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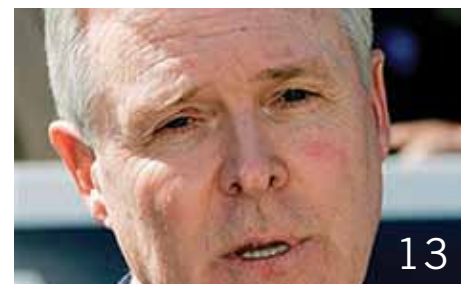
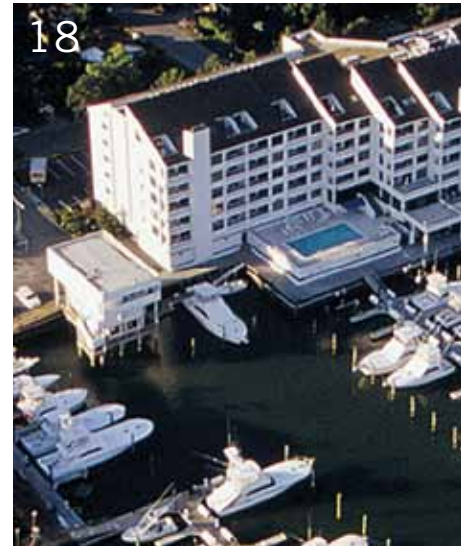
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Eileen Murphy

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Joe Barnes

FY2010 Spending Priorities Come to Light

THERE'S GOOD NEWS AND perhaps not-so-good news about FRA's top priority for the year — fully funding Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) health care programs for 2010. We're gradually learning more about the Administration's priorities for both DoD and VA, even though the official budget plan probably won't be sent to Capitol Hill until early May (after this edition of *FRA Today* goes to print).

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates convened a Pentagon press conference on 7 April to discuss next year's DoD budget and associated priorities. He referenced a two-percent overall growth projection in total DoD spending after inflation and also indicated plans to including warfighting funds within the base budget rather than funding these costs through supplemental spending bills. The latter is noteworthy, given the reliance on supplemental budgets for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and other programs since 2001. It's also important to note that other departments are slated to grow by about seven percent.

What this all means is a significant reduction in the Administration's total defense spending plans for next year and beyond. And as always, the cost of people programs — in particular health care — are under considerable scrutiny within DoD as the complete budget plan is being finalized.

Although the primary focus of the press conference was reprioritizing weapons and equipment programs, which drew strong criticism from some members of Congress and defense contractors, Gates also commented on the growing challenges associated with military health care costs. The Armed Forces Press Service quotes him as stating, "We have gone

up there [to Capitol Hill] three years in a row seeking an increase in premiums — a very modest increase, I might add — in a program where there has been no increase since it started." He continued, "I think we need to lay out for Congress how health care is eating the department alive." And in the FY2010 request of \$47 billion, "we will spend on health care what the entire foreign affairs budget is." The latter reference has prompted speculation that DoD may wait until 2011 to push plans for higher TRICARE-related fees.

[A]s always, the cost of people programs — in particular health care — are under considerable scrutiny within DoD as the complete budget plan is being finalized.

President Obama announced additional details about the Department of Veterans' Affairs FY2010 budget two days later at a White House press event, citing the creation of a "Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record" as a top priority for the Administration and department. This has been a long-standing FRA goal that's been addressed repeatedly in our testimony before congressional panels and echoed by various commissions. Both DoD and VA have supposedly been working toward this with their respective AHLTA and VISTA electronic medical records, although the systems are not "interoperable" despite significant efforts toward that end for a number of years.

The VA is slated for \$25 billion above baseline funding over the next five years, which includes more increases in the department's health care budget along with expanded eligibility to allow over 500,000 more (apparently lower priority group) veterans into the system by 2013. According to a White House press release, the Administration is also committed to "providing greater benefits to veterans who are medically retired from service."

More details on these and other issues will be known soon and, as with any budget proposal, the final outcome will be determined by Congress as both the House of Representative and Senate write their respective authorization and appropriations bills for 2010 and beyond. FRA closely monitors this annual budget process and will report here and in our weekly email update, *NewsBytes*, as details emerge. And our Legislative Team will weigh in on important proposals that affect the quality of life for current and former service members.

And that's where our members' involvement comes in. As lawmakers hammer out these details, it's critical that you stay informed and be part of FRA's grassroots advocacy campaigns by expressing your views to your senators and representative. I strongly urge you to visit FRA's Action Center (at www.fra.org) frequently and either use prewritten messages or write your own addressing DoD and VA health care along with other important personnel issues. Thanks in advance for doing so.

Joe Barnes is FRA's National Executive Director and Chairman of the National Committee on Legislative Service. A member of Navy Department Branch 181, he is also an advisor to the National Committees on Budget and Finance and Membership and Retention.

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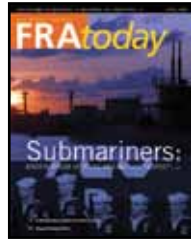
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Blue Water Veterans

I just had to drop a note to say thanks for [FRA's] testimony for VA funding for Blue Water Sailors. I am one of those that has a medical problem that the VA attributed to herbicide causes from Vietnam. My problem is not with the VA but with the Dept. of the Navy. I am drawing VA disability for that medical problem, but can't draw CRSC due to the "No Boots on the Ground" [rule]. Hopefully the added pressure will get something accomplished. Thanks for the push.



PNP John Johnson

Unified Medical Records Are First Step Toward Seamless Transition

As a follow up to your meeting with Chairman Bob Filner (27 January 2009) held to discuss priorities for the 111th Congress, I have a simple suggestion for a new start.

According to a November 2006 VHA report, "Analysis of VA Health Care Utilization Among US Southwest Asian War Veterans," of the 1.4 million troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, 631,174 OIF and OEF veterans have left active duty and become eligible for VA health care since FY2002. Of that number, 32 percent (205,097) have enrolled in the VA system and sought VA health care.

Thirty-two percent enrollment? Why aren't 100 percent of the troops who leave active duty under honorable conditions automatically enrolled in the VA system? At present, each of them has to enroll individually. As a current VA trauma psychiatrist and former U.S. Navy Commander, I find the current process outrageous.

There is a simple and elegant solution available, one that should be the basis of the DoD and the VA working together. On the first day of active duty, all military personnel should be automatically enrolled in the VA system. Since the VA has an extremely effective computerized patient record system (CPRS), on the last day of active duty, when troops are given their DD-214s and information about benefits, their DD-214s should be scanned into CPRS,

making this valuable document immediately available to VA personnel.

If we can also develop a simple, compatible electronic interface, all active-duty service members would have their military medical records available to VA medical personnel and vice versa, making both systems available as health care options. This, for example, could be a big advantage for active duty personnel seeking medical attention when on leave.

Why this hasn't happened yet highlights the depth of the chasm between high-level VA/military rhetoric and practical care for veterans and troops. I also strongly suspect there are those in our government who hope not all eligible veterans enroll since the full long-term medical costs of sending our troops to war would then be known. Maybe if this were part of the economics of going to war, we would be more restrained in starting them. Our Vietnam and Iraq experiences should have taught us this.

Enrolling in the VA is often a psychologically difficult process for men and women who have to adapt their war zone skills so they can reintegrate into civilian society. Our troops have paid heavy dues and have earned a seamless transition from military health care to VA health care.

Please do what you can help making enrolling in the VA health care system on the first day of active duty a priority of the 111th Congress.

Gene Tinelli, M.D.

FRA Response: *FRA and other veterans' service organizations have been addressing the need for joint medical records for years, but despite legislation and directives to create a seamless transition process (some dating back to the early 1980s), there's been little progress. We're encouraged by the Obama Administration's recent plan to create a "Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record [that] will ultimately contain administrative and medical information from the day an individual enters military service throughout their military career and after they leave the military." (See NED Perspective on page 5.)*



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Health Care Debate Heats Up

AS FRA TODAY GOES to print there is speculation that President Obama's first budget will include a request for TRICARE fee increases. The shifting of TRICARE costs to beneficiaries is not a new idea. The previous Administration promoted excessive fee hikes and increases in pharmacy co-pays for the past three years, but was unsuccessful. If the new Administration pushes the same agenda of TRICARE fee increases, it will prove the old axiom that "the more things change, the more they stay the same."

FRA is supporting "The Military Retirees' Healthcare Protection Act" (H.R. 816) that would prohibit the Department of Defense (DoD) from increasing TRICARE fees, and grant that authority solely to Congress. While the Association strongly opposes fee increases, we also want to shift the focus to other options that would make TRICARE more cost-effective. In recent years, use of the Mail Order

Pharmacy has expanded and Congress has allowed federal pricing for prescription drugs. And last year, a pilot program for preventative care for beneficiaries under age 65 was authorized. These programs are just getting started and have the potential to create significant savings.

As you receive this issue of *FRA Today* the new Administration is expected to be submitting its first budget to Congress. Thousands of FRA members contacted the White House and asked the President not to include TRICARE fee and pharmacy co-pay increases in his FY2010 budget request. FRA's National President Don Muecke also wrote to President Obama expressing FRA's belief that DoD must explore and implement other cost-saving measures before shifting costs to beneficiaries. Imposing higher health care costs sends a powerful and negative message not only to retirees, but also to those currently serving, about the value of their service.

FY2010 Budget Process Begins

In early April, both the House and Senate approved their respective budget resolutions for FY2010 (H. Con Res. 85 and S. Con. Res. 13). The annual budget resolutions are used as a guide for authorizing, appropriating, and taxing committees and represent congressional spending priorities for the upcoming fiscal year that starts 1 October 2009 (FY2010).

The House and Senate plans currently provide for a four-percent increase in Defense spending and a seven-percent increase in non-defense spending. FRA's Legislative Team is monitoring the process with regard to the impact on personnel programs and the Association's legislative agenda.

