



AFRH Local Advisory Board has full agenda at semi-annual meeting

The AFRH Local Advisory Board held their semi-annual meeting at the Home on November 6, 2008. The Local Advisory Board is governed by law established under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002.

In attendance was Mr. Tim Cox, AFRH Chief Operating Officer, Major General Carla Harley-Bowland, Commanding General, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command, David Watkins, AFRH-W Director, Al Mori, AFRH Ombudsman, Esker McConnell, Resident Advisory Council, Steve McManus, AFRH Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Marge Class, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and the TriCare Management Activity Program Analysis, Clinical Quality, Colonel Darence Fivehouse, Office of Staff Judge Advocate, David Lenz, AFRH Administrative Officer, Maurice Swinton, AFRH Chief of



Members of the AFRH Local Advisory Board have a round table discussion about the large number of visitors (just over 4,000) to the AFRH this year.

Information, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent, Master Chief Loretta Glen for Joe R. Campa, Jr., MCPON, Colonel Ed Adelman, USAF, Office of Secretary of Defense Liaison, Joe Woo, AFRH Chief Architect, Sheila Abarr, AFRH Public Affairs Officer, Karen Harry, Office of the AFRH COO, Nancy Duran, Consultant, 1st Sgt Chief Miller sitting in for CSMAF and Vicki Leonard, representing DC Council (Ward 5).

The Local Board for the AFRH is comprised of at least 11 members who (except as otherwise specifically provided) shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with each of the

Secretaries of the military departments concerned. At least one member of the Local Board shall have a perspective that is oriented toward the Retirement Home overall. Other board members shall have expertise in retirement home administration and financing, gerontology from the geographical area, financial management, senior noncommissioned officer of each of the Armed Forces, one senior judge advocate from one of the Armed Forces, the director of the facility, a representative from the AFRH Resident Advisory Council, and other representatives designated by the Secretary of Defense.

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British veterans join in Veteran's Day ceremony at Arlington National



The "Men in Scarlet," as the Chelsea Pensioners of the Royal Hospital Chelsea are referred to, join residents of the AFRH at Veteran's Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery. Chelsea Pensioners are former members of the British army and the Royal Hospital Chelsea dates back to 1682 when it was founded by King Charles II. The Pensioners spent a week at the AFRH getting reacquainted with old friends and making new friends. The complete story is on Page 8.

Notes from the Resident Advisory Council



At the first part of the month of November many of you may have noticed several men walking around post wearing scarlet coats and speaking what some might consider a

“weird” type of English. Yes, these were our visitors from the Royal Hospital Chelsea. This institution located in the Chelsea section of London performs the same types of functions as our home. They visited during the period November 7-14.

They were hosted by four residents of our home. These four residents were: John Miller, Curtis Young, John Porter and myself. There were also several members of the home and agency staff that escorted us. Just to name them is to thank them for their work - Laura Fogarty, Becky Perry, Christine Baldwin, Jerry Carter, Lorenzo Tribbett, Earl Thomas, David Watkins, Charles Dickerson, his wife Miko, and Michele Bailey. Also the work of the dining hall individuals and everyone else who worked so hard on this visit was welcomed. If I have forgotten any person who assisted in this visit, I am sorry but your hard work was welcomed.

And then there were the residents who worked in the “Tea Room.” This room, put together by residents Corrine Robinson and Susan Chubb, was well received by the British.

And then we have to thank the organization that is responsible for all this happening. This organization is the Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA). Most of the effort was taken care of by their Executive Director for Government Affairs Mr. Richard Schneider. Mr. Schneider was assisted by his wife Fiona who did her share of work to make this visit happen.

Now that the visit is over we can get on to other things. Like getting ready for Christmas, the New Year, the new Congress, the new President. But just like every other thing that happens we residents are ready for them. Just because we have aged, we have not lost our desire to serve our fellow residents, and to continue to serve the country we love. And the upcoming year gives us that many more days to offer and receive assistance.

So instead of going on and on just let me say that all the members of the Resident Advisory Council, myself included, will continue to insure that your interests are heard and worked on in the coming year.

Esker McConnell

December Events

- Dec. 6 -
Country Step Dance Team
1:30 Scott Theater
- Dec. 7 -
Pearl Harbor Remembrance
11:45 Scott Dining Hall
- Dec. 9 -
Tree Lighting Ceremony
6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 11 -
Holiday Door Decorating
Contest, 3 p.m.
- Dec. 12 -
Arts and Crafts
9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Scott Lobby
- Dec. 16 -
Ice Cream Social
1:30 Scott Dining Hall
- Dec. 19 -
Holiday Dance
7:30 p.m.

AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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The AFRH Communicator is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by the AFRH Communicator staff for journalistic style and length. The articles included in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the management, staff, or residents of the AFRH.

Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi



Become a resident today!

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

Eligibility:

Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH.

