nd Annual Easter Egg Hunt for the girl scout troop on the lawn in front of the Lincoln Cottage.

**Bands perform at AFRH during the month of April**

**April 4** - Chaparral Middle School Band, Diamond Bar, California, 1 p.m.

**April 7** - Edon Northwest HS Band, Edon, Ohio, 1:30 p.m.

**April 11** - American Fork HS Choir, American Fork, UT, 10 a.m.

**April 14** - Timpview HS Band, Provo, UT, 1 p.m.

**April 24** - Lexington HS Wind Ensemble, Lexington, MA, 1 p.m.

**April 25** - Battle Creek HS Band, Battle Creek, MI, 10:30 a.m.

**April 25** - Jennings County HS Orchestra, North Vernon, VA, 1:30 p.m.

Also, please note that on Saturday, April 5, a bus trip is scheduled for the Cherry Blossom Prelude to Fireworks Show with the Navy and Army bands performance, departing at 4:30 p.m.

On Sunday, April 20, a trip is planned to attend the U.S Marine Band (in full) performance at Northern Virginia Community College, departing at 12:30 p.m. Sign up in Sheridan, room 1010, for both of these trips.

# Flexibility class is way to regain strength, balance to live a healthier fuller life

By Mary Kay Gominger

Don't you wish there was something you could do that would instantly make you feel younger, more alive and take away some of the increasing aches of pain associated with aging? Wouldn't you like to bound out of bed every morning, feeling energized and ready to take on the day? Sound like the impossible dream? Well, some residents have discovered just the way to do that and with the help of resident Curtis Young, they are seeing some good results.

Fitness enthusiast Curtis Young knows the benefit of a daily exercise regimen. He works out in the fitness center and runs every day. He also rides bikes and plays softball. And now, with the support of Recreation Specialist Jerry Carter, Curtis teaches a Flexibility Exercise class for any resident that wants to join.

"We exercise together for one hour, two days a week," Curtis said. "The participants in the class are already finding improved balance and strength. If you want to have less aches, pains and fear of falling and you've been waiting for a straight forward, enjoyable entry into shaping up, with loads of humor, here it is."

According to Jerry Carter, the benefits of the class are many. They include decrease risk of osteoporosis, increase mobility, improve balance and coordination, decrease risk of injuries, reduce the probability of falls, increase range of motion, weight management, increase strength and endurance, boost your energy, increase muscle mass and less body fat, injury protection for muscles and joints, improve posture and finally, it will improve your quality of life.



**"...If you want to have less aches, pains and fear of falling and you've been waiting for a straight forward, enjoyable entry into shaping up, with loads of humor, here it is...."**

**Curtis Young  
Class Instructor**

The Flexibility Exercise class uses a combination of tools such as dumb bells, bar bells, tubing, resistance bands, strength training, yoga, pilates and mat abdominal work. Over two dozen residents are signed up and the num-

bers keep growing.

"Curtis is in fantastic shape," said Jerry. "He takes his health seriously and he is doing a valuable service by teaching this class to other residents. They are starting to see the results as well."

Flexibility Exercise class participant Marie Townsend said, "For a very long time my left leg was giving me trouble and I couldn't go up and down steps. I had to take one step at a time using my right leg only. When I joined the class and did all the exercises the teacher told us to do my leg was



Jean Ringuette (left) and Curtis Young, along with other members of the class, stretch during a Flexibility class at the Fitness Center. Improved balance and an overall feeling of wellness are just two of the benefits of enrolling in the class.

stronger and funny thing - recently when I went down steps I even forgot the pain and now I don't need help climbing steps."

Jim Sowers shared this, "The benefit that I have received from joining the exercise and flexibility classes has done very much toward the rapid recovery of the surgery I had for a total hip replacement."

"Curtis Young's Flexibility classes have given me some positive feelings about aging," said Virginia Sicotte. "I didn't expect to live this long. I didn't know what to expect so the aches and pains and losses were a shock. These classes are sort of an insurance policy against losing it all. They give me hope. Get younger, with Young!"

Fifteen year resident Michael George said, "This is what the class does for me: I have the newspaper delivered to me and I can now bend over and pick it up without hanging on to something because I no longer am

afraid I will fall on my nose. It's no longer a major struggle putting my socks on in the morning. I as of yet do not have my balancing down, I still need the back of the chair, but I am a lot better than when I started."

"I went to the class as I was having trouble with my legs, especially walking. The exercises have been beneficial to me in developing my leg muscles and hopefully to get to a point that I will be able to take up bowling again," said Erigelina (Lennie) Kuhn.

Resident R. Royce summarized it by saying, "Exercise and diet has extended my life into a healthy human being. I also walk in a spiritual awareness that gives me full comfort and peace of mind."

The Flexibility Exercise class is held on Saturdays and Wednesdays at 3 p.m. Stop by the Fitness Center and see Jerry Carter and get signed up.



In unison, two participants of the Flexibility class lift barbells over their heads.



Curtis Young leads the class as they go through a routine using resistance bands for strength training.



## 20,000 mile walking award

Two residents, both members of the AFRH-W Walking Club, received 20,000 'VICTORY MEDALS' on Thursday, March 13. The AFRH-W Walking Club consists of residents who keep a record of the miles they walk in a log book. Residents receive tee-shirts for walking 100, 500, miles/ 1000, 5,000 10,000 15,000 miles get hooded sweat shirts/ at 20,000 miles get the Victory Medal. They are the first residents to achieve 20,000 here at the AFRH-W.

From left - Chief Resident Services Chuck Dickerson, Edmond Crump, Roger Davison and AFRH Chief Operating Officer Tim Cox.

# Women's History Month *Ladies of AFRH honored*

Story by Jessica Cain, DTRA PA  
Photos by Bill Weih

Eight female military trailblazers were honored on March 5, 2008, for their service to the country and their courage to serve despite the discrimination they faced as women in the military.

They endured hardships from fellow service members simply because most men did not want them to serve. DTRA staff came out by the dozens to pay tribute to these brave women.

Upon starting her career, one honoree, Marion Marques, was told by a male superior "not to get comfortable," implying that she would not be in the military long. This is type of discrimination that women in the military typically faced in the 1950's. Marques went on to serve a full 20 years.

Another honoree, Ann Whittaker, joined to work on planes, but was given the duty of filing papers. While she was not able

to achieve her dream, her service inspired two generations of her family to join the services as well. Whittaker held back tears as she told the crowd of her four sons, and seven grandchildren that have served in the military.

Despite the difficulties they were forced to overcome, all of the women are proud and honored to have the opportunity to serve in the military.

While on active duty, the eight women worked in various capacities, ranks and services but there is a single common thread that holds them all together: service to their country. This same theme was exemplified by the photographic video tribute to women in the military. Willa Farrell even said that she would enlist again now if she were allowed.

These women, and the many like them, have inspired not only their own families, but future generations for years to come.

A second event in observance of Women's History Month, held on March 19th, included a three hour tour of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC.

Active duty members present roses to each of the 'trailblazers' prior to the luncheon held on March 5 as a tribute to their service to country.



Before the event, each honoree was escorted to lunch by a DTRA staff member. Army Major Matthew Moakler, of the Plans & Doctrine Integration Division, Combating WMD Enterprise, had the pleasure of dining with Marion Marques. When asked later about the experience, he said he "was most impressed by how she ended up overcoming the doubts and misconceptions about what a female could do."



The ladies of AFRH have a group photo taken during the DTRA luncheon held in their honor. The luncheon was part of DTRA's Women's History Month events.