A conference committee made-up of members of the House and Senate will be appointed to reconcile the differences and draft a conference report that will be submitted to both chambers of Congress for approval. If both chambers agree on a final budget resolution, it will be used as a blueprint in developing the FY2010 budget.



TRICARE ISSUES

Military Retirees' Health Care Premiums Paid with Pre-Tax Dollars

Sen. James Webb (Va.) introduced "The Federal and Military Retiree Health Care Equity Act" (S. 491) that allows military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis and allows a tax deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums. This is a companion bill to House legislation (H.R. 1203) introduced earlier by Rep. Chris Van Hollen (Md.). Visit the FRA Action Center (at www.fra.org) to contact your representative and ask him/her to co-sponsor this important legislation.

TRICARE Beneficiaries Can Access DoD Self-Service Logon

The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) has a new name, and its website has a new look. The new DoD Self-Service Logon — or "DS Logon" — is a secure credential issued to uniformed service members, spouses, and other family members 18 and older who are eligible for benefits in the DEERS system. It allows access to secure DoD web applications, and can link the TRICARE beneficiary's identity to their medical records, pay, and human resource systems, and allows them to access different web applications.

Sponsors may use their CAC or MyPay personal identification number (PIN) in the DS Logon Access Manager at www.dmdc.osd.mil/dsaccess to create a DS Logon for themselves or a family member. A PIN will be mailed along with instructions on how to activate the DS Logon. Family members can also request a DS Logon for themselves when applying for an ID card, and the one-time PIN will be mailed to them.

Navy Doctor to Become TRICARE Deputy Director

Navy Rear Adm. Christine S. Hunter will become the deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). She will assume the position from Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger who retires this month. Hunter, who is currently the commander of Navy Medicine West and Naval Medical Center San Diego, brings significant medical and business expertise to TMA. In her new position, Hunter will serve as principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs on DoD health plan policy and performance. She will lead a staff of 1,800 in planning, budgeting and executing a \$22.5 billion Defense Health Program to high-quality, accessible health care for 9.2 million beneficiaries worldwide.

TRICARE Standardizes Claims Payment Processes in Philippines

TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) recently implemented several new policies to streamline the claims payment process in the Philippine Islands. A major change allows Philippine providers more time to provide necessary credentialing information and documentation for certification before their claims are denied. Claims are now held for 90 days as opposed to the previous 35 to facilitate this process. Provider certification is critical as beneficiaries living in the Philippines may only have their claims paid if they use TRICARE certified providers. Other new policies include the use of fax technology to overcome overseas mail delays, and new procedures designed to reduce data entry errors. TMA will set up a TRICARE satellite office in the Philippines to assist beneficiaries and providers, but the location and timing has yet to be determined. These changes accompany the implementation of a new Philippines fee schedule in November of 2008.

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) is Important to Reservists

As of 1 January 2009 TRS rates changed from \$81 to \$47.51 for single members and dropped 29 percent, from \$253 to \$180.17, for member-and-family coverage. These new, lower rates will help provide continuity of coverage to Reserve Component members and their families. For more information about TRS, go to www.tricare.mil/trs.

Speaking with the Speaker and Other House Leadership

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (Calif.) met with FRA's National Executive Director Joe Barnes and representatives from various military and veterans' organizations in late March to discuss each organization's legislative priorities for the First Session of the 111th Congress. The Speaker opened the meeting by announcing that the Administration would withdraw its controversial plan to have the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) bill third-party insurance companies for care provided to veterans for service-connected injuries or illnesses. (See Third-Party Payer story on page 10.)

House Majority Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer (Md.), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Rep. Ike Skelton (Mo.), Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee Rep. Bob Filner (Calif.), Chairman of the House Budget Committee Rep. John Spratt (S.C.), Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Rep. Charlie Rangel (N.Y.), and Chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee Rep. Chet Edwards (Texas) also attended the meeting, during which NED Barnes reiterated FRA's top priority for the year — the importance of adequate funding for DoD and VA health care.

HASC Chairman Skelton informed the group that the President's FY2010 budget outline provides funding for the expansion of full concurrent receipt to more disabled retirees, but also stated that there are significant funding challenges associated with other personnel programs, including offsetting revenue related to a TRICARE fee increase.

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

VA Economic Recovery Payments for Disabled Vets Coming Soon

As mentioned in the 13 March 2009 *Newsbytes*, the recently passed Economic Stimulus bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) to make a one-time economic recovery payment of \$250 to disabled veterans. FRA has been informed that these VA payments are scheduled to be issued in June 2009.

Bill Connects Parkinson's Disease to Agent Orange Exposure

Rep. Bob Filner (Calif.), Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs (HVAC) re-introduced a bill (H.R. 1428) that would require the VA to grant service connection for Parkinson's disease for Vietnam veterans who file for a disability claim. The bill would establish a presumption of service-connection for Parkinson's disease due to exposure to Agent Orange for Vietnam veterans afflicted with this degenerative and incurable condition.

Approximately 20 million gallons of herbicides were used in Vietnam between 1962 and 1971 to remove unwanted foliage and vegetation that provided cover for enemy forces during the Vietnam War. After their military service in Vietnam, some veterans reported a variety of health problems and concerns due to exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides and pesticides. Shipmates are urged to use the FRA Action Center to ask their U.S. Representative to co-sponsor this important legislation.

Related to this issue, FRA has also written Rep. Filner requesting that he re-introduce the "Agent Orange Equity Act" (H.R. 6562), that will reverse the VA's decision that prevents "Blue Water Navy" retirees and veterans who served in the waters around Vietnam from claiming presumptive status for diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure.

FRA Testifies Before VA House and Senate Panels

FRA's National Executive Director Joe Barnes highlighted the Association's veteran-related priorities in mid-March before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. Barnes restated FRA's concern about ensuring that wounded troops, their families and the survivors of those killed in action are cared for by a grateful nation, voiced support for partially lifting the ban on health care coverage for Priority Group 8 veterans (which will begin later this year), and cited the Association's opposition to proposed enrollment fees for veterans in Priority Groups 7 and 8 who seek medical care at VA facilities. He also expressed support for legislation (S. 423, H.R. 1016) that would authorize a two-year budget cycle for the VA to provide advance funding for veterans' health care and facilitate continuity of services and strategic long-term decisions.

The Association expressed strong opposition to a plan to charge third-party insurers for treatment of veterans' service-connected injuries at VA hospitals (see VA Third-Party Payer article below). Additionally, Barnes urged the committees to eliminate restrictions on Agent Orange disability claims by "Blue Water" Vietnam veterans (see Agent Orange story at left), recommended Medicare subvention for eligible veterans receiving VA health care, and asked for the committees' support to ensure implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill by 1 August 2009.

FRA Opposes VA Third-Party Payer Plan

In a letter to the White House, FRA National President Don Muccheck expressed concern about proposals to bill third-party insurance companies for treatment of veterans' service-connected injuries at VA health care facilities. These concerns were also referenced when NED Joe Barnes testified before a joint hearing of the House and Senate VA Committees.

As a result of these initiatives and opposition from FRA and other military and veterans' organizations, President Obama withdrew the controversial proposal. FRA believes that passing the cost of service-connected care to veterans, even indirectly through their private insurance companies, violates our government's solemn obligation to past and present service members. Further, FRA is concerned that potential employers would be reluctant to hire veterans, fearing that service-connected disabilities could increase their health care cost.

House Approves Expanded VA Eligibility

The House passed FRA-supported legislation (H.R. 1377) that would expand eligibility for reimbursement by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for emergency treatment provided at non-VA facilities. The bill, sponsored by House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Bob Filner (Calif.), outlines the VA's allowable limits and clarifies that the VA is not responsible for co-payments the veteran may owe to the third party, such as deductibles.

Final Regulation for Post 9/11 GI Bill Released

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) recently released the final regulations for the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit that takes effect on 1 August 2009. Approximately two million service members and veterans can expect to receive a letter outlining eligibility and application requirements. Applications will be available on the VA website on or after 1 May, but benefits will not take effect until 1 August.

FRA strongly supported this legislation that significantly enhances education benefits for service members who have served since 11 September 2001, including VEAP-era personnel. This extensive reform package eliminates the \$1,200 enrollment fee, provides a monthly cost-of-living stipend, and includes the ability to transfer the benefit to family members for some currently-serving personnel — a significant victory for FRA and Post-9/11 service members and vets.

Visit www.gibill.va.gov to learn more about the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

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Senate Bill Allows Retirement Credit for More Reservists

“The National Guard and Reserve Retired Pay Equity Act” (S. 644) was recently introduced by Senator Saxby Chambliss (Ga.), a longtime champion for Reserve retirement benefits. Existing law allows Reservists to receive retirement benefits three months earlier for every 90 days of active duty service, but it only applies to service performed since the law’s enactment on 28 January 2008. The Chambliss bill would retroactively provide the same benefit to Reservists who have served since 11 September 2001.

A similar bill (H.R. 208) was introduced by Rep. Joe Wilson (S.C.) in the House, and shipmates are urged to use the FRA Action Center (www.fra.org) to contact and ask their elected officials to support both measures.