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

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

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH PAO/Marketing, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

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

AFRH Welcomes Air Force visitors

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (photo right) Rodney McKinley talks with William Sinnott during a recent visit to the AFRH.

Below - CMSAF McKinley's staff members (from left) MSgt Evans, 1stSgt. Miller and TSgt Fischer talk to Charles Merlino at the bowling alley.



Message from the Chief Operating Officer



The AFRH 2008 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) has been finalized and it is currently at the printers. You can access an advance copy of it by going to our website at www.afrh.gov, and clicking on the "Performance and Accountability Report" link on the home page. I am very excited about all that we have accomplished in the past year and this publication so beautifully captures the spirit of our residents at AFRH. The 2008 PAR fulfills an annual Congressional mandate, but you will see at first glance that it does so much more than that. It's a snapshot, so to speak, of where the AFRH is both organizationally and financially and it does so in a fashion that features our number one asset, which, is the unique and special group of veterans that call the AFRH 'home.'

Today the vitality of our organization is evident in everything we do. Residents of all ages are discovering that by engaging the mind and body, anything is possible, now and deep into their golden years. A good example of this is the three residents that qualified for the 2009 National Senior Olympics by competing in the DC Senior Olympics last summer. Willa Farrell qualified in the bowling events, Clyde Hairston in the golf competition, and Ed Crump will participate in the 1500 meter speed walk. The 2009 Summer National Senior Games will take place in San Francisco, California, from August 1 thru the 15th. Congratulations to you all! Your family at the AFRH will be cheering for you.

These are but a few of the many vibrant, remarkable residents here in our Home. Our community of veterans made a difference when they served in the armed forces and they continue to make a positive impact in the day-to-day activities of our Home.

The ties we have with the active duty military community continues to grow. This month we had a record number of visitors from all spectrums of military service - from a former Marine Corps Commandant, General P.X. Kelley, who spoke at our Marine Corps Birthday celebration on November 6 to a performance by the U.S. Army School of Music on November 20 with many more in between. On November 14 we hosted the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Charles Bowen. Other visitors this month include Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Joe Campa Jr., Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney McKinley and the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent. The Public Affairs Officer also hosted a group of Senior Staff NCOs from all over the U.S. for a tour and lunch on November 20 and sponsored a Red, White and Blue (The Military Coalition) luncheon on November 19. We had soldiers from the Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers (BOSS) Program visit the residents on November 13 and a son of a soldier presently serving in Iraq, 16-year old Eagle Scout Ryan Mavity, made and delivered four DVD cases to our Library. The generation gap certainly narrows when it comes to the military 'take care of its own.'

The Defense Threat Reduction Agency honored a group of our residents on Veterans' Day with a ceremony and lunch but it is not just on Veterans' Day that our residents are honored or invited to attend functions. We have residents going year round to local area events such as the Joint Chiefs of Staff Christmas party or they are given tickets to professional and college sporting events. Just this week nearly 80 of our residents were treated to a day trip aboard the USS Odyssey, sponsored by the Washington Yacht Club. The Military District of Washington continues to support us



Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent takes notes during the AFRH Local Advisory Board meeting held on Nov. 6.

year after year by providing honor guards for all our military birthday celebrations and the Non Commissioned Officer's Association (NCOA) has been an excellent partner of the AFRH, sponsoring many events and trips for our residents to enjoy. The NCOA, in fact, helps make possible the visits from the Royal Chelsea Pensioners to the U.S. and our residents visiting them abroad. The bond of friendship between these two groups of veterans, stretched across an ocean, is strong and grows stronger every year. To everyone that helped make this year's visit successful, thank you! We just celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday which makes this a very appropriate time for us to be thankful for all the abundance in our lives. There are so many people that know and appreciate the sacrifices you made for your country. You answered the call to service and for that I am thankful.

Timothy Cox

AFRH hosts bike race

The DCCX Cyclocross Race, held in October on the grounds of the Armed Forces Retirement Home, had a record number of participants in a race that featured lung-searing climbing, fast, tricky turns and a large tree trunk that required riders to jump off their bikes, hop the obstacle and remount at top speed.

The race is the only one of its kinds held in the nation's capital. It attracted racers and spectators drawn to the attraction of experiencing the grounds of AFRH and also the free food, which included French fries, Dutch pancakes and lots of free-flowing beverages.

The Belgian Embassy chipped in too, sponsoring the Li'l Belgians kids' race, which had more than four-dozen competitors ranging from age three to 10 on a special miniature course. Anxious parents were treated to a tasty Cote D'or chocolate after their kids' raced.

Cyclocross is a unique biking discipline which was initially contrived as a way to allow road racers keep fit in the cold, northern European winters. Riders use bikes



Timothy Cox, AFRH Chief Operating Officer, accepts a donation of \$1,000 from City Bikes DCCX representatives (from left) Marc Gwadz, Tim Cox, Matt Donahue and Chris Clarke.

that look like road bikes -- like those used in the Tour de France -- but with thicker, beefier tires to handle the grass, trails and mud of the course. Laps of the course also include obstacles that require them to hop off their bike, run and then hop back on and ride off. The DCCX course was soft but not too muddy

after a downpour the day before.

