

Education Foundation Issues



Joe Barnes

Happy New Year! I hope all goes well for everyone in 2018. Due to the *FRA* today publication schedule, this was written before New Year's Day. This column will address several key issues.

As we begin the new year, it's important to say thanks again to Shipmates, Branches and others who contributed to the FRA Education Foundation in 2017. Contributions are always important, however, they are more so since the annual FRA contribution to the Foundation (that funded a dozen scholarships) has been eliminated.

Thanks also to everyone who contributed through the expanded 2017 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) that concluded in mid-January. And to everyone who registered the Foundation in the Amazon Smile program, which generates a 0.5% contribution from qualified purchases on Amazon.com. If you've not already done so, please go to smile.amazon.com and select the Fleet Reserve Association Education Foundation (spell out Fleet Reserve Association) and one half of one percent of all pending and future purchases will benefit the Foundation. This may not seem like much, but every little bit helps and the more Shipmates and others who designate the Foundation to benefit from Amazon's program, the greater the return.



Scholarship Applications Deadline

The application deadline for 2018 Foundation scholarships is April 15. Updated application forms are posted on the Foundation web page at fra.org/foundation. Simply scroll down the page then select one of the listed scholarships and print out the application, which includes detailed instructions, including eligibility requirements.

It's especially important for students who submit complete application packages to include all required documents listed. Unfortunately, we receive many incomplete application packages each year and these submissions are not forwarded to the review committee. So please be sure students submit complete application packages.

Updating Wills and Associated Documents

One of my 2017 columns addressed the importance of updating wills and associated documents to ensure, among other things, legacy giving wishes are clearly stated and include contributions to credible, well-run organization such as the FRA Education Foundation.

Accordingly, I wanted to share with you my efforts with my wife's and my respective wills and associated documents. It was a year-long process (due to my procrastination) and we recently completed and signed all documents. The package included an instruction letter that was forwarded to key family members, our respective wills (each individual needs one), durable power of attorney for each of us, advance health care directives, HIPAA authorization and waivers for both of us, final disposition instructions and distribution of personal property forms (currently unsigned).

To reach this point, we completed questionnaires, reviewed and revised draft documents, identified assets, insurance policies, discussed what we want and who to designate as our respective executors. We also maintained contact with the attorney and clarified several issues. That said, it's done and reassuring that we can make future updates as necessary.

I urge everyone to undertake this process to ensure your wishes are accurately detailed for when the time comes—something inevitable for all of us! This could be your new year's resolution for 2018. This is also important for your family who may face difficult estate related questions in the absence of a will.

As always, thanks for your continuing support. Please encourage eligible family members and others to check out our scholarships and learn more about our programs by visiting the Foundation web page (fra.org/foundation). Anyone can contribute to the Foundation via a link on the page. **FRA**

By NEDE Joe Barnes