SecDef Ends Stop-Loss

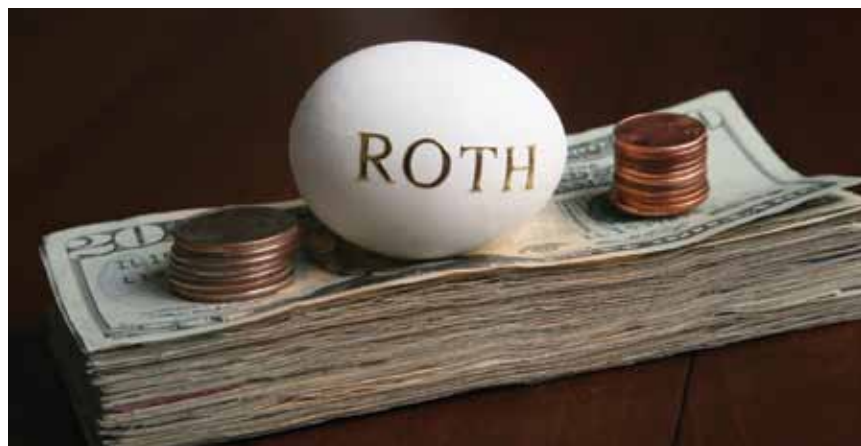
Defense Secretary (SecDef) Robert Gates announced the elimination of “Stop-Loss,” the policy that forces active duty and Reserve personnel to extend their tours beyond their enlistment contract or eligibility for retirement. Last year Congress authorized \$500 bonuses for each month served beyond service members’ obligation for those whose enlistments are extended by Stop-Loss orders.

Gates also announced his recommendation to re-nominate Navy Admiral Mike Mullen and Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright as the chairman and vice chairman, respectively, of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for second two-year terms.

Concurrent Receipt Bill Introduced in the Senate

Senate Majority Leader Senator Harry Reid (Nev.) introduced the “Retired Pay Restoration Act” (S. 546) that would authorize service members who receive Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP), have less than a 50-percent disability rating and less than 20 years of service to receive a phased-in concurrent receipt benefit to be completed in 2014. The Association continues its long-standing support for the immediate payment of concurrent receipt of full military retired pay and veterans’ disability compensation for all disabled retirees, and this legislation is a major step toward achieving that goal. Shipmates are urged to use the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org to contact their senators on this critical issue.

House Passes TSP Improvements and Eases SBP/DIC Offset



Before leaving town for a two-week recess in early April, the House passed “The Federal Retirement Reform Act” (H.R. 1804) that would provide benefit enhancements for currently serving military personnel and military survivors. Sponsored by Rep. Edolphus Towns (N.Y.), chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the bill would authorize active duty military personnel the same Roth option for their Thrift Savings Plan that most corporate employees already enjoy. A Roth 401(k) allows individuals to invest after-tax dollars into an account in which the balance grows without taxation and can be withdrawn tax-free under specified criteria.

The bill also eases the financial penalties imposed on military widows whose spouses died of service-connected causes, many of whom experience considerable financial penalties because their military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities are reduced by the amount of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) they receive from the VA. Two years ago, Congress took a first step in addressing that burden by authorizing a \$50 monthly allowance for these widows. H.R. 1804 would increase the monthly payment to \$95 next year and to \$345 in the out years. The measure now goes to the Senate for further consideration. Use the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org to urge your senator to support the bill.

Improved Pay Increase for Active Duty Personnel

Rep. Joe Wilson (S.C.), ranking member of the House Armed Services' Military Personnel Subcommittee, introduced legislation (H.R. 1864) that provides an active duty pay increase of at least one-half percent above the Department of Labor's Employment Cost Index (ECI) for FY2010. The Administration's budget outline for FY2010 indicates that the White House will request a 2.9-percent increase that is equal to the ECI. The House and Senate Armed Services Committees sent letters to their respective Budget Committees asking for sufficient funding allocations to pay for the additional one-half percent hike for active duty personnel in 2010.

Representative Gus Bilirakis (Fla.) introduced FRA-supported legislation (H.R. 1592) that would guarantee annual pay increases for active duty service members at least one-half percent higher than the Employment Cost Index (ECI) for FY2011 through FY2014. FRA also supports targeted pay hikes for mid-career and senior enlisted personnel to help close the pay gap between active duty and private sector pay. Shipmates are urged to use the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org to contact their representatives to urge them to support the pay increase proposals.

DoD Announces Projects in Stimulus Act



The Department of Defense (DoD) announced that more than 3,000 projects are included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that was signed into law in March. The two biggest DoD projects are hospitals at Fort Hood, Texas, and Camp Pendleton, Calif. The Defense Department received \$7.4 billion under the law, with \$5.9 billion going for construction and repair projects. The funds are to be spent at DoD facilities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico.

These projects will provide much-needed improvements to military installations and include hospitals, child development centers, barracks projects, family housing, community centers, gymnasiums and other facilities for troops and their families. The act also funds needed infrastructure repairs including water projects, electrical grids, steam lines and sewers.

A complete list of projects is available at www.defenselink.mil/recovery and at www.recovery.gov. Defense officials will continue to use those websites to post future announcements.

President Nominates Navy Secretary



Raymond E. Mabus, a former naval officer who served aboard the guided missile cruiser USS Little Rock, has been nominated to become the next Secretary of the Navy. He has served as Governor of Mississippi, Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Chairman and CEO of Foamex, a large manufacturing company. Mabus holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from the University of Mississippi; a masters degree in political science from Johns Hopkins University; and a law degree (JD) from Harvard University. His nomination must be approved by the Senate.

The FRA Legislative team is Joe Barnes, National Executive Director, John Davis, Director of Legislative Programs, Bob Washington, Health Care Advisor and Outreach Manager, Chris Slawinski, National Veterans Service Officer and Ed Dockery, Assistant Director of Legislative Programs.

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Memorial Day: Honoring the Fallen

THE TRADITION OF “DECORATION DAY” began long before the end of the Civil War, when Southern women began decorating the graves of Confederate dead. And although there are dozens of cities that claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day, it’s difficult to pinpoint the true origins of the day reserved for honoring those who died for their country.

We do know that Memorial Day was officially proclaimed by General John Logan on 5 May 1868. As national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, his vision became reality on 30 May of that year as flowers were placed on both Confederate and Union graves at Arlington National Cemetery. New York State was the first state to officially recognize the holiday (in 1873) and by 1890, all Northern states had joined in the observance. Southern states chose to honor their war dead on separate days until the holiday was changed following World War I to recognize all Americans who died fighting in a war, not just those who perished during the Civil War. (Several Southern states still honor their Confederate War dead on a separate day.) The National Holiday Act of 1971 established a nationwide day of remembrance on the last Monday of May.

FRA shipmates participate in a variety of Memorial Day observances. FRA’s National President (or his designated representative) annually attends the national Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery and places a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Many branches participate in local ceremonies, parades and other events that honor the memory of those who’ve made the ultimate sacrifice and comfort the families of the fallen.

There is a growing concern that Memorial Day has become less about honoring those who’ve died in service to our country and more about sales at local shopping malls and auto dealerships. To remind Americans about the true meaning of Memorial Day, a National Moment of Remembrance was established in 2000. At 3:00 p.m. (local time), all Americans are invited to observe “a moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence.”

In an effort to return the day to one of solemn remembrance, there is also a movement to move the holiday back to 30 May, its traditional day of observance. Some believe that making the holiday part of a three-day weekend diminishes the spirit and true meaning of the day.

Tell us what you think. Should Memorial Day be celebrated on the last Monday of May or on 30 May, regardless of the day of the week on which it falls? How do you commemorate Memorial Day? What does your FRA branch do to honor the fallen? Visit www.fra.org/history to share your views.



Tomb Guard Pfc. Michael Steiner marches 21 steps down the black mat behind the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, Va. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer’s Mate 2nd Class Daniel J. McLain.

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In tough economic times, it's just not good enough to offer meager discounts of 10% and 20%. Even "half-off" has become ho-hum. That's why we're going all the way. Our stunning *Scienza™* lab-created **Ruby Pendant** can be yours for **FREE** (You pay nothing except basic shipping and processing costs). Similar designs can be found at the largest jewelry stores in America for \$299. But for a limited time, **you can take 100% off!**

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Why give away jewelry? Our real goal is to build a long term relationship with you. We are convinced you will become a loyal Stauer client in the years to come. But for now, in this lousy economy, offering this remarkable pendant seemed the best way for you to give us a try.

The *Scienza™ Ruby Pendant* features an impressive 1-carat oval-cut, lab-created ruby prong-set in luxurious gold vermeil. Surrounding the radiant red oval are 14 brilliant-cut, lab-created *DiamondAura®* dazzlers. The combination sparkles with a passionate fire that is even brighter than most mined stones.

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Recruiting and Outreach

OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL months, many FRA branches will be participating in outreach events all over the country. These are great opportunities to promote the Fleet Reserve Association at events that will attract active duty, Reserve, retired, and veteran members of the Sea Services. Let's take a look at what you can do to promote the benefits of being an FRA member.

If your branch isn't already scheduled to participate in a community outreach event for military personnel or veterans, you won't want to miss this opportunity to get involved or organize an event of your own. Check your local newspapers, TV, radio, and community websites for upcoming events in your area. May is Armed Forces month and all over the land there will be events that will attract millions of service members and veterans. There will be parades, presentations, speeches, air shows, base open houses and Navy Week activities. Memorial Day observances are another opportunity to honor our service personnel and veterans, living or departed. The Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps will send their finest active duty and Reserve personnel to represent themselves and their service in the best possible light at these events. Consider ways you can make their jobs easier by offering refreshments, a spot of shade or even just a verbal "thank you."

Your rich tradition of service in the Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard means that you have a story to tell, which may attract prospective members. Remember that you are the best source of information about FRA's purpose and history. You are a living statement of what it means to be an FRA shipmate. We can help you tell this story by sending you literature

and promotional items to hand out at outreach events. You can order items by calling Member Services at 1-800-372-1924. Please place your order in advance so we can ship out materials before your scheduled outreach event.

If your branch isn't already scheduled to participate in a community outreach event for military personnel or veterans, you won't want to miss this opportunity to get involved or organize an event of your own.