With more than 400 registered riders, the DCCX race was the most popular ever in the local MABRA series and also garnered a huge showing of spectators after the Washington Post ran an article about it the week before.

Naval Home history

Who shot Stephen Decatur?

...or to do justice to the two doughty lads involved...who severely wounded Decatur and himself received a grievous thigh wound?

...who had the misfortune to recover and have his worthy opponent die?

...who went on "waiting orders" on half pay for 20 years and never receive another command?

Commodore James Barron, the second governor of the Naval Asylum, that's who...

In 1807, while in command of the Chesapeake, Barron was attacked by the British frigate Leopard. As the 50 gun enemy opened fire, Barron, believing that further resistance would only subject his crew to massacre, hauled down his colors. Later, Barron was brought before a court martial as a result of a letter by six officers of the

Chesapeake who requested the arrest of Barron for the premature surrender of his ship.

The court that counted Bainbridge and Decatur (one of his former midshipmen) among its members cleared Barron of cowardice; nevertheless, he was convicted for failing to clear his ship for action. He was sentenced to suspension from the service for five years.

After his suspension, Barron's efforts to obtain active service were blocked by his fellow officers. In 1820, 17 years after the Leopard incident, he challenged Commodore Stephen Decatur to a duel that took place in Maryland. On March 22, 1820, in the duel, Decatur was killed and Barron was severely wounded. Because of the popularity of Decatur, all sympathy was withdrawn from Barron who remained on "waiting orders" for the rest of his days.

To fill the boredom of his days, Barron served as the second governor of the Naval Asylum from April to November 1842. He died at Norfolk, Va., in 1851 at the age of 82, the senior officer of the Navy at the time.

Source: The U.S. Naval Home and Its Governors by Lt. (j.g.) J. B. Smith (1964).

Sidebar: This was one of the most extraordinary court martials in American history, occasioned as it was primarily

by a clear need to find a scapegoat for a humiliating incident. The punishment meted out was relatively mild but it led to the most tragic of encounters, James Barron's duel with a major American hero, Stephen Decatur.

Reprinted from *Naval Home publication The Homeport*, 1979



Commodore James Barron
1769 -1851

More December Events

Dec. 20 -

Little Hometown Soldiers musical production
1:30 Scott Theater

Dec. 24 -

Egg Nog Social
7:30 p.m. Scott Lounge

Dec. 31 - **New Year's Party**
9 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.
Scott Theater

Season's Greetings
from your AFRH Communicator staff

Welcome Aboard



Name: Edward Shrader
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: January 1944
Separation Date: August 1965
Rank: E7
War Theaters: WWII, Korea



Name: Corena Wash
Branch of Service: USAF
Entry Date: June 1956
Separation Date: July 1997
Rank: E7
War Theaters:



Name: Myron Wash
Branch of Service: USAF
Entry Date: January 1952
Separation Date: August 1975
Rank: E9
War Theaters: Korea, Vietnam



Name: Opie Miller
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: January 1938
Separation Date: August 1962
Rank: CWO4
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Peter Behl
Branch of Service: USMC, USA
Entry Date: June 1967
Separation Date: November 1988
Rank: E7
War Theaters: Vietnam



Name: Sara "Sally" Manning
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: July 1944
Separation Date: July 1946
Rank: E3
War Theaters: WWII



Name: John Bauer
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: June 1950
Separation Date: November 1969
Rank: E9
War Theaters: Vietnam

KHC Tree Lighting Ceremony

When: Tuesday
December 9, 2008
Where: LaGarde Mainstreet
Time: 10:00a.m.

NEEDED: Singers for the
 Christmas Chorus
 If interested practices will be
 in KHC Recreation Therapy
 on the following days:

Monday, Dec. 1 at 3 pm
Friday, Dec. 5 at 3 pm
Monday, Dec. 8 at 3 pm

AFRH-Gulfport Update



West end of building.



Pavilion B.



Front view.



Front of Pavilions A and B.

From the Director



When Sheila Abarr takes people on tours of the Armed Forces Retirement Home she tells them, "We are doing things here so we can continue to serve America's veterans for the next 150 years". Now I have difficulty thinking in terms of 150 years, but I can relate to the years I've lived since I became government property belonging to the US Navy.

Some people who are beginning their work career at AFRH will presumably be working here for 40 years or so. What will the world look like 40 years from now? How will the changes in the world affect us, and, therefore, shape the way we care for America's Defenders? And, what does all of that have to do with how we prepare the structure to carry on for the next 40 years or more?

Forty years ago we lived in a radically different world. We were at the height of the Viet Nam Conflict and the civil rights struggles; a gallon of gas cost \$0.33; and the Standard and Poor's Index topped 100 for the first time. No one had heard of the Internet, World Wide Web, YouTube, Facebook, blogs, or cell phones. Only a few academicians and government officials had access to a computer, which was much less powerful than the most basic computer available today throughout the world. And medical costs were affordable.

