



## Scott Building to be replaced at AFRH-W

### Initial plans for new complex are underway

One of the FY 2009 key focus areas for the AFRH is the Scott Project and plans are getting underway. The initial focus was to undertake a major renovation of the nearly 60-year-old Scott Building (totaling 355,000-square-feet).

Scott currently houses resident living units and primary "common areas," such as kitchen and dining, library, theater, administrative offices, etc. After extensive analysis, it was determined that renovation was not feasible, due to the many obstacles associated with this massive, aging structure (e.g., inadequate room heights for healthcare functions, oversized and inefficient common spaces, and unachievable energy conservation goals). Also, the large cost of a total renovation was estimated to be well beyond our funding allowance.

As a result, the team concluded the preferred alternative is to replace the existing Scott Building with a new, two-building facility. This new complex could accommodate "right-sized" common areas and the healthcare functions - in energy efficient structures designed to current building codes and in compliance with the latest standards and practices in senior care design. This approach also makes the best use of the Sheridan Building, which was recently renovated to accommodate the projected IL and AL populations.

The anticipated new buildings, with a combined area of approximately 188,683 square feet, are referred to herein as the Commons and the Healthcare Center. The Healthcare Center will accommodate LTC and MS residents in closer proximity to the

IL and AL residents. This option has the advantage of drawing LTC and MS residents into the community, instead of the current setup where they are housed in the remote LaGarde Building. The new Commons will include a progressive Healthcare Center (medical, dental and optometry). This fosters the concept of "aging-in-place" by providing medical care while allowing the residents to remain in the IL and AL living areas.

In other words - Aging in place simply

means not having to move from one's present residence in order to secure necessary support and program services in response to changing personal needs.

The new Commons will be located in the same general area as the current Scott Building, thus minimizing the effect of construction on the facility's historic components. Also, the view from the Lincoln Cottage will be greatly improved due to the much lower profile of the Healthcare Center.

### Concept Courtyard View



The Scott Project - An artist's rendition of the new two-building complex that will replace the Scott Building.

## A View from the Top



### Preparing to Top Out in Gulfport

A crew works on the rooftop of Pavilion B of the AFRH-G. On Friday, February 27, Yates Construction will mark the completion of the outer shell of the 660,000 gross square foot structure with a Topping Out ceremony. The building consists of three eight level and one three level pavilions.

A complete update and floor plans can be found on Page 3.



## Inside this Issue



### Storming the beaches of Tarawa

Page 6



### A Mardi Gras celebration

Page 6



### WWII soldiers finally recognized

Page 8

## Notes from the Resident Advisory Council



One of the many problems in attempting to represent over 1,000 residents of AFRH is that no matter what one does, someone is not going to agree with it. Let me cite two recent

incidents.

The first had to do with smoking; not smoking in the authorized areas but in areas that are not allowed for smoking. In particular, the area at the entrance to the Scott Building near the Scott lounge. What was going on was that residents and workers alike were smoking both in the entry way and the outside area close to the building. That area had been posted as a non-smoking within 25 feet of the building.

Another group of residents, those with COPD or other lung problems, were affected by this. These residents were bothered by the smoking.

The solution? You will now notice signs posted in that area making sure that people know that no smoking is allowed there. Second, security has been notified to make this a matter of special interest on their rounds and finally, the "butt-can" has been moved to an area that is the proper distance away from the building.

And here is another problem that appears minor but is really a matter of concern. There are some people who place just one item in washers, and they do the same thing with the dryers. This is a problem in the Scott building where washers and dryers are located on the floors. Now that sounds like a minor problem but it mounts up when they are using both washers for just two items and both dryers to do the same thing. This is a waste of both water and electricity. So a sign has been placed in the wash room telling people to wash a full load.

You may have noticed that the weekly bulletin has changed somewhat. The change had to do with removal of the menus from the bulletin and issuing them as a separate item. This was the result of a request made by a resident. This resident noted that many bulletins were being taken and left around the home with the just the menus removed. Hope you find this a better method. I do.

A floor representative asked that cork boards be placed on each floor of the Sheridan building to post items that are unable to be placed in the regular bulletin boards. This is going to be accomplished sometime after the end of March 2009. I will see how the RAC fund is at that time and use money from that account to purchase these boards.

Recently residents of the 3rd floor Scott (assisted living area) held a meeting with Mr. Mori, the Ombudsman; Mr. Terry Sawyer, the LaGarde Ombudsman, and myself. The purpose of this meeting was to inform residents about movement to the LaGarde building and to insure that steps are taken to keep the resident informed as to the exact date they are to be moved and that their phones, cable line, etc. are shut off or moved with them to LaGarde. This meeting was very productive and should insure that movement of residents to LaGarde is carried on with as little disruption to their daily life as possible.

Well, that ends another month's column. Hopefully you have gained some information from it and will continue your efforts to make this home the place for retired service members to come to. Greet a new person to the home and make them feel welcomed. And then find something to do for the home to keep you busy. It makes the aging process go easier.

*Esker F McConnell*

## 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*  
Greg Moore - *Marketing*  
Sherry Artis - *Marketing*

*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



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>

## Become a resident today!

### American Legion Auxiliary ladies tour the AFRH-W

Earlier this month, women of the American Legion Auxiliary visited the AFRH-W campus. Their visit included a tour of the Library as well as other recreational activity areas.

The women of the American Legion Auxiliary make a difference in the lives of all Americans. They educate children, organize community events and help our nation's veterans through legislation action and volunteerism.

The American Legion Auxiliary is the world's largest patriotic service organization with nearly 1 million members in 10,100 communities. Auxiliary members are a unique group of women, joined in the fellowship of volunteerism, patriotism and dedication to veterans, young people and communities. Go to [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org) for more information.



Mary Ann Ventulett (second from left), American Legion Auxiliary, Eastern Division Vice President, meets with AFRH residents and other ALA women at the AFRH Library.

**Talent Show Meeting and Sign Up March 16**  
**1 p.m. in Scott Lounge**

# Message from the Chief Operating Officer



Earlier this month the Washington Post published an article regarding AFRH's decision to stop negotiations with North Carolina-based Crescent Resources as the developer of a portion of our Master Plan which calls for the private development of Zone A of the AFRH-W campus, an underutilized portion of the campus. Negotiations were halted by the AFRH, primarily due to the inability of AFRH and Crescent to reach agreement on a few fundamental areas. The turbulent market conditions were not the sole cause of the termination of negotiations, but they certainly exacerbated the issues.