Recruiting Success

Our membership recruiting year began on 1 April 2008 and ended on 31 March 2009. Congratulations to FRA's top 10 recruiting branches:

- Branch 46 (Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii) was the top recruiter with 182 members.
- Branch 99 (Virginia Beach, Va.) – 111 members.
- Branch 269 (Goose Creek, S.C.) – 80 members.
- Branch 290 (Mayport, Fla.) – 77 members.
- Branch 24 (Annapolis, Md.) – 75 members.
- Branch 91 (Jacksonville, Fla.) – 69 members.
- Branch 61 (Chula Vista, Calif.) – 68 members.
- Branch 40 (Chesapeake, Va.) – 60 members.

- Branch 20 (Groton, Conn.) – 56 members.

Thanks to all of our branches that recruited new or reinstated members. Keep up the good work.

At the end of each membership year, we award prizes to members who recruited others to join the FRA. On 3 April, we drew names out of our barrel for a complementary five-year membership or cash. Congratulations to:

- Brian I. Masterson of Branch 269,
- Ernie Hayes of Branch 061,
- John A. Warth of Branch 077,
- Robert Rogers of Branch 269,
- Michael J. Ireland of Branch 061,
- Henry N. Stamey of Branch 245
- Lawrence H. Williams of Branch 256,
- Robert J. Dentici of Branch 110,
- Michael H. Bevill of Branch 011, and
- Charles A. Hines of Branch 269.

Our theme for the new recruiting year (1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010) is "Excellence in Recruiting." If you recruit a minimum of three new or reinstated members, you will receive the new pin, which is featured on page 4. You also have the opportunity to receive other recruiting incentives such as pins for recruiting one, two, 10, or 50 members or a Life Membership for recruiting 32 or more members.

Maintain your recruiting and outreach efforts. Plan ahead and recruit a current or former sea service member into the FRA!

Penny Collins is a member of FRA Branch 24 in Annapolis, Md. and can be reached at penny@fra.org.



Depart from Rudee Inlet
for a full day of sport
fishing, or eat someone
else's catch at the cozy
Virginia Beach restaurants
overlooking the Inlet.

A stylized map of Virginia in shades of yellow and orange, with a blue coastline on the right. A red pin is placed on the coast, and a white road with a grey shadow curves through the state. A pink line also runs across the map.

BOUND FOR VIRGINIA BEACH

VIRGINIA BEACH is the largest city in Virginia, offering a wide range of activities and entertainment options for all ages and interests. While soft sands and rolling waves are the foundation of any Virginia Beach experience, the site for FRA and LA FRA's 2009 National Conventions is so much more!

 by LAUREN ARMSTRONG

Located halfway between Maryland's Ocean City and the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Virginia Beach provides the natural beauty and energy of a beach town. The wide oceanfront at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay boasts miles of boardwalk, hundreds of hotels, resorts, restaurants and numerous attractions. The surrounding Tidewater region is home to historic landmarks, museums, performing arts venues and several U. S. military facilities. It's no wonder the area is a popular destination for 2.5 million visitors each year.

JOIN THE FUN IN VIRGINIA BEACH! Plan now to attend the FRA and LA FRA conventions October 21st thru 24th. To make reservations or learn more about the convention details, visit www.fra.org.

** indicates an attraction will be featured on a tour or excursion offered by the Convention Committee. Reservation information will be included in the next edition of the Convention Newsletter.*

BEACHES

Fill your lungs with the salt air as you explore the wide swath of expansive sand that makes Virginia Beach so attractive. This classic vacation spot includes 35 miles of waterfront property consisting of three distinct beach areas. Whether you're looking for a park-like atmosphere that goes on for miles or you simply want to relax and unwind, Virginia Beach is considered the longest pleasure beach in the world and has something for everyone.

The Resort Beach

The Resort Beach bustles with seaside activity and is the site for a variety of festivals and events throughout the year. A 34-foot sculpture of King Neptune reigns over the miles-long boardwalk that's perfect for a leisurely stroll or a rigorous workout. The Resort Beach attracts swimmers and sunbathers, as well as hundreds of the world's top surfers. Bring your swimsuit, walking shoes, or just a beach chair and umbrella and enjoy the energy of the Resort Beach.



L to R: Photos courtesy Virginia Beach CVB



Chesapeake Bay Beach

Chesapeake Bay Beach, located north of the Resort Beach, offers a quieter refuge with gentler waves and sunset views of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, the longest bridge-tunnel complex in the world. The beach is an angler's paradise, where fishermen can cast a line from shore or fish from the heart of the Bay.

Sandridge Beach

Sandridge Beach is a five-mile stretch of secluded sand dunes situated 15 miles south of the Resort Area Beach. It's a peaceful and relaxing area that includes the marshes and open waters of Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park, a haven for kayakers, hikers and fishermen.

ATTRACTIONS

There's more to the Virginia Beach area than soft sands, rolling waves and salty bay breezes. Visitors to the Virginia Beach/Norfolk/Hampton Roads area can choose from a wide variety of attractions that range from museums to amusement parks.

Nauticus*

History meets state-of-the-art technology at Nauticus, a museum and attraction rolled into one. The many hands-on exhibits complement the permanent and changing collections that highlight our connection with the maritime world. Berthed at Nauticus is the USS Wisconsin, one of the largest and last U.S. Navy battleships. Visitors can explore her decks and learn about her victories during



With the food-rich Chesapeake Bay meeting the Atlantic Ocean, Virginia Beach and its neighboring waters are home to a multitude of freshwater and saltwater fishing opportunities.

WWII. The Navy's Hampton Roads Naval Museum is also located at the site and features a rich collection of authentic uniforms, weaponry, underwater artifacts, ship models and artwork. Other permanent collections include a tribute to the Great White Fleet, a look at our National Marine Sanctuaries, and a variety of interactive simulations that help visitors learn about today's maritime technology. Nauticus admission also includes entrance to a 350-seat theater that shows a variety of high-definition digital films on a 50 x 24-foot screen.

Nauticus will be part of the Tuesday (20 October) tour organized by the Convention Committee. For those who wish to visit on their own, it is located on the Norfolk waterfront, a short drive west of the convention hotel. The facility is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. It is closed on Mondays. Admission is \$10.95 for adults and \$8.50 for children ages 4 through 12. Discounts are available for seniors, military personnel and AAA members, and children ages 3 and under are admitted free.

For more information, visit www.nauticus.org or call 800-664-1080.

Spirit of Norfolk*

Convention organizers have planned a dinner cruise aboard the Spirit of Norfolk, a beautifully appointed vessel offering a dazzling view of downtown Norfolk. Prepare yourself for a memorable evening of delicious food, lively dancing and engaging entertainment as the magnificent vessel travels north on the Elizabeth River, past the National Maritime Center, Portsmouth Naval Hospital, and Norfolk Naval Base.

Billed as "the ultimate Norfolk experience," the cruise is

scheduled for Thursday evening (22 October). The cost is \$82 per person and includes transportation to and from the Cavalier Hotel, dining, entertainment and gratuities aboard the ship.

For more information, visit www.spiritofnorfolk.com or call 866-304-2469.

Military Aviation Museum

Located at the Virginia Beach Airport, the Military Aviation Museum houses one of the largest collections of vintage airplanes in the world. See a P-51D Mustang, FG-1D Corsair, PBY Catalina and other airworthy WWII airplanes that have been restored to their original aeronautic splendor. Marked by a red checkered water tower that was transported from Kentucky and built during WWII, the museum has its own grass landing strip that allows these historic warbirds to participate in air shows across the nation.

The planes have all been restored by the Fighter Factory (www.fighterfactory.com), located near the museum. Shipmates interested in seeing restoration projects underway may make advance arrangements to tour the facility by contacting the Virginia Beach Airport at 757-721-7767.

The Military Aviation Museum is located at 1341 Princess Anne Road in Virginia Beach and is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission for adults is \$10 and school-age children are admitted for \$5. Discounts are available for seniors and active duty military personnel, and there is no charge for WWII veterans.

For more information, visit www.militaryaviationmuseum.org or call 757-721-7767

HISTORY

The Tidewater region of Virginia, which includes Virginia Beach and the surrounding area, is steeped in history. The first European settlers made landfall here and the area played key roles in the American Revolution and the Civil



War. The region's colonial roots come to life in a variety of historical venues.

Cape Henry*

America's first European settlers landed at Cape Henry in 1607, before moving up the coast to establish Jamestown, our country's first English colony. These early colonists erected a wooden cross to offer thanks for a safe journey across the Atlantic and a granite cross now memorializes this famous site, which has witnessed other important events in our nation's history.

By blockading the Chesapeake Bay off Cape Henry in 1781, British reinforcements were kept from reaching Yorktown, thereby forcing British forces to surrender in the decisive battle of the American Revolution. One of the new government's first lighthouses was erected on Cape Henry in 1792, and today is a National Historic Landmark and serves as the official symbol for the City of Virginia Beach. When the original lighthouse began to crack in 1870, a new Cape Henry Lighthouse was constructed just 357 feet away. The "new" lighthouse is still an active aid to navigation operated by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Lighthouse will be included in the Monday (19 October) tour organized by the Convention Committee. For those who wish to visit on their own, it will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during October.



Clockwise from left to right: Cape Henry Lighthouse; a colonial flute; replica of Powhatan Indian village home in Jamestown, Virginia; U.S. Virginia quarter dollar.



Admission is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children (ages 3 to 12), and free for children under the age of 3. Please note the Cape Henry Lighthouses are located within Fort Story military base. To visit the lighthouse, all visitors age 16 and older must show a photo ID to enter the base.

Jamestown and Yorktown

Drive an hour northwest from Virginia Beach and you can easily imagine you've traveled back in time.