One of our board members is Major General Carla Hawley-Bowland. She is the Commander of the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. At our board meeting three weeks ago, the General shared some intriguing data on new devices that are being tested now that almost sound like science fiction. One is a "neuroprosthetic" chip strategically placed in the brain that interprets signals from it and stimulates neurons to allow a paralyzed person to control a prosthetic device with his thoughts. Or even control epilepsy or paralysis. Imagine what that will do for America's military being injured in today's battles. General Hawley challenged us to begin

thinking of how we can meet the needs for those coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Walter Reed is heading up technology that is allowing the injured to be fitted with devices that allow them to run faster than some of the fastest joggers. Certainly much faster than my pace! What she told us amazed me. Experts are now fusing artificial limbs directly to human bone which are being commanded by the brain thus allowing effortless and natural motion. She told us that older devices requiring 20 months of training now takes only 13 hours. That training was to teach a person to grab hold of a glass of water, get it to his or her mouth and drink it successfully, rather than pouring it all over himself.

Things are changing. And as you well know, these are very challenging times. Who knows where our country is

going financially? How can we predict anything? But, we, of the AFRH, cannot just float along with whatever comes. G.K. Chesterton said "A dead thing goes with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it."

The question that we face at the AFRH is this: "How do we prepare in such a fast changing culture?" While we don't know what life will look like in 2048, we believe that preparation for the caring for America's veterans into the future demands being driven by the same mission, the same focus - and that is meeting the needs of our residents. We must realign our willingness to explore new avenues within the changing demands of America and the world. Our mission? To take the very best care of you possible. I am excited where Mr. Tim Cox is leading us. You will be hearing more of this. We are at work!

David Watkins



Attendees of the Marine Corps birthday celebration gather for a photo just prior to the cake cutting, In the center is the guest speaker, General Paul X. Kelley, former Marine Corps Commandant. General Kelley was the twenty-eighth Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, from July 1, 1983 to June 30, 1987. Also pictured, far left, is AFRH-W Director David Watkins.

New Lincoln statue installed

By Alison Mitchell, NTHP

Since the first stages of planning a year ago the bronze statue of President Lincoln and his horse has been highly anticipated and was installed on the morning of Nov. 10. It began around 8 a.m. and the weather was perfect for an easy (and dry) installation. The 2,500 pound sculpture was lowered onto the excavated site as the President Lincoln's Cottage staff, sculptor Ivan Schwartz of StudioEIS, and members of the press watched.

The statue conveys Lincoln either returning from or about to embark on his commute to the White House. Months of research went into the historical accuracy and visual aesthetics of this portrayal of Lincoln and his horse. Visitors will see the weight of the war on his shoulders, but will also get a sense of calm and solace in his expression as he was able to relax at his Soldiers' Home retreat.

Details of new Lincoln Statue at President Lincoln's Cottage:

In comparison to the Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall in downtown D.C., this portrayal of President Lincoln is a much more intimate and personal one rather than a strong, serious figure elevated and looking down at the viewer. Now that the pathway and base of the statue are finished, visitors are at eye level with Lincoln. The Cottage, for the most part, was a relatively isolated place where the president had a chance to reflect on the decisions that had to be made on emancipation and the war. With this statue, visitors will be able to feel that sense of place and intimacy that Lincoln felt while staying here.

The statue was made possible by the generosity of Robert H. Smith and designed and produced by StudioEIS of Brooklyn, NY. The formal dedication will be in February 2009.



Up close and personal - this newly installed bronze statue of President Lincoln is located in front of the Lincoln Cottage on the grounds of the AFRH.

Eagle Scout project benefits AFRH residents

"...the generous donations by several groups made the project possible. They are: Veterans of Foreign Wars \$100, Women's Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, \$75, and the Air Warriors' Courage Fund, \$500..."

By Mary Kay Gominger

When high school youth Ryan Mavity of Maryland starting thinking of what he could do for his Eagle Scout project he knew he wanted to do something for veterans but he wasn't sure what. His dad, an active duty Air Force member stationed in Iraq, suggested he do something for the veterans of the AFRH. Ryan, 16 years old, liked that idea so he made a visit to the AFRH and decided to build four DVD cases to put in the Library.

The entire project took about a year.

Ryan, a junior at W.T. Woodson High School in Fairfax, said, "We (group of Boy Scouts of Troop 1523 out of Parkwood Baptist Church) took raw lumber and made them into finished boards. It took about 350-man hours for their construction. The staff at Bolling Air Force base woodshop was very helpful, especially the woodshop manager Ray Bestaich."

Ryan said the generous donations by several groups made the project possible. They are: Veterans of Foreign Wars \$100, Women's Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, \$75, and the Air Warriors' Courage Fund, \$500.