Additionally, the value to AFRH in the deal was largely driven by the property value at initial appraisal. Given the market conditions, the initial appraisal would have been done in a very poor market, and resulted in a long-term diminution of value to the Home.

In other news around campus, you will recall that last year Congress approved our request to withdraw \$76 million from the Trust Fund for the Scott Project. The artists' rendition on the front cover of this issue of the Communicator gives the reader a general impression of the new atmosphere created with the removal of the current Scott building and the replacement buildings. A new complex, consisting of a two-story Health Care Center for the Long Term Care and Memory Support units and a three-story building referred to as the Commons, which will house resident program and activity spaces, administrative and support offices as well as

the Wellness Center, joined by a two-story connector, is completely functional yet it does not disrupt the historical ambience of our surroundings and in fact opens our spaces breathing new life into our campus.

Over the next two months, AFRH will ask the RAC Chairman and Council members to form a committee for the Scott Project. There will also be resident focus groups formed so that all residents will have an opportunity to share their ideas and concerns. AFRH is looking forward to working with residents on this project.

Construction continues to progress on schedule in Gulfport. Friday, February 27, Yates Construction, our general

contractor, marks the passing of a major milestone in the construction of our new facility with the 'topping off' of our building. This event, which is similar to a ship naming and launching ceremony, recognizes the completion of the shell of our structure. The concrete on the south end of the rooftop of Pavilion C was placed earlier this week, officially completing the outer structure of the AFRH-G. Though there is still much work to do, the footprint is now in place. We look forward to following the continued progress of our Home.

In closing I encourage you stay active and get involved with our Resident Advisory Council and focus group meetings. Your input is valuable and we need everyone working together for the betterment of our Home.

*Timothy Cox*



## The Scott Project

AFRH Architect Joe Woo (left), Magda Westerhout, Architect for Marks Thomas Architects and Anthony Cortel with STV Inc. (Engineers) discuss architectural concepts for the Scott Project earlier this month. In the background is Stan Whitehead, AFRH IT Specialist.

# AFRH-G Update

*By Steven Smith, GSA Project Manager*

### Main Building:

Concrete work continues. Pavilions A and Pavilion B, completed through roof and finishing penthouses; Pavilion C completed through 8th floor and completing roof and penthouses; Pavilion D up through third floor and completing roof. Substantial completion of the concrete work is scheduled for February 27, 2009.

Other trades are installing mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection components in the building. Testing of these components has begun and will continue as sections of the building are completed. Framing, interior and exterior, is being installed throughout the building. Precast panels being installed.

### Chapel:

Contract and Notice to Proceed was issued to McClain Contracting Company Incorporated to provide hazardous materials abatement and selective demolition services in connection with the Armed Forces Retirement Home Gulfport Chapel. Completion of work is scheduled May 15, 2009. CRA/LAS continue to provide design services for the Chapel. Design services will be complete April 1, 2009.

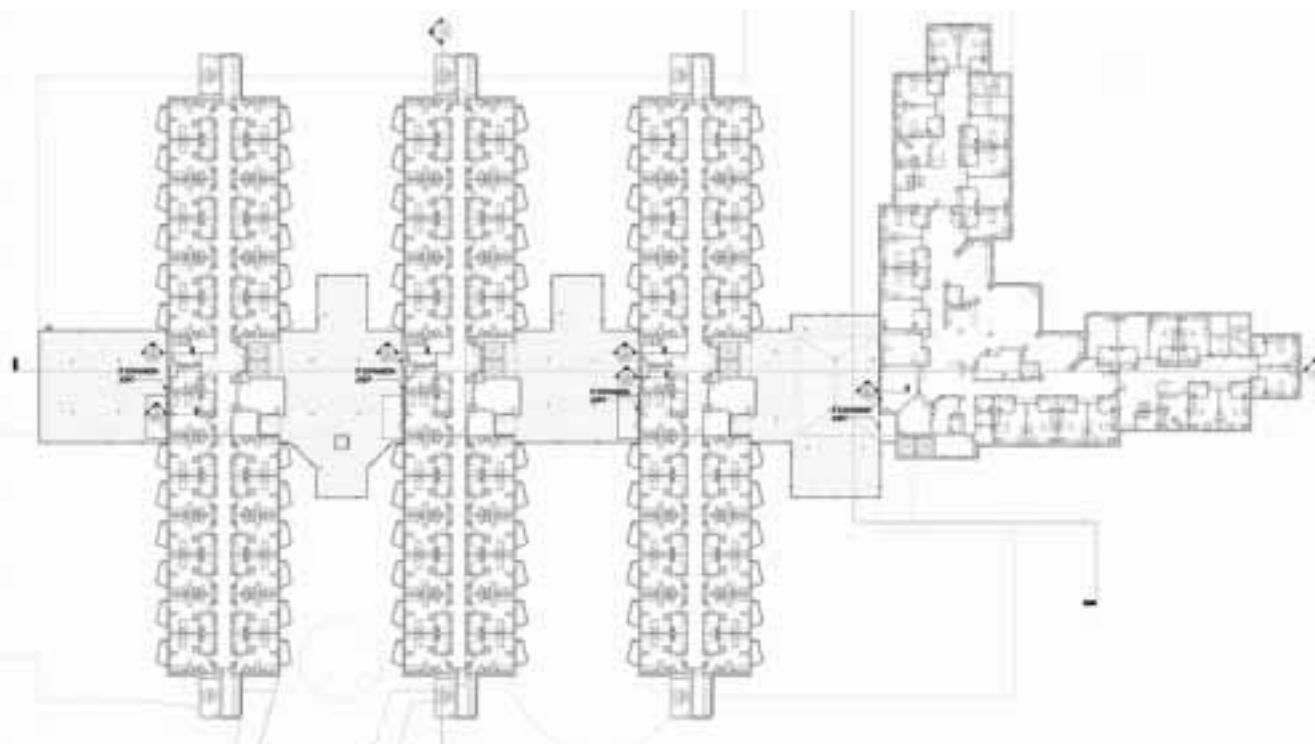
### Pedestrian Overpass:

Negotiations continue for design services in connection with the overpass. Coordination and discussions continue with local, state and federal jurisdictions in preparation of the design/construction.