Jamestown was America's first permanent English colony, settled 13 years before the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts. The 17th-century settlers endured many hardships and their story comes to life through film, gallery exhibits and living history programs at Jamestown Settlement. Visitors can board replicas of the three ships that brought the settlers from England in 1607, explore recreations of the colonists' fort and a Powhatan Indian village, and learn from costumed historical interpreters who describe and demonstrate daily life as it was in the early 1600s.

When Lord Charles Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown to American and French troops in October of 1781, it effectively ended the Revolutionary War. The Yorktown Victory Center details our nation's journey from colony to fledgling nation through a unique variety of exhibits that chronicle our journey to independence. Learn about the experiences of ordinary soldiers and citizens of the time, the development of a new government and Yorktown's importance as an 18th-century seaport. Visitors are also invited to explore a recreated Colonial Army encampment and 1780s farmhouse, and learn how Americans lived in the decade following the American Revolution.

Adult admission to Jamestown Settlement is \$14; \$6.50 for children (ages 6 to 12). Admission to the Yorktown Victory Center is \$9.25 for adults and \$5 for children. A combination ticket is available (\$19.25 for adults, \$9.25 for



The amphibious dock landing ship, USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) pulls into Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, after a three-month deployment.



children) for those who wish to visit both sites and can be used on different days.

For more information on Jamestown Settlement and the Yorktown Victory Center, visit www.historyisfun.org or call 888-593-4682.

Colonial Williamsburg

Also located about an hour from Virginia Beach is Colonial Williamsburg, a 301-acre living history museum that includes some 500 buildings reconstructed and restored to their original 18th-century appearance. Williamsburg was the political and cultural center of Britain's largest colony in the New World and visitors relive history as it was more than 220 years ago. Historical interpreters and character actors offer glimpses of pre-Revolutionary America by bringing history to life.

Colonial Williamsburg is open daily, but hours vary. Admission is required for some exhibits, but there are plenty of sites that are open to the public at no charge.

For more information go to www.visitwilliamsburg.com or call 800-268-6511.

MILITARY

A vast military infrastructure grew in the Virginia Beach area before and during WWII. This military tradition thrives today with numerous military installations in the area and the second-highest concentration of veterans anywhere in the country. For many shipmates, coming to the Virginia Beach area will be like returning home!



U.S. Navy photo by Illustrator/Draftsman 1st Class Moises Medel; Mass Communication Spec. 1st Class Chad J. McNeelley

Naval Station Norfolk*

The largest naval installation in the world, Naval Station Norfolk is home to 78 ships, 26 aircraft squadrons and Atlantic Fleet Headquarters. More than 100,000 military personnel are assigned to this complex that covers over 8,000 acres. The station is part of the Monday (19 October) tour organized by the Convention Committee, which will include driving through the Naval Air Station, past 14 piers and numerous historic homes on the installation.

Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek*

Little Creek is a major operating base for the Atlantic Fleet's Amphibious Forces and is the largest base of its kind. More than 15,000 personnel and 27 ships are assigned to Little Creek, providing many of the troops and tank-carrying ships for the Marine Corps. A driving



Students from The Williams School, in Norfolk, peer inside a display aboard the battleship USS Wisconsin (BB 64), now a Naval heritage museum.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Tyler Jones

tour of Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek is included in Tuesday's (20 October) All-Day Tour, organized by the Convention Committee.

The Old Coast Guard Station

While you're in Virginia Beach, visit the Old Coast Guard Station, one of the first life-saving stations in the United States and one of several such facilities along the East Coast that are still open to the public. The 1903 Life-Saving Station is an artifact in itself and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The station also houses a research library and a museum that depicts the history of the U.S. Life-Saving Service and the U.S. Coast Guard through more than 1,800 artifacts and over 1,000 photographs. Learn about shipwrecks of the Virginia coast and enjoy other displays that depict the state's oceanfront, coastal and maritime heritage.

Admission to the Old Coast Guard Station is \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors and military personnel, and \$2 for children ages 6 to 16. Children under 6 are admitted free. The Old Coast Guard Station is located at 24th Street and Boardwalk in Virginia Beach. It's open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

For more information, visit www.oldcoastguardstation.com or call 757-422-1587.

NATURE

Spend some quality time with Mother Nature while you're in the Virginia Beach area. The area offers more than 18,600 acres of state parks and wildlife refuges, over 121 navigable miles of waterways and 35 miles of ocean and bay beaches. The area includes one of the East Coast's last great salt marsh habitats, which is home to a wide array of birds, fish and other wildlife. It's no wonder nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts flock to the region.

Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center

If you don't get enough water at the beach, visit the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center. You're guaranteed to see amazing sea life in the facility's 700,000-gallon aquariums and live animal habitats, where you'll have an opportunity to get up-close and personal with sharks, sea turtles, harbor seals, river otters, sting-rays and more. The Aquarium also includes hundreds of hands-on exhibits, 10 acres of marsh habitat, an outdoor aviary that hosts 55 different varieties of birds, a 1/3-mile nature trail through a salt marsh and woodland preserve, and a 3-D IMAX Theater.

The Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and admission to the Aquarium is \$11.95 per person. There is an additional charge for the

IMAX Theater, and discounts are available for visitors over age 62 and under age 11.

For more information, visit www.virginiaaquarium.com or call 757-385-FISH (757-385-3474).

Back Bay Wildlife Refuge

The natural beauty of the Virginia coastal region is on display at the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge, providing beach, dunes, woodland, farm fields, and marsh habitats for a wide assortment of wildlife. In addition to several threatened and endangered species such as loggerhead sea turtles, peregrine falcons and bald eagles, the 8,000-acre refuge is home to river otters, white-tailed deer, mink, opossums, raccoons, red fox, nutria, more than 300 species of birds, and various snake and turtle species.

Back Bay offers scenic walking trails, venues for fishing, hunting, bicycling and hiking, as well as a visitor center. The outdoor facilities are open dawn to dusk daily, and the Visitor Contact Station is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends.

For more information, visit www.fws.gov/backbay or call 757-721-2412.



Lauren Armstrong is the Contributing Editor and an LA FRA Member at Large.



The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center in Virginia Beach, the largest aquarium in Virginia.

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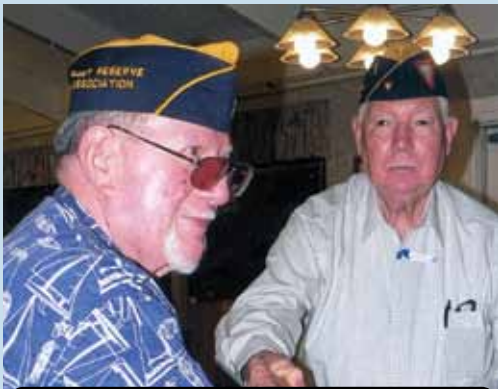
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BRANCH 136 MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Five shipmates participated in the Twin Cities' Honor Flight to the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. Shown are (l to r, standing) Cecil Seim, Willard Overacker, Arthur Krick, Larry Hanson, and (seated) Elmer Nord.



BRANCH 34 TALLAHASSEE, FLA.

Branch President Bob Weichelt congratulates Shipmate Leon Nettles (right) on his 40 years of continuous FRA membership.



BRANCH 226 STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

Vice Admiral Vivian Crea, USCG, thanked RPNE Jim Brown and other shipmates for their participation in the annual Memorial Day Pass and Review at Ft. Wadsworth.



BRANCH 204 ROCKY MOUNT, N.C.

Branch President Gerry Phelps presents a 55-year Continuous Membership Pin to Shipmate Dewey Glover as Glover's daughter, LA FRA Unit 204 Past President Susan Williamson, looks on.



BRANCH 6 BALTIMORE, MD.

Branch President Joseph Shrader presents a 50-year Certificate and Pin to Shipmate Robert Godin (left).

BRANCH 253 PITTSBURGH, PA.

By combining efforts with Trillium Council Girl Scouts and the Harmar McDonald's restaurant, shipmates delivered Shamrock Shakes to veterans at John Heinz Memorial Hospital in Aspenwall, Pa., for St. Patrick's Day. Shown (l to r, standing) are RVPNE Jim Smith, Branch Service Officer Bill Habrat, Branch President Bill Heckman, and (seated) veteran Stan Sadowski.

**BRANCH 269 GOOSE CREEK, S.C.**

Shipmate Arthur Miller receives his 40-year membership Certificate and Pin from Branch President Larry Starland.

**BRANCH 346 PANAMA CITY BEACH, FLA.**

Branch President Donald Lloyd presents a 50-year Membership Certificate to Shipmate Thomas St. Angelo (left).

BRANCH 371 BATON ROUGE, LA.

Branch Vice-President Rob Cobb (center, front) poses with Navy recruiters who are new FRA shipmates.

**BRANCH 267 ST. LOUIS, MO.**

Shipmates (l to r) Jim Cole, George Neiswenter, Jerry Hessel, John Partin, Dale Ferrington, Jerry Piva and other branch members organized a Bingo Party for the residents of the St. Louis Veteran's Home. (Not shown are John Hollowood (hiding behind Neiswenter) and Branch President Jim Taylor.)



To submit a photo for News From the Branches, please e-mail a photo as an attachment in jpeg format to FRAToday@fra.org or mail a high-quality photograph to *FRA Today*, 125 N. West Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include a brief description of the photograph and include the names of those pictured. Laser prints and scanned copies of photographs cannot be accepted.

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American Association of Navy Hospital Corpsmen

23–27 Sept. 2009, San Diego, Calif. Contact Joe Pifer, 619-464-5445, joenpj@cox.net.

Cargo Handling Battalion Six

28–30 August 2009, Stroudsburg, Pa. Contact BMC Bill Malloy, 1426 Fox Hollow Way, N. Myrtle Beach, SC 29582, 843-280-4190.