Boy Scouts from Troop 1523 deliver four hand made DVD cases to the AFRH Library. Ryan Mavity, third scout from the right, spearheaded the Eagle Scout project with the help from donations. Also pictured with the Scouts is Gary Klug (center back) the Troop Committee Chairman and Bill Cosby (back second from right), Assistant Scoutmaster.

Retired Army warrior maintains good health with active lifestyle

By Mary Kay Gominger

December 16 marks the 64th anniversary of the start of the Battle of the Bulge, the bloodiest of the battles that the U.S. forces experienced in World War II. Over 75,000 Americans were killed in the failed Nazi counter offensive, the last major offensive against the Allies in WWII.



James Vancil (upper right) and three Army buddies.

Resident James Vancil, then an Army infantryman, now a retired command sergeant major, was in the 6th Infantry Regiment during World War II and as such was involved in the Invasion of Sicily, the Invasion of Southern France and he survived the Battle of the Bulge.

James, now 93, said it was all in a day's work.

"When I enlisted in the Army in 1935, my pay was \$21 per month," he recalls. "That was more than I needed, I remember thinking how fortunate I was to be making so much money."

On December 16, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, James' job was to guard the perimeter of the command post. He had no occasion to shoot anyone and fortunately for him, he never got shot. When the war ended, James got out of the Army but stayed in the Army Reserve. He was recalled to active duty at the start of the Korean War and had the opportunity to go into construction engineering. It was a way for him to get ahead so he made the switch to the 434th Engineer Battalion (Construction) and spent the next several years paving roads and build-

ing in south Korea.

James retired from the Army in 1966 and he and his wife settled into farm life in Arkansas. Working a three-acre vegetable garden took up most of their time but they did manage to fish, hunt and travel to their hearts content. He feels very fortunate to have had a life filled with so much abundance. James and his wife Jermaine had 63

years together. He joined his fellow veterans at the AFRH a year ago. He attributes his good health and longevity to his healthy lifestyle (no smoking or drinking), and exercise.

"I have a daily calisthenics routine that I have been doing for many years," James said. "I also go through the Life Trails several times a week and I walk and jog at least four or five times a week."

He keeps his mind sharp and alert by reading.



James Vancil retrieves his bowling ball during Shootout play at the AFRH Bowling Alley.

"I only had nine years of education, just one year of high school," James said. "My wife used to read all the time and I guess I just picked up that habit from her. Now I read about 20 books a month. The library here is just great. It is very large and has plenty of books."

"The thing about living here now is that they take care of everything," James said. "I have made some friends here and it is nice to spend time with them but mostly I do my exercises and read my books. It is a good life."

Chaplain's Corner

OH, GIVE THANKS!!

Many of you have heard me say more than once how grateful I am at being in a place such as this - a place where history abounds, where growth among the mature continues, and where life and death are seldom taken for granted. Frequently I've heard expressions from residents about their recognition that life is indeed a gift. Some of you have told me that in spite of the fact that your physical body may be in some manner racked with pain or otherwise disabled, you remain positive about life itself and the purpose for which you are here on this earth.

In a season of thanksgiving and gratitude for the many blessings that we experi-

ence as a nation and as individuals, it will not be rare for us to hear the words "Thank you" or "I'm so grateful for what you have done!" or even "I appreciate you!" It has been my experience in these more than four years to hear such expressions daily here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home! Ingratitude is a sign of selfishness and pride.

I received the following communication about three months ago and thought that I would immediately include it in the Chaplain's Corner for all to read. Little did I know that the time was not then for publication, but now. The person entitled his message, "The End of Life's Road" and presented it in memorandum form.

To: The Staff of the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, DC
For: [Subject:] The Most Outstanding Care and Devotion that Can be Rendered to Veterans

This is not an institution, but a home in every sense of the word.

I take this opportunity to celebrate my first year at the home. I stress this word. For to me this is exactly what it has been.

The care and the treatment that I have received is without question the very best. From the over-worked doctors, nurses, nurse's aides, social workers and cleaning personnel, [all] who have gone out of their way to assist us in our every need. Be it physical, spiritual, mental; or a need of kindness and sympathy.

As a small demonstration [of this care], one night a nurse's aide came into my room and took my vitals (blood pressure and temperature) when I was already in bed. She replaced the covers when she was finished and tucked the covers over me; wished me good night and turned off the light. [She] really gave me a warm feeling [that someone was] caring for my comfort. I consider [this] an act of love and devotion.

As usual, in an [institution] as this, you will hear words of anger and complaints - about the food, the treatment, the maintenance. But I think I speak for the silent majority, that these instances [of care and kindness] are part of the normal [life] of someone having to live away from the home that they were so used to for many years.

This [home] is where veterans can become friends and/or buddies, no matter the [branch of] service we served. We can and sometimes do relate [to others] our [past] experiences and the dangers we faced. [For] the majority of us have been down that road of [actual] blood, sweat and tears; and . . . we . . . survived.