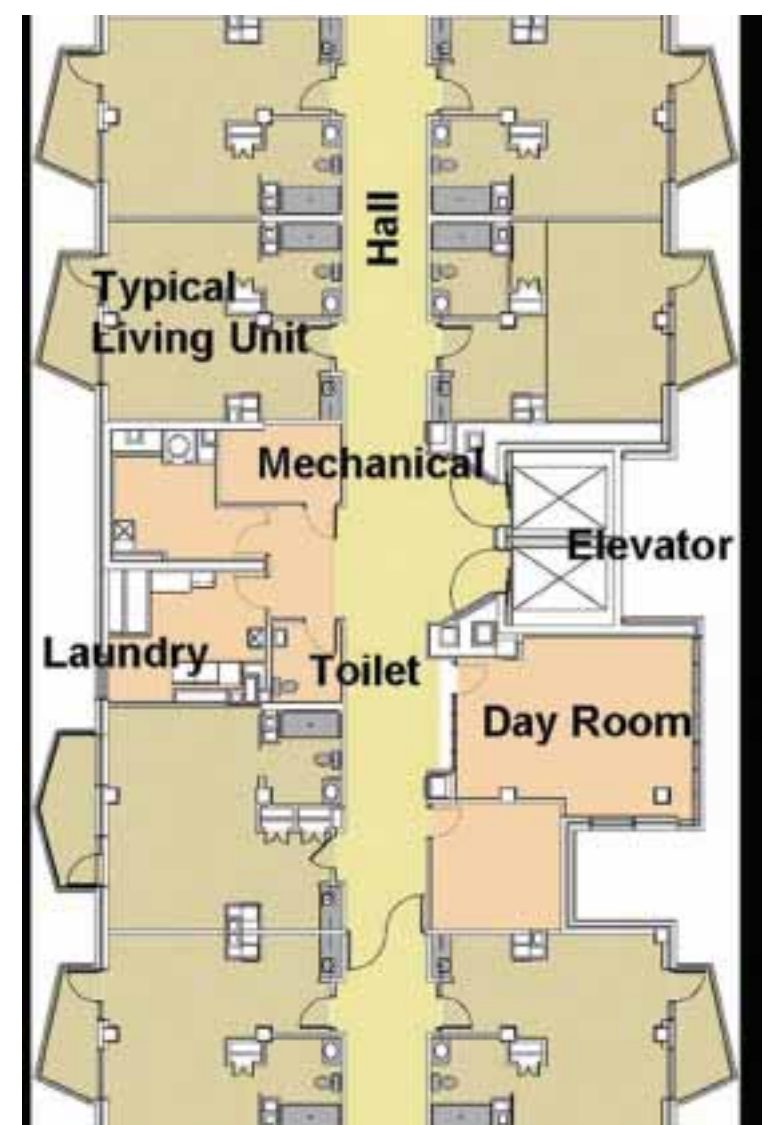


Typical Independent Living Residential Unit

## Gulfport Floor Plans



Gulfport Dining Area



## Welcome Aboard



**Name:** Robert McCreary  
**Branch of Service:** USN  
**Entry Date:** January 1947  
**Separation Date:** February 1969  
**Rank:** E7  
**War Theaters:** Korea



**Name:** Leonard Mitchell  
**Branch of Service:** USMC  
**Entry Date:** June 1942  
**Separation Date:** May 1965  
**Rank:** E8  
**War Theaters:** WWII, Korea

### WALTER REED INCOME TAX PREPARATIONS

**By Appointment Only**

**Number to call for appointment: 202-782-6225**

**Location of office: Building 11, Delano Hall, Rm. 2-66**

**Be sure to ask what you need to bring to the appointment**

### AARP INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

AARP Income Tax Counselors are back from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. starting February 5th every Thursday until April 9th, and starting February 7th, every Saturday until April 11th, in the Scott Main Floor, Rooms 1301, 1304 and 1306. A reception desk will be in the hallway, please make sure you sign in. AARP Income Counselors have been certified by the IRS and will be electronically filing (E-File) your tax returns. Please note AARP will file both federal and state or just federal but cannot file just state income taxes. Please bring the following items:

- Last year's (2007) Federal and State Returns
- 1099-R Pensions Form
- W-2 Forms if Applicable
- Any 1099 Misc. forms
- 1099 – Div. - Dividend Forms
- 1099 – Int. - Interest Forms
- Copy of blank or voided check if direct deposit of refund is requested

## AFRH Demographics

### Residents who served in War Theaters\*

**World War II: 466 (44%)**  
**Korean Conflict: 502 (47%)**  
**Vietnam: 469 (44%)**  
**Panama: 2 (.01%)**  
**Gulf War: 3 (.02%)**

**\*Figures exceed 100% because many have served in multiple wars.**

## *Retiree organization tours AFRH*

Recently, members of the The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) received a tour of the AFRH.

NARFE is the only association dedicated to safeguarding and enhancing the benefits of America's active and retired federal employees, and their survivors. NARFE membership totals 300,000 federal workers and retirees. NARFE's strong supporters and years of experience on Capitol Hill and in federal agencies have made NARFE a respected name among members of Congress and a key player in the federal community.



Sheila Abarr, AFRH Public Affairs Officer (second from left), escorts members of the NARFE as they tour the Home.

## In the Archives

# Memorial near Chapel not really a tombstone

### The Soldier's Friend

By Ray Colvard/April 1997

A memorial next to Rose Chapel is a paradox, a "tombstone" that is not a tombstone. The enlisted men of the Army raised about \$700 in 1878 for the monument, and it has stood for more than a century on the Chapel grounds. The large granite block is inscribed "Henry Wilson" and "The Soldier's Friend." Wilson is not buried under the stone, it was erected by soldiers as a memorial to a man whose life was an even greater paradox than the stone itself. Margaret Leech wrote in *Reveille* in Washington, 1860-1865, that Wilson was the hero of an American success story. The "plebeian abolitionist" was a powerful figure in the Senate Military Affairs Committee. A senator from Massachusetts, Wilson also was a militia brigadier general. During a senate recess in 1862, he went back to Massachusetts and recruited a full regiment and brought them to Washington. He was an unofficial aide to Gen. McClellan and later to Secretary of War Stanton.

Wilson's real name was Jeremiah Jones Colbath. He had been a farm laborer, became a shoemaker and on political plat-

forms was known as the "Natick Cobbler." In his first speech to the senate in 1855, Wilson urged the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law. He urged that runaway slaves be enlisted in the Army, and long before Lincoln wrote *The Emancipation* reclamation, Wilson urged that emancipation be the policy in the District. Wilson, among others, rashly demanded that Gen. Scott teach the Southern army camped at Bull Run a lesson. Along with other sightseers, Wilson went to Bull Run to watch the battle. He was in a holiday mood. As Leech wrote, "enriched by the anticipation of seeing the rebels run." In the rout of the Union army and political sightseers, Wilson lost his carriage and, mortified, returned to Washington on the back of a stray army mule.