CBMU-302 (All Years)/302NCB WWII

2–4 Oct. 2009, Branson, Mo. Contact Dave Schill, 609-410-5969, dwschill@comcast.net.

COMIUWGRU2/MIUW506/706/210

24–24 Oct. 2009, Baltimore, Md. Contact Bill Ganz, 3436 Nanmark Court, Ellicott City, MD 21042, 410-418-5597, yncganz@yahoo.com.

Diesel Fast Attack Submarines Association (Tang Class Boats)

8–12 Aug. 2009, San Diego, Calif. Contact Dan Craw, 8607 46th Ave. Cir. W., Bradenton, FL 34210, 941-761-2234, dcraw1@tampabay.rr.com.

Marine Corps Air Transport Association

24–27 Sept. 2009, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact C. J. McQueen, 102 Wanchese Way, New Bern, NC 28560, 252-447-8551, scottie@ec.rr.com.

MCB-9 Seabee Association

8–11 Oct. 2009, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bobby Fletcher, 1758 Golden Vista Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89123, 702-897-6613, ichibanseabee@aol.com.

MTACS-2/MASS-2 (All Years)

19–22 Oct. 2009, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact George Macartie, 858-566-5303, mass-2@sbcglobal.net.

NAS New York (Floyd Bennett Field)

29 Oct.–1 Nov. 2009, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Chet Atkinson, P.O. Box 62066, Virginia Beach, VA 23466, 757-495-1338.

NAS Twin Cities

22–22 Aug. 2009, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact Jack Iverson, 952-322-1249, thetarjei@charter.net.

NAVCOMMSTA Londonderry, Northern Ireland

17–20 Sept. 2009, Charleston, S.C. Contact Art Saraphis, 919-598-8568, artjojo@webtv.net.

Navy Recruiting District NY

25–26 Sept. 2009, Nashville, Tenn. Contact YNC Steve “Mig” Miglionico, 407-348-8466, nrdnyreunion@aol.com.

NAVYMATS VR’s

1–3 Oct. 2009, Dayton, Ohio. Contact Eugene Hilvers, 937-233-7361, locheed1649@woh.rr.com.

U S Asiatic Fleet

27–31 August 2009, Washington, D.C. Contact Ray Kester, 703-451-2520, raykstr@verizon.net.

USMC Motor Transport Association

13–16 Sept. 2009, Indianapolis, Ind. Contact Terry Hightower, P.O. Box 1372, Jacksonville, NC 28541-1372, 910-324-7281, secretary@usmcmcta.org.

USS Annapolis (AGMR-1)

14–18 Oct. 2009, Mobile, Ala. Contact Lee Allen Hallman, 201 15th St E, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401, 205-345-7766, lahusn@yahoo.com.

USS Beatty (DD-640/756)

13–18 Oct. 2009, Clearwater, Fla. Contact David Soderland, 1359 Fairfax Rd, Clearwater, FL 33764, 727-531-2262, oambrosino@tampabay.rr.com.

USS Belknap (DLG/CG-26)

22–26 Oct. 2009, St. Louis, Mo. Contact Jeff Milnes, 724-775-5197.

USS Bexar (APA/LPA-237)

24–27 Sept. 2009, Nashville Tenn. Contact Steve Malloy, 360-373-1093, ussbexar@comcast.net.

USS Bristol (DD-857)

8–11 Oct. 2009, Milwaukee, Wisc. Contact Walter Marczak, 209 Castle Heights, Clarksville, TN 37040, 931-648-9843, wmarczak@charter.net.

USS Caperton (DD-650)

15–18 Oct. 2009, Branson, Mo. Contact Bob Smithson, 9645 S. 51st St., Phoenix, AZ 85044, 480-496-0705, busibob@aol.com.

USS Charr (SS-328)

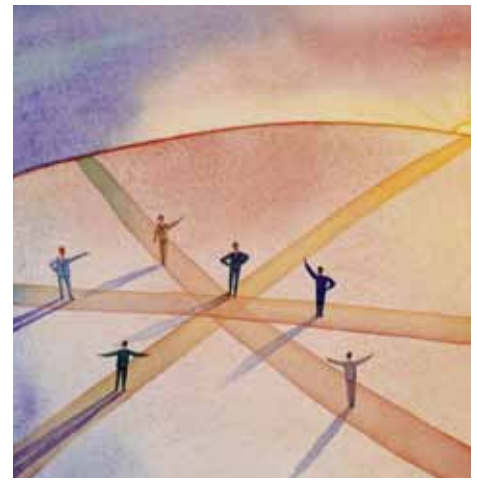
17–21 Sept. 2009, Portland, Ore. Contact Carl Klein, 410-747-7292, ckleinsr@comcast.net.

USS Chickasaw (ATF-83) (U.S. Navy)

27–2 Oct. 2009, Charleston, SC. Contact Bill Devitt, 1101 Rockwell Ct., Dyer, IN 46311, 708-372-1737.

USS Chilton (APA-38)

24–27 Sept. 2009, Deerfield, Ill. Contact Bill Shields, 1220 Norwalk Rd., Unit B3/203, Philadelphia, PA 19115, jdubois42@msn.com.



USS Constant (MSO-427)

2-4 Oct. 2009, Washington, Ill. Contact William Brunk, 504 Hillcrest Dr., Washington, IL 61571, 309-444-4347, bjbru504@earthlink.net.

USS Durham (LKA-114)

21–24 May 2009, Durham, N.C. Contact Greg Yung, 13835 Pennock Ave., Apple Valley, MN 55124-6104, 612-282-7834.

USS Dyess (DDR/DD-880)

18–21 June 2009, Madison, Wisc. Contact Joe Guastella, 608-221-0155.

USS Fletcher (DD/DDE-445, DD-992)

13–16 Sept. 2009, Rapid City, S.D. Contact Mel Gentry, Gentry44@grics.net.

USS General W. A. Mann (AP-112)

14–16 May 2009, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Richard Higginbotham, 334-277-5124, richkat63@charter.net.

USS Ingersoll (DD-652/990)

4–9 Oct. 2009, Laughlin, Nev. Contact Tom Dixon, 928-763-4219, bigdsd@frontiernet.net.

USS Lapon (SSN-661/SS-260)

24–27 Sept. 2009, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Raymond Zieverink, 3003 Lakeland Dr., Rock Hill, SC 29730, 803-324-1414, lapon.reunion@yahoo.com.

USS Lawrence Association (DDG-4 & DD-250)

21–26 June 2009, Charleston, S.C. Contact Craig Bernat, 135 Zurenda Lane, Mineral Point, PA 15942-4505, 814-322-4150, dguts@usslawrence.com.

USS Leyte (CV-32) Air Groups & Marines

30 Sept.–4 Oct. 2009, New London, Ct. Contact Le Grande W. Van Wagenen, 43 Frederick Place, Parlin, NJ 08859-1811, 732-727-5993, leyte1956@aol.com.

USS Lindenwald (LSD-6)

24–27 Sept. 2009, St. Louis, Mo.
Contact Bill Breitzig, 440-543-0378,
bbreitzig@adelphia.net.

USS LST-1157/USS Terrell County (LST-1157)

22–24 Oct. 2009, Lead, S.D. (Black Hills). Contact George O’Connell or Keith Senska, 7138 Little River Tpk., #1000, Annandale VA 22003, 605-354-4203, groconnell@lst1157.com.

USS Mansfield (DD-728)

30 Sept.–4 Oct. 2009, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact Mike Backlund, 507-388-4921, mbacklund@noramsec.com.

USS Maury (AGS-16)

8–12 Oct. 2009, Seattle, Wash. Contact Charles Howe, 322 W. Hickory St., Roseburg, OR 97471-2220.

USS Monticello (LSD-35)

16–20 Sept. 2009, Branson, Mo. Contact Robert (Beamer) Behm, 3011 Dunn Road, Valley Springs, CA 95252, 209-772-0543, Beamer@ussmonticello.com.

USS Nassau (LHA-4)

24–26 July 2009, Norfolk, Va. Contact John Tokarcik, 765-455-8569, Tokarcikj@aol.com.

USS New Jersey (BB-62)

7–11 Oct. 2009, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact BTCM Joe Di Maria, 645 Brisa Ct., Chesapeake, VA 23322, 757-549-2178, joedimaria@msn.com.

USS Perkins (DD-26, DD-377, DDR-877) Association

24–27 Sept. 2009, San Diego, Calif. Contact Peter K. Massa, 8019 Wingspan Drive, San Diego, CA 92119, 619-463-5644, pkelvistcb@cox.net.

USS Philippine Sea (CVC/CVA/CVS-47)

5–10 Oct. 2009, Tucson, Ariz. Contact Chuck Davis, PO Box 496412, Port Charlotte, FL 33949-6412, 941-743-5460, philsea@embarqmail.com.

USS Pollux (AKS-2 & AKS-4)

28 Oct.–1 Nov. 2009, San Diego, Calif. Contact Glen Broxson, 4518 Peaden Rd., Pace, FL 32571, 850-994-0416, glenbroxson@aol.com.

USS Ranger (CVA/CV-61)

17–21 June 2009, Mobile, Ala. Contact Larry Schmuhl, 904-997-2217, lschmuhl@juno.com.

USS Sphinx (ARL-24)

4–7 August 2009, Evansville, Ind. Contact Frank Ironi, 954 Lilac Drive, Sauke Centre, MN 56378, 320-352-3271, fironi@mainstreetcom.com.

USS Washtenaw County (LST-1166)

7–11 Oct. 2009, Washington D.C. Contact Paul Roberge, 5449 Varnum St., Bladensburg, MD 20710-1568, 301-779-2571, swabbyrobby@comcast.net.

USS Wasp (CV/CVA/CVS-18) Association

25–30 Oct. 2009, Lowell, MA. Contact Richard G. Vanover, 6584 Bunting Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127-3635, 716-649-9053.