[This] is the place where a . . . veteran can live in peace and contentment until we pass away, knowing that we served our country with a full measure of honor and devotion. And that we receive the respect, care and love so evident in this our last place [where] we chose to live, until we are called home to our Lord.

I can but honor and respect these dedicated people who give so much more than working at a job, but apply love and compassion along with it. My prayers go out to you.

Edward F. Davis
Resident

Clearly the writer of the above believes in taking nothing for granted, even the kind act of tucking "the covers over me". In this period of so much upheaval on so many fronts, and so much disconnection and discontentment let us be found guilty of saying "Thank you!" for whatever someone does for us, even if they say, "I'm only doing my job!" Let's be accused of being so kind and

thoughtful of one another to the point of making folks wonder "Why?"

The Bible supports the conclusion that I draw here that God disdains ingratitude while He looks upon thankfulness as a virtue. Have a blessed Thanksgiving and extend the season far beyond the fourth Thursday of November!!

John P. Goodloe, Sr.

Veterans have always held special place in heart of heir to Postum Cereal Company

By Wilfred McCarty

The Hillwood Estate Museum and Gardens (Marjorie Merriweather Post Estate, her mother's maiden name was Merriweather) honored 27 veterans from AFRH and other veterans Sunday, Nov. 9. They sent a bus for us. If they do this next year be sure and sign up for it. I thought I had seen everything but hadn't seen a magnificent mansion full of Russian and French treasures like this. She had 30 gardeners and the gardener's house is now the Visitor's Center where we were treated to refreshments. Thru out her life Mrs. Post honored the military and veterans. In World War I she funded a Red Cross hospital in France. She financed a ship to deliver medical supplies which was accidentally sunk before leaving the harbor. In World War II she provided her yacht the Sea Cloud to be used as a weather ship by the Coast Guard. In the 60s and 70s she hosted Vietnam Veterans and provided flamingo dancers as entertainment. For us they had a flamingo Zivas Spanish Dance ensemble. She liked to square dance and would move furniture out so her guests could square dance. Mrs. Post's father invented the coffee substitute Postum. At the age of 27 she became the sole heir to the Postum Cereal Company. She married at 18.

One of her daughters, Nedina, became an actress and took the name Diana Merrill. She was a blonde Grace Kelly type. Through the years some of our residents

have worked as guards at her estate and they loved working there as they ate the same food she did and she honored them. The bedroom next to hers is called the Adam bedroom. It is the guest bedroom and was named after two brothers who designed such bedrooms with panels. One of her husbands was Joseph E. Davis who was a friend of the then President and was the second American ambassador to Russia.

The magnificent Marjorie Post died at Hillwood Sept. 12, 1973. She left the mansion and gardens for future generations. The museum is open Tuesdays thru Saturday, closed January and national holidays. It is located at

4155 Linnean Ave, N.W. Washington, D.C. near Rock Creek Park. Phone 202 686 5807 to see if you might visit.

It might help if you tell them your are a veteran and from the Old Soldiers' Home as they

have always treated us kindly.



The Hillwood Estate Mansion in the summer.



From left - Margy Raube, Karen Bell, Barbara Shier and Patsy Brougham, members of Heart and Hand Quilt group from Centerville, Va., display a quilt they made and donated to the AFRH on November 25. It is on display in Scott dining hall lobby.

On Veteran's Day

AFRH veterans honored at Catholic University with standing ovation



Residents stand on the 50 yard line during a recent football game at Catholic University. The veterans were honored as part of the University's Veterans Day Appreciation celebration and received a standing ovation which lasted over five minutes. Pictured from left are: Philip Uhlmann, Walter Conover, Frank Piccarreta, Susan Chubb, Robert Carlozzi, Paul Taylor, Robert Stevenson and Jerry Carter.

Photo by Matthew Barrick, courtesy The Catholic University of America

Learn how to 'surf the net'



From left - AFRH Librarian Christina Baldwin, resident Curtis Young, and volunteer Colonel Easter search Web MD at the Computer Lab located in the basement of the Scott building. Computer classes are available for residents. Contact Christina in the Library for more information about the next class.

Soldier's Show Visits KHC

By Steven Briefs
Recreation Therapy

On Tuesday November 4th members of the Soldier's Show came down to LaGarde to present a sample of the music they sing as they travel the country. There were 12 young soldiers each with a great singing voice and they went unit to unit singing a variety of patriotic and pop songs until they had sung for all of of KHC. After each program the soldiers took time to introduce themselves and chat with our residents, sharing memories of the time some of those songs were sung. It was a great time for all.

The 2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show is sponsored by multi-year lead sponsor and partner the U.S. Army National Guard, first-time partner Freedom Team Salute, and longtime corporate sponsor AT&T. No federal endorsement is implied or intended.