Senator Wilson had an eye for the ladies. He was "intimate" with the South's most glamorous spy, Rose O'Neal Greenhow. Alan Pinkerton believed Rose used "her seductive powers" to obtain official information from Wilson. In the National Archives is a packet of "love letters," signed with the initial H, "hastily written notes filled with the ardor of frustration." The "beautiful rebel of 16th Street" may have framed poor Henry by

letting Pinkerton find bogus correspondence. A lady perhaps more dear to Wilson was Clara Barton. The founder of the Sanitary Commission, the forerunner of the Red Cross, she was denied access to military installations by McClellan and Stanton. She went to Wilson, Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee and got her passes. Senator Wilson and Secretary of War Stanton believed Gen. McClellan and other generals were conspiring to establish a dictatorship. McClellan was relieved of command. Wilson, in 1863, introduced a bill to reorganize the judiciary system in the District in an effort to oust the many pro-slavery judges. Lawyers opposed it, but the bill passed. A District Supreme Court replaced the old Circuit Court System. Henry Wilson also was a notable writer. Among his works is the three-volume *History*



The tombstone of Henry Wilson that is located next to Rose Chapel.

of the Rise and Fall of Slave Power in America. He was nominated for vice-president on the ticket with Gen. Grant in 1872, and took office the next spring, after 18 years in the Senate. He was soon disabled by a paralytic stroke and remained infirm until his death in 1885. To paraphrase Shakespeare: he was a man. We shall not see his like again.



## Visiting the AFRH

Robert Armstrong shows CSM Jefferson Varner of Ft. Myer his original Korean War cover. CSM Varner made a trip to the AFRH to see what support they provide to retired personnel. CSM Varner was accompanied by the Pentagon staff that came to the AFRH for coverage of the Year of the NCO.

## March Musical Performances

**March 9**  
Buxton HS, Williamstown, MA  
**March 13**  
Warren HS, Warren, IL  
**March 17**  
Archie Edwards Blues  
**March 19**  
Great Bend HS, Great Bend, KS  
**March 20**  
North Allegheny HS  
Wexford, PA

# From the Director



We all like good stories. Who doesn't like Bill Cosby's:  
 - "Dentists tell you not to pick your teeth with any sharp metal object. Then you sit in their chair, and the first thing they grab is a metal pick."  
 - A guy is talking to his Doctor: "I have a ringing in my ears." The Doc replies, "Don't answer!"

- The Doctor says "You'll live to be 60!" "I AM 60!" "See, what did I tell you?"  
 - "If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving definitely isn't for you."  
 - "If you think nobody cares about you, try missing a couple of payments."

Comedian David Brenner is preparing to get on the road again with a comedy tour. He will perform a collection of classic routines, many from his 158 visit to The Tonight Show. Even at 73, Brenner decided to tour because of the troubles in the world with the economy. "I begin my research every day checking out the news, and it's been so

depressing. It's the same feeling I had after 9/11. What better time is there to make people laugh?"

"Demand for real, rib-tickling humor has never been higher," writes humor columnist Jackie Papandrew. "Everybody could use a good laugh these days." In these moments of economic upheaval, the threat of global terrorism, or the possibility of a natural calamity-such as an asteroid striking the planet-good humor is getting harder to come by.

There are so many documented advantages of laughter and good humor. Just get on the internet or pick up an encyclopedia and look up a Proboscis Monkey or a Star-nosed Mole. You will see God has a fantastic sense of humor. Or look at me!

Dwight L. Moody, the famous preacher, loved to tell jokes following a crusade. It helped him relax. He encouraged people to write questions on paper and pass them in, and before the crowds, he would then answer them. At one of these sessions, he opened the paper which read, "Fool". Mr. Moody said this is a first! He explained he'd received many questions and comments which were not signed, but this was "the first time anyone had signed his name without the question".

Laughter has great effects on our bodies. Consider what laughter can do:

A good hearty laugh can help: reduce stress, lower blood pressure, elevate mood, boost immune system, improve brain functioning, protect the heart, connect you to others, fos-

ter instant relaxation and make you feel good.

To laugh or not to laugh is your choice. Even in these difficult times, we need to bring more humor and laughter into our lives. You and I alone are not going to do ourselves even a bit of good by fretting over the situations in the world. If you know someone who is having a rough time, help them out. Other than that, we won't solve the woes. When you find yourself taken over by what seems to be a horrible problem, ask these questions:

- Is it really worth getting upset over?
- Is it worth upsetting others?
- Is the situation irreparable?
- Is it really my problem?

Create opportunities to laugh. Laugh at yourself. Share your embarrassing moments. The best way to take ourselves less seriously is talk about times when we took ourselves too seriously. Pay attention to children and emulate them. They are the experts on playing, taking life lightly, and laughing. Seek out funny people. Spend less time with overly serious people. Bring humor into conversations. Ask people, "What's the funniest thing that happened to you today? This week? In your life?" Use humor at the expense of yourself or a group you are part of, rather than at someone else's expense. Don't use humor when someone else is in so much pain that humor will not make them feel better.

Give yourself to others. Help them enjoy life . . . laugh.  
*David Watkins*

## BUSINESS CENTER NEWS

### It's tax time and time to calculate your 2010 Resident Fee

**Attention residents** - as you complete your 2008 income taxes, please visit the Business Center to have your 2008 tax documents copied in order to calculate your 2010 Resident Fee.

Please bring the following information by April 15, 2009.

- Tax form 1040 and supporting documentation used to compute taxes for 2008.
- 2008 1099 form from Social Security, Military Retirement, Civil Service, Pension and/or Annuity
- Proof of payment for supplemental insurance for 2008 (cancelled check or bank statement)
- 2008 VA benefits/waiver, Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC), Defense Finance & Accounting System

(DFAS) 148 (Military Retirement Statement)

•Additional 2008 interest, dividend, or income earned

If you do not file taxes please be advised you do need to submit your 1099s for Social Security, VA Benefits and/or CRSC. In addition, you'll need to sign a statement acknowledging you do not file taxes.

