



Alpha Company Soldiers from Fort Detrick, Md., take a group photo with two retired Senior Noncommissioned Officers who live in the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. Photo by SGT David Bowen

1SG Phillip Rivera presents a coin to the two retired Senior Noncommissioned Officers who provided a tour of the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. Photo by SPC Kenneth Ehrhardt



# IN THE WARRIOR'S FOOTSTEPS

By SPC Kenneth Ehrhardt

FORT DETRICK, Md. – Alpha Company, 53rd Signal Battalion Soldiers recently visited the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C., giving the retirees a chance to meet the young men and women who have followed in their footsteps. It was an encouraging time for the residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. It gave retired Soldiers time to recall their past experiences in the military, and share their life experiences with today's Soldiers.

The visit opened with a riding tour around the retirement campus. There is also a walk-around tour as well, but due to inclement weather, the group went on the riding tour. On this trip, they were able to see the many activities the retirees enjoy on a day to day basis from fishing to auto crafts and golf.

Once the young Soldiers made their way into the home, they were graciously greeted by many of the home's residents. After a brief introduction, the young Soldiers were shown around the facilities and introduced to various retired Soldiers. The home had everything including a dining facility, medical facility, dental clinic, pharmacy, social lounge and a PX/BX.

Guiding the expedition were a retired sergeant major and sergeant first class who showed the visitors the many indoor activities and their own living accommodation. Some of the 53rd Soldiers noted that retired sergeants major still keep their personal area way above the military standard. The visitors even had a chance to play pool with the home's own pool shark which didn't turn out to well for Alpha Company.

When asked if they enjoyed their time at the home, most replies were of pure jubilation at the fact that they were treated like royalty. A life of leisure awaits all enlisted members who serve in the military, all branches alike if you qualify.

From spending time with the retired Soldiers, the young bucks from 53rd learned a lot. During their lunch hour, they were all afforded the opportunity to mingle with the general population. One retired petty officer third class passed on the three life rules he learned in life and lives by:

- Don't judge a book by its cover.
- Be cool when you meet someone new.
- Don't judge a book by its cover.

Over all, the trip was a success. Alpha Company 53rd had a great turnout from all ranks from specialist to the first sergeant. The residents of the Armed Forced Retirement Home were grateful for the visit and asked to thank all Soldiers for their service in this article. 📖

## BACKGROUND:

A little general knowledge about how the home is run: All forfeited pay from Article 15s goes to the home and funds just about everything. None of the taxpayer's money goes into the home. This is truly a home for the Soldiers funded by Soldiers. Also if all Soldiers take a look at their Leave Earnings Statements, they will realize that they give fifty cents a month, under the allotment to Armed Forces Retirement Homes.