The modern version of the U.S. Army Soldier Show originated in 1983 as an outgrowth of several shows existing in various Army commands, with Soldier talent selected from worldwide competition. In 2008, the Army is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the modern-era U.S. Army Soldier Show and the 89th birthday of the first Army Soldier Show that debuted in 1918.

The motto, mission and philosophy of the show - "Entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier" - were established during World War I by Sgt. Israel Beilin, a Russian immigrant better known as Irving Berlin. He conceived and directed the first Army Soldier Show, "Yip Yip Yaphank,"

which appeared on Broadway in 1918.

The headquarters of the U.S. Army Entertainment Division at Fort Belvoir, home of the U.S. Army Soldier Show, was dedicated to Berlin and named the Irving Berlin Center on Oct. 30, 2002.

The U.S. Army Soldier Show was reinvented during World War II on Broadway under the title "This is the Army," which was written, directed and produced by Berlin. The cast and crew were members of U.S. Army Special Services Company No. 1. The 1943 film version featured a military cast starring Ronald Reagan, Gene Kelly and Joe Louis. (Info obtained from U.S. Army MWR website.)



Frederick Douglas is greeted by two members of the Soldier's Show that visited the AFRH on Nov. 4.

AFRH Bowling News

By Ed Crump

We took a vote last month to change the way the handicap is figured in the bowling Shootout from what it's been for the last several years to give the lower average bowlers a better chance of winning a bigger cash prize. The handicap will now be 100% from 200 with no maximum handicap. Now that we've gone through one month with the new handicap system it proves to be beneficial to our lower scoring bowlers. One bowler who benefited from it most was Phyllis Bradford who cashed in all five weeks of the Shootout last month including a third place finish one week. She's been bowling in the Shootout since February and prior to last month the highest finish she had was ninth on three different occasions. I admire her for staying in the Shootout all this time knowing she has no chance to win a cash prize, which goes to the top eight positions. Now that the handicap system has changed, she's been cashing in every week which I'm sure puts a big smile on her face. I look for her to cash in quite often from now on.

Clarence Peterson is another one that benefited last month from the new handicap system. He owns the lowest average in the bowling Shootout and prior to last month was another one who had no chance of finishing in the top eight positions, but last month managed to finish in the top eight three different times including one second place finish in which he rolled his high game of the year with a 157 including four strikes in a row at the end of the game and then to start the second game he threw the first two strikes. So he actually had six strikes in a row - a highlight of his

month. What I admire about Clarence is he has a lot of fun bowling in the Shootout and he's trying hard to improve his average. He's been practicing several times a week and when he does practice he bowls anywhere from six to eight games each day so I admire him a lot. He's doing the best he can and that's what counts.

For the second time this year John Glover was named Bowler of the Month. He finished first once and third once in the Shootout. He tied his high series of 477 the week he took first place and rolled three consecutive games of 157-164-164. He only had a 133 average going into that week and with that series he upped his average to 139. He joins Steve Kostich as being the only two bowlers to win Bowler of the Month twice this year.

The race for the Bowler of the Year honors is tightening up and it could go down to the final week of the year before a winner is decided. Going into this month Buron Noel was leading with 53 points with Smokey Prussman next with 51 points followed by Jim Vancil with 48 and Bob Schonherr with 44 so it should be very interesting the last two months.

In last month's column it was revealed that Gene Allison had the high game scratch for the GEICO Tournament which was held back in September. It should have been Buron Noel who bowled that game on the final day of the tournament.

I've now been writing this column for some six months now and I can honestly say it's been a great honor for me to do it and I hope to continue doing it for many more months.



Everyone is invited to the weekly Bowling Shootout - every Thursday
Come join the fun!

National Deviled Egg Day

By Carol Mitchell

Yes, there actually is a day dedicated to deviled eggs! On Monday, November 03, 2008, some of the residents of King Health Center enjoyed a morning of cooking, shelling, slicing, mixing, and of course sampling the food.



Residents enjoy deviled eggs at King Health Center.

Wii Game Comes to KHC

By Carol Mitchell

On Monday, November 03, 2008, the King Health Center residents enjoyed an exciting afternoon of Wii Bowling. Lorenzo Tribbitt, Resident Services employee, provided the Wii demonstration and skillfully guided residents throughout the game. The residents look forward to future Wii Game events at King Health Center.



AFRH reunites with Royal Hospital Chelsea

THE TRADITION CONTINUES

“As each year passes and another trip is completed, four more veterans are added and engaged in this program and as a result feel the special bond of friendship.”

By Laura Fogarty, Recreation Director

The week of November 7-14, 2008, will certainly be a week to remember for a long time, especially for our six British friends from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, located in Chelsea region of central London, and for our resident hosts Esker McConnell, John Porter, John Miller and Curt Young. The action packed week went by very quickly and each day brought out something very special to everyone in attendance. Here are the highlights of the week:

Upon their arrival on Friday, November 7th several residents (former and present hosts) were anxiously waiting for the pensioners to come through customs. Once they did the group belted out a big “hip hip hooray” several times, a tradition lead by Jim Webster. After settling into their rooms and dinner the Resident Advisory Council hosted a social to welcome our guests.