If you pay the maximum resident fee please be advised you still must visit the Business Center to sign a max fee waiver letter.



Staff members of the Business Center assist Ruby Bloomer in calculating her resident fee. Pictured are Sofia Williams-Account Receivable (seated), Francis Irving-Budget Analyst (far left) Chiffon Graves-Budget Analyst (second from left) and Nichelle Goins-Financial Manager (center).

The Business Center is located in the Scott Building main floor near Admissions.

### 1840 Sailors seek relief

#### Aggrieved Naval Asylum pensioners petition SecNav for additional space

In the early 1840s the Asylum building in Philadelphia was used for three purposes, sheltering three institutions: The Naval Asylum for the disabled, the purpose for which the building was erected; the general Naval hospital for the station, and the Naval School (later to be named Naval Academy), instituted for the instruction of midshipmen.

Naturally, between institutions of so diverse a nature, there would arise considerable friction, and this was particularly the case between the Asylum proper and the hospital department. The subject of the space to be occupied by each became so annoying that the Navy Department decided, in order to settle it, to divide the building into two portions by a partition of lath and plaster, the northern half to be devoted to the Asylum and Naval School, and the southern wing to the hospital.

On account of the circumstances, Commodore Barron, then Governor of the Asylum, was unwilling to remain, and, at his own request, was detached November 30, 1842. At this announcement the pensioners addressed him a letter requesting him to reconsider his determination, for which they expressed great regret. In answer, the Commodore, after complimenting the pensioners as a body, informed them that he regretted that circumstances would not allow him to change his intentions and remain with them. Lt. A.H. Foote, who had been executive officer of the Asylum for about a year, was left in charge after the departure of Commodore Barron.

Finding so much intemperance among the old sailors, Lt. Foote interested himself very strongly in their behalf, and, finally signing the temperance pledge himself as an example, induced many others to do the same. From this time is dated the commencement of increasing activity upon the question of temperance, an activity which had much to

do with the final abolition of the grog ration in the service.

A letter to Secretary Upshur from Lt. Foote about this time informs the Department of the Navy that by an order from the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery he was obliged to vacate the chapel and remove the pulpit. In addition, the transfer of midshipmen from the basement had reduced the available space for the old men, crowding them uncomfortably.

The pensioners, feeling themselves much aggrieved by the various matters, finally addressed a petition to Secretary Upshur, which is so quaint in its style that it is given largely herewith:

*The humble petition of the pensioners at the Naval Asylum to the honorable Secretary of the Navy:*

"Sir: We humbly ask your leave to make known to you our trouble, and hope you will be pleased to see us righted, and we hope you will excuse us.

It is because we have faithfully served our country that we have been admitted here to this place, which we hear was built out of the twenty cents a month we have all had deducted from our wages by the pursers.

We all looked ahead when we should grow old to be entitled to moor our shattered hulks in this snug harbor to be ready to answer the last signal from Him who commands the world. We determined to behave like men and to please our Commander and hope we have done so.

The gallant Commodore Biddle was our first Governor; a brave man like him knew what old sailors wanted. He indulged the good men and brought the bad men into good order, and when he left us we all to a man wished he had been left alone, as we were happy under his regulations. The proper rooms were allotted by him to us, and all the officers treated us like men. When he went away Commodore Barron came, who commanded us as an old Commodore ought to command old seamen like himself. He was ready to listen to us and to see our wants supplied, and may God bless him and Biddle, too, for both are the old sailors' friends; which we put in the newspapers, which you have read when Commodore Barron left us. He left Lt. Foote to command. He has done

us a great deal of good in making us all sober men. We once thought that old sailors could not do without grog; now there is not a man in the house that draws his grog, and we feel like human beings, and hate the sin of being drunk. As old men we wanted and had peace of mind and repose of body, but all that is put a stop too. The house is divided in two.

We, the pensioners, a large number, are put into the other side up a high stairs, three stories from the ground-upwards of 100 people stored on one side of the building. Some are lame from wounds, some are lame and weak from sickness, such as Rheumatism, and some of us are obliged to get the others to help us get up the steps. Our little rooms, which we fitted as we liked with our grog money, which we stopped, are taken away, and as there are not enough rooms as many as four of us have to sleep in one of the rooms at the end. It is large enough for beds, but we are not quite as we used to be, and have lost our pride in being private by ourselves. In the summer time it is impossible to sleep, so many in one room. It is for this cause we petition your Honor, and humbly pray that you, as the worn-out sailors' protector, will have our rights respected, and that you will give orders to let us each have our small cell in the second story again.

Most of us must go to the Philadelphia Almshouse to be paupers, who are better lodged than we are now. We want to live the short time we are in the world in quiet and peace, but if our prayer is not granted we have made up our minds not to stay here.

But we have now told you, sir, what we pray for, and hope you will be pleased to grant it to your petitioners.

N.B. - In Perry's action George Adams and Jack Smith pulled, one the bow and the other the stroke oar, in Perry's boat when they left the Saint Lawrence in the battle on Lake Erie; and old Mr. Johnson (pensioner) was with John Paul Jones when he took the Serapis with the Bon Homme Richard; besides the standing part of the pensioners were in all of our glorious victories during the last war under Hill and Stewart, Bainbridge and Biddle, Jones and Warrington and Lawrence."

(Signed by 43 pensioners)

Sign up  
 now for the  
**U.S. Capitol  
 Tour**  
 March 23  
 Depart: 9:30  
 Return: Noon  
 Sign up in  
 Sheridan Room  
 1010

Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan

## Newspaper article stirs memories of beach landings of WWII

By Mary Kay Gominger

He heard about the article in the November 2008 Stars and Stripes before he saw it. Upon reading the headline, "Remains found on Pacific Island likely to be those of 139 WWII Marines," the memories, buried but always just below the surface, returned. And he pictured quite clearly the masses of bodies laid out in a long line, down in a six-foot trench. He stood on the bank of the trench, watching, as the young Marines were buried on the tiny island of Tarawa in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

"It was a very bitter battle," AFRH resident Tilghman Smith recalled. "There was total devastation at Tarawa, everywhere you looked. The island looked as if someone had taken a tractor and plowed the whole place down. Giving up was never an option though and we ultimately got the island but it was a deadly battle, for both sides."

Tilghman joined the Marines in September of 1940. His specialty was radio communications and at the height of WWII, he took part in three historic beach landings - Guadalcanal, Tarawa and Saipan.