USS Wayne (APA-54)

9–13 Sept. 2009, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. Contact J. Rodes, 515-953-0424, Ssjmor@msn.com.

USS White Plains (AFS-4)

27–1 June 2010, Washington D.C. Contact Steve Edmison, PO Box 233, Roy, UT 84067, 866-229-1134, AFS-4@comcast.net.

USS Zellars (DD-777)

15–19 Oct. 2009, San Diego, CA. Contact Howard Blessitt, 770-504-1064, Zippingz@aol.com.

VC-35/VA(AW)-35

28 Sept.–2 Oct. 2009, San Diego, Calif. Contact Felix Winckler, 2852 Circle Drive, Escondido, CA 92029, 760-746-6046, fandawinckler@cox.net.

VP-28 Hawaiian Warriors

4–8 Oct. 2009, St Augustine, Fla. Contact Michael Chalut, 6401 Jack Wright Island St., Augustine, FL 32092, 904-522-1276, chalut@bellsouth.net.

VR-22

7–11 Oct. 2009, Norfolk, Va. Contact Gene M. Shonkwiler, 1801 Columbia Dr., Winter Haven, FL 33881-2723, 863-969-3850, GShonkwile@aol.Com.

VR-52 Det. Detroit/VR62 Detroit (NAF Detroit)

21–23 August 2009, Port Clinton, Ohio. Contact Bill Borrusch, 8903 York Dr., Hudson, FL 34667, 727-862-6343, adcsbill@juno.com.

WWII UDT Reunion Association

6–10 Oct. 2009, Ft. Pierce, Fla. Contact Wally Scheid, 804-512-4900, waldos@wildblue.net.

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NAME	BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH
Andersen, Alexander, LCDR USN	042	Hamrick, Jodie, Jr., QMC	001
Anderson, Conley A., AEC	110	Harrell, James L., ADC	282
Ayers, Kenneth W., EN1	237	Harris, Paul S., RM1	060
		Harrison, Raymond T., ABCS	030
Ballantine, D. A., CY	043	Heckmann, William A., MMC(SW)	269
Barnes, Royal M., GMC	219	Heffington, Foy W., BTC	282
Barr, Larry G., CWO4 USN	004	Hicks, Charles D., AMCS	042
Beal, Paul W., DTCS	022	Hilbert, William J., AMS1	005
Beaudwin, Melford E., ENC	MAL	Hill, Benjamin B., BMC	338
Beckermeyer, John R., GM1C	001	Hipple, Harvey J., Jr., 1STSGT	175
Biedebach, Herbert, CDR USN	MAL	Hodges, James W., Jr., CDR USN	MAL
Blount, Ray A., BTC	057	Hosfelt, Robert H., RM1(SS)	371
Blue, James W., NCCM	282	Huber, William, BT1	MAL
Boeckstiegel, Elmer J., CPO USN	267		
Brown, Donald L., MU1	067	James, Phillip M., MMCS	050
Buckner, William C., AMCS	091	Johnson, Darold E., ETCM	MAL
Buddemeyer, Paul, HM2	MAL	Johnson, Wade S., Jr., CPO USN	060
		Joslin, Joseph D., CPO USN	055
Calloway, Robert E., BMC	234	Keays, Keatinge, LCDR USN	024
Carson, Dawsey J., SIC	MAL	Kelly, Richard F., DPCM	288
Cassell, James C., ADJC	145	Kitch, Jeffery J., HT1	MAL
Cates, Robert N., ADJC	096	Konen, Lawrence M., RMC	057
Chapman, James E., SKC	130		
Childears, James R., CPO USN	374	Lansford, Doyle M., AFCM	166
Clark, William G., JOC	MAL	Laperche, Jacques B., CDR USN	MAL
Collins, James C., PHC	147	Lewis, Bertram H., TCMC	237
Cody, John S., LT USN	374	Lindsey, Leonard J., CPO USN	MAL
Cope, Robert, CWO2 USN	161	Little, Lee D., AOCM	126
Costantine, Lawrence F., GMGC	085	Llantada, Benjamin, BT2	108
Covell, John G., PO1 USN	040	Lorenzo, Frank E., AG1	162
Coyle, John E., ENC	MAL	Lovell, James E., CWO2 USMC	MAL
Crane, Hugh R., CDR USN	024		
Crisp, George M., GMC	166	Maershbecker, Nicolas, BTC	MAL
		Malone, James T., MSC	MAL
Dane, Richard R., ADRC	246	Marak, Ronald C., OSC	MAL
Davis, Ronald O., BT1	023	Martin, Richard E., HTC	023
Davis, William R., Jr., MSGT	339	McGarry, John F., ADRC	250
Deboard, Leo F., POCS USN	282	McLane, Clarence M., RMC(SS)	MAL
Debolt, Arthur O., MGYSGT	141	McNally, Thomas F., RM1	120
Dionne, Philip G., ETC	020	Melton, Bernest G., ADRC	126
Dunbar, Roy, AMCS	086	Merrill, Richard E., TMC	085
		Midbust, Arthur W., QMC	MAL
Elston, Wallace J., ENC	MAL	Mitchell, Albert A., BMCS	MAL
Evans, Alan, IM1	MAL	Mitchell, John V., MMC	MAL
		Mohland, John M., ENC	009
Ferry, Andrew J., QM2	001	Molitor, Loren B., FTM1	MAL
Fleinek, Raymond, RMCM	166	Moran, Delbert L., EN1	267
Fleming, W. Jack, FTCS	029	Morse, James L., AECS	061
Frauenfelder, Lee R., PCCM	241	Mulligan, Charles H., ETCS	MAL
French, James E., MMCM(SS)	020		
		Nadrchal, David H., CPL	060
Giannotti, William J., GMC	MAL		
Gillis, Chester B., BMCM	051	O'Brien, James W., USN RET	046
Golden, George H., CDR USN	099	Owens, Arthur E., TMC	090
Goodner, Grover, GMG2	MAL		
Goodwin, James P., LCDR USNR	MAL	Pearson, James R., GMC	040
Granger, Charles F., CDR USN	MAL	Pendergraft, Lawrence A., CPL	364
Greenlaw, Howard E., CPO USN	022	Pitts, Henry C., Jr., GMC	052
Gruber, George N., CPO USN	MAL	Powell, James C., BMC	156
Hahn, Gary T., LT USN	175	Regala, Isidoro, CS2	127
Hallenius, Peter Perkins, AMSC	038	Richmond, Elmer C., SH1	022
Hamilton, Arthur, YN1	MAL		



NAME	BRANCH
Ridenour, Clifford C., SCPO USN	MAL
Roberson, Felix J., AOC	203
Rodgers, William P., ENCS	020
Rowsemitt, Aaron, CDR USNR	MAL
Roy, Andre A., SSGT	072
Ruiz, Aristeo, MMC	327
Schauer, William W., CPO USN	275
Scherini, Otto A., RADM USN	256
Selvek, John W., GYSGT	120
Shukis, William J., SGT	256
Smith, J. Sanders, ADJC	MAL
Snively, Kay W., MMC	046
Snow, Charles H., LCDR USN	126
Solum, Floyd K., RMCM	097
Speer, Paul W., PR1	261
Stark, Bernard J., ETCM(SS)	117
Stewart, Woodie A., CWO USN	061
Stiltz, Robert L., Jr., ETCM(SS)	MAL
Stitt, Donald E., HMC	313
Stiver, Paul G., PC2	MAL
Strickland, John W., ADC	022
Sullivan, John F., SSGT	246
Talbert, Carl L., BTCS	228
Talty, James R., STCM	015
Thompson, Kathie, HMCS	070
Tomaszewski, Edward J., MSGT	222
Turrieta, Edward, ABCS	074
Tyrpak, Peter, USN RET	060
Vollmer, Gary E., MSGT	175
Warlikowski, Matthew, OSCM	124
Webb, Leonard R., CAPT USMC	051
Weidler, Rudolph C., ATCS	067
Weitz, Charles A., HMC	MAL
Whisnant, Wayne O., SKC	168
White, Robert R., RMCS	136
Wilson, George W., Sr., EMC	050
Winder, Harold H., ACM	010
Wing, Donald G., ADRC	156
Winkler, Cottie R., HMC	032
Wood, David D., 1STLT	MAL
Zito, Angelo F., MMCS	249

Names in red indicate 50 year continuous members.
 ⚙ indicate a Past National Officer.



Herbert Morris

Served on the USS Boston (CAG-1), 1966 to 1968. Lived in the southern states. Please contact Chuck Mallow at mallow@whidbey.com or 360-221-6035.

Shipmates relocating the Orlando, Fla., area to switch to Branch 117

Contact Branch 117 Secretary YNC Steve Miglionico at 407-348-8466 or FRA117BR@AOL.COM.

Hospital Corpsman Lloyd Stangeland

Stationed at the Ryukus Army Hospital on Okinawa in 1955-56, Lloyd was an O.R. Tech and friends with Corpsmen Norm Oliver and Darryl Wahler. The latter two have recently regained contact and would like to find Lloyd. Contact either Norm at keitholiver@bresnan.net or Darryl at gitmorider@yahoo.com.

Looking for ADR Richard and Sally Davis, USN

Last known duty station was in Norfolk area. Served with him in AEWBARRONPAC in Hawaii in early 60's. Contact Bob Bain at bainrw@md.metrocast.net or 301-863-7948.

Master Chief William Sargent, USN (Ret.)

Sarge was our best man in Newport, R.I., in 1962. We lost track of him when we were in Naples, Italy. We will celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2012 and we'd really like to have him attend our anniversary celebration. Sarge and my husband were stationed together at Fleet Training Center in Newport. Please contact Dixi & Eleanor Jacobs, 13252 Rosman Erickson Rd., Lake Park, MN 56554 or dejacobs@loretel.net.