Saturday, November 8th the group enjoyed a champagne brunch cruise on the USS Odyssey. The weather was perfect and the food was fabulous. The rest of the afternoon was spent visiting Union Station and the Pentagon City mall.

Sunday, November 9th was a full day of activities. Up bright and early the group set out to the St. David's Episcopal Parish Church for the British remembrance ceremony following by a reception. Shortly afterwards the group traveled to Mt. Vernon in Virginia for a few hours and finished the evening at the Kennedy Center for a production of Shear Madness.

Monday, November 10th was a day for seeing a bit of Washington DC. First stop was the Washington Monument. The visitors enjoyed being at the top and viewing the city from up above. Colonel Nigel Gilbert, the groups escort, said it was magnificent! The Air and Space Museum was enjoyed throughout the afternoon. After a short rest the group got dressed up for a formal reception affair at the Capitol Hilton Hotel hosted by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation. Thank you Dick Schneider, NCOA Executive Director, for including us as your guests at this event.

Tuesday, November 11th, Veterans Day was a special day to honor all those veterans who have served here and abroad for our entire group. While at Arlington our visitors were able to include one of their own poppy wreaths alongside the many wreaths carefully placed by organizations at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. After the ceremony the group socialized a bit at the Women's Memorial and then enjoyed a special tour of the Capitol.

Wednesday, November 12th started with a White House Tour. Then it was off to the Pentagon for lunch which was hosted by the Secretary of the Army and SGT-



A group photo of the Pensioners from the Royal Hospital Chelsea (in red jackets) with resident sponsors. The visitors enjoyed a very busy week with the veterans of the AFRH.

MAJ of the Army Kenneth O. Preston. Several Sergeant Majors and Command Sergeant Majors joined us for lunch. After lunch we were first briefed by Col. Billy Farris, a veteran of several tours in Iraq and Maj. Brian Sullivan who served in Afghanistan as a battalion executive officer. They both shared their experiences and gave an overview of the war status.

When the SGTMAJ of the Army Kenneth O. Preston spoke he had the full attention of everyone in the room for over an hour. The group was very interested in hearing about what his duties entailed as the top adviser to the chief of staff on all enlisted matters. He spoke about his two-year tour in England during the early 1980s as a staff sergeant and instructor. Some of the men he knew Colonel Gilbert knew as well so the conversation became personal so to speak. He also highlighted changes the Army had made since he joined in 1975. After the formal visit, the group visited the Pentagon Memorial which stands in honor of the September 11th victims. It was a very special day for everyone, truly a highlight of the week long program. Thank you to Dick Schneider for arranging this for us.

Thursday, November 13th was another day of excitement as the group boarded the bus for Gettysburg. While there they experienced the newly opened multimedia center which included a cyclorama, film and museum and a guided tour of the battlegrounds. Lunch at the famous Pickett's Buffet was plentiful before coming home. The evening social was hosted by Chuck and Miko Dickerson and special gifts of friendship were exchanged. As speeches were made it was evident that there is truly a special bond between the AFRH

and the RHC. As each year passes and another trip is completed, four more veterans are added and engaged in this program and as a result feel the special bond of friendship. This is the fifth trip for the Chelsea pensioners and our residents will make their fifth trip to London in the July/Aug 09 timeframe.

Friday, November 14th, was the final day of the week. More downtown visiting took place as we went to see the Lincoln, Korean War and Vietnam Memorials. The weather was cooperative on a cloudy raining day with no rain pour while we walked around our Nation's capitol one last time. One last meal was shared at the famous Ebbitt's Grill Restaurant downtown with Dick Schneider and his lovely wife Anne. This was the perfect way to end a perfect week.

Many people have been involved in this program and need to be recognized for making this a success. Thank you to the resident hosts/alternates Esker McConnell, John Porter, John Miller, Curt Young, Hugh Wingo, James Riordan, Red Cooper, Michele Bailey, Susan Chubb, Greg Wilson, Liz Garris, Fred Hornsby, Susan Orr, Cleophus Snow, Ottis Moffit, Dick Schneider, Corrine Robinson, Doris Balfour, Marion Wolke, Chuck Dickerson, Rebecca Perry, Christine Baldwin and David Watkins.

In closing I would like to mention that this program wouldn't be possible without the co-sponsorship of the Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA). Through Dick's efforts this program remains successful bringing together great bonds of friendship between two very special homes which are taking care of their nation's heroes.

AHOY MATE!

Washington Yacht Club sponsors outing aboard the USS Odyssey



Residents were treated to a turkey and dressing lunch with a wonderful dessert of pumpkin cheesecake with caramel sauce.



GiGi Malone is escorted by a Corporal of the Marines Corps aboard the USS Odyssey for the cruise and lunch on November 25.

Photo left - Residents and other guests take to the dance floor as the music plays.