"One of the things about Tarawa, that made it so difficult, was that the island was surrounded by coral reefs, sometimes as far as a mile out. On the day we went in, the tide was so low that landing craft could not cross the reef. Most of us were forced to debark at the end of the reef and wade in to the beach under heavy enemy fire. They were waiting for us, well entrenched with concrete bunkers and pill boxes to hide their weapons. We were definitely at a dis-



Tilghman Smith, 1943

advantage," he said. "You see men dropping all around you and you hope you are going to make it but... let's put it this way, I was 21 years old and really never expected to see 22."

While American forces were victorious in the three-day battle at Tarawa in November 1943, nearly 1,700 Marines and sailors were killed and thousands more injured. Tilghman, though, left the island unscathed. It was a different story in Saipan, however. There, Tilghman's luck ran out. He was hit by artillery shell shrapnel which ripped through his left forearm. After ten months of treatment involving several surgeries, Tilghman was finally able to come home. The war



AFRH resident Tilghman Smith displays his military medals.

was over and it was time for him to do something with the rest of his life.

Using the GI Bill, Tilghman enrolled in an electronics school and soon after graduation landed a job with Voice of America, an international broadcasting service, funded by the U.S. government. For the next nine years, Tilghman traveled to countries all over the world building relay stations with high power transmitters and antennas so radio stations could pick up intercontinental broadcasts

with high class receiving equipment. Voice of America first went on the air in 1942 and today broadcasts about 1,500 hours of news, information, educational and cultural programming every week to an estimated worldwide audience of 134 million people. Tilghman's pioneer efforts laid the foundation for the first transmittals of worldwide communications as we know it today.

After 25 years in broadcasting, Tilghman bought a 300-acre cattle ranch in southern Indiana and later, he owned and operated a feed store. In 2005, he was packed and heading south to Gulfport to join his fellow veterans when Hurricane Katrina barreled in and changed his plans. He made a U turn and arrived at the AFRH-W about the same time the evacuees did. He's been here ever since.

"This is the best place in the world to go for a walk," Tilghman said about the AFRH-W campus.

"I use the Metro and can go anywhere I want to go in the DC area. I'm always taking trips to the museums, malls and stores around town."

As for the article in the Stars and Stripes about the possible remains of Marines still at Tarawa, Tilghman says it is time for them to come home.

"We (Marines) were always faithful to each other," he said. "That's what Semper Parati, our motto, is all about. We don't leave anyone behind."



Tilghman Smith (right) and a Marine buddy in New Zealand, 1943.

## Mardi Gras 2009

# Let the Good Times Roll

By Laura R. Fogarty

Recreation Services Director

The annual Mardi Gras party held on Friday, February 20th was an event to remember. With festive balloons displayed everywhere along with transforming the dining hall to create a "Bourbon Street" atmosphere, this party was a huge success. The King and Queen lead the parade and as the parade came marching in, the energy level was high for everyone in the room.

Once the King and Queen were brought to the throne, the official ceremony took place. Barbara Folk spoke to the crowd on behalf of the NAMACS Krewe. Former King Lorenzo Senires (103) presented the scepter to this year's King Robert Stevenson (95). Former Queen Catherine Bowie (96) presented her scepter to this year's Queen Anna Kubish (93). Everyone raised their glasses and toasted to the new 2009 King and Queen. Then the partying began.....

Plenty of beads, candy, coins, hats, crowns and feathered masks were available for everyone. The food was exceptional with the New Orleans gumbo and deviled eggs

being the favorites. The Tim Ford Trio band played great tunes to dance to and many people danced throughout the event.

Events like this don't happen successfully without the help of many people. First and foremost a special thank you to residents Barbara Folk and Sally Manning for their time in all the preparation work such as decorating the Mardi Gras tree and golf carts, making the parade signs and for always having a positive attitude with everything they do. You ladies are terrific! In addition, I would like to thank the residents and staff who worked so hard during the event: Jesse James, Jim Grant, Leonard French, Walt Hutchins, Amanda Jensema, Jerry Carter, Sarah Kennan, Matt Kayson and Nicole Chappell.

Recreation Services would also like to thank the Dining Services, Custodial Services and Public Affairs for assisting with this event. Lastly, we had wonderful volunteers from Howard

University's ROTC who were here assisting with decorating and serving during the event. Partnerships are great!

In closing, I would like to thank all the residents who attended this event. Save your special beads for next year!



An intern from Howard University asks Laura Fogarty questions about the Home's Mardi Gras celebration.



William (Bill) Sinnott and his guest at the 2009 AFRH Mardi Gras party held on February 20. The event included plenty of food, festive music for dancing, decorations and fun.



Above - Residents enjoy the music and fellowship at the annual Mardi Gras celebration held on Friday, February 20.

Left - King Robert Stevenson and Queen Anna Kubish.

## Bowling News

By Ed Crump

Smokey Prussman who ended up finishing in third place for Bowler of the Year last year despite not being Bowler of the Month one time finally broke that streak last month. It took a spectacular performance by him the final two weeks to win it when he averaged 188 the final six games in the Bowling Shootout which included three games of better than 200 including a 222 game, his final game, which enabled him to tie for the top spot that final week with Henri Gibson to earn five more points on his point total for the month. That game alone earned him valuable points to put him over the top for Bowler of the Month honors.

Going into that final day Smokey had accumulated only three points for the month and trailed first place leader Charlie Gammon by five points. He had a second place finish the previous week for those three points. He began the final week with a 203 game but could only muster a 158 game his second game which at that time looked like his chances of winning Bowler of the Month was a done deal. Evidently he didn't think it was as he came roaring back with a 222 game to tie for the top spot that day. With that 222 game it gave him a 583 series scratch which was high for the month which earned him another point and his 682 total series with handicap. That was also high for the month along with Henri Gibson. This also earned him still another point. He wasn't done yet. That 222 final game earned him another point for being at least 50 pins over his average of 167 and his 583 series added another point on his total for being at least 75 pins over his average for the three games. His final two points came from being the most improved bowler for the month. That day alone he earned 11 points to end up with 14 points for the month to finish ahead of Charlie Gammon who ended up with 8 points so he definitely had to work for every pin he knocked down to win Bowler of the Month. It wasn't easy.

