

Public Affairs Office
Armed Forces Retirement Home
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Humanitarian effort of MSU volunteers benefits military veterans

Armed Forces Retirement Home, Gulfport, Miss. – A group of volunteers from Mississippi State University in Starkville, Miss., have assisted military personnel and AFRH-G staff in Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts. The AFRH-G withstood the destructive winds of Hurricane Katrina as she blew through the Mississippi Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005, but the 30- foot tidal surge caused flooding on the first floor. With no power or water, it was necessary to evacuate the residents to the other AFRH in Washington, D.C., the day after the storm until the facility can be renovated.

The Mississippi State University group started with removing, cleaning and packing away for storage all the memorabilia on the first floor. The AFRH-G is home to 600 military retirees and veterans. The 11-story high rise that sits on 44 acres directly across Hwy 90 from the beach holds literally thousands of pieces of historical military memorabilia that has been collected through the years and proudly displayed by the residents.

In addition to preserving valuable memorabilia, the MSU volunteers then moved to the library where they catalogued and boxed thousands of books that were spared the flood waters. The books will be stored until the home is ready for occupancy again.

Volunteers plan to begin work in the Recreation Department next, salvaging books on tape, DVDs and VHS movies. There are also plans for the Mississippi State volunteers to assist in revitalizing landscaping and to assist in other areas of recovery.