DVD or VHS of USS Texas

I had a copy, but gave it away. Will pay. Contact Robert Baum, AFRH Box 1010, 3700 N. Capitol St NW, Washington, DC 20011-8400.

USS Arikara Crew

I served aboard the USS Arikara (AT-98) before and during the Korean War and have approximately 50 photos of some of the crew. Some of the names on the back of the snapshots are: W.C. Detzen; Hernandez (1947); Charlie Gilland; Ramundo RA/3; Rex Pitt; Duncan; Boyd; Cravens; Hora; Byrnes; Burns; Bones Brockman; Lauder; Pasternak; Wagner; Plummer. If any of the mentioned would like the photos, they can contact me at: CDaulman@aol.com.

Shipmate Grady, USMC

I served with a Marine named Grady (last name) in Sasebo, Japan in 1966 and would like to reconnect with him. Please contact Vernon Hanks, 173 Avenida Majorca, Unit P, Lagun Wood, CA 92637-4123.

Classmates from Boot Camp Company 20, USNTC Great Lakes, Ill., 26 March 1954

Contact LNC Jim Lawrence, USN (Ret.) at 843-553-1908 or Dachie2008@att.net.

Classmates from NTC San Diego, Company 014, January-February 1955

I'm looking for a cruise book/year book. Please contact Edward Costello, 225 Stonyford Dr., Vacaville, CA 95687, 707-449-0429.

Sid L. Frazier, Jr.

He served aboard the USS Hopi (ATF-71) in 1946. Please contact Barbara Perryman (daughter of Jackie Edgecomb/Mertz), 30264 White Wake Dr., Canyon Lake, CA 92587, 951-244-3638 or 310-490-3424.

DC1 J. V. Johnson

He served aboard USS Canberra and USS Little Rock. Last known assignment was recruiting duty in Seattle area in 1964-1966. He then went LDO. Contact Jim Mosley, 141 Alan Lane, Unicoi, TN 37692, 423-743-6277.

DC1 Harry Moore

He was a firefighting instructor at Treasure Island in 1960s. Contact Jim Mosley, 141 Alan Lane, Unicoi, TN 37692, 423-743-6277.

ATKRON 23, 1963-1964, USS Midway Cruise

While in Yokosuka, Japan, a group was detached to Atsugi for pilot training. If you were in the TAD group, I would appreciate hearing from you ASAP. AMH2 Jerry A. "Whit" Whitcomb, 811 NE Madrona Dr., Myrtle Creek, OR 97457, 541-863-4968.

Crew from USS Vammen (DE-644), 1960-1964

I'm trying to verify that I went ashore in Duong Dong, Vietnam, to take a shipmate to an abandoned airfield to be medevac'd to a military medical facility. Need documentation for VA justification. I was a PO3 at the time. Please contact William F. Browne, Jr. at 53925 St., Rt. 7, New Matamoras, OH 45767, 740-864-2143.

CPO William Ruddick, HAL-3 Seawolves

Contact CPO Joe W. Walker at 903-463-0285 or George Leduc at 828-389-2536.

Capt. Nelson, USN

Past commanding officer of USS Tawasa (ATF-92), retired 1 October 1995 as Deputy Director of Naval Education and Training. Last known location was Military Sealift Command (Civil Service) in 1997. Please contact Cal Stanford at 2616 NE 152nd Ave., Vancouver, WA 98684, 360-896-4274 or 360-903-3242, usbud@msn.com.

Leslie Smallwood and James Wells

Stationed together at Kaohsiun, Taiwan, 1965-1967. Contact MSGT Jimmy D. Middleton, USAF (Ret.) at 615-790-7726.

Capt. John A. Pickering, USN

Served aboard USS Ranger (CV-61) as the chief engineer. Please contact Arthur P. Calvert at 4316 Arrecife Way, San Diego, CA 92154, 619-980-5553.

SKC Doris Aronald, USN

Stationed at Naval Ship Repair Facility, Yokosuka, Japan. Contact CWO4 Arthur P. Calvert at 4316 Arrecife Way, San Diego, CA 92154, 619-980-5553.

AVCM Dennis Higgins (HU-2), AMCS Ed Wishmeyer (VF-101) and ADC J.D. Kingcade (VF-101, VF-151, NMC/VX4 Point Magu, Calif.)

Please contact AFCM Walt Hall, 1351 Evergreen Heights Dr., Woodland Park, CO 80863, 719-687-4552, waltandgay@aol.com.

FC3 Robert Eugene Jones

USS Lansdale (DD-426) survivor who went over the side with me on 20 April 1944 after we were torpedoed in the Med. Contact Sal "Chuck" Rizzo, 4402 San Lucian Lane, Fort Myers, FL 33903 or marsal2202@webtv.net.

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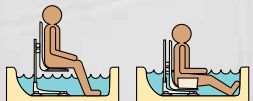
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Message from the National President

WE HAVE REACHED THE halfway mark of our Auxiliary year. Our members have been working on all their projects and they continue to shine in all their volunteering activities.

Their efforts range from welcoming our returning heroes at their local airports to servicing our local VA hospitals with ward parties, bingos, and blackjack games. We have members who help put together packages for our service personnel overseas. They not only do the package but also collect the items that go into the packages. It does not stop there. What about the members who drive the elderly to their doctor's appointments, shopping and much more? THANK YOU for all you do.

The LA FRA annual Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknowns and the Mast of the Maine was held on 25 April. What a very memorable event! When you see the members in white, with their hats on, carrying those flags, your heart swells with pride; it is without a doubt a beautiful sight.

My husband and I just returned from St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. This is my National President's project for 2008-2009. Donna Young, who works in St. Jude's marketing department, took us on a tour of the research labs, and explained what they were working on and what they hope to accomplish. We then went on a tour of the hospital itself. Of course, there were areas we could not visit and we understood perfectly. Did you know that Danny Thomas and his wife Rosemary are buried on the hospital grounds? There is a Danny Thomas Pavilion which houses his many awards and pictures of people he worked with in show business. I can not begin to tell you the feeling you have after you have walked these grounds. I learned a lot. I hope and pray that my project does well for these children. After all, they are our future.

Fran Hoadley is the editor of *LA FRA News* and the *FRA Today* Liaison.



Unit 208, Jacksonville, N.C.

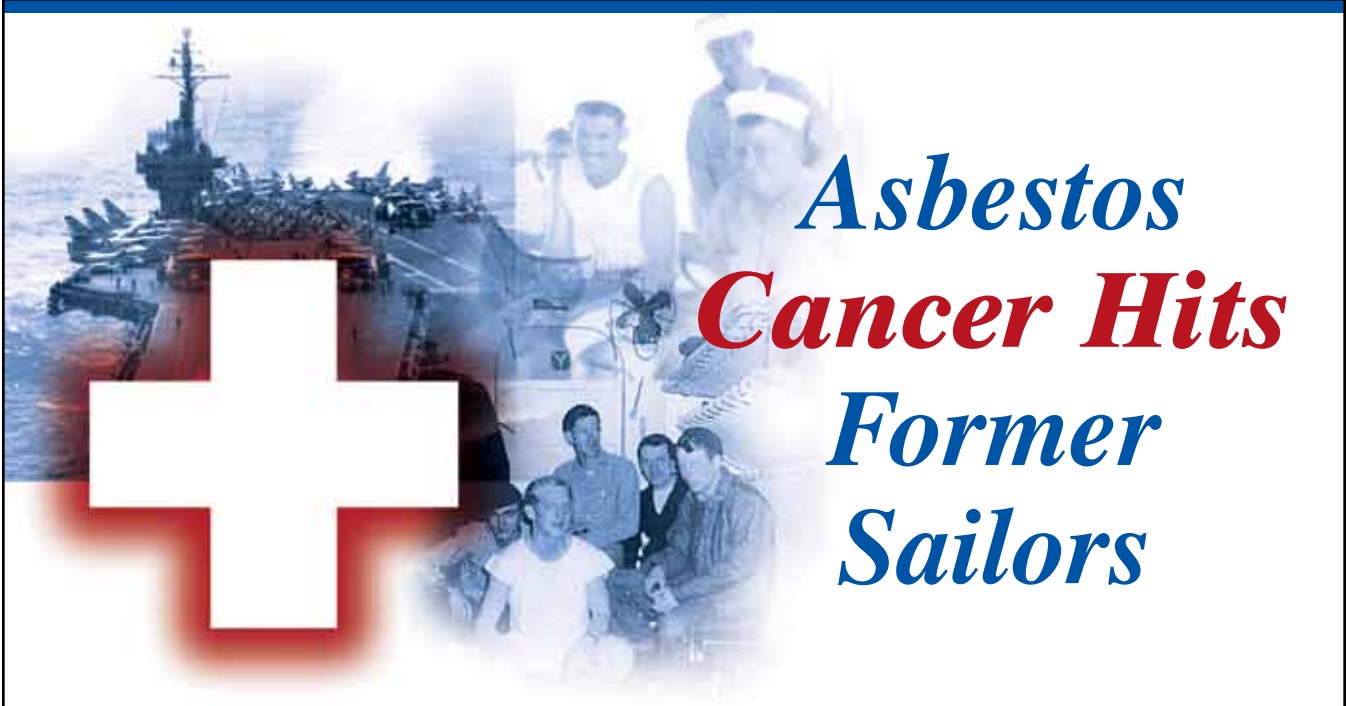
Irma Potter (left) was presented her 20-year LA FRA membership pin by Unit President Margaret Boggs and Branch President Earl Harper. (Photo taken by MGySgt Robert R. Baum, Branch 208 FRA Public Relations Chairman)



GEORGIA GALLAGHER,
National President



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