Clarence Peterson who only had a 113 average earned a first place spot for the first time in 36 weeks. He's been bowling in the shootout since I've been running it. He rolled a 401 series which is his best ever in

the Shootout which included a 155 game. So with his 261 pin handicap for three games it gave him a total of 662 which beat second place winner Smokey Prussman by 13 pins. So it makes me feel good when someone like Clarence can win the top spot for one week. Hopefully it won't be his last. That's what makes the shootout what it is. Just because you have a real low average doesn't mean you don't have a chance to win. Helen Noel who has the lowest average of anyone in the Shootout managed to finish fourth one week. She only had a 99 average, but managed to bowl a 144 game. She finished 15 pins out of the top spot.

Even though it was in open bowling Ralph Wynland rolled a 694 series with games of 231-227-226. He only had one open frame the whole three games when he missed the 10 pin late in the third game. I just couldn't believe what I was seeing nor could anyone else. It was like someone on the pro tour. Ralph is one of our regular Shootout bowlers. He had a 614 series back in October. He currently has a 166 average but I look for him to improve on that over the next month or so.

Individual high honors for the month went to Gene Allison who had a game scratch of 231, Herbert Smith had a high game handicap with a 260 while Smokey Prussman had high series scratch of 583 while he and Henri Gibson had high series handicap with 682 each.

I want to thank Smokey Prussman for taking the time to put together pictures of all the bowlers who won Bowler of the Month honors last year with Bowler of the Year Gene Allison in the middle. It is hanging on the wall in the Bowling Center above the ball cleaning machine so next time you are in the area, take time to look at it. It's my way of giving a little respect to those bowlers who participate in the Shootout week after week, after all, they are the ones who make it possible for me to write this column every month which I take a lot of pride in doing. New bowlers are more than welcome to come and join the Shootout. I'll guarantee you'll have a fun time whether you win or lose. We are a great group. Hope to see you there soon. Come and check us out.

## Building strength with use of Osteo Ball

Join your fellow residents in the new Osteo Ball class being held every Friday at 9:30 a.m. in the Sheridan Fitness Center.

The classes are designed to strengthen and work muscles but an added benefit better coordination and balance.

Stop by the Fitness Center and get signed up today!



## SuperBowl crowd in the AFRH Theater

### STEELERS OUTPLAY THE CARDINALS!

By Jerry Carter

SuperBowl Sunday drew a large crowd to the Scott theater. Cardinal fans took places next to a handful of Steelers supporters. The red and white struggled throughout the first half, despite loud cheering from the residents in attendance. The game became very competitive by the fourth quarter and the Cardinals finally pulled ahead with 2 minutes left in the game. However the Steelers rose to the occasion and pulled the game off by scoring the winning touchdown in the last minute.

Over 200 residents enjoyed one of the most exciting SuperBowl games in history. The residents were treated to beer & pizza during the game. Recreation Services thanks all the volunteers and staff for helping out during the game.

## Midwinter poetry reading at the Library

On a cool February day, a full house enjoyed a warm poetry reading at the Scott Library. Twelve readers covered everything from military heroism to the upcoming Valentine's Day holiday. Several read their own compositions.

Don Patrick started the program with a thoughtful, powerful poem that he wrote entitled, "On Eagle Wings: A Psalm of the Soldier." This was followed by Rosemary Tully's reading of "About Ben Adhem" followed by a tearful remembrance of The Statue of Liberty in "The New Colossus". Katie Browning read her poem "A Special Place", which made a special place in everyone's heart. Back to a military theme with Joe

Doyle's reading of "Captain, My Captain" and "Unknown Soldier". Two of Robert Frost's poems, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Nature's First Green is Gold" brought the theme of weather to us by John Miller. "Sea Fever", a fun poem was read by Jim Webster. Dave Davidson read, sang and talked about "Military Music". A moving piece written and read by Warren Helms made "DC in Winter" a thought-filled poem. From memory, Rosemary Tully told the story-poem of "the Owl and the Pussycat". Fitz Fitzpatrick brought back lots of memories with the sterling rendition of "For Whom the Bell Tolls". "The Greatest Man," which won Best Poem in 1999 was read by Hugh Wingo. The final poem, "My Valentine" written and read by Ida Emily Simpson took us from midwinter to the start of spring and our next favorite holiday.

## The Mardi Gras was a Wonderful Evening

By Sara Kenan  
Recreation Therapy

This past Friday evening February 20th, King Health Center and Assisted Living Residents enjoyed a night of good food and music at the Mardi Gras celebration. Among the residents there was Miss Anna Kubish, chosen to be our new reigning queen. She was handed the scepter from the old reigning queen Miss Catherine Bowie.

Anna Kubish is a young 93 years old and has been living at the home since 1974. If you ever get a chance to talk to her she has a lot of wonderful memories of the home from years gone by. Mr. Senires, 103 years young, was also

in attendance and he handed the scepter to the new King, Mr. Stevenson. Everyone had a great time.



From left - William Noone, Chuck Dickerson, Chief, Resident Services, and Louis DiCroce at the Mardi Gras event.

## Taking to the Rails



Ruth and Carl Graue check out the Model Train display set up in the Scott theater lobby.

## Residents treated to Model Train Show

By Jerry Carter

The Atlantic Coast S Gaugers Model Railroad Club visited the AFRH-W campus on Saturday, February 7th.

American Flyer S gauge trains were built by the A.C. Gilbert Company between 1946 and about 1965 and were especially popular from the late 1940s well into the 1950s. The club members set up model train layouts which featured two separate rail

lines. The wiring and electrical connections allowed the operation of two trains simultaneously. Many of the layouts also added scenery and operating accessories such as barrel loaders, cranes, crossing bells and lights, and whistling billboards. Also, the trains themselves were colorful lighted passenger trains or long freights led by steam engines that actually smoke or by diesels that have operating horns and bells.

The residents were treated to a fantastic model show and everyone had a fun time socializing with the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers Model Railroad Club members!

# THE WERETH 11

## REMEMBERING THE INVISIBLE SOLDIERS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

By Norman S. Lichenfeld, M.D.- Mobile, AL

Few realize that a decisive factor in the defense of Bastogne, during the Battle of the Bulge, rested in the artillery support of the surrounded town. One of the heavy (155mm) artillery units was the segregated 969th Field Artillery Battalion joined by a few howitzers and survivors of the segregated 333rd Field Artillery Battalion. For their actions the 969th FAB received the Presidential Unit Citation, the highest award a military unit can receive. In spite of this meritorious service, participation by Black G.I.'s in the Battle of the Bulge, or for that matter in the Second World War, is not well known or recognized.

Everyone knows of the Tuskegee Airmen and some know of the 761st Tank Battalion and the Red Ball Express. However, the majority of the Black G.I.s in World War II, 260,000 in the European Theatre of Operations, were not forgotten to history, they were simply never acknowledged. They are the 'invisible' soldiers of World War II. They include eleven young artillerymen of the 333rd Field

Artillery Battalion (FAB) who were murdered by the SS, after surrendering, during the Battle of the Bulge-the Wereth 11.

The 333rd Field Artillery Battalion was a 155mm Howitzer unit that had been in action since coming ashore

at Utah Beach on June 29, 1944. Typical of most segregated units in World War II, it had white officers and black enlisted men. At the time of the Battle of the Bulge, the unit was located in the vicinity of St. Vith, Belgium. Specifically it was in the small village of Schonberg, having arrived there in October of 1944. The Service battery was west of the Our River, while the firing batteries (A,B,and C) were across the east side of the Our river in support of the Army VII Corps and especially the 106th Infantry Division.

In the early morning hours of December 16th, German artillery began shelling the Schonberg area. By the afternoon, with reports of rapid German infantry and armored progress, the 333rd FAB was ordered to displace further west but, at the request of the 106th Div. artillery commander, to leave 'C' Battery and Service Battery in position to support the 14th Cavalry and 106th Division. By the morning of December 17th, the Germans were in Schonberg, and in control of the bridge across the river that led to St. Vith. Service Battery tried to displace to St. Vith through the village and were brought under heavy fire. Those not killed were forced to surrender. However eleven men of different Batteries who were caught on the east side of the river went overland in a northwest direction in the hopes of reaching American lines. At about 3 p.m., they approached the first

house in the nine-house hamlet of Wereth, Belgium, owned by Mathius Langer. A friend of the Langer's was also present.

The men were cold, hungry, and exhausted after walking cross-country through the deep snow. They had two rifles between them. The family welcomed them and gave them food. But this small part of Belgium did not necessarily welcome Americans as "Liberators." This area had been part of Germany before the First World War and many of its citizens still saw themselves as Germans and not Belgians. The people spoke German but had been forced to become Belgian citizens when their land was given to Belgium as part of the First World War repatriations. Unlike the rest of Belgium, many people in this area welcomed the Nazis in 1940 and again in 1944, because of their strong ties to Germany. Mathius Langer was not one of these. At the time he took the Black Americans in he was hiding two Belgian deserters from the German Army and had sent a draft age son into hiding so the Nazis would not conscript him.

About 4 p.m., a four man German patrol of the 1st SS Division, belonging to Kampfgruppe Knittel (recent information shows these men to be from 3./SS-PzAA1 LSSAH), arrived in Wereth in their Schwimmwagen vehicle. It is believed a Nazi sympathizer informed the SS that there were Americans at the Langer house. When the SS troops approached the house the eleven Americans surrendered quickly, without resistance. The Americans were made to sit on the road, in the cold, until dark. The Germans then marched them down the road. Gunfire was heard in the night. In the morning, villagers saw the bodies of the men in a ditch at the corner of a cow pasture. Because they were afraid that the Germans might return, they did not touch the dead soldiers. The snow covered the bodies and they remained entombed in the snow until January when villagers directed members of the 99th Div. I&R platoon to the site. The bodies had been frozen and unmolested since the massacre. The official report noted that the men had been brutalized, with broken legs, bayonet wounds to the head, and fingers cut off. It was apparent that one man was killed as he tried to bandage a comrade's wounds. Prior to their removal an Army photographer took photographs of the bodies to document the brutality of the massacre.

An investigation was immediately begun with a "secret" classification. Testimonies were taken of the 99th Div. men, the Army photographer, the Langers and the woman who had been present when the soldiers arrived. She testified that she told the SS the Americans had left! The case was then forwarded to a War Crimes Investigation unit. However the investigation showed that no positive identification of the murderers could be found (i.e. no unit patches, vehicle numbers, etc) only that they were from the 1st SS Panzer Division. By 1948 the "secret" classification was cancelled and the paperwork filed away. The murder of the Wereth 11 was seemingly forgotten and unavenged!

Seven of the



William E. Pritchett, a member of the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion.



Gravestone in Camden, Alabama of William Pritchett, a black veteran of WWII.

men were buried in the American Cemetery at Henri-Chapelle, Belgium, and the other four were returned to their families for burial after the war ended. The Wereth 11 remained unknown, it seemed, to all but their families until 1994.

Herman Langer, the son of Mathius Langer, who had given the men food and shelter, erected a small cross, with the names of the dead, in the corner of the pasture where they were murdered, as a private gesture from the Langer family on the 50th anniversary of their deaths (see photo of original memorial). But the memorial and the tiny hamlet of Wereth remained basically obscure. In a tiny hamlet with no school or shops, there were no signs on the roadways to indicate the memorial, and it was not listed in any guides or maps to the Battle of the Bulge battlefield. Even people looking for it had trouble finding it in the small German speaking community.

In 2001, three Belgium citizens embarked on the task of creating a fitting memorial to these men and additionally to honor all Black GI's of World War II. With the help of an American physician in Mobile, Alabama, whose father fought and was captured in the Battle of the Bulge, a grassroots publicity and fund-raising endeavor was begun. The land was purchased and a fitting memorial was created. There are now road signs indicating the location of the memorial, and the Belgium Tourist Bureau lists it in the 60th Anniversary "Battle of the Bulge" brochures. The dedication of the memorial was held in 2004 in an impressive military ceremony. Further research on the men and their unit continues. Two families of the murdered men have been located, as well as three U.S. gravesites.

It is believed that this is the only memorial to Black G.I.s, and their units, of World War II in Europe. Our ongoing efforts are to improve the memorial site, educate the public to its' presence and encourage black/segregated units of WW II to place unit plaques at the site. Our sincere hope is to make the memorial a focus of these units participation, and of American sacrifice during WWII.

Any unit that is interested in placing a plaque at the site or making a donation can do so by contacting [donations@wereth.org](mailto:donations@wereth.org).

The goal is to make the Wereth 11 and all Black G.I.'s "visible" to all Americans and to history. They, like so many others, paid the ultimate price for our freedom.



The original gravesite that Herman Langer, son of the man that gave the men shelter back in 1944, erected in the corner of the pasture where they were murdered.



These are the plaques at the Memorial - in four languages.



The Wereth Memorial, located in Belgium, is believed to be the only memorial to Black G.I.s of World War II